Date: Tue, 1 Nov 2022 8:32:52 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 1 Nov 2022 8:32:48 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs moderated a Lancet Commission webinar on COVID-19 origins this morning
From: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]

Rich: Your summary of my summary is right on point – that was exactly the vibe of Sachs's comments during the webinar. He let Ebright and Kopp spell out the crazier aspects of the lab leakers' viewpoint. Chan was more balanced than I expected her to be (although her summary clearly had a thumb on the scale).
Best regards,
Jeff

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 8:28 PM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs moderated a Lancet Commission webinar on COVID-19 origins this morning

Jeff:

Great summary, but nothing really new as all the presenters had well-known views. My only comment is that Sachs recently seems to be a little less adamant that it was a lab leak and just now relies on innuendo.

Rich

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email: b6

Executive Assistant: b6
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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 8:15 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: Jeff Sachs moderated a Lancet Commission webinar on COVID-19 origins this morning
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

All: I listened in this morning on the webinar on COVID-19 origins that Jeff Sachs moderated under the auspices of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). I wasn't able to stay until the end of the Q&A, but I did hear the three main presentations. Sachs said that he plans to post the recording of the session (on SDSN?). This was the first of three planned webinars – the second (on global health financing) will take place on November 22, the third (on health system strengthening) on December 8.

Sachs served as moderator. His introduction was fairly mundane. His basic premise was that there are two "absolutely viable" hypotheses for the origin of COVID-19 – either zoonotic or due to a lab leak. (Note that the language he uses – "absolutely viable" – obscures the fact that the evidence differs significantly for each of the two hypotheses. But this was a bias that ran through all of the presentations.) He then argued that we need to follow both lines of inquiry equally, to have a proper understanding of both possibilities. He alluded to the bimodal distribution of most discussion of these questions – with "mainstream media" coming down on natural origins, and "alternate media" arguing for laboratory origins (including in this Senator Burr's Senate Minority Report). He then turned to two "leading scientists" and a "leading reporter" for further perspectives.

The speakers were Alina Chan (Broad Institute), Richard Ebright (Rutgers University) and Emily Kopp (US Right to Know) – no great surprises there.

Alina Chan's main argument was that there is not enough evidence to decide which hypothesis is true, and that all the evidence is circumstantial. She did say that there is no argument over the fact that the pandemic originated in spillover from bats – just a difference of opinion on how and where this happened.

She presented a set of factors that would explain the chain of causation for each of the two hypotheses:

<u>Natural origins</u>
- Earliest cases handled live animals?
- Were there infected animals in markets or farms?
- Were there animal variants of the virus?
- Was there antibody evidence of infected animals or traders (not presenting with pneumonia)?
- Was there a strong wildlife conduit between known bat reservoirs and the outbreak site?

She then claimed that none of these have been established for SARS-CoV-2, and thus we can't say that natural origins hypothesis is true.

Lab leak
- WIV was the HQ for virus hunting program targeting both animals and humans
- WIV found and developed SARS-CoV-2-like viruses by 2013
- WIV did advanced work with virus isolates and "seamless clones"
- Live virus work was done in BSL2 and BSL3 environments, which could not contain airborne viruses
- WIV and collaborators were planning to insert furin cleavage sites in different viruses (she referred to a "pipeline" of risky research and made a big deal of the rejected DARPA proposal, for which the research was never done)

Her conclusion: evidence is not definitive for either hypothesis, but these aspects of research at the WIV were "very concerning" and thus we need to investigate both conclusions.

Richard Ebright was then asked what should be done about improving the oversight of research in this area from the perspective of biosafety, biosecurity, and biorisk management. He concurred with Sachs and Chan that the available data do not enable a choice between the two hypotheses of COVID-19 origin. But regardless of where one stood on this question, the research by EcoHealth Alliance, WIV, and their collaborators – according to Ebright – used inadequate biosafety protocols and lacked transparency. Again, according to him, this points to, but does not prove, a research spillover as the origin of COVID-19.

I've attached a screen shot of the slide he shared that lays out his bill of complaint. As you can see, he's fixated on the work that WIV and EHA did from 2016-2019, arguing that, while this doesn't prove laboratory origins, it "exceeds the standard of probable cause" and provides "ample basis to initiate investigation and ample basis to improve oversight." (Like Chan, he also made much of EHA's rejected DARPA proposal, trying to use it as a "smoking gun" for malign intent by EHA and WIV, despite the fact that this research was never done!)

He spent most of his time, however, outlining a basis for and recommendations for improved research regulation and oversight in biosafety, biosecurity, and bio risk management.

Sachs and Ebright had an exchange about the recent news of the creation of a variant of COVID-19 that appeared to be more virulent than Omicron, without the "knowledge or approval of NIH." This was evidence for both of them of the need for enhanced oversight.

Emily Kopp, an investigative journalist with US Right to Know, then made a breathless presentation about her attempts to bring the truth about COVID-19 origins to light through FOIAs and dogged persistence. The gravamen of her complaint is that much of the relevant research has been underwritten by NIH, DOD, and USAID with taxpayer funds, and conducted in the US (at EHA, University of North Carolina,

University of Texas, and UC Davis), yet she and her colleagues have had to file dozens of FOIA requests and lawsuits to get access to what they consider to be relevant information.

She reviewed five categories of evidence:

1. EHA progress reports to the NIH: She noted that the Intercept is going after 31 EHA NIH proposals and over 1000 other documents not yet released. They also plan to go after EHA Board members and collaborators at the U of Maryland and UC Davis.

2. USAID databases from PREDICT.

3. NIH bioinformatics databases for sequence data from WIV: She was quite exercised about the "apathy" of NIH at not going through archived sequences to provide the information that USRTK wants.

4. The Baric Lab at UNC: She said as yet there are few clues to planned work on genetic engineering techniques here.

5. Department of Defense: Again, she railed about the lack of transparency about the rejected EHA DARPA proposal, which she claimed DARPA tried to conceal. She also mentioned data from PREEMPT.

She then claimed that the public can't trust the credibility and integrity of the NIH on these matters, since they tried to obscure the existence of relevant data – and event tried to obscure the involvement of other scientists in the discussion of COVID-19 origins in the conversations that led to the *Nature Medicine* correspondence in 2020 (I lost her here – the discussion became very "inside baseball"). She concluded with a plea that the public deserves more clarity about the pandemic's early days.

Sachs then threw her a softball about the *Nature Medicine* correspondence, inviting her to tell the listeners how it appeared that NIH was trying to obscure who came up with the zoonotic origins theory (and then didn't credit those authors on the publication). She then said that the virologists who were on this correspondence have continued "to be aggressive about natural origins and to marginalize other theories" – asking (rhetorically) if they have shown integrity.

Sachs then said that all of this information had to be pried out of the NIH and the USG, rather than being offered transparently. He showed how the NIAID had redacted most of the 300-page COVID strategic plan of April 2020, and also made a point of saying that Robert Redfield had wanted to attend today's webinar but couldn't, noting that he believes a lab leak is more likely – and that he was shut down by NIH when he tried to call for further investigation. Sachs then teased that there may be new revelations that the WIV and US scientists were implicated in evidence

that COVID-19 emerged in China before December 2019. (This latter evidence-free speculation seems to refer to Mike Pompeo's evidence-free contention that the USG had evidence of this – but that evidence has never materialized.)

Sachs then reiterated his contention that both hypotheses need further investigation – and that the relevant information may be in the US, not China. We need an independent, rigorous, transparent scientific investigation. (Despite this language, I think you can sense from my summary of the webinar that Sachs is actually shading the argument toward his belief that COVID-19 had a laboratory origin.)

I wasn't able to stay on for the Q&A, but we should be able to review the rest of the session when Sachs posts the recording.

Hope this is helpful.

As ever,
Jeff

Date: Tue, 5 May 2020 6:35:37 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 5 May 2020 6:35:36 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Vanity Fair: Dr. Fauci Isn't Buying Trumpworld's China Coronavirus Theory
From: David Morens b6
To: Peter Daszak <
Attachments: image001.jpg

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

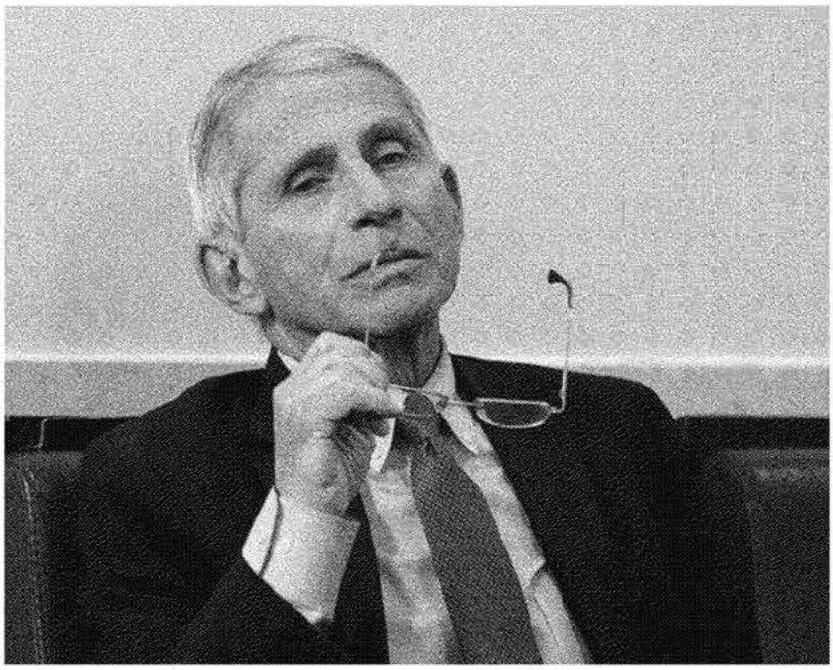
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 5, 2020 at 18:35:01 EDT
To: David Morens < b6
Subject: Fwd: Vanity Fair: Dr. Fauci Isn't Buying Trumpworld's China Coronavirus Theory

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 5, 2020 at 18:33:35 EDT
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov >, NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov >, NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov >
Subject: Vanity Fair: Dr. Fauci Isn't Buying Trumpworld's China Coronavirus Theory

Dr. Fauci Isn't Buying Trumpworld's China Coronavirus Theory

The doctor's skepticism comes as the president and his allies suggest the virus was created in a Wuhan lab.
By Eric Lutz
May 5, 2020



Anthony Fauci attends a coronavirus press briefing in April.Drew Angerer

Donald Trump and others in his orbit have begun more aggressively pushing the conspiracy theory that the novel coronavirus was created in a Chinese lab. "It's a terrible thing that happened," the president said in an interview with *Reuters* last week. "Whether they made a mistake or whether it started off as a mistake and then they made another one. Or did somebody do something on purpose?"

But Dr. **Anthony Fauci** shot down that theory, telling *National Geographic* in an interview published Monday that there does not appear to be evidence the deadly virus was created in a lab and made it into the general population, either by accident or on purpose as Trump suggested. "What's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved," Fauci told the publication. "A number of very qualified biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species."

The virus, which was first discovered in Wuhan late last year, is believed to have jumped to humans from bats. But as the toll of the coronavirus continues to mount in the United States, which was caught flat-footed by the pandemic despite the president receiving multiple warnings about the severity of the threat, Trump and his allies have gone all in on a theory that China created the virus on purpose. "There's enormous evidence that that's where this began," Secretary of State **Mike Pompeo** said Sunday on ABC News' *This Week*, declining to produce any such proof to support his claim. "These are not the first times that we have had the world exposed to viruses as a result of failures in a Chinese lab." Both U.S. intelligence and the World Health Organization have publicly refuted the theory, though Fox News' **John Roberts** reported over the weekend that some intelligence officials believe a Wuhan lab created the virus and released it as a "mistake." Pompeo has reportedly pushed for the U.S. intelligence apparatus to find proof to support the theory, but Fauci told *National Geographic* that the crusade makes little sense. "I don't get what they're talking about," Fauci said. "I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument."

Fauci has long been at odds with Trump and members of the administration, who have played down the threat of the virus, promulgated unproven and in some cases obviously dangerous potential treatments for it, and pushed to "reopen" states and businesses despite ongoing deficiencies in U.S. testing capabilities. Speaking to *National Geographic*, he cautioned against the spread of misinformation like the kind the president has spouted. "Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about," Fauci said. "It's very difficult for the general public to distinguish."

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Date: Thu, 16 Jul 2020 6:44:25 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 16 Jul 2020 6:44:24 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Azar briefing
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]>;

Thanks David,

I strongly suspect if Azar had showed up or made any comment NIAID would know, and Greg would have circulated it.

Maybe Peter and EcoHealth have been tracking that specifically, and if so I'd love to know what has happened. I have tried to google it a number of times up to this afternoon but haven't found anything. The congressional letter said they wanted this by July 15th.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, July 16, 2020 6:36 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: Re: Azar briefing

I know nothing. I had a meeting today with Tony who was here in the office. I dont think he knew about this. But i font know. He tarely talks about these kinds of things because he is very cautious. Rarely he will make a veiled or sarcastic remark to me and i presume others. But since we are all largely eorking alone or at home or in my case in my bsl3-office, none of us has much face to face interaction ehete such things might come up. But we do have an "OD group" email where About 10 of the senior People and key people like schedulers and media folks keep each other informed, do when anything at all happens we all know it.

Also today i sent this group the galley of the ajtmh paper and explained there would be a go-with editorial criticizing the grant termination. Tony had that before we met but didnt say anything. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jul 16, 2020, at 18:27, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> **From:** "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
> **Date:** July 16, 2020 at 17:37:20 EDT
> **To:** Peter Daszak [b6], "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
> **Subject: Azar briefing**
>
> As far as I know Azar failed to show up to brief the congressional committee chairs per their request of June 26th (see below link). Do you have any definitive information or other insights?
>
> https://energycommerce.house.gov/newsroom/press- releases/committee- leaders-raise-questions-after-abrupt-termination-of-federal
>
> Jerry

Date: Thu, 27 Aug 2020 4:04:59 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 27 Aug 2020 4:04:58 PM -0400
Subject: OK, It's been announced, you got the award, so now I can say CONGRATS!!!

Date: Mon, 21 Sep 2020 1:02:51 PM -0400

Sent: Mon, 21 Sep 2020 1:02:50 PM -0400

Subject: FW: Daily Beast: A Notorious COVID Troll Actually Works for Dr. Fauci / Bill Crews is a PR official at the National Institutes of Health. But he also has another job: an anonymous RedState editor who rails against the agency for which he works.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6

To: Peter Daszak b6 b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 >;

I don't think I have ever heard of this guy, and he doesn't work in the "front office". I doubt Tony knows or has ever heard of him. If true, doing this on work time is an action for which you get fired.

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 12:53 PM
Subject: Daily Beast: A Notorious COVID Troll Actually Works for Dr. Fauci / Bill Crews is a PR official at the National Institutes of Health. But he also has another job: an anonymous RedState editor who rails against the agency for which he works.

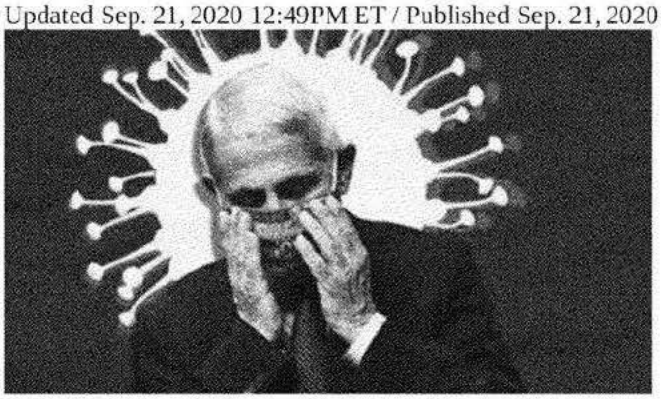
A Notorious COVID Troll Actually Works for Dr. Fauci

INSIDE JOB

Bill Crews is a PR official at the National Institutes of Health. But he also has another job: an anonymous RedState editor who rails against the agency for which he works.

Lachlan Markay

Updated Sep. 21, 2020 12:49PM ET / Published Sep. 21, 2020 12:41PM ET



exclusive

Photo Illustration by The Daily Beast/Getty

The managing editor of the prominent conservative website RedState has spent months trashing U.S. officials tasked with combating COVID-19, dubbing White House coronavirus task force member Dr. Anthony Fauci a "mask nazi," and intimating that government officials responsible for the pandemic response should be executed.

But that writer, who goes by the pseudonym "streiff," isn't just another political blogger. The Daily Beast has discovered that he actually works in the public affairs shop of the very agency that Fauci leads.

William B. Crews is, by day, a public affairs specialist for the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. But for years he has been writing for RedState under the streiff pseudonym. And in that capacity he has been contributing to the very same disinformation campaign that his superiors at the NIAID say is a major challenge to widespread efforts to control a pandemic that has claimed roughly 200,000 U.S. lives.

Under his pseudonym, Crews has derided his own colleagues as part of a left-wing anti-Trump conspiracy and vehemently criticized the man who leads his agency, whom he described as the "attention-grubbing and media-whoring Anthony Fauci." He has gone after other public health officials at the state and federal levels, as well—"the public health Karenwaffen," as he's called them—over measures such as the closures of businesses and other public establishments and the promotion of social distancing and mask-wearing. Those policies, Crews insists, have no basis in science and are simply surreptitious efforts to usurp Americans ' rights, destroy the U.S. economy, and damage President Donald Trump's reelection effort.

"I think we're at the point where it is safe to say that the entire Wuhan virus scare was nothing more or less than a massive fraud perpetrated upon the American people by 'experts' who were determined to fundamentally change the way the country lives and is organized and governed," Crews wrote in a June post on RedState.

"If there were justice," he added, "we'd send and [sic] few dozen of these fascists to the gallows and gibbet their tarred bodies in chains until they fall apart."

Crews' authorship of the posts—which The Daily Beast was able to confirm through public records, social media postings, and internal records from the National Institutes of Health, NIAID's parent agency—is a remarkable break from the public positions of the agency that employs him in a public relations role. And it illustrates the extent to which the response to the pandemic has become deeply politicized, even within the agencies at the front lines of fighting it. Crews isn't just a civil servant anonymously disagreeing with his bosses online; he's actively undermining their work and even suggesting retribution against them.

But while Crews may be one of the most remarkable cases of a government official contributing to the misinformation campaign around COVID-19, he's hardly the only one doing so. His most scathing writings about the coronavirus came over the summer, as other Trump loyalists in the nation's public health bureaucracy sought to undermine the work of some of the government's foremost scientists.

The Daily Beast could not definitively determine whether Crews was writing for RedState, or posting to his Twitter account, while on the clock at his government job. But the vast majority of his writing at the site this year has been published during the work week, often during normal business hours, raising questions about the ethical use of taxpayer resources.

Reached on his streiff Twitter account, Crews initially declined an interview request from The Daily Beast. He did not respond to a list of detailed questions subsequently sent to his Twitter account and his personal and NIH email addresses. The NIAID press office did not immediately respond to questions.

According to his LinkedIn page, Crews has worked as a press officer at NIAID since 2007. That LinkedIn page is associated with streiff's Gmail account, and its "connections" include a number of RedState's founders and its former editor, Erick Erickson, many of whom are also friends with Crews on Facebook. The LinkedIn page also lists a prior stint as an officer in the Army's Berlin Brigade—specifically the 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment—which is consistent with details shared by "streiff's" Twitter account. Crews' LinkedIn page also mentions later service in the U.S. Army's 3nd Infantry Regiment; Streiff tweeted that he was a veteran of the unit during a 2019 exchange.

On the Streiff account, he has alluded on multiple occasions to his work at NIH. Internal NIH employee directory records confirm that Crews is a public affairs specialist in NIAID's communications services branch, based at the agency's Rockville, Maryland, offices. Details in those records, including Crews' middle initial, align with property records for the Maryland home owned by Crews and his wife. Streiff has frequently called himself a Marylander as well and even helped start a conservative blog about state politics called Red Maryland.

Emails from listservs for both current and former RedState writers—a number of which were obtained by The Daily Beast —show that Crews also passed along information shared internally at NIH to other writers at the site. In late 2016, he sent an email to a list of current and former RedState contributors from his "streiff" Gmail account containing a memo circulated to agency employees by NIH director Francis Collins. Crews prefaced the memo by writing, "from office email." He also sent the list internal NIH emails regarding the government shutdown of 2013, and even suggested that RedState writers cover various NIH-funded studies, in one case asking suggesting that another contributor write up a particular study because "I'm conflicted out."

A request for comment sent to Jonathan Garthwaite, the vice president and general manager of RedState parent company Townhall Media, was not returned.

Though a Trump critic during the 2016 campaign, Crews is now a die-hard supporter, and his writings on the coronavirus have been, to say the least, inflammatory. Wearing masks to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, he wrote last month, is "a political statement" akin to "wearing the red ribbon when AIDS was a huge deal, and we were supposed to believe that you can have an epidemic without having casual transmission of a virus (sorry, in most areas of the world's landmass outside a San Francisco bathhouse, butt sex is not considered 'casual')."

Crews' posts on coronavirus at RedState have directly contradicted the guidelines put out by the White House coronavirus task force and the nation's various public health agencies, including the NIH. "This whole thing has been a total fraud, insofar as the policy response to Wuhan virus, from day one," he wrote in June. "There has never been a need for a lockdown. There has never been a need for wearing masks."

While Fauci initially downplayed the value of masks, he said he did so out of fear that a run on masks would create a scarcity for frontline and medical workers. He and other federal health officials such as Centers for Disease Control and Prevention chief Dr. Robert Redfield have more recently described them as crucial to containing the virus' spread.

Fauci's change in tone on the issue has tracked with Crews' increasingly derisive attitude towards him. In March, as the virus began to spread in the U.S., Crews, writing as streiff, called the NIAID leader one of "the most respected experts on infectious diseases in the world." By the summer, his assessment had shifted dramatically.

"When the smoke clears on this Wuhan virus tragedy (and I mean the tragedy of the working men and women of this nation who have seen their livelihoods and life's work and, sometimes their actual lives destroyed by the unreasoning panic inflicted upon us by the public health nazis), one thing will become blindingly obvious: the nation and the Trump administration were failed at every turn by the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Dr. Anthony Fauci," Crews, under his pseudonym, wrote in July.

His writings on RedState repeatedly allude to fascism and Nazism in describing efforts to combat the virus, with references to "the public health Gestapo" and "mask nazi" Fauci. "A government that can force you to wear a purely symbolic face mask in a prescribed manner can make you wear a yellow Magen David and get on the boxcar," Crews wrote in July.

Crews' RedState posts on the coronavirus are also littered with COVID-19 predictions that ended up vastly understating the severity of the virus. "When Covid-19 Kills 18,000 People Call Me, But Until Then Stop the Scaremongering," declared the headline of a streiff post in early March. "To say the 'science' driving this shameful episode was akin to necromancy is an understatement," he wrote in June. "When Texas and Georgia and Florida released the totalitarian controls the 'scientists' predicted a huge spike in infections and deaths. This, to say the least, did not happen." Later this summer, those spikes did, in fact, come to pass.

Crews' writings are representative of a strain of conservatism that sees aggressive efforts to combat the coronavirus as not just misguided or counterproductive, but as concerted schemes by public health authorities to amass and wield political power in an effort to damage Trump. It's a conspiracy theory that tracks with more general suspicions by Trump supporters, and to an extent the president himself, who has insinuated that a cabal of "deep state" government employees are out to destroy him.

What makes Crews' writings more notable is that he is in the employ of the very bureaucracy he accuses of orchestrating this seditious plot. Indeed, in some of his writings, Crews, as streiff, makes vague references to his career in the federal public health apparatus.

"I have worked in the CDC and seen the politicization up close," he wrote in July. "It is a hotbed of progressive activity. It also has more than its share of idiots. And 90% of the people who work there should be named Karen. They desperately want to manage your life."

Crews' stint at the CDC appears to have occurred prior to his current role at NIAID. Various news reports in 2006 quote "Bill Crews" as the agency's spokesperson. According to three sources familiar with RedState's internal operations, it was generally known among the site's contributors that Crews worked in the federal government, though the specific agency wasn't as widely known. One source recalled speculating that Crews worked at a public health agency given the familiarity he appeared to have with the policies emanating from such agencies.

Even prior to the coronavirus pandemic, Crews used his perch at RedState to write about his employer, often disparagingly. In a pair of posts in 2014, he criticized NIH over alleged research misconduct and for its response to the Ebola outbreak (during which he also criticized Fauci specifically).

At RedState, Crews has been a prolific writer since he began contributing to the site in 2004, the year it was founded. This year alone, he's penned more than 400 posts for the site, publishing as many as five a day. As of 2018, according to a former RedState editor, Crews was among the site's most widely read contributors.

-- *with reporting by Adam Rawnsley*

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Date: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 11:46:46 AM -0400
Sent: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 11:46:45 AM -0400
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; [b6]

Jerry and Peter,

This is sent from my gmail account. Please send all replies here To gmail

I have let Tony know but have not spoken to him directly. There are things I can't say except Tony is aware and I have learned that there are ongoing efforts within NIH to steer through this with minimal damage to you, Peter, and colleagues, and to nih and niaid. No guarantees, but let us hope. I imagine this will be handled at the level of Francis and Tony, within nih, and I don't expect to be in the loop.

I don't have any insight into what happened or how it happened, but the fact that your termination letter came from "Building 1", that is, the NIH directors office, and not from NIAID, is telling

Whatever is going on, I very much doubt that Tony or any of our niaid leadership would willfully throw you under the bus, or any grantee, for that matter. Indeed, I expect we would do everything possible to protect you. I have reason to believe that there are already efforts going on to protect you

What I said on the phone last night stands. I urge you to meet asap with this guy Lauer and with Eric and Emily. Lauer may well decline to meet with you, but I think you should press him. You have a right to demand a face to face explanation for such an unprecedented action. If your grant is from DMID Virology you may also want to meet with Virology Branch Chief Mark Challberg, and of course with Cristina, who is Emily's deputy and a respiratory virologist. These DMID folks will be your advocates. If any part of the grant goes through Columbia, or UNC (isn't that where Ralph is?), or any University, they may be able to apply pressure too.

If you can get down here, these meetings should be in person, although of course many nih folks are working from home, so that may not be possible.

In the meantime I would NOT go to the press. The first step is to find out in detail what happened and what your rights are. But I would line up advocates, as I suggested and Jerry as well. The press may find out about this in any case, but I think if so it is better to let friends defend you than for you to fight on your own. At least for now. Of course, however this plays out in the short term, it will end up in the public domain and the truth will come out. So hold on to that certainty, small comfort now, I know

Finally, I am so sorry you and your colleagues are going through this. You don't deserve it; if anything you deserve a medal. Please hang in there and press ahead firmly but collegiality

As a coda, Tony knows about your work. Sometime around 1 Feb I sent him an email outlining your work over recent years, and why it was so important to science. This was mostly because I anticipated new money, but also in the back of my mind was the possibility that something really dark like this could happen

Again, whatever role NIH might be playing in these events, I truly expect that we will be doing what is possible to protect you and your research over the long haul

I think I need another Scotch, and it's only 1145 am
David

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 26, 2020, at 06:43, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] gov > wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: April 25, 2020 at 22:03:15 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >, "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thanks Peter,

I know Dave Morens – everybody knows Dave Morens. I had another thought about this and it would be to alert Victor Dzau who works very closely with Tony, of course, and even though I consider myself a friend as well as a colleague I think Victor would have a pretty direct route to Tony. It is an issue the National Academies should be interested in, and have some traction. We need to get Peggy Hamburg involved to bring AAAS on board. It is like the Bush administration attempts to control NIH but on steroids. Anyone but an idiot would understand why it is essential to maintain our scientific connections with China so that we can engage with them to figure out what happened. What the Trump idiots are doing is totally and absolutely counterproductive. I do think – as we discussed yesterday – that for the moment keeping cool is the best strategy. But influential people need to know and its probably better if you are not directly involved.

I watched the session on COVID-19 this afternoon for the Academies meeting via Zoom or some platform. Tony, Jeremy, George Gao, Sanjay Gupta, Susan Weiss, and Richard Hatchett, All of the questions about the emergence and the reservoir or spillover host for which there is no information are the strengths of your programs and your collaborations. How absolutely stupid to close those off, but how absolutely unacceptable it is from the perspective of the separation of politics and science in a free society. That Francis would allow it is hard to believe. That Tony would allow it is even harder to believe – and for that reason I expect it is at levels below him and he is too busy at the moment trying to keep focused on rational decision making while the idiot in chief tells us to swallow a UV-C lamp or shove it up out butt – I can tell you whose butt I would shove it – and for good measure have a Chloroxitini or just do a total cleansing

with H2O2 (the rationale would be if H2O is good for us wouldn't H2O2 be better, after all it would have another one of those O's whatever they are.

Dave, get in touch so we might strategize, and for certain reasons keep Peter out of the loop.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; David Morens [b6]
[b6]>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry – great to read this – thanks for your support.

I also spoke with David Morens today who was equally shocked and said this has never happened. He also said there are influential people who would come to our defense at the right moment. In the meantime, he's going to talk with Greg Folkers (Chief of Staff for Tony Fauci) to find out if Tony knows, and why it happened. He's then going to let Tony know. I think you and him are on the same page in that you're both right that this is a clear political interference in NIH business. Trump said at his press briefing Friday 17th that he would 'end' the grant, and one week later I got the termination notice from NIH.

In the meantime, we're working on a short draft of how we could have easily changed the geography to the countries adjacent to China, as we proposed to Erik Stemmy and Emily Erbelding. We'll be talking with them next week early to try and find out why this happened. We won't respond to the termination notice (Michael Lauer) until we've found out more.

FYI – re. the FoIA - I'm contacting the FBI to talk about the risk of our FoIA and how I've been threatened by QANON related to this and our Chinese colleagues have had their lives threatened.

I'm not going to talk to the media about this, not our representatives, until I've tried all possible ways with NIAID/NIH to change the decision from a cancelation. I'm also very concerned that Trump could target our organization or me personally, leading to our EIDRC being nixed and we don't even have an NoA on that, so it could quietly disappear.

I'll get back in touch with you once I've found out more from Erik Stemmy, Emily Erbelding and Cristina Cassetti.

In the meantime is it OK if I email introduce you and David so you could possibly coordinate in some way, or at least stay in touch? Right now I'm feeling particularly vulnerable – the power of the President is pointed at us, the CIA, FBI and someone from Medical Defense Intelligence (or something) are interviewing staff, QAnon are threatening me, and our colleagues in China have death threats against them. That's just this week! Having you out there talking with others at this level is extremely important right now.

By the way, here's a list of our Board: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/board- of-directors

It includes two people you know – Jim Hughes (former head of NCID/CDC, Rear Admiral Public Health Service Rtd, Asst. Surgeon General Rtd) and Rita Colwell (Former Head of NSF under 3 presidents: Clinton, Bush sr, Bush Jr – I think). I'll be talking with Jim Hughes tomorrow or Monday and Rita Colwell on our Baord meeting Friday.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Hi Peter and Aleksei,

I want to change my recommendation from earlier this evening. Put the really good Cabernet aside and drink the disinfectant instead. This is an afront to science, after the language in the first letter and your response to comply. It must be challenged. The question is not only how but also when – certainly not before the EIDRC funding comes through. And then in a smart manner. I want to chat again next week – I need the weekend off having just finished the draft report on the R&D preparedness ecosystem for NAM working with Nicki Lurie. There are some smart and very influential people I can talk to - and keep you out of the conversation – when we agree it makes sense. I mentioned Maria Freire from FNIH and Mary Woolley from Research!America. I also thought about Harold Varmus and former Representative John Porter who was a great supporter of NIH (made the doubling happen) and CDC even though he is a Republican. But I too will do nothing for a few days.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: FW: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] < b6
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura < b6 >; Peter Daszak < b6 >
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 >; Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 >; Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 >; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 >; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 >; Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 >
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone
Email b6

From: Aleksei Chmura < b6 >
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6 >
Cc: Peter Daszak < b6 >, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6 >, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6 >, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6 >
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &
Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
(mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <b6> wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email:

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" <b6>
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" <b6>, Aleksei Chmura <b6>, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records
2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.
Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Olival b6 ; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6 ; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6 ; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.
- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it

appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.

- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.
- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email: b6

From: Kevin Olival b6
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak b6 who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.
2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,
Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (direct)
b6 (mobile)
1.212.380.4465 (fax)
b6
EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics *and* promote conservation

On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:

Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received.

The sooner you can get us that information, the better.

Best, Mike

From: Naomi Schrag [b6]
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6], " [b6] " [b6], Naomi Schrag < [b6]
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6]
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,
I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.
Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To: [b6]; Naomi Schrag [b6]
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone
Email [b6]

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 6:22:59 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 6:22:52 PM -0400
Subject: RE: House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations reaching out regarding NIH Grant and COVID-19
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Gerald T Keusch [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >;

My concern is that I don't want my name and EcoHealth's to be dragged through the mud for political gain by the Democrats or the Republicans at this point. We lose.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 5:52 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald T Keusch [b6] >; [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >
Subject: Re: House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations reaching out regarding NIH Grant and COVID-19

Dont know, but the chair of this committee is surely a democrat and therefore inclined to be on your side You probably at this point need to start working through your democratic rep, whether on this committee or not, so he or dhe can guide you on how to proceed. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 30, 2020, at 17:34, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
>
> Would this be helpful to EHA or harmful to our reputation?

Any advice welcome.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: b6
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 4:28 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Keck, Zachary b6 b6 b6
Subject: Reaching out regarding NIH Grant and COVID-19

Peter,

I'm b6 with the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations. We're reaching out to ask if you are able to speak early next week regarding your work on SARS-CoV-2, work with China including any interactions with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and the NIH grant with EcoHealth that was canceled.

Please let me know if you're available on Tuesday after 12pmET or on Wednesday outside the 12pmET to 130pmET window to speak with me and my colleagues.

Thank you!

b6

Date:	Sun, 26 Apr 2020 4:35:05 PM -0400
Sent:	Sun, 26 Apr 2020 4:34:51 PM -0400
Subject:	Fwd: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From:	David Morens [b6]
To:	Jeffery Taubenberger [b6]
Attachments:	NIAID-COVID-19-Strategic-Plan-2020.pdf; Untitled attachment 07346.htm; NIAID CoV 2018 R01 renewal text final.docx; Untitled attachment 07349.htm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Date: April 26, 2020 at 15:23:51 EDT
To: David Morens [b6] >, [b6] [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thank you so much for your help David & Jerry. This is a brutally stressful issue on just about every level: jobs in our organization, freedom to do science in a country I came to voluntarily for that reason, and the real and present danger that we are being targeted by extremists, supported by the President, who is shockingly ignorant and unconcerned about the damage his actions have to people's lives, and our own US National Security.

David - We'll communicate with you via gmail from now on. I understand exactly what you're saying in your email, I agree, and we'll follow this line exactly. I'll be talking with Emily, Erik and Cristina early this week, then will try to set up a call with Michael Lauer hopefully as a conf. call. We haven't responded to NIH's email yet, and will only do so after talking with Program staff and getting back to you both. We are working on a brief outline of a compromise approach, whereby we change the geography of our work to include countries on the border of China, where the same bats live and the same behavioral risks happen (Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam). Even that would be a loss – we have 15,000 samples in freezers in Wuhan and could do the full genomes of 700+ CoVs we've identified if we don't cut this thread.

On the issue of why our grant has been targeted. We read the NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research (attached) and noted that **Michael Lauer's justification for terminating our grant "At this time, NIH does not believe that the current project outcomes align with the program goals and agency priorities." Is completely countered by ALL 4 of NIAID's COVID-19 strategy (page 2 of the attached pdf):**

The *NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research* aligns with the priorities set by U.S. Government–wide task forces for the development of medical countermeasures. NIAID actively participates in COVID-19 task forces to identify opportunities, ensure open communication, encourage resource sharing, and avoid duplication of effort. The plan is structured around four strategic research priorities:

1. **Improve fundamental knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19,** including studies to characterize the virus and how it is transmitted and understand the natural history, epidemiology, host immunity, disease immunopathogenesis, and the genetic, immunologic, and clinical associations with more severe disease outcomes. This includes accelerating the development of small and large animal models that replicate human disease.

2. **Support the development of diagnostics and assays**, including point-of-care molecular and antigen-based diagnostics for identifying and isolating COVID-19 cases and serologic assays to better understand disease prevalence in the population. Diagnostics also will be essential for evaluating the effectiveness of candidate

countermeasures.

3. **Characterize and test therapeutics,** including identifying and evaluating repurposed drugs and novel broad-spectrum antivirals, virus-targeted antibody-based therapies (including plasma-derived intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) and monoclonal antibodies), and host-directed strategies to combat COVID-19.

4. **Develop safe and effective vaccines against SARS-CoV-2,** including support of clinical trial testing.

Each of these points are clearly part of the Specific Aims of our grant (attached to this email).

Re. media –Journalists are lined up wanting to talk with me about this issue, including already asking if NIH have communicated with me. I will be silent on this issue for now and hope something can happen. Likewise re. our political representatives. I'll contact them only if/when we can't resolve anything this way. I'll also be talking to our pro bono law firm who will start lining up a legal argument against termination of this grant, just in case we can't do anything in a decent way. All the time this goes on, I'm really worried about our EIDRC U01 contract that it in final Just in Time issues right now, so I'm hoping we get an NoA before anything turns ugly.

One last comment – as you talk to your colleagues, please let them know that funds from this grant aren't just shipped over to China. Most of the money stays in the USA and funds work at EHA and UNC critical to identifying future risk of pandemics and vaccine and drug development against coronaviruses. Right now, without this funding, US employees will become unemployed. Of course, that pales into insignificance against the potential loss of life if we consider the health benefits of 1) better prediction of future pandemics; 2) better vaccines & therapeutics that work against these viruses; & 3) continued access to 15 yrs of sample collection, data, and collaborative knowledge from our work with our Chinese colleagues.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Sunday, April 26, 2020 11:47 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; [b6]
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Jerry and Peter,

This is sent from my gmail account. Please send all replies here To gmail

I have let Tony know but have not spoken to him directly. There are things I can't say except Tony is aware and I have learned that there are ongoing efforts within NIH to steer through this with minimal damage to you, Peter, and colleagues, and to nih and niaid. No guarantees, but let us hope. I imagine this will be handled at the level of Francis and Tony,

within nih, and I don't expect to be in the loop.

I don't have any insight into what happened or how it happened, but the fact that your termination letter came from "Building 1", that is, the NIH directors office, and not from NIAID, is telling

Whatever is going on, I very much doubt that Tony or any of our niaid leadership would willfully throw you under the bus, or any grantee, for that matter. Indeed, I expect we would do everything possible to protect you. I have reason to believe that there are already efforts going on to protect you

What I said on the phone last night stands. I urge you to meet asap with this guy Lauer and with Eric and Emily. Lauer may well decline to meet with you, but I think you should press him. You have a right to demand a face to face explanation for such an unprecedented action. If your grant is from DMID Virology you may also want to meet with Virology Branch Chief Mark Challberg, and of course with Cristina, who is Emily's deputy and a respiratory virologist. These DMID folks will be your advocates. If any part of the grant goes through Columbia, or UNC (isn't that where Ralph is?), or any University, they may be able to apply pressure too.

If you can get down here, these meetings should be in person, although of course many nih folks are working from home, so that may not be possible.

In the meantime I would NOT go to the press. The first step is to find out in detail what happened and what your rights are. But I would line up advocates, as I suggested and Jerry as well. The press may find out about this in any case, but I think if so it is better to let friends defend you than for you to fight on your own. At least for now. Of course, however this plays out in the short term, it will end up in the public domain and the truth will come out. So hold on to that certainty, small comfort now, I know

Finally, I am so sorry you and your colleagues are going through this. You don't deserve it; if anything you deserve a medal. Please hang in there and press ahead firmly but collegiality

As a coda, Tony knows about your work. Sometime around 1 Feb I sent him an email outlining your work over recent years, and why it was so important to science. This was mostly because I anticipated new money, but also in the back of my mind was the possibility that something really dark like this could happen

Again, whatever role NIH might be playing in these events, I truly expect that we will be doing what is possible to protect you and your research over the long haul

I think I need another Scotch, and it's only 1145 am
David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 26, 2020, at 06:43, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
Date: April 25, 2020 at 22:03:15 EDT
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thanks Peter,

I know Dave Morens – everybody knows Dave Morens. I had another thought about this and it would be to alert Victor Dzau who works very closely with Tony, of course, and even though I consider myself a friend as well as a colleague I think Victor would have a pretty direct route to Tony. It is an issue the National Academies should be interested in, and have some traction. We need to get Peggy Hamburg involved to bring AAAS on board. It is like the Bush administration attempts to control NIH but on steroids. Anyone but an idiot would understand why it is essential to maintain our scientific connections with China so that we can engage with them to figure out what happened. What the Trump idiots are doing is totally and absolutely counterproductive. I do think – as we discussed yesterday – that for the moment keeping cool is the best strategy. But influential people need to know and its probably better if you are not directly involved.

I watched the session on COVID-19 this afternoon for the Academies meeting via Zoom or some platform. Tony, Jeremy, George Gao, Sanjay Gupta, Susan Weiss, and Richard Hatchett, All of the questions about the emergence and the reservoir or spillover host for which there is no information are the strengths of your programs and your collaborations. How absolutely stupid to close those off, but how absolutely unacceptable it is from the perspective of the separation of politics and science in a free society. That Francis would allow it is hard to believe. That Tony would allow it is even harder to believe – and for that reason I expect it is at levels below him and he is too busy at the moment trying to keep focused on rational decision making while the idiot in chief tells us to swallow a UV-C lamp or shove it up out butt – I can tell you whose butt I would shove it – and for good measure have a Chloroxitini or just do a total cleansing with H2O2 (the rationale would be if H2O is good for us wouldn't H2O2 be better, after all it would have another one of those O's whatever they are.

Dave, get in touch so we might strategize, and for certain reasons keep Peter out of the loop.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; David Morens ([b6]< [b6]>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry – great to read this – thanks for your support.

I also spoke with David Morens today who was equally shocked and said this has never happened. He also

said there are influential people who would come to our defense at the right moment. In the meantime, he's going to talk with Greg Folkers (Chief of Staff for Tony Fauci) to find out if Tony knows, and why it happened. He's then going to let Tony know. I think you and him are on the same page in that you're both right that this is a clear political interference in NIH business. Trump said at his press briefing Friday 17th that he would 'end' the grant, and one week later I got the termination notice from NIH.

In the meantime, we're working on a short draft of how we could have easily changed the geography to the countries adjacent to China, as we proposed to Erik Stemmy and Emily Erbelding. We'll be talking with them next week early to try and find out why this happened. We won't respond to the termination notice (Michael Lauer) until we've found out more.

FYI – re. the FoIA - I'm contacting the FBI to talk about the risk of our FoIA and how I've been threatened by QANON related to this and our Chinese colleagues have had their lives threatened.

I'm not going to talk to the media about this, not our representatives, until I've tried all possible ways with NIAID/NIH to change the decision from a cancelation. I'm also very concerned that Trump could target our organization or me personally, leading to our EIDRC being nixed and we don't even have an NoA on that, so it could quietly disappear.

I'll get back in touch with you once I've found out more from Erik Stemmy, Emily Erbelding and Cristina Cassetti.

In the meantime is it OK if I email introduce you and David so you could possibly coordinate in some way, or at least stay in touch? Right now I'm feeling particularly vulnerable – the power of the President is pointed at us, the CIA, FBI and someone from Medical Defense Intelligence (or something) are interviewing staff, QAnon are threatening me, and our colleagues in China have death threats against them. That's just this week! Having you out there talking with others at this level is extremely important right now.

By the way, here's a list of our Board: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/board- of-directors

It includes two people you know – Jim Hughes (former head of NCID/CDC, Rear Admiral Public Health Service Rtd, Asst. Surgeon General Rtd) and Rita Colwell (Former Head of NSF under 3 presidents: Clinton, Bush sr, Bush Jr – I think). I'll be talking with Jim Hughes tomorrow or Monday and Rita Colwell on our Baord meeting Friday.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Hi Peter and Aleksei,

I want to change my recommendation from earlier this evening. Put the really good Cabernet aside and drink the disinfectant instead. This is an afront to science, after the language in the first letter and your response to comply. It must be challenged. The question is not only how but also when – certainly not before the EIDRC funding comes through. And then in a smart manner. I want to chat again next week – I need the weekend off having just finished the draft report on the R&D preparedness ecosystem for NAM working with Nicki Lurie. There are some smart and very influential people I can talk to - and keep you out of the conversation – when we agree it makes sense. I mentioned Maria Freire from FNIH and Mary Woolley from Research!America. I also thought about Harold Varmus and former Representative John Porter who was a great supporter of NIH (made the doubling happen) and CDC even though he is a Republican. But I too will do nothing for a few days.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <
Subject: FW: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura b6; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: b6

From: Aleksei Chmura b6
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &
Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701

New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
(mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6, Aleksei Chmura < b6, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6 >
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records
2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.
Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should

be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Olival <b6>; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.
- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.
- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.
- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone b6
Email

From: Kevin Olival b6
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak (b6) who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.
2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,
Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (direct)
b6 (mobile)
1.212.380.4465 (fax)
b6
EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics *and* promote conservation

> On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:
>
> Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received. The sooner you can get us that information, the better.
>
> Best, Mike
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Naomi Schrag < b6
> **Date:** Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
> **To:** "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6 , "

b6, Naomi Schrag

Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6

Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,
I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.
Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To: b6; Naomi Schrag b6
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone b6
Email

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

Date: Thu, 9 Jan 2020 1:15:20 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 9 Jan 2020 1:15:11 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Wuhan virus
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Ian Lipkin [b6]>; Jon Epstein [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Thanks! I am just curious, plus we (NIAID) needs to have the latest as Tony is getting bombarded by calls…..

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] [b6] [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- [b6] [b6] [b6]
- **b6**

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 12:57 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Ian Lipkin [b6] [b6]>; Jon Epstein [b6]>
Subject: RE: Wuhan virus
Importance: High

Yes – lots of information and I spoke with Erik Stemmy and Alan Embry yesterday before the news was released. Erik is my program officer on our coronavirus grant specifically focused on China.

I've been talking with reporters today and happy to fill you in on any further information…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 12:50 PM
To: W. Ian Lipkin [b6]; Peter Daszak; Jon Epstein
Subject: Wuhan virus

Hi guys, do any of you have any inside info on this new coronavirus that isn't yet in the public domain? Or any thoughts?

TY,

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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Date: Sun, 26 Jul 2020 1:53:33 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 26 Jul 2020 1:53:30 PM -0400
Subject: RE: https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3094447/coronavirus- top-scientists-push-quantum-leap-bat-virus-research
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]

That's great coverage. I tweeted it out to spread the word.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 12:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak < [b6]
Subject: https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3094447/coronavirus- top-scientists-push-quantum-leap-bat-virus-research

--
David M Morens [b6]

Date:	Tue, 5 May 2020 5:15:11 PM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 5 May 2020 5:15:06 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6]>; [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image003.png; IMG_8988.jpg

Most important of all he stated that he doesn't buy the 'accidental lab release' hypothesis either – for the first time.

He's a hero to me, my wife and to our whole family.

We have our 'Fauci Mug' to prove that (see attached image). Please show that to the great man himself if there's an opportune moment over the next few weeks.

Cc'ing Dennis and Jerry on this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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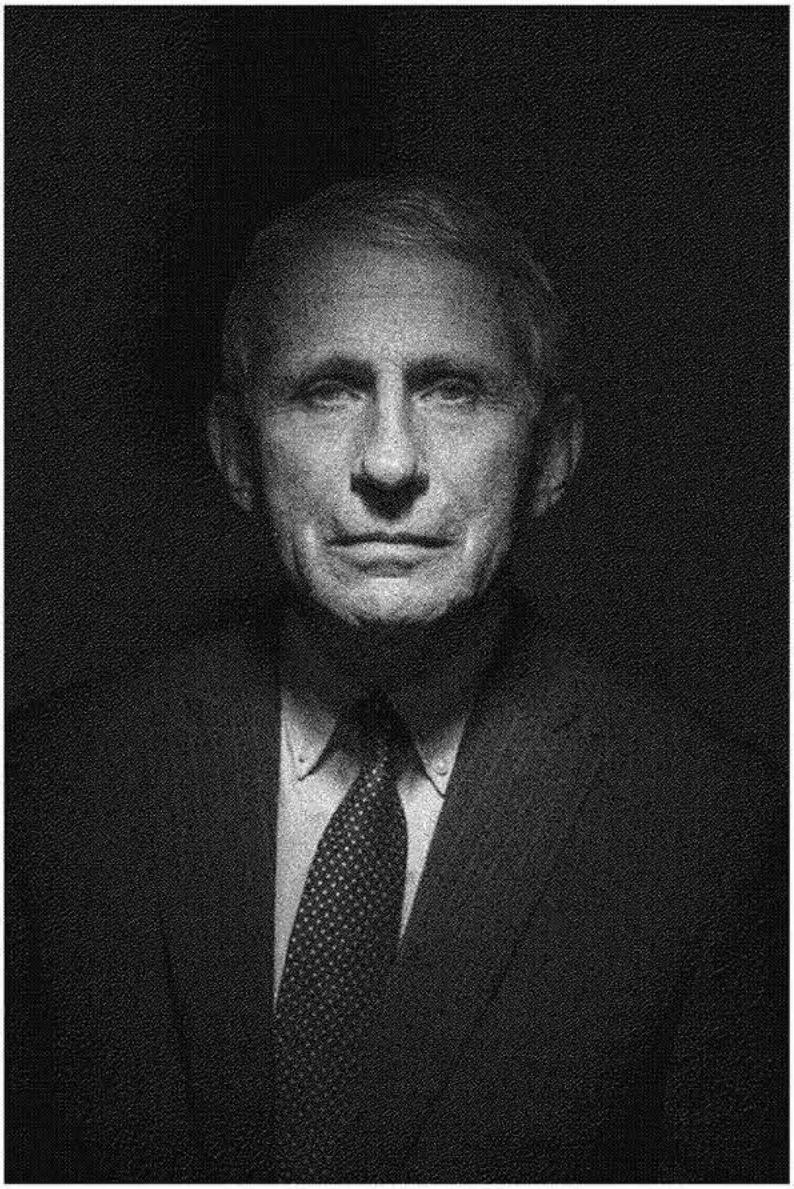
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:02 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 4, 2020 at 20:58:15 EDT
Subject: **Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab**
https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3



ScienceCoronavirus Coverage

Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab

In an exclusive interview, the face of America's COVID-19 response cautions against the rush for states to reopen, and offers his tips for handling the pandemic's information deluge.

Anthony Fauci has been the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for almost 40 years, where he has tackled dozens of outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS. To him, the coronavirus is "extraordinary."

By **Nsikan Akpan** and Victoria Jaggard

PUBLISHED May 4, 2020

Anthony "Tony" Fauci has become the scientific face of America's COVID-19 response, and he says the best evidence shows the virus behind the pandemic was not made in a lab in China.

Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, shot down the discussion that has been raging among politicians and pundits, calling it "a circular argument" in a conversation Monday with National Geographic.

"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated … Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species," Fauci says. Based on the scientific evidence, he also doesn't entertain an alternate theory—that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, listens as President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 9, 2020, in Washington.

Photograph by Andrew Harnik, AP Photo

Fauci is most concerned that the United States will be put to the test this fall and winter by a second wave of COVID-19 if the country does not blunt the infection rate by the summer.

"Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter," he says, advising that the U.S. needs to make sure we not only have an adequate supply of tests available before a second wave hits, but also a system for getting those tests to the people who most need them.

"I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear," he says. "It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge." As such, Fauci says the U.S. should also focus this summer on properly reinforcing the nation's health care system, ensuring the availability of hospital beds, ventilators, and personal protective equipment for health care workers.

He also stressed the importance of continuing to social distance everywhere until the case counts start to fall in cities and states. The U.S. witnessed about 20,000 to 30,000 new cases every day in the month of April, suggesting the country is stuck in its peak.

Still, he remains optimistic that a vaccine will be ready within an historically short time frame, citing one promising candidate that he thinks may move into advanced clinical trials by the early summer. Fauci has said that he thinks a final vaccine could be available for general use as early as January, which would break records for the speed at which previous vaccines were developed.

One reason for his confidence is the "impressive" results being seen now in animals tested with a vaccine candidate made by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna Therapeutics, which brought it into human trials in a record 42 days. The candidate is what is known as an mRNA vaccine—a drug that uses snippets of a virus's genetic material—rather than the dead or weakened virus itself—to build the proteins that trigger the body's protective immune response.

To date, no type of mRNA vaccine has been licensed for use in humans, but Fauci believes there is great promise for this technology targeting the coronavirus, based in part on his experience developing treatments for HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and '90s.

"For some reason that we're still struggling with, the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV," he says. To fight off that virus, a vaccine has to work better than the body's own natural response. By contrast, "it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response" to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the animal trials so far show that modest doses of the mRNA vaccine for coronavirus have also generated a strong immune response.

He adds that NIAID is still developing and supporting multiple vaccine efforts, in case those that go into trials soonest don't ultimately prove safe and effective. "You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time," he says.

Fauci told National Geographic he's concerned about states rushing to reopen before their infection rates fall. He also shared how he manages the barrage of new scientific information being released about COVID-19, and how his family and faith keep him going despite his increasingly hectic schedule.

(*The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.*)

Fauci on the vaccine

You've been the NIAID director since 1984, witnessing dozens of disease outbreaks. One of the first was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. How does that experience compare with COVID-19?

One of the important advantages is what we call targeted drug development. Viruses cause disease by binding to receptors on cells in your body, be they in your upper airway or in your lung, in the case of COVID-19. They then replicate at a rapid

rate that triggers a variety of pathogenic processes. Targeting drugs to interfere at one or more vulnerable sites within this replication cycle is something that we learned with HIV.

Left:
U.S. President George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 19, 2008 to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland during ceremonies at the White House. The Presidential Medal of Freedom
… Read More
Photograph by Karen Bleier, AFP via Getty Images (Left) and Photograph by White House Photo / Alamy Stock Photo (Right)

SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] has the same sort of vulnerable points. We need to identify them and develop drugs, either alone or in combination, to block the replication.

Are there also lessons from HIV/AIDS that relate to developing a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are a bit different. We have a better chance of quickly getting, relatively speaking, a vaccine for the novel coronavirus than we did for HIV, because for some reason that's still unknown the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV.

We don't necessarily have that challenge with this coronavirus because it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response. They clear the virus, and they do well. As we know from the natural history of this disease, the majority of people actually either get well without any symptoms—they're called asymptomatic—or they have minimal symptoms, where they get a fever, some aches, and then they recover.

The fact that the majority of people can actually clear the virus is a very good sign for the feasibility of developing a vaccine.

The two most widely discussed vaccine candidates are an mRNA vaccine from Moderna, which reached human trials in a record 42 days, and Oxford University's candidate, based on what's known as a nonreplicating viral vector. Yet no vaccine based on these two technologies has ever been licensed for human use. What makes these two vaccines seem so promising, especially on this expedited timeline?

These vaccines are inducing, at least in animal models, really rather substantial immune responses, particularly the mRNA vaccine. When we look at the immune response that you can induce with a modest dose—one that's feasible to be translated into humans—and the amount of time it takes to get to that level of immunity, it is really quite impressive. It is also really easy to scale up with these two, in the sense of making a lot of doses pretty quickly. So you're right, they have not been approved, as many of the other vaccine platforms have, but the promise is great.

We at NIAID are either developing or supporting the development of multiple candidates. You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time—maybe June, July, or August—to get them into an advanced trial. The mRNA one is already well into phase one of clinical trials, and we're getting ready to go into phase two and three sometime in the early summer.

Fauci on reopening and masks

As states move to reopen businesses and warmer weather lures people outside, how concerned are you about a fresh spike in infections in the U.S.?

Take a look at the guidelines for Opening Up America Again. There are very well delineated checkpoints. There's a gateway where infections must go down for 14 days before you can enter into phase one for reopening. If you fulfill the requirements of phase one, you move to phase two. If you do it there, you go to phase three.

So when you see somebody in an environment in which the infections are not going down, and then you see 30 to 40 people on a beach with no mask … well that's very nice to have fun in the sun, but you're really putting yourself and everyone at risk for creating an even bigger spike in infections.

Do you fear a second wave?

What's impressed me the most—but clearly in a disturbing way—is the extraordinary efficiency of how the virus spreads. It spreads so much more efficiently than influenza does. You see situations where people at home try and physically separate; they have no contact except they've touched the plate or a doorknob, and they wind up getting infected.

The clusters in families, the outbreaks on the *Teddy Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, the enormous spread on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama harbor—it's a very, very transmissible virus.

Anthony Fauci hugs Nina Pham, the nurse who was infected with Ebola from treating patient Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, as Pham's mother Diana (sixth from left) and sister Cathy

... Read More Photograph by Alex Wong, Getty Images

We're going to be put to the test as we move toward the fall and winter of this year. If we do it correctly, then we could be able to blunt and diminish the daily rate of infections in this country as we get into the summer. I can't guarantee it, but if we do things right, that likely will happen.

But I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear. It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge. We now will have a few months—May June, July, August—to prepare, by making sure our health system is adequately supplied with ventilators, ICU beds, personal protective equipment, etcetera. We need to not only have tests, but to make sure the people who need tests can get tested.

So that by the time we get to September, we don't have the dialogue continually fixating on do you have enough tests? Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter.

What's your position on the general public wearing face masks?

I'm glad you asked, because it has evolved over the weeks and months. When there was first discussion, it was at a time when face masks—either surgical masks or N95 respirators—were at high scarcity.

Let's assume that we now have enough masks or that you could easily make a cloth covering, as was suggested appropriately by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I think those are reasonable assumptions. We know that the masks are better in the health-care setting to prevent someone who's infected from coughing and sneezing and infecting people in the environment. When you look at what the mask does for the general population, the data are not 100 percent: It doesn't 100 percent protect you from infecting somebody else, and it certainly doesn't 100 percent prevent somebody else from infecting you.

But if you wear a mask, you are getting some protection for yourself, and if you happen to be infected and don't know it, you're to some extent preventing transmission to someone else. Given that, it just makes sense that first of all, the best way to prevent spread is to maintain the physical distance of six feet.

So, if you're in a situation where you're in contact with no one, then you don't have to be walking around with a mask all day, that's for sure. But if you are in a situation where you are going to be within the realm of six feet—the grocery store or even walking out on the street—then wear it.

Fauci on the information deluge and the "virus made in Chinese lab" claim.

How do you keep up with the barrage of information and filter down to the most important science?

It's like drinking from a fire hydrant. It really is. Fortunately for me, I have a staff of three to four really good people who sift through the papers and when something looks unreasonable or "pie in the sky," they don't bother me with that. Then when all of these studies come across my desk, I read the title and the abstract. If it looks feasible, I'll put it aside and try and read it. When it's something that they think I should read, they make sure I read it.

Even with that screening process, it's still very difficult to consume everything that's out there, particularly with this relatively recent trend with these non-peer-reviewed, pre-publications [that have not gone through traditional vetting to appear in major journals].

So, what's your advice to the public at-large for sifting through the headlines and making sense of it all?

Dr. Anthony Fauci speaks with members of his laboratory during a meeting Aug. 31, 1990, where he describes a natural growth factor that is necessary for the AIDS virus to multiply.

Photograph by George Tames, The New York Times via Redux

Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about—and it's very difficult for the general public to distinguish. So, make sure the study is coming from a reputable organization that generally gives you the truth—though even with some reputable organizations, you occasionally get an outlier who's out there talking nonsense. If something is published in places like *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, or *JAMA*—you know, generally that is quite well peer reviewed because the editors and the editorial staff of those journals really take things very seriously.

One topic in the news lately has been the origins of SAR-CoV-2. Do you believe or is there evidence that the virus was made in the lab in China or accidentally released from a lab in China?

If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats, and what's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved. A number of very qualified evolutionary biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species.

Sure, but what if scientists found the virus outside the lab, brought it back, and then it escaped?

But that means it was in the wild to begin with. That's why I don't get what they're talking about [and] why I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument.

Fauci's life right now

What's your typical day like?

I get up around five o'clock in the morning, and I usually wind up running downstairs, getting a quick breakfast, and looking at a thousand emails—literally a thousand.

I then head to the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for my day job—trying to develop a vaccine and drugs and running a $6 billion institution. I stay there until around one o'clock, and then I go down to the White House for multiple meetings. First, I meet with the doctor group—myself, coronavirus response coordinator Debbie Birx, director Bob Redfield from the CDC, commissioner Steve Hahn from FDA, and others. We then go into the task force meeting run by Vice President [Mike Pence], which usually lasts about an hour and a half. We summarize this pre-brief with the vice president and then go brief President [Donald Trump] for the press conference.

Then, the work starts … I head home or back to the NIH and work until the wee hours of the morning. The whole day is punctuated by everybody needing to talk to you: every governor in the states, every congressional leader, every leader in the White House. It's constant conference calls. It's an almost impossible situation—and that's seven days a week.

Then you superimpose upon that all the press you do—the TV or the radio or the interviews. It's kind of a surrealistic state. I have to wake up in the morning and literally, without being facetious, ask my wife, what day is it?

Wow, how do you unwind?

I power walk with my wife, usually at night or on the weekends. It's dark, but we still do it anyway.

Has it ever been too taxing?

A couple of months ago, I was foolish and just thought I could get away with almost no sleep. I mean, like three hours a night. I did that for a few weeks, and it almost killed me. It really wore me down badly. Thank goodness I have a very intelligent and clinically skilled wife who turned things around and said, You got to remember to eat, and you've got to remember to sleep. The day is still impossible, but I don't think I'm going to drop dead from it. I hope not.

You went to a Jesuit high school, where you learned the importance of doing good for the public. How has that experience informed your professional life?

My whole life was almost served to me on the basis that my mother and father were very much oriented toward service. They were never really interested in money or material things. That's just the way they were, both of them. So I never knew there was anything like going out there and making a lot of money, and that was really cemented when I went both to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, where the entire theme was service for others.

I almost never had any other inkling of doing anything except something that would have a public service component to it. I'm very much of a people person, but I'm also scientifically inclined. My entire training is steeped in the humanities, and when you combine that with an aptitude for science, you wind up being a physician.

Victoria Jaggard is the senior editor for Science & Innovation at National Geographic.

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Date: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 7:18:06 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 7:18:05 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Strategy re. NIH decision & some funding news
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]

Peter, this is great news, and i truly believe that you will prevail in the end. Everyone i know is one your side, and we all think justice must and will win in the end.

Kudos to Jerry, he has worked miracles for you, and i look forward to a day when i can buy drinks and toast you both! Dom Perignon will be in order, or maybe Veuve Cliquot...

On a different note, yesterday i forwarded to astmh president Joel Breman a first draft of a ms i mentioned to you. The idea is to have this come out as sort of an official statement of astmh signed on by several folks, yet to be determined. It will not mention you or discuss what happened, rather it will discuss why understanding the origins of this virus is important, discussing your work and including refs to your publications. The message will be, this line of work is hugely important, we need to greatly ramp it up. We thought this approach would be a better way, rather than getting into arguments. Maybe i will send you a draft off thevrecord for thoughts. It's bot a big bang, but we think it flags the extreme importance of tiur work

David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 12, 2020, at 16:39, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Great to hear you're keeping the pressure on. I think if there's a continual drip of these big name statements/letters, coupled with the social media agitation, and reporters picking up on it, the story won't disappear.

Confidentially - We've quietly but officially appealed the decision. Our pro bono lawyers drafted a really detailed slamdunk letter that showed precedent for them essentially acting capriciously and arbitrarily. We've done this to fit the NIH policy on appealing decisions not to fund a grant initially (the only way you can appeal, considering that the termination did not go through a process that allowed any challenge or inquiry). We filed this just before the 30 day limit for an appeal, and have heard nothing back from them now 2 wks later. We'll wait for this to gradually run out the clock, then go to phase 2 of an appeal process, and run the clock out on that. If Francis' office don't come back to us with any response, we'll then make a decision (based on extrinsic risk to EHA's reputation) to sue, or not, but that will be much much later, and if Trump loses election, it could be on Nov 4th.

Obviously, we won't be announcing this. You are in a very small circle of people who know that includes Lauer, Erik Stemmy (my Program Officer), Cristina Cassetti and Emily Erbelding, i.e. those cc'd on the termination letter.

Our PR strategy is to try not to have our name associated with NIH termination every time I speak with the press, but that's already happening I'm afraid. Luckily Trump has been so heinous on so many levels that I don't think it's as damaging as we were worried it would be. That said, I won't be publicly criticizing Trump for this decision. Each time a statement or letter criticizing the NIH is released, we'll expect to be quoted to amplify that critique. There will also be the opportunity to drive publicity around the following:

- the fact that we're appealing
- Announcing that we're continuing our fieldwork in China (we have the funds to do this now)

- Meeting in China with Wuhan staff
- Announcing other funding for the work
- Calling for resignation of Azar and Collins
- Announcing that we'll be suing NIH

The timing of any of these will have to depend on the politics, and we're going to be very careful on that, including any calls for resignation of Collins considering the likely candidates for that position that Trump staffers would dream up!

Now the good news. You'll be delighted to hear (as we were) that we have received substantial gifts, pledges and offers of funds since the 60 Minutes piece aired. We're already in the multiple hundreds of thousands of dollars, with the potential for grants that would take us up to a million or so if they pan out. It doesn't completely replace what's been taken but it does give us the chance to actually continue working in China, which is important considering that's where COVID seems to have come from! I want to thank you both formally for helping raise the profile that's led to this. I'll give you the full details once we're in the clear with the politics, and then repeatedly over alcohol and food as we start to open up and meet in person again!!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 12:25 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>
Subject: RE: From Rich Roberts who led the Nobel Laureate letter

Thanks Peter,

I am planning two actions that can build on this important statement from the Collins' ACD. First to rewrite the letter to the three NASEM Presidents and send it to Azar and Collins and try to get as widespread public notice as possible. I was planning to cite the Nobelist letter and the weak statement from NAM as background, but now I can also mention the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director, which is important. Adding the names of 90+ NAM members will have some weight, albeit not like the Nobels or the ACD. I will have to get permission from everybody again but that is not a major task.

Second, I have begun to craft a commentary for one or more prominent medical journals published by major medical research societies that have not gone public, which would try to make the case this is a dangerous precedent. It too would be signed by as many of the NAM members I am communicating with who will agree to be listed.

The point is to keep this in the air they breathe in Building 1, and make it much more irritating than CoV-2.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 1:11 AM
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Subject: From Rich Roberts who led the Nobel Laureate letter

Another important statement below from the NIH Advisory Board. Rich Roberts led the Nobel Laureate group and wrote to each member of the Advisory Board.

Really pleased to see this. Not sure how it can mobilize action, but I'll be publicizing this and spreading the word. Please do so as well if you can.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 11:11 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

In case you didn't hear about the public statement made by Francis Collins' Advisory Board it is below:

"Recent statements from numerous scientific organizations and leaders in the American biomedical community expressed grave concern about the termination of an NIH grant to Peter Daszak at the EcoHealth Alliance. They argue that this cancellation circumvented the peer review process and has the appearance of contravening long held NIH traditions and policies. Members of the NIH ACD share the grave concerns expressed by the community. We agree with their request, and recommend that the entire process leading to the Daszak grant cancellation be thoroughly reviewed. If indeed the process is found to have been flawed, we recommend that the NIH reverse this decision and implement better procedures to avoid a repeat of such occurrences. This is an opportunity to ensure and reinforce the primacy of peer review in the mission of the NIH."

They intend to put it up on their web site and when it is formally released I will also feature it on our web site

https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant.html

My intention is to add a few more pieces on the site if developments warrant them. Please feel free to share the link.

I should also mention that at least one member of the ACD has also approached Wellcome independently of our efforts to suggest they fund you.

Good luck

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 10:42 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich,

Great that you're talking to Advisory Board members. I wondered about this. I hope they do the decent thing and at least challenge the decision.

I'm massively appreciating everything you're doing, as is our staff and Board. I know I'm being cautious and careful, and I'm really nervous to look like we're out there fundraising to keep this work going, because that will likely be a story. All that said, I'm playing the long game on this and have made sure our options are still open to appeal and potentially sue, but likely we'd only do that if a different administration comes in. This group is just extremely vindictive and petty.

In the meantime, I'll let you know what happens with Wellcome and if we get any other support.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6

Website: https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c
&sdata=t9MZAjox3nt95uhUOWlA0Nh8FnVo%2BDmR7w1ttl2R5FA%3D &reserved=0
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:33 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

Thanks for getting back to me (and sorry to add to your email load). I'm pleased to hear about the gift from the Wallace Foundation and hope that the Wellcome Foundation will come through also. Jeremy Farrar is a very good guy!

We are trying to find out what happened at Francis Collins Advisory Board meeting, but no word yet. I had written to all members advising them of our letter.

If you think of anything else we could usefully do at this point please let me know.

Rich (not Robert)

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:55 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

Robert,

Thank you for getting back in touch. I read the email exchange with amusement below! Please tell your colleague that we have 'donate now' buttons on our website (https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2Fdonate
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c
&sdata=fSQCnT1GUsG0S8D9pF66AoLHe800NbloGSqd29KmK50%3D &reserved=0) and they can specify what the donation is for - we take 'donor intent' very seriously.

It's hard not to speak out against this administration right now on so many levels: Public Health (e.g. WHO defunding); blatant racism from the top and its shocking consequences across society; using an anti-science agenda as a political tool without a care for people's health and lives. That said, we're all holding our tongues here - something we really have to do right now because we have other grants pending with NIH that could easily disappear, and because one of Trump's senators (Pennsylvania) wrote to DoD to complain about them funding us (he shared it with Breitbart News).

For those reasons, we won't be openly and actively fundraising to cover our loss from NIH - it would become a story and antagonize the Trump Team, who are actively pushing an anti-China narrative as part of their campaign. Have a look at the leaked GOP talking points that specifically refer to conspiracy theories at length around the work we did with Wuhan: p. 18 and on here..
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstatic.politico.com%2F80%2F54%2F2f3219384e01833b
virus-big-book-4.17.20.pdf%3Fmc_cid%3D8bef7ea1d3%26mc_eid%3D4c6a7c6e0b
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c
&sdata=R1bOnpbM3TsKXs4dDlUN6LDXF1udkmlV9tFOHMeLr8Q%3D &reserved=0. It's quite blatant.

We do have some good news though. First of all we received the check from your Anonymous donor colleague (A great Joy!) and this will go a significant way to allowing us not to lay off staff from the China work. Secondly, we were approached by a Family Foundation (Wallace Research Foundation), who wanted to support us to the tune of $250K. The Board chair got a bit of concern from one board member about potential political targeting if they funded us, and asked if we could find matching funds. We were able to use the Anonymous gift as a match, and have just submitted a proposal which we're told will be a formality. Very good news, and please pass on our gratitude to your colleagues. Of course, we can't publicize this right now either! Finally, as you mentioned I did hear from Jeremy Farrar and am pulling together a 3 page pitch this week. It will have to go through review, of course, and may not pan out, but we will do our best and even without that, we are on the way to being whole again.

As for our general situation - these are interesting times indeed. We're being FoIA'd by 'White Coat Waste', who are delighted the grant was terminated. We're fighting it of course. We're also being FoIA'd through our colleague Ralph Baric who works at UNC - a state university so his emails with us are fair game. We'll be fighting that. We're receiving a mixture of trashy hate mail (nothing like your past experiences) as well as small donor checks 'in honor of Donald Trump' from concerned citizens, and have had an uptick in donations on our website. At the same time, I've had personal attacks online and have met with the FBI to beef up security at home and in the office. Our Intel agencies are also continuing to ask questions, which is fine, but I wonder if anyone above them is even listening at this point! At the same time, right now I've got a Zoom call with colleagues at NAM/NAS to talk with colleagues from the Chinese Academy of Sciences as a quiet dialog to share information on COVID - these are precious times when we can talk openly with our Chinese colleagues without the politics. They are continuing to hold open an invitation to continue our work with them.

Thank you again for all you've done, and continue to do. We're keeping our fingers crossed that this toxic administration will disappear and we can get things back to some sense of normality.

Cheers,

Peter

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Tel.: b6
Website: https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c
&sdata=t9MZAjox3nt95uhUOWlA0Nh8FnVo%2BDmR7w1ttl2R5FA%3D &reserved=0
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 10:34 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Subject: FW: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

I thought you might be interested in this email exchange. I gather Wellcome have expressed an interest. Have you heard from them?

I hope you are managing OK both financially and healthwise. If there is more we can do please let me know.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
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USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

-----Original Message-----
From: [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 6:20 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Re: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had $20 when I get my social security check in mind. That's the sort
of thing one generally donates through a crowd funding appeal - but let me know if there's another place to send it!

I suspect there's a lot of outraged people who would give a few dollars, and such funded Bernie Sanders' entire Presidential campaign.

Of course, many professionally paid people would donate a good deal more than $20.

Frankly, I'd like a chance to turn the President's face purple when word
got out. His fists would flail, and he'd probably shout every manner
of thing on Twitter. Not only would this be good for public morale,
but every time it happens, he comes closer to losing the election.

Showing the Chinese that Trump isn't in control is downright useful.

Yours,

[b6]

On 6/2/20 5:04 PM, Roberts, Rich wrote:
> [b6]
> The main point of the letter was to raise awareness of the issue, especially at DHS and NIH, but also to funders who might offer to fill the gap. We have been actively soliciting the latter and already have one Foundation that will make a significant donation, but wishes to remain anonymous (all of their funding is made anonymously).

>
> If you are able to help in the regard please let me know.
>
> Incidentally after the letter was sent, 4 more Laureates joined as signatories.
>
> Rich Roberts
>
> Sir Richard J. Roberts Ph.D. F.R.S.
> 1993 Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine Chief Scientific Officer
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723 USA
>
> Tel: b6 b6
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: b6
>
> Executive Assistant: b6
> Tel: b6 b6
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: b6
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: b6 >
> Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:51 PM
> To: Roberts, Rich b6
> Subject: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of
> bat coronaviruses in China
>
> EXTERNAL SENDER
>
>
> Dr. Roberts:
>
> I see that you have been instrumental in organizing lobbying to get the NIH to reconsider their withdrawal of funding to EcoHealth Alliance, for international bat surveillance in China.
>
> The amount involved is three million dollars, which is not a small amount, nor a huge amount.
>
> I am wondering why I have heard neither of a crowdfunding effort for this work, nor other sources of funding for this work. For instance it sounds like something Bill Gates would be happy to contribute money to.
>
> I do hope your interest is in funding the bat surveillance and not in playing political baseball with the Trump administration, using worldwide health as the baseball.
>
> Please give consideration to these ideas. Even if you do not raise
> three million dollars, such an effort would raise quite a lot, make President Trump purple in the face, and enhance the regard the Chinese have for the American people.
>
> EcoHealth Alliance does take donations, but they seem to generally be involved with vague anti-development efforts, and it isn't clear atleast from their web site, that money given to them as a general donation would or might go to a specific pragmatic purpose.
>
> Thanks!
>
> Yours,
>
b6
>
>

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 10:41:37 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 10:41:33 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Thank You!
From: Nancye Green [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6] [b6] Gerald T Keusch [b6]

Great article. Thank you for contributing and sharing.

Nancye

Nancye Green
Donovan/Green
O: +1 [b6] [b6] [b6]
M: +1 [b6] [b6] [b6]
[b6]
www.donovangreen.com

EcoHealth Alliance, Chair

From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Date: Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 9:51 PM
To: David Morens [b6] >, [b6] " [b6] >, Gerald T Keusch [b6] >
Cc: Nancye Green [b6] >
Subject: Thank You!

Thanks for your great quotes in the excellent article in *Science* tonight. Hopefully this will raise awareness in the community so they fight back and ensure none of their grants are targeted, and no more of ours!!

https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/04/nih- s-axing-bat-coronavirus-grant-horrible-precedent-and-might-break-rules-critics-say#

BTW, apparently Rudi Giuliani is now an expert on Gain of Function – he's tweeting that we broke the rules. I guess COVID can make everyone an epidemiologist, even that scheister.

Off for a beer, and ready for tomorrow!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001

USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Mon, 27 Jan 2020 4:53:55 PM -0500
Sent: Mon, 27 Jan 2020 4:53:54 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Wuhan novel coronavirus - NIAID's role in bat-origin CoVs
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
To: Peter Daszak b6
CC: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Alison Andre b6

Great info, thanks. Tony doesn't maintain awareness of these things and doesn't know unless program officers tell him, which they rarely do, since they are across town and may not see him more than once a year, or less….

In reflecting on this, and in part from your work, many people have been saying since the beginning of MERS that these coronaviruses are just going to keep on emerging, and for reasons your whole group have been highlighting for years, the human animal interface, etc….. Assuming this current thing turns out well, this has to be a serious wake up call that we have to do much more

I WILL pass this on to Tony. He is overwhelmed with press calls and pressure from the Dept of HHS. I have never seen him so frazzled. Saturday night he sent me a one line email. "I am brain dead". (Not for attribution or repeating!).

Interested in your feeling about where this is going. The experts buzzing around us are all over the map, between doomsday and not that big a deal, with everything in between.

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2020 1:36 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Alison Andre [b6]>
Subject: Wuhan novel coronavirus - NIAID's role in bat-origin CoVs
Importance: High

Hi David – Happy to have a phone call re. the Wuhan CoV, but just wanted to mentioned a few things for your information and hopefully to pass on to Tony Fauci for when he's being interviewed re. the new CoV:

NIAID has been funding coronavirus work in China for the past 5 years through an R01 to me (1R01AI110964: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"). That's now been renewed, with a specific focus that we identify cohorts of people highly exposed to bats in China, and work out if they're getting sick from CoVs. Erik Stemmy is the Program Officer (cc'd here). Collaborators include Wuhan Institute of Virology (currently working on the nCoV), and Ralph Baric. The results of our work to date include:

- Sampled 10,074 bats and ~2,000 other mammals at 47 sites across S. China
- Discovered 172 novel β-CoVs (52 novel SARSr-CoVs), >350 novel α-CoVs
- Discovered closest relative to Wuhan nCoV (92% homology)
- Discovered Swine Acute Diarrheal Syndrome Virus (SADS-CoV) killing >25,000 pigs in Guangdong Province (Published in Nature)
- Found SARS-related CoVs that can bind to human cells (Published in Nature), and that cause SARS-like disease in humanized mouse models.
- Found that clinical signs of bat SARSr-CoVs in mice were not prevented with a vaccine candidate against SARS-CoV, and were not treatable with most monoclonal therapies being developed
- Found serological evidence that 3% of people living at the wildlife-human interface in rural China are being exposed to these bat SARS-related coronaviruses

Also – FYI, prior to the R01, we worked under an R01 with Eun-Chung Park as Program Officer on viral discovery in bats, where originally identified SARS-CoV as having a likely origin in bats (published in Science)

As I mentioned, I'm now part of a group that's meeting by phone weekly with CEIRS to discuss the nCoV and Erik's part of that.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10001

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 1:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak; Ian Lipkin b6 Jon Epstein
Subject: RE: Wuhan virus

Thanks, the excitement never ends, right?

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- (b) (6)(b) (6)
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 12:57 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Ian Lipkin b6 <
b6 >; Jon Epstein < b6

Subject: RE: Wuhan virus
Importance: High

Yes – lots of information and I spoke with Erik Stemmy and Alan Embry yesterday before the news was released. Erik is my program officer on our coronavirus grant specifically focused on China.

I've been talking with reporters today and happy to fill you in on any further information…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 12:50 PM
To: W. Ian Lipkin b6 Peter Daszak; Jon Epstein
Subject: Wuhan virus

Hi guys, do any of you have any inside info on this new coronavirus that isn't yet in the public domain? Or any thoughts?

TY,

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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(b) (6)(b) (6)

b6

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Date: Fri, 22 May 2020 5:01:06 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 22 May 2020 5:00:55 PM -0400
Subject: NYTimes: Prominent Scientists Denounce End to Coronavirus Grant
From: Dennis Carroll [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6];

Very impressive. Nicely done
Prominent Scientists Denounce End to Coronavirus Grant
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/21/health/wuhan- coronavirus-laboratory.html?referringSource=articleShare
--

Dr Dennis Carroll
President, Global Virome Project
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University
Counselor and Advisor to the Faculty of Tropical Medicine at Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

mobile: [b6]
email: [b6]

Date:	Fri, 29 May 2020 3:29:56 PM -0400
Sent:	Fri, 29 May 2020 3:29:49 PM -0400
Subject:	paper coming out next week on bioRxiv reporting 780+ partial sequences of bat-CoVs in China
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	'Saif, Linda' [b6] David Morens [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] >; [b6] [b6] [b6] Dr. Ralph Baric [b6] [b6] Toni C Baric [b6] [b6]
CC:	Robert Kessler [b6] >;
Attachments:	Talking points Latinne et al. Bat Coronaviruses, China.docx; China bat CoVs_R2_v5 changes accepted.docx

Hello all,

Just emailing to give you advance info on a paper that we're uploading onto bioRxiv this weekend. I've attached the draft here and some talking points I've written out for journalists. We've spoken with one NY Times reporter, and depending on what happens next week, it might get some pick up in the news. Is it OK for me to suggest your names to journalists as people who are knowledgeable on COVID-19, CoVs, pandemics, high impact viral diseases etc.? I think this paper helps a little bit to show that there's nothing unusual about COVID-19 being a bat virus that got into people naturally. There's also the fact that the other close virus (RmYN02) is in the same clade as SARS-2 and RaTG13, and that virus has an insertion in the Spike protein, disproving one of the conspiracy theories, but that won't stop them.

I feel like I should add a disclaimer to emails along the lines of "if you do speak to journalists about this work you may end up being targeted by nutjobs and potentially have one or two of your grants terminated by El Guru-in-Chief!"

BTW – please use Ralph's gmail address so I don't get FoIA'd

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Sat, 16 May 2020 1:58:09 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 16 May 2020 1:58:08 PM -0400
Subject: Ajtmh piece
From: David Morens b6
To: Peter Daszak b6

Hi Peter, i hope things are settling down a bit for you!

I am in very frequent touch with Jerry K and he is doing a great job. you/we/science in general are lucky to have a guy like him!

With luck, tomorrow i will try to set aside some time to think about and make notes on the piece several of us will write for astmh. We all agree that we want to keep off Of it any fingerprints of you, Ralph and any eha or grant colleagues.

However, i hope you will have time to point me in the direction of key papers, key arguments, etc, so i dont have to reinvent the wheel At this point, the only person i have asked to help in a substantial way is Jeff T, a molecular virologist quite familiar with phylogenetics

I want to pull together a base of relevant materials, then draft something before pulling in additional colleagues including a card carrying phylogeneticist, also someone familiar with bsl 3 and 4 work and safely regs, not to bring thT up at all, just to have coauthors who know what's what

So, i would luke to discuss with you on the phone sometime soon, your time permitting. I should have time beginning tomorrow or Monday throughout next week. I need to keep this off of govt email and govt phone text

TY, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Tue, 19 May 2020 12:43:12 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 19 May 2020 12:43:11 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Time for a call today?
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Alison Andre [b6]

OK, will call after 2, d

On 5/19/2020 12:39 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> You can call me on my home landline – [b6] or on my cellphone [b6]
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 460 West 34th Street
> New York, NY 10001
> USA
>
> Tel.: [b6]
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** David Morens [b6]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:15 AM
> **To:** Peter Daszak [b6]
> **Cc:** Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Alison Andre [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Time for a call today?
>
> Yes i think so. I an in PT startung soon into maybe noon. Give me a good number to call after i get back in the office and clear up done stuff. D
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On May 19, 2020, at 10:05, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
> >
> > I'm free between 2 & 4pm – would anytime in that window work for you? If not, please suggest a time it would be good to catch up..

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10001
USA

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

--
David M Morens b6

Date: Sun, 14 Jun 2020 2:20:19 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties
From: David Morens b6
To: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6

David M. Morens, MD

b6

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Peter Daszak** b6 >
Date: Sun, Jun 14, 2020 at 2:17 PM
Subject: RE: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties
To: David Morens b6 >, Gerald Keusch b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6

This is a disgrace and smacks of the McCarthy Era and the thought-police. I've read the background of every case that's been in the press. Some of them are clearly people committing prob criminal behavior (e.g. smuggling vials on planes). Others are people who are 'double-dipping' with companies in china and research in USA. Some are just unwitting scientists who've been given a stipend to talk in China and not realized the origin.

I get it that China is now the bad guy, but what if I get a Wellcome grant from the UK. Am I supposed to notify NIH – who would have known that? If the UK becomes a bad guy and we start digging back over the last decade or so (as has happened here), do we then have people who've gotten a Wellcome grant indicted!?

It's basically a tightening of regulations after the fact. I don't know where it says on my R01 form that I clearly have to make a statement on what funds I've received from foreign countries. I'm sure it's in the small print somewhere, but are we really at that moment in history where we're trying to catch scientists in a web like this? The message it sends to me and everyone else is "Do international research at your peril". That's bad news if the USA wants to stay engaged on the world stage scientifically…but I guess that's exactly the point: Trump doesn't want us to be and that's how he perceived he was voted. In.

I also note three phrases of particular concern to me:

- 41% of those under investigation (77 scientists) have been banned from further participation in NIH's well-regarded system of vetting grant proposals." That "well-regarded" moniker has been completely undermined by Collins' termination of my grant!

- "There are 399 scientists "of possible concern" to NIH, he told the advisory council,". Am I one of these people? Am I being investigated? I note that no one has actually asked me if I've received funds from China. I asked the FBI 2 weeks ago if I'm a 'person of interest' when I met with them and the bloody CIA out on my back porch (what a joke!) – they said 'No', but am I on the 18% of people who are 'pending'. Are NIH under any obligation to tell me they're investigating me? NIH has written back to "White Coat Waste" who filed FoIA's for our grant info and told them that there was an ongoing investigation so they can't have that info. Is that investigation into EHA or me?

- "Slightly more than one-half had been an NIH peer reviewer in the past 2 years, and 41% of those under investigation (77 scientists) have been banned from further participation in NIH's well-regarded system of vetting grant proposals." I was recently asked to serve as a reviewer on U01s for Flu (the next round of the CEIRS awards). I agreed, sent in my conflicts (very minimal) and then was declined. I was surprised by this. Here's the email I got back from the person organizing the review saying that this was because they're contracts not grants etc. (below). Is it because I'm now black-balled from reviews by NIH? I know this sounds paranoid, but this is the sort of reputational risk that Michael Lauer and Francis Collins clearly don't care about when they pursue people on these flights of fancy, and the fear factor is exactly what this Administration is trying to infuse into the system.

Dear Peter,

Sorry for not getting back to you sooner, but we were hoping to get a policy relaxation regarding having conflicted reviewers to serve on the contracts review panel. Unfortunately, we finally were not able to get this due to very strict rules with contracts reviews, and as a results we were not able to have you on this review panel. However, we will have another Influenza Transmission review meeting in November for grants applications in the U19 mechanism, and we hope you will be available to help. Since those are grants applications, conflicts can be easily managed, as conflicted reviews can still serve on the review panel. Thanks very much.

Best wishes,

Yong

****

L.-Yong Gao, Ph.D.
Scientific Review Officer
Microbiology Review Branch
Scientific Review Program, DEA
NIAID/NIH/DHHS
5601 Fishers Lane, Room 3G13B, MSC 9834
Bethesda, MD 20892-9834
For express couriers: Rockville, MD 20852

Phone: b6 Fax: 301-480-2408
Email: b6
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From: Peter Daszak [b6 >
Sent: Sunday, April 26, 2020 10:08 PM
To: Gao, Yong (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Alison Andre [b6]; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Invitation to review NIAID/NIH contract proposals: Centers of Excellence for Influenza Research and Response
Importance: High

Dear Yong,

Many apologies for the delay – a lot going on last week. Here's my COI form.

There are few conflicts as you'll see, mainly because I haven't done much research on influenza for many years.

I did co-sign a statement in the Lancet a couple of months ago with some of the people on the list, but this was an editorial with 28 other authors, and I wouldn't say that creates a conflict.

I do have one person (Emily Gurley) that I've published quite a bit with on Nipah virus, and another who I'm on the advisory board to their organization (Juergen Richt).

Look forward to serving.

Cheers,

Peter

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2020 10:29 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
Date: June 13, 2020 at 10:13:51 EDT
Subject: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties

Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties

By Jeffrey MervisJun. 12, 2020 , 6:00 PM

Some 54 scientists have resigned or been fired as a result of an ongoing investigation by the National Institutes of Health into the failure of NIH grantees to disclose financial ties to foreign governments. In 93% of those cases, the hidden funding came from a Chinese institution.

The new numbers come from Michael Lauer, NIH's head of extramural research. Lauer had previously provided some information on the scope of NIH's investigation, which had targeted 189 scientists at 87 institutions. But his presentation today to a senior advisory panel offered by far the most detailed breakout of an effort NIH launched in August 2018 that has roiled the U.S. biomedical community, and resulted in criminal charges against some prominent researchers, including Charles Lieber, chair of Harvard University's department of chemistry and chemical biology.

"It's not what we had hoped, and it's not a fun task," NIH Director Francis Collins said in characterizing the ongoing investigation. He called the data "sobering."

In the vast majority of cases, Lauer reported, the person being investigated has been an Asian man in his 50s. Some three-quarters of those under investigation had active NIH grants, and nearly half had at least two grants. The 285 active grants totaled $164 million.

Lauer also presented data on the nature of the violations that NIH has uncovered. Some 70% (133) of the

researchers had failed to disclose to NIH the receipt of a foreign grant, and 54% had failed to disclose participation in a foreign talent program. In contrast, Lauer said, only 9% hid ties to a foreign company, and only 4% had an undisclosed foreign patent. Some 5% of cases involved a violation of NIH's peer-review system.

Lauer said the fact that 82% of those being investigated are Asian "is not surprising" because "that's who the Chinese target" in their foreign talent recruitment programs. Some 82% are men, and their median age is 56, with the youngest being 48 and the oldest 59. Slightly more than one-half had been an NIH peer reviewer in the past 2 years, and 41% of those under investigation (77 scientists) have been banned from further participation in NIH's well-regarded system of vetting grant proposals.

NIH has been in the forefront of federal efforts to identify and block behavior that many U.S. government officials say poses a significant threat to the country's economic well-being and to national security. Several bills pending in Congress seek to limit that threat in various ways, including by limiting the flow of scientific talent from China to the United States, and by restricting access to federally funded research that provides a foundation for cutting-edge technologies and new industries.

Lauer's presentation also provided a glimpse into the scope of that broader investigation. There are 399 scientists "of possible concern" to NIH, he told the advisory council, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation has fingered 30% (121) of them. An additional 44 have been flagged by their own institutions. Of that pool, Lauer said, investigations into 63%, or 256 scientists, came out "positive." Investigations into some 19% came up "negative," he noted, whereas the status of the remaining 18% is "pending."

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Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 2:18:42 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Grants withdrawn
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6 Gerald Keusch b6

Got it. I don't know who but suspect it was someone in Bldg 1 (Collins' office) and if not, someone in NIAID who somehow learned of what was afoot, perhaps by being asked to provide info justifying the termination. Who could that be? b6 supposedly didn't know about it, but she has the guts and smarts to do it. b6 I doubt it, b6 is too risk averse. Maybe it is an A told B who told C story that reached someone willing to blow the whistle when it reached them

You probably saw Jerry's email saying I should stay out of this for now. Not sure whether he means entirely, or whether it's OK to talk to this guy on background. If the latter I will do so. But don't want to mess up the great things that Jerry is doing!

d

On 6/16/2020 9:24 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> No problem – it's entirely up to you David. One of the things they'll be trying to do, I believe, is to find out who might have been the person who leaked this story to Politico in the first place and see if they'll talk off the record.. They're looking to get the chain of what happened from Trump saying he'll end the grant, to it actually being terminated.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> **From:** David Morens b6
> **Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 7:46 AM
> **To:** Gerald Keusch b6 ; Peter Daszak b6
> **Subject:** Fwd: Grants withdrawn
>
> Guys, just saw this and will pass on this unless you think there is value in talking on background as i have done with

other reporters. Let me know, and also any thoughts on who i can refer him to. Thanks, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Rainey, Jim" <jim.rainey@latimes.com>
Date: June 15, 2020 at 21:32:03 EDT
To: b6
Subject: Grants withdrawn

David,

I am a reporter with the Los Angeles Times. I have written a bit about some of the individuals and organizations—including Peter Daszak and EcoHealth Alliance—that have been trying to track down zoonotic viruses.

EcoHealth's loss of NIH funding has obviously drawn a lot of attention. I am trying to home in on who exactly was pushing for an end to that funding. Is that something we could talk about. I understand this is dicey terrain. If you need to discuss on background, with no ID disclosed, I get it. That can be done.

You can reached me at this address, or via my cell, b6 I can also be reached via Signal, the secure/encrypted messaging service. I am on Signal via the same phone number, b6 b6

Please let me know if you can help me understand what happened to this funding.

With kind regards,

Jim

--
David M Morens b6

Date: Mon, 11 May 2020 1:11:35 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 11 May 2020 1:11:34 PM -0400
Subject: ASTMH efforts
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6

Peter,

I have been in Discussions for several weeks with the leadership of ASTMH. The Prez Joel Breman and I are old friends from the same CDC EIS class of 1976. Among many other things they are signing on to a joint IDSA/ASTMH letter to the President.

After discussions over a couple weeks, Joel today asked me to pull together information and draw in some co-authors to write a commentary/review for the AJTMH. This would not in any way mention/specifically defend you or your colleagues or EcoHealth, but rather make the strong scientific case for why this virus emerged from nature, not from a lab. We think that that approach will do more to help you than a direct defense, as it is about what scientific evidence shows.

To do that, I am hoping to ask you (and Ralph) to work with us behind the scenes to assemble and tie together all evidence including phylogenetic information and scientific work of you colleagues in China and elsewhere, that might have a bearing on this story.

I think that phylogenetics will be key, and if you agree we should go forward, I will contact Eddie Holmes about pitchoing in. I know him well, and he and I have published together in the past. Also, as you know, he has already published a brief review of the phylogenetics of this virus.

The plan would be to bring in 5-10 co-authors who would be senior folks representing some aspect of relevant experience. These might include folks like (just off the top of my head) Joel, who worked in smallpox eradication, Tom Ksiazek, who has been an expert in biosafety and chair of the ACAV SALS, the subcommittee on laboratory safety and development of the BMBL (Biosafety in Mirobiological and Biomedical Safety) manual and safety practices, myself, who worked to investigate and insure the safety of the Koltsovo Vektor BSL4 lab, which housed smallpox virus and was a center for Soviet bioterrorism work, and along with Joel worked on the 1976 Ebola outbreak and ahve since worked with a number of high consequence pathogens including Lassa, hantaviruses, dengue hemorrhagoic fever, Rift Valley fever, etc., Jeff Taubenberger, who "resurrected" and was involved in the reconstruction of and experimentation with the 918 flu virus, Charlie Calisher, a leading virologist in discovery of new viral pathogens who was falsely accused by Fidel Castro, in 1981, of conducting a dengue 2 bioterrorism attack in Cuba, and perhaps an IDSA member, and various others.

Please let me know what you think.

On another topic, as I had a meeting last night I set my DVR to record the 60 miniutes show, then found out it had been locally pore-emepted by something on our local CBS channel. A friend will be sending me a ling hopefully today, as I am eager to see it.

Also, I do encourage you to join ASTMH, and my checkbook is here standing ready to pay the dues!

David

On 5/7/2020 7:47 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> This is just amazing to hear. It's true leadership when you stand up on principle, under risk of losing your position, in defense of your organization's mission, and in the interests of public health. That's what Tony's done repeatedly throughout his career and particularly regarding this outbreak.

Congressional Medal of Honor, Freedom of the City, Nobel Prize – I'd give him the lot…

It's a very worrying time for us here at EcoHealth, but knowing that you're all out there working in the background and that Tony's speaking truth to power is extremely important – a slight relief in a tough week.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 12:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6
Subject: Tony's inside NIAID town hall meeting of a few minutes ago

Among other things he was asked about the termination of your grant, Peter.

He mentioned you by name, although pronouncing it "DAY- ZACK".

He said, and I quote, "we were told by the White House"..... "they told Building 1"... then mentioning specifically the NIH OD and the NIH-wide extramural office, within OD, and added that the grant was "terminated centrally", implying he/NIAID were not involved in any way. This was a somewhat bold thing to say because he essentially blamed Francis without saying so explicitly

It is conceivable that this Town Hall was recorded and if so I will get it to you.

david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--
David M Morens b6

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 3:55:34 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 3:55:33 PM -0400
Subject: Statement of Advisory Committee to the NIH Director about the Daszak grant termination
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6; David Morens b6
b6

In case you haven't actually seen it, Rich Roberts sent me the link below to the video of the ACD meeting. At around 1 hour and 5 minutes into the videocast, Brenden Lee is given the floor to read a statement from 15/17 ACD members (2 abstentions) about what has happened to the EHA grant and calls on Collins to review and reverse if the action cannot be substantiated. It is an absolutely remarkable moment which can only be equaled by the lack of any meaningful response other than "thank you" from Francis.

https://videocast.nih.gov/watch=37816

Date: Thu, 14 May 2020 2:14:31 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 14 May 2020 2:14:30 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses
From: David Morens [b6]>
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>;
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Bryan Morens [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments: image002.jpg
Solid advice! D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 14, 2020, at 14:04, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

I can't read the tweets as the university blocks social media – that's probably a very good thing in the general sense, and not specific to Peter's offerings.

I agree with David and with Peter's instincts to stay out of the political fray. Let the scientific community's voice become louder, broader, and deeper – Francis' constituency, his colleagues. Let the press continue to pursue it – both the media including the networks and the scientific such as Science magazine. Stay focused.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2020 1:52 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Bryan Morens [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses

Peter, good stuff but I WOULD be careful. It is not impossible that Francis could be pressured into a walk back. I wouldn't burn that bridge. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 14, 2020, at 13:45, Peter Daszak <[b6]> wrote:

Yes – saw that this morning. WaPo have been a problem in the way they report this – they're coming down on the side of suspicion of China, but this is much more balanced than their previous reports. You'll be amused by the tweet chain I put out:

First this one: https://twitter.com/PeterDaszak/status/1260909941080182784?s=20

Then this one: https://twitter.com/PeterDaszak/status/1260918031636729856?s=20

Then this one: https://twitter.com/PeterDaszak/status/1260915012891222022?s=20

Finally this one: https://twitter.com/PeterDaszak/status/1260918031636729856?s=20

I'm trying not to be political, and I know I shouldn't do it, but Francis Collins' is the first target of my ire right now. His actions are unethical at best.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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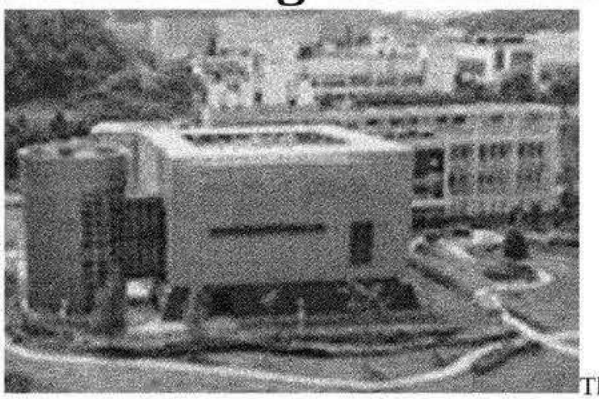
From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 10:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Gerald Keusch b6 ; Bryan Morens < b6
Subject: Fwd: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Date:** May 12, 2020 at 10:37:16 EDT
> **To:** David Morens b6
> **Subject: Fwd: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> > **Date:** May 12, 2020 at 10:23:05 EDT
> > **Subject: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses**

Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses



The Wuhan Institute of Virology partnered with the New York City-based EcoHealth Alliance to research unknown viruses in bats that could cause a global pandemic. (Hector Retamal/AFP/Getty Images)

By
Paul Sonne and
Shane Harris
May 12, 2020 at 9:59 a.m. EDT

An American nonprofit received millions of dollars from the U.S. government during the Obama and Trump administrations to identify unknown viruses in bats that could infect humans and cause a global pandemic.

Now, as the world faces one such pandemic, the New York City-based EcoHealth Alliance has found itself at the center of a political maelstrom, with one of its major federal grants suddenly axed. The reason: Its longtime Chinese partner in identifying unknown bat viruses, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is fending off allegations from President Trump and some of his top aides that the pathogen causing covid-19 escaped from its lab.

The story of how EcoHealth became a target in the Trump administration's effort to deflect criticism and focus blame on China illustrates the promise and perils of international cooperation on public health research between two superpowers that are increasingly at odds.

Beijing has led an authoritarian crackdown on information about the initial coronavirus outbreak, while Washington has demonstrated a cavalier willingness to fuel theories about a Chinese lab accident without presenting any evidence. Caught in the middle are scientists from both countries, facing questions about their research and doubts about whether their years-long collaboration can continue amid escalating geopolitical tension.

After a CBS News "60 Minutes" segment detailed EcoHealth's research and defunding on Sunday, Trump accused the show of defending China. Anthony S. Fauci, who runs the part of the National Institutes of Health that awarded EcoHealth's grant and later terminated it, could face questions about the matter during testimony Tuesday in front of a Senate committee.

EcoHealth's work in China first gained national attention during the pandemic when Trump, at a news conference in mid-April, pledged to pull its grant from NIH. Days later, the president's personal attorney, Rudolph W. Giuliani, assailed the grant in a tweet. Neither Trump nor Giuliani mentioned the nonprofit organization by name, instead focusing on its partners in Wuhan.

Late last month, NIH followed through on Trump's promise and abruptly pulled more than $3 million in funding over five years that was awarded in 2019. NIH gave the nonprofit organization little reason for doing so, writing in a letter that the project didn't align with "program goals and agency priorities."

"This idea that it doesn't fit the goals and objectives — there must be more to it," EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in a May 1 interview. "You can't apply for money from the NIH unless it's within the goals and objectives of the organization. They review that when you submit a proposal."

NIH confirmed in a statement that EcoHealth's grant was terminated and acknowledged that the

Wuhan Institute of Virology was a "sub-awardee." Asked why the funding was pulled, NIH said it does not discuss "the details of the decision-making process regarding specific grant awards."
Daszak, who said the grant's termination will force EcoHealth to lay off employees, says cooperation with Chinese scientists is important because the next bat-derived virus threatening humans is likely to emerge from the region. Already, two appear to have caused pandemics in less than 20 years.
"Viruses emerge from places where wildlife carry them and people interact with the wildlife," Daszak said. "If you have a place with a high diversity of bats and lots of people hunting and eating bats like in Southeast Asia and China, that's where you need to go."
Some of the bat coronaviruses EcoHealth identified with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Daszak said, were used at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to test the effectiveness of remdesivir, the antiviral medication the United States recently approved as a therapy for covid-19 patients.
"Covid-19 is [the result of] a bat-origin coronavirus from China," Daszak said. "Our grant is called understanding the risk of the emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses. The place we were doing it is China. We were right to be doing that."

Of science and suspicion

EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology's cooperation took their researchers to the front lines of infectious disease.
Scouring China, the scientists hunted the rare bat virus that would infect humans and cause the next severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS. The hope: find the virus and develop a vaccine in advance.
The quest led them to a remote bat cave in China's Yunnan province. There and elsewhere, over many years, the researchers took blood and fecal samples from bats, used those samples to identify the genetic sequence of unknown viruses and experimented with the material in the Wuhan lab. Over the years, the collaboration yielded considerable results.
In the aftermath of SARS, Daszak and Wuhan Institute of Virology scientist Shi Zhengli, now referred to in some Chinese media as "bat woman," were among a group of scientists who in 2005 demonstrated that the virus most likely originated in horseshoe bats. Later, their researchers found evidence that bat coronaviruses could infect humans directly and don't need other animals as intermediary hosts.
The joint research involved risks. Researchers in protective equipment interacted with potentially infectious wildlife. Back in the lab, they cultured a live coronavirus from a bat on at least one occasion and tested its potential to infect human cells. Using what are known as "reverse genetics," they took the spike proteins of new viruses that they identified and inserted them into a uniform SARS-like virus to understand which was most infectious to humans. Some experiments involved humanized mice.
Theoretically, an accident during such activities could prompt an outbreak. If researchers, for example, had found SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes covid-19, and cultured the virus in the lab, it could have infected humans as the result of a mishap.
No evidence of that nature has emerged. Shi has said SARS-CoV-2 wasn't among the bat coronaviruses that her institute identified or possessed. Daszak dismissed such theories outright. "We have worked with this lab for 15 years," Daszak said. "They didn't have the virus. I have never heard anything suspicious from this lab. It's a preposterous idea."
Along with other scientists, Daszak has argued that the covid-19 pandemic almost certainly arose naturally, namely through the "spillover" of the SARS-CoV-2 virus from bats to humans, possibly through an intermediary species, in a process similar to what caused the SARS outbreak in 2002.
"People hunt bats, eat bats, use bat feces for Chinese medicine and put it on their vegetable gardens, every day," he said. "We have actual evidence, real evidence, that between one [million] and seven million people a year are getting [exposed to or] infected by bat coronaviruses in Southeast Asia."
Fauci, who hasn't commented on why his institute, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, terminated the EcoHealth grant, said in an interview with National Geographic that the available scientific evidence points to a virus that "evolved in nature and then jumped species."
Such an outbreak could easily happen in any Chinese city with an animal market selling species that could carry the virus from bats to humans. Many of the initial patients in Wuhan, which has a population of more than 11 million, were connected to one such market.
But questions about exactly how and where the natural spillover took place, coupled with China's refusal so far to allow an independent investigation into the origins of the pandemic, have bred suspicion about whether the institute could be to blame. So has the coincidence that both the bat

coronavirus research and the outbreak took place in the city of Wuhan.

The Trump administration has amplified the suspicion. Senior administration officials told U.S. intelligence agencies to scour their records and look for new information that might show that the Wuhan lab was the source of the virus, current and former officials familiar with those efforts said. Those agencies have not found evidence to support the theory, according to those people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal intelligence efforts.

The U.S. intelligence community agrees with the scientific consensus that the virus was not man-made or genetically modified, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence said in a statement in late April. It also said U.S. intelligence agencies will continue examining information "to determine whether the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or if it was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan."

Trump and his top aides have been fueling the lab-origin theory for weeks. Asked at an April 30 news conference whether he had seen any evidence that the pathogen causing covid-19 originated at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Trump said he had but then declined to elaborate.

"There is enormous evidence that that's where this began," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a May 3 interview with ABC News, when asked whether there was evidence that the outbreak began in the lab. He has not presented that evidence.

Scientists have analyzed SARS-CoV-2 and asserted that it has the makings of a naturally derived virus. And they have emphasized that the spillover of coronaviruses from animals to humans is a common occurrence, especially in a place like China.

Kristian G. Andersen, a microbiology professor at the La Jolla, Calif.-based Scripps Research Institute, who co-authored a March paper in the journal Nature arguing that the virus wasn't lab-created, said the lab-accident theory was not a plausible explanation, but rather a "possible explanation — with an extremely low likelihood of being true."

Science alone, however, cannot definitively disprove the lab-accident scenario, said Simon Wain-Hobson, a virologist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, in part because of the challenge of proving a negative. He said to do so would require full knowledge of the Wuhan institute's samples and activities leading up to the outbreak.

"The only way to know is we would seek the collaboration of our colleagues at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and this would need the collaboration of the Chinese government — and given the relationship, it seems unlikely that we are going to know," Wain-Hobson said. Trump's actions, he said, reduce the chances even further.

"Given available data, I subscribe to the natural-virus-origin thesis," he said. "There may be a twist."

An unpredicted outbreak

For years, the raison d'etre for EcoHealth's research in China and elsewhere has been "bio-surveillance."

The aim, Daszak said, is "to find out which of the viruses in the wild even possibly could infect people so we know where they are and we can stop them from emerging."

"It's a little bit like if you listen to phone calls from Afghanistan. To find the terrorists, you have to listen to all the phone calls," Daszak said. "Only when you've heard the phone call do you then go in and find out who these people are and disrupt those networks."

The nonprofit organization partnered for years with a USAID program called Predict. Launched in 2009, the program took tens of thousands of wildlife samples and identified hundreds of new viruses that could pose a threat to humans in order to create an "early-warning system" for the next pandemic. The Trump administration declined to renew the program's funding late last year. Its work has continued through an initiative called the Global Virome Project, for which Daszak is the secretary and treasurer.

Critics of the "early-warning system" approach say it would be onerous and costly to identify all of the world's zoonotic viruses, let alone figure out which ones will enjoy the exact alignment of circumstances to spill over and cause the next pandemic.

Andersen said the scientific research that EcoHealth and its partners in China have been doing is very important to better understand coronaviruses and how they work — but he takes issue with the panacea rationale.

"I feel the claim they are making that you can prevent the next pandemic by doing this type of work is preposterous," Andersen said. "If you could, given they worked in Wuhan for so long specifically, you would have thought they could have prevented the current pandemic, and they didn't."

Daszak, however, points out that one of his colleagues, Ralph Baric, a virologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, worked with Gilead Sciences to develop the antiviral drug remdesivir and used virus strains that EcoHealth and its Chinese partners identified in the process, putting the

United States ahead of the curve.

In a statement, Baric said that it is critical to learn what viruses exist in nature so potential drugs can be tested against them in a laboratory setting. His lab already had been working on bat coronaviruses, including at least one discovered by EcoHealth and the Wuhan institute, before testing remdesivir.

"It is because of our early work that the United States was in a position to quickly find the first successful treatment for SARS-CoV-2," Baric said in a statement. "It is unfortunate that research that could help humans prepare for and fight disease is now viewed as questionable."

EcoHealth and its partners regularly sounded alarm bells about a bat coronavirus spilling over into humans and becoming the next pandemic. The nonprofit said it found more than 700 novel coronaviruses during its work in China.

Still, it did not identify or prevent the pathogen causing covid-19. Despite seeking to find "spillover-risk hot spots," the virus emerged in the very city their partners worked.

Shi told Scientific American that when the outbreak of a mysterious illness emerged in Wuhan late last year, she left a conference in Shanghai and returned home. If coronaviruses were indeed the culprit, she wondered, according to the magazine, "could they have come from our lab?"

After scouring her lab's records for possible evidence of an accident, Shi told Scientific American that she breathed a sigh of relief when the genetic sequences from the new virus came back and didn't match those her team sampled; the closest shared 96 percent of its genetic material.

"That really took a load off my mind," she told the magazine. "I had not slept a wink for days."

Suspicion of her institute grew anyway. Rumors circulated that she had defected, that she had been shut up by China's Communist Party in a coverup. In a social media post in February, she promised "on her life" that the virus had nothing to do with the lab. She declined to comment for this story.

Shi's research partners in the United States, including Daszak, have rushed to her defense, describing her as a highly professional scientist and her lab as one of China's best. Nevertheless, her claims have been treated with suspicion in a Washington where distrust of the Chinese government is at a decades-long high. Her institute is part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Attention soon shifted to her collaboration with U.S. scientists under NIH grants.

Starting in 2008, Daszak received the first of three multiyear grants from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to study bat viruses. The second grant, which began in 2014 and, according to EcoHealth, amounted to approximately $3.1 million over five years, placed the nonprofit in formal collaboration with the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a sub-recipient.

About $100,000 a year went to the institute in Wuhan to pay for the genetic sequencing of viruses under that grant, Daszak said.

Daszak received the third grant in 2019, worth about $3.2 million over five years, according to EcoHealth. The Wuhan Institute of Virology was a sub-awardee, as were East China Normal University in Shanghai, the Institute of Pathogen Biology in Beijing and Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore, according to NIH.

Daszak said he received a letter from NIH in late April saying that the agency had decided to suspend the Wuhan Institute of Virology from federal grants pending investigation. NIH asked whether EcoHealth had sent money to the lab under the current grant, and Daszak wrote to say it had not and would not. He said NIH suggested that the rest of the grant's work would resume.

Shortly thereafter, though, Daszak said he received another letter saying that the grant had been terminated. He wrote to NIH asking to have a conversation about the rationale for the termination. So far, he has not received a reply.

NIH would have screened the Wuhan Institute of Virology with input from the State Department as an acceptable foreign partner before issuing the grant, Daszak said. He said NIH was aware of all the work being done under the grant and never registered an objection.

Recipients are also required to file regular status updates for review by a panel of experts. NIH and EcoHealth declined to release those reports.

Regardless of whether the funding is restored, Daszak said EcoHealth would continue its work, much of which still relies on federal funding from agencies such as the Defense Department.

"We are just going to get on with our mission," he said. "We just move on. We have to."

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Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 11:10:05 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 11:10:02 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Politico story
From: Nancye Green [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Thank you, Jerry. We very much appreciate your support and counsel. It is all about the science and we are committed to staying true to our course.

Warm regards,
Nancye

Nancye Green
Donovan/Green
O
M b6
[b6]
www.donovangreen.com

EcoHealth Alliance, Chair

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 at 11:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >, Nancye Green [b6] >, David Morens [b6] >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: RE: Politico story

Hello Nancy,

I am in touch with various colleagues to determine the best response from the scientific community. Its late tonight and not much will happen until tomorrow, but when people read this and other reports sure to follow there will be concern and consternation. It cannot be left as it is. Lauer and Francis Collins will have to own this, and it will not be pretty for them. Francis will lost the respect of the scientific community – whether he is personally involved or not he is the head and therefore responsible for its actions. Lauer will be the fall guy. So be it.

Friends of EHA will stay in close touch with Peter and through you with the Board. Let us know as well if there are additional ways we can come to the support of the organization, scientific integrity, and the integrity of science.

Jerry Keusch

From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 8:13 PM
To: [b6] David Morens [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: Politico story

Importance: High

Dear All,

I'm introducing you to Nancy Green, the Chair of our Board. David Morens – you both met at the Smithsonian Exhibit opening. Nancye – David is in the Office of the Director NIAID, reporting to Tony Fauci and a long time mentor of mine. Jerry Keusch is the Head of the Boston University Biosecurity Level 4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center, and another of my 'mentors'.

This is the story from Politico, with our statement embedded. It's not a rip-roaring call to arms for the defense of scientific integrity, but it's a start and at least exonerates us of any wrong doing. I'm hoping that powerful voices will now speak out and try to crush this political interference in work that was defined to protect our national health and security.

https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

I'll be reaching out to Jim Hughes and Rita Colwell tonight to set up a call.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date:	Thu, 9 Jul 2020 12:00:56 PM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 9 Jul 2020 12:00:51 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world- news/china-found-coronavirus-strain-seven-22304139
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6];
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6];
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Hi David – it turns out there's a masters thesis in Mandarin that the internet trolls got hold of. It's inconclusive – the miners had bat-CoV antibodies, which is interesting but nor remarkable given they work in caves. They died of pneumonia but the masters' thesis apparently says that could have been bacterial.

It's of course become yet another political football and something that your dear NIH Director and his crony has already latched on to. I'll tell you more later on today.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 5:43 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: [b6] news/china-found-coronavirus-strain-seven-22304139

Peter, what is known about this 2012 outbreak? Was there anything published in any language, or anything more definitive that a news story? TY,

[b6]

David M. Morens, M.D.

CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 7:23:42 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 7:23:41 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszak <[b6]>
CC: Gerald Keusch [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>

Peter, i think i need to be more clear on one thing. I am HAPPY to talk to reporters. The problem is that all discussions with reporters, including Tony's discussions, need to be approved by HHS. They may try to steer reporters away from me, or even forbid it. But often if a reporter insists they can prevail, and my point was to let them know that. Once a reporter is approved to talk to me, i can answer questions with candor. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 16, 2020, at 00:32, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Thanks David and totally understand if you don't respond to reporters – not a problem at all I don't want to jeopardize your status.

Re. the China issue - I don't see any potential problems with any Chinese collaborators. There is really only Zhengli Shi, who is just a jobbing virologist – she's not even a proper Communist Party member – fairly non-political. No links to Military labs etc. In any case, all of my collaborators and collaborating institutions were reviewed and OK'd by NIH once we'd received our scores, so pretty sure I'm safe.

Secondly, just so you both know, I've never personally been paid any money at all (even reimbursements for expenses) by China. Neither has EHA ever received any funds from China. We often commented how tight they are. Thank God for that!

As to what's happening at NIH, I believe it may be that Francis is feeling the heat. The letters really help I think – it's his peers, 77 Nobel Laureates (apparently a handful others have also signed on now), 31 Scientific Societies, President of NAM, 14 out of 16 members of the Advisory Committee just last week. Our appeal letter was also a serious document, about 10 pages of legal argument as to why we have a valid case for appeal. My suspicion, given all the above, is that it's possible Francis has passed my name on to the FBI to see if there's any China dirt on me or EHA so he can have something up his sleeve if necessary. It may not be the case, but I'm not leaving anything to chance.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 9:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald Keusch [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.

Peter, i must admit thT i am unsure what is going on within nih. I sense intrigue. I will be glad to talk to reporters but to the extent you have influence with them, let them know they might have to push to reach me behind the censorship curtain

I would suggest you try to make sure that none of your Chinese collaborators Have any ethics issues, no matter how small. This is where they could kill you. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2020, at 21:02, Peter Daszak [b6]g > wrote:

Hi David and Jerry,

I've been thinking of a way to get ahead of the curve, just in case NIH really is investigating EHA or me. This goes back to NIH telling folks who FOIA them that they can't reveal info on my grant and Wuhan because of a law enforcement clause and a pending investigation (https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/nih- we-cant-release-our-papers-about-the-wuhan-institute-of-virology-because-of-a-pending-investigation/). I've been wondering if that's a real investigation maybe by another org seeing if NIH acted legally? Is it them investigating Wuhan (not really possible)? Is it related to the NIH Director's pushing the agenda of investigating scientists who have been taking funds from China etc. (https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/06/fifty- four-scientists-have-lost-their-jobs-result-nih-probe-foreign-ties). What concerns me is that it seems that Francis Collins is personally involved in the investigation, and that his key henchman is Michael Lauer. It's actually Lauer who gave the talk to the ACD meeting last week (https://www.acd.od.nih.gov/meetings.html , click on "ACD Working Group on Foreign Influences in Research Integrity (Update)". I think it would be convenient for Collins if they could try to dig up some China dirt on EHA, and it's probably no skin off his nose to ask his henchmen to investigate (they've already got 399 "Scientists of Possible Concern") what's one more between friends.

So for that reason, I want to let you know that I've spoken with two good reporters off the record over the last few days and given them both your contact. One is Jim Rainey from the LA Times who did a good piece on the origins of COVID about EHA's work and others. He's now trying to dig into the handling of the termination by NIH and will be filing a FoIA, but right now would love to talk about the details. The other is Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed. He did file a foia for Michael lauer's communications and some others. He said he will be appealing their decision not to release the files.

I'm hoping that these two reporters will dig out some interesting stuff and maybe then I'll know whether this 'investigation' is just Francis Collins trying to fob off the foia requests, or it's because we've appealed, or another group has filed a motion with NIH re. their decision to terminate.

Anyway – hope they contact you, and hope it leads to something.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

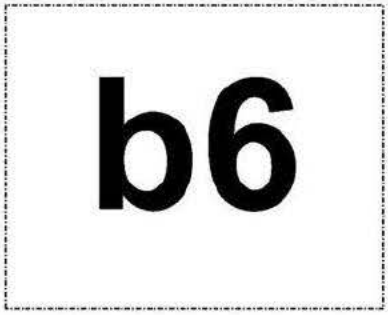
Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 2:44:12 PM -0400

Subject: Fwd: FW: Politico: Top intel agency rules out 'manmade' theory of coronavirus origins/But the intelligence community is still investigating whether the virus may have accidentally leaked from a Chinese laboratory.

From: David Morens [b6]

To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Attachments: image002.jpg



IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message --------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** [b6]
Date: Thu, Apr 30, 2020 at 2:43 PM
Subject: FW: Politico: Top intel agency rules out 'manmade' theory of coronavirus origins/But the intelligence community is still investigating whether the virus may have accidentally leaked from a Chinese laboratory.
To: David Morens [b6]

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:42 PM
Subject: Politico: Top intel agency rules out 'manmade' theory of coronavirus origins/But the intelligence community is still investigating whether the virus may have accidentally leaked from a Chinese laboratory.

national security

Top intel agency rules out 'manmade' theory of coronavirus origins

But the intelligence community is still investigating whether the virus may have accidentally leaked from a Chinese laboratory.



Biochemists swab samples for Covid-19 testing in Argentina. The Trump administration has been pressuring analysts to search for evidence that the virus came from a lab. | Amilcar Orfali/Getty Images

By NATASHA BERTRAND

04/30/2020 11:41 AM EDT

The agency that oversees the entire U.S. intelligence community has released an unusual public statement on Thursday outlining its ongoing investigation of the origins of the novel coronavirus outbreak, amid reports suggesting the White House has been pressuring analysts to conclude that the outbreak spread from a lab in Wuhan, China.

"The entire Intelligence Community has been consistently providing critical support to U.S. policymakers and those responding to the COVID-19 virus, which originated in China," reads the statement released from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. "The Intelligence Community also concurs with the wide scientific consensus that the COVID-19 virus was not manmade or genetically modified."

ODNI does not typically comment on intelligence-gathering matters, let alone publicly confirm a particular finding. The last press release that came close to commenting on intelligence was in early March, when ODNI signed onto a joint statement warning voters that "foreign actors continue to try to influence public sentiment and shape voter perceptions."

The agency went on to confirm in its statement on Thursday that it is still investigating the origins of the outbreak, including the theory, pushed by some in the White House, that it was the result of a lab accident in Wuhan.

"As we do in all crises, the Community's experts respond by surging resources and producing critical intelligence on issues vital to U.S. national security," the statement reads. "The IC will continue to rigorously examine emerging information and intelligence to determine whether the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or if it was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan."

Current and former national security officials said they were surprised by the release, and suggested it could be a sign that the intelligence community feels it is being pulled into a political battle. The administration has been pressuring analysts, particularly at the CIA, to search for evidence that the virus came from a lab and that the World Health Organization helped China cover it up, according to a person briefed on the discussions.

ODNI's statement does not rule out that possibility — but it emphasizes the fundamental role of the spy agencies: to collect and analyze information, not to search for a particular conclusion. There is currently no evidence to support the theory that it came from a lab, said people briefed on the intelligence, but there is also no intelligence that would allow the agencies to explicitly rule out the possibility.

In an op-ed published on Tuesday, three intelligence veterans who either rarely criticize the administration or rarely comment on it at all — former acting CIA director Michael Morell, former White House deputy national security adviser Avril Haines, and former deputy CIA director David S. Cohen — warned of what they say are Trump's ongoing efforts to politicize the intelligence community, most recently by firing the IC inspector general who informed Congress of the whistleblower complaint against him.

"This pattern of politicization is particularly concerning now," they wrote, "as the country confronts the coronavirus pandemic.

"The answers to key intelligence questions—Did the coronavirus emerge from nature or escape from a Chinese lab? To what extent did the Chinese government misrepresent the scope and scale of the epidemic?—will have profound implications for the future of U.S. national security policy, especially concerning China. We know Trump's preferred answers to those questions. What we don't know is whether the career analysts in U.S. intelligence agencies will be allowed to speak the truth when they uncover it."

Disclaimer: Any third-party material in this email has been shared for internal use under fair use provisions of U.S. copyright law, without further verification of its accuracy/veracity. It does not necessarily represent my views nor those of NIAID, NIH, HHS, or the U.S. government.

Date: Wed, 29 Apr 2020 7:06:46 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 29 Apr 2020 6:46:33 PM -0400
Subject: Its official
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Gerald T Keusch [b6] Peter Daszak [b6];
CC: Jeffery Taubenberger [b6]

Off the record.... Guys sad to say i have now been censored from speaking to the press I was contacted today by a reporter about my prior spoken public and published comments that the virus could not have been genetically engineered. Upshot is, i cant speak to him. I am truly depressed thAt it comes to this. But still pushing ahead as best i can. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 3:21:02 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 3:21:01 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Grants withdrawn
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Peter Daszak b6

OK, I will punt on Rainey. I don't know how to get the ACD statement in a citeable way. I bet they have blocked it, as was the case for Tony's statements at the town hall meeting. d

On 6/16/2020 2:44 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> Hi David,
>
> I did speak to Jim Rainey of the LA Times an hour ago. I don't think you should risk talking to him, certainly not at this point. He is still mostly working on the public response to police shootings and wants to get back to this story asap. I think I filled him in without releasing any info I have had by referring him to the Nobel's web, and – per his interest in the investigation of Chinese influence on US science – to the ACD meeting and Lauer's presentation.
>
> I have drafted an op-ed and will send it to the NAM group who joined the letter to the NASEM presidents. I'm asking them to agree to be named, although WaPo wouldn't publish that as its length would exceed the allowable word count by several fold. I do refer to the important statement of the ACD, and I am wondering if there is any publicly accessible way to cite it, as it is a remarkable rebuke of Collins' Building One.
>
> Jerry
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
> **Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 2:19 PM
> **To:** Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
> **Subject:** Re: Grants withdrawn
>
> Got it. I don't know who but suspect it was someone in Bldg 1 (Collins' office) and if not, someone in NIAID who somehow learned of what was afoot, perhaps by being asked to provide info justifying the termination. Who could that be? b6 supposedly didn't know about it, but she has the guts and smarts to do it b6 I doubt it, b6 is too risk averse. Maybe it is an A told B who told C story that reached someone willing to blow the whistle when it reached them
>
> You probably saw Jerry's email saying I should stay out of this for now. Not sure whether he means entirely, or whether it's OK to talk to this guy on background. If the latter I will do so. But don't want to mess up the great things that Jerry is doing!
>
> d
>
> On 6/16/2020 9:24 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:
>
> > No problem – it's entirely up to you David. One of the things they'll be trying to do, I believe, is to find out who might have been the person who leaked this story to Politico in the first place and see if they'll talk off the record.. They're looking to get the chain of what happened from Trump saying he'll end the grant, to it actually being terminated.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 7:46 AM
To: Gerald Keusch b6 Peter Daszak b6 >
Subject: Fwd: Grants withdrawn

Guys, just saw this and will pass on this unless you think there is value in talking on background as i have done with other reporters. Let me know, and also any thoughts on who i can refer him to. Thanks, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Rainey, Jim" <jim.rainey@latimes.com>
> **Date:** June 15, 2020 at 21:32:03 EDT
> **To:** b6
> **Subject: Grants withdrawn**
>
> David,
>
> I am a reporter with the Los Angeles Times. I have written a bit about some of the individuals and organizations—including Peter Daszak and EcoHealth Alliance—that have been trying to track down zoonotic viruses.
>
> EcoHealth's loss of NIH funding has obviously drawn a lot of attention. I am trying to home in on who exactly was pushing for an end to that funding. Is that something we could talk about. I understand this is dicey terrain. If you need to discuss on background, with no ID disclosed, I get it. That can be done.
>
> You can reached me at this address, or via my cell, b6 I can also be reached via Signal, the secure/encrypted messaging service. I am on Signal via the same phone number, b6 b6
>
> Please let me know if you can help me understand what happened to this funding.
>
> With kind regards,
>
> Jim

--

David M Morens b6

--

David M Morens b6

Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 6:37:58 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Politico story
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;
Attachments: NIAID COVID-19 Full Weekly Update [b6]

this and prior email, re new NIAID implementation plan, released last night d
Let me know if you got these docs, am having trouble with home gmail david
David M. Morens, MD

b6

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Mon, Apr 27, 2020 at 11:37 PM Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Hello Nancy,

I am in touch with various colleagues to determine the best response from the scientific community. Its late tonight and not much will happen until tomorrow, but when people read this and other reports sure to follow there will be concern and consternation. It cannot be left as it is. Lauer and Francis Collins will have to own this, and it will not be pretty for them. Francis will lost the respect of the scientific community – whether he is personally involved or not he is the head and therefore responsible for its actions. Lauer will be the fall guy. So be it.

Friends of EHA will stay in close touch with Peter and through you with the Board. Let us know as well if there are additional ways we can come to the support of the organization, scientific integrity, and the integrity of science.

Jerry Keusch

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g >
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 8:13 PM
To: [b6]; David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <chmura[b6] >
Subject: Politico story
Importance: High

Dear All,

I'm introducing you to Nancy Green, the Chair of our Board. David Morens – you both met at the Smithsonian Exhibit opening. Nancye – David is in the Office of the Director NIAID, reporting to Tony Fauci and a long time mentor of mine. Jerry Keusch is the Head of the Boston University Biosecurity Level 4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center, and another of my 'mentors'.

This is the story from Politico, with our statement embedded. It's not a rip-roaring call to arms for the defense of scientific integrity, but it's a start and at least exonerates us of any wrong doing. I'm hoping that powerful voices will now speak out and try to crush this political interference in work that was defined to protect our national health and security.

https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

I'll be reaching out to Jim Hughes and Rita Colwell tonight to set up a call.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street

New York, NY 10001

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: b6

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Wed, 6 May 2020 6:08:58 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 6 May 2020 6:08:55 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Amusing interlude re. an NASEM Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

That's the one – well worth a view. John Cleese at his best.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 6:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Amusing interlude re. an NASEM Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7

I have almost all 12 Fawlty Towers episodes committed to memory but am fuzzy on the one you are referring to, possibly the one titled The Germans. Gotta re watch them i guess. Funniest stuff ever

Throughout the whole series was a character called The Major, played by the 1930s and 1940s character actor Ba llard Berkeley, a WWI vet who apparently had Alzheimers and couldnt remember much except that he didnt much like The Germans

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 6, 2020, at 17:49, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Confidentially sharing this. I initially thought this was the National Academies moving surprisingly swiftly and directly

in defense of my honor and that of science across the world, but it's not – it looks like from this email chain below, that this was in the works already. I think this was something Linda Saif has initiated at the NAS to build collaborative good will with China.

It's good that this call will at least have key people on it: Ralph Baric, Jim Le Duc, George Gao, Linda Saif. Note the email though that we're going to specifically avoid discussing the issue of the origin of COVID-19.

That reminds me of the Fawlty Towers episode where Basil Fawlty (having sustained a fall and minor concussion) has a German guest and keeps reminding himself 'not to mention the War'…of course, he does in the most hilarious and crass way possible.

I will try not to mention 'the war' on this call….I'll let you know how it goes…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel. b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Rusek, Benjamin b6
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2020 6:15 PM
To: 'David A Relman' b6; 'Baric, Ralph S' b6; 'Saif, Linda' b6; 'Perlman, Stanley' b6; Peter Daszak b6; Harvey V. Fineberg b6; 'Diane Griffin' b6; 'Peggy Hamburg' b6; 'jwleduc@UTMB.EDU' b6; 'Dave Franz b6; Shi, Pei yong b6
Cc: 'Frances Sharples' b6; Lowenthal, Micah b6; 'Baric, Toni C' (b6 b6; Alison Andre b6; Jennifer Ryan b6; Bowman, Katherine b6
Subject: Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
Importance: High

Greetings,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a virtual bilateral dialogue meeting between Chinese and American experts studying and fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. I am reaching out to you now so 1) the group is connected by email and 2) to organize the planning teleconference for the American participants on May 7. The purpose of the May 7 discussion is to fill you in on the dialogue background, discuss the topics/questions (list in your invitation letter and attached) and issues we should probably avoid (origin questions, politics), logistics, and address any other questions or concerns you

may have.

We are proposing that this ~1 hour discussion take place over Zoom at 8:00 PM ET on Thursday, May 7. If this time does not work for someone we could push the time up or back slightly. Please let me know. Also if Thursday evening is impossible I can brief you on the discussion over the phone sometime on Friday.

Re the actually dialogue meeting with the Chinese group, as your invitation letter notes we have proposed that the dialogue meeting take place on the evenings of Monday, May 11th (to address the first set of bullet points) and Tuesday, May 12th (to ask/answer follow-up questions and address the second set of bullet points), at 9:00 PM ET for the Americans. George Gao has not yet let us know if these exact times work but we should hear back from him soon (the Chinese May day holidays end on the 5th).

Kind regards,

Ben

Benjamin Rusek
The U.S. National Academy of Sciences
b6

Date: Mon, 4 May 2020 7:23:14 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 4 May 2020 7:23:13 PM -0400
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]
CC: Glass, Roger (NIH/FIC) [E] [b6] Kilmarx, Peter (NIH/FIC) [E] [b6] Karen Goraleski [b6]

Thanks! David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 4, 2020, at 18:51, Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6] > wrote:

David, my personal email is j[b6]

Sent from my iPhone

On May 1, 2020, at 8:29 AM, David Morens [b6] > wrote:

Thanks, Roger, I feel the same. I have known Peter well for many years, have worked with and published papers with him, have gotten to to know several stellar scientists on his team, Like Jon Epstein and Kevin Olival, and have followed his many important publications in all the top journals: Science, Nature, PNAS, and many more. He is a self-effacing, humble humanist of great integrity who routinely credits those who work with him and steps out of the limelight himself

It is sadly ironic that the terminated grant was the one that provided Gilead the groundwork for studying remdesivir, recently touted as possibly efficacious in treating COVID-19, and that a scientist on the grant worked with Gilead at length without compensation or credit, to demonstrate in vitro efficacy against bat coronaviruses. That was the pivotal work that led Gilead to go forward.

We live in interesting times. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 1, 2020, at 07:53, Glass, Roger (NIH/FIC) [E] [b6] > wrote:

Peter is an outstanding researcher who received his first nih funding from Fogarty -2 or 3 grants since 2002?. He received his Niaid grant with a top 3% score and doesn't now have fic funding.

This is a most unusual turn of events .
I don't have more info but I have all confidence in integrity of Peter

Roger

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 30, 2020, at 5:03 PM, Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6] > wrote:

Confidential

Roger Peter,

Just got off phone with David Morens of NIAID —who informed me that a research grant to Peter Daszak of EcoHealth, Columbia U has been terminated abruptly. Daszak has been collaborating productively w/Wuhan scientists and others around the globe in defining bat and other Corona virus ecology for many years.

Do you know about this? Is FIC funding EcoHealth Alliance?

I have no more information other than enclosed correspondence shared by David. He would be happy to talk with you: object keeping support for Daszak.

Best. Joel

Sent from my iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

From: David Morens [b6] >
Date: April 30, 2020 at 2:04:37 PM EDT
To: "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" [b6] >, "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" [b6] >
Subject: Fwd: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

David M. Morens, MD

[b6]

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a

reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** <b6
Date: Sun, Apr 26, 2020 at 6:44 AM
Subject: Fwd: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
To: David Morens b6

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Date: April 25, 2020 at 19:21:48 EDT
To: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6 >
Subject: Fw: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent

pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:47 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura; Peter Daszak
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]; Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]; Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]; Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E]
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,

Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144

Bethesda, MD 20892

Phone b6

Email b6

From: Aleksei Chmura b6
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 g >, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6 "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &

Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144

Bethesda, MD 20892

Phone: b6

Email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6]
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6], "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <[b6]>, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <[b6]>
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records

2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.

Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street

New York, NY 10001

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <b6
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Olival <b6>; Peter Daszak <b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag <b6>; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] <b6>; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.

- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.
- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.
- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144

Bethesda, MD 20892

Phone: b6

Email: b6

From: Kevin Olival b6
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak (b6) who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.

2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,

Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

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www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics *and* promote conservation

On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:

Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received. The sooner you can get us that information, the better.

Best, Mike

From: Naomi Schrag b6
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6 >b6 " < b6 , Naomi Schrag < b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,

I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.

Sincerely,

Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <
b6
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To: b6 ; Naomi Schrag <
b6
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144

Bethesda, MD 20892

Phone b6

Email b6

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

<Daszak letter 4 24 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

Date: Tue, 18 Aug 2020 1:42:01 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 18 Aug 2020 1:42:00 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Vet Practice News: Human-animal health link explored at global convention /Scheduled for Aug. 20 to 22, the event will feature a special video debriefing from longtime National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director, Anthony Fau
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6];

Hello Peter,

First nothing more from Varmus so I don't know what he is up to. I didn't hear back from the reporter since she called and emailed on Friday just as I was heading west to the Berkshires. I sent her 3 emails over the weekend to let her know I was available and she could pick the time, but I haven't heard anything more.

Second, if you want fresh eyes to review the NAM briefing document after you give it a haircut I can prioritize that.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 11:34 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Greg Gray [b6] [b6]>
Subject: RE: Vet Practice News: Human-animal health link explored at global convention /Scheduled for Aug. 20 to 22, the event will feature a special video debriefing from longtime National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director, Anthony Fau

Slow is good. It usually means thoughtful and therefore more long-lasting! Great to see "The Fautch" standing up for One Health!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 10:05 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Greg Gray b6
b6
Subject: FW: Vet Practice News: Human-animal health link explored at global convention /Scheduled for Aug. 20 to 22, the event will feature a special video debriefing from longtime National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director, Anthony Fau

Slow but sure progress at NIAID….

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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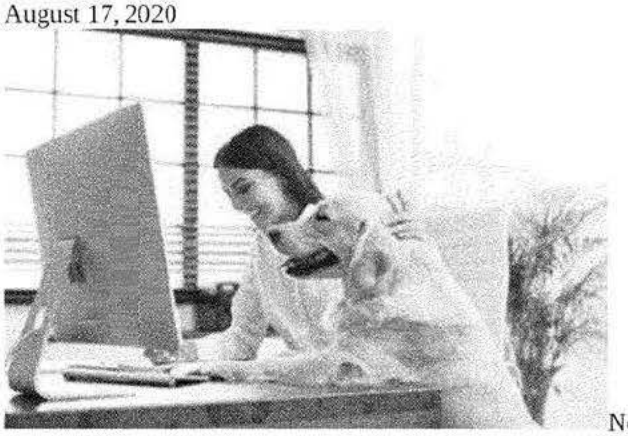
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 9:14 PM
Subject: Vet Practice News: Human-animal health link explored at global convention /Scheduled for Aug. 20 to 22, the event will feature a special video debriefing from longtime National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director, Anthony Fauci,

Human-animal health link explored at global convention

AVMA's upcoming virtual event will feature a video briefing, discussing COVID-19 and One Health

August 17, 2020

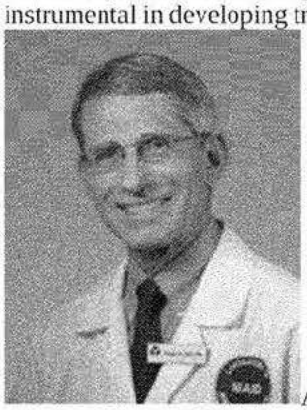


Novel coronavirus and the correlation between human and animal health are set to be unpacked at the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA 's) inaugural digital convention. Scheduled for Aug. 20 to 22, the event will feature a special video debriefing from longtime National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) director, Anthony Fauci, MD.

"We are delighted and honoured to have Dr. Fauci share this update on COVID-19 and One Health with our members on the closing day of our first-ever virtual gathering," says AVMA 's president, Douglas Kratt, DVM.

Fauci has served as director of NIAID for more than 35 years. In this role, he oversees an extensive portfolio of basic and applied research to prevent, diagnose, and treat established infectious diseases (*e.g.* HIV/AIDS, respiratory infections, tuberculosis, malaria), as well as emerging diseases, such as Ebola and Zika.

Additionally, Fauci has advised six American presidents on HIV/AIDS, along with other domestic and global health issues, NAVC says. He has made significant contribution to the understanding of how HIV impacts the body's defenses, and has been instrumental in developing treatments to enable people with HIV to live longer and more active lives.



Anthony Fauci, MD

Photo courtesy NIAID

Fauci has also authored and contributed to more than 1300 scientific publications, including several textbooks, and has received 45 honorary doctoral degrees from universities in the U.S. and abroad, NAVC says.

More than 2000 veterinarians are registered for AVMA 's convention, which was moved online in response to the global pandemic.

"Veterinary professionals have done a remarkable job stepping up and contributing in countless ways to assist our nation during the COVID-19 pandemic," Dr. Kratt says.

"Veterinarians on the front lines have cared for animals, donated personal protective equipment, provided services to those who need it most, and made essential contributions to research that helps medical science understand the virus."

For more on the convention, click here.

Disclaimer: Any third-party material in this email has been shared for internal use under fair use provisions of U.S. copyright law, without further verification of its accuracy/veracity. It does not necessarily represent my views nor those of NIAID, NIH, HHS, or the U.S. government.

Date: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 12:25:00 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 12:24:58 PM -0400
Subject: RE: From Rich Roberts who led the Nobel Laureate letter
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens [b6]

Thanks Peter,

I am planning two actions that can build on this important statement from the Collins' ACD. First to rewrite the letter to the three NASEM Presidents and send it to Azar and Collins and try to get as widespread public notice as possible. I was planning to cite the Nobelist letter and the weak statement from NAM as background, but now I can also mention the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director, which is important. Adding the names of 90+ NAM members will have some weight, albeit not like the Nobels or the ACD. I will have to get permission from everybody again but that is not a major task.

Second, I have begun to craft a commentary for one or more prominent medical journals published by major medical research societies that have not gone public, which would try to make the case this is a dangerous precedent. It too would be signed by as many of the NAM members I am communicating with who will agree to be listed.

The point is to keep this in the air they breathe in Building 1, and make it much more irritating than CoV-2.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 1:11 AM
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Subject: From Rich Roberts who led the Nobel Laureate letter

Another important statement below from the NIH Advisory Board. Rich Roberts led the Nobel Laureate group and wrote to each member of the Advisory Board.

Really pleased to see this. Not sure how it can mobilize action, but I'll be publicizing this and spreading the word. Please do so as well if you can.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 11:11 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

In case you didn't hear about the public statement made by Francis Collins' Advisory Board it is below:

"Recent statements from numerous scientific organizations and leaders in the American biomedical community expressed grave concern about the termination of an NIH grant to Peter Daszak at the EcoHealth Alliance. They argue that this cancellation circumvented the peer review process and has the appearance of contravening long held NIH traditions and policies. Members of the NIH ACD share the grave concerns expressed by the community. We agree with their request, and recommend that the entire process leading to the Daszak grant cancellation be thoroughly reviewed. If indeed the process is found to have been flawed, we recommend that the NIH reverse this decision and implement better procedures to avoid a repeat of such occurrences. This is an opportunity to ensure and reinforce the primacy of peer review in the mission of the NIH."

They intend to put it up on their web site and when it is formally released I will also feature it on our web site

https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant.html

My intention is to add a few more pieces on the site if developments warrant them. Please feel free to share the link.

I should also mention that at least one member of the ACD has also approached Wellcome independently of our efforts to suggest they fund you.

Good luck

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 10:42 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]

Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich,

Great that you're talking to Advisory Board members. I wondered about this. I hope they do the decent thing and at least challenge the decision.

I'm massively appreciating everything you're doing, as is our staff and Board. I know I'm being cautious and careful, and I'm really nervous to look like we're out there fundraising to keep this work going, because that will likely be a story. All that said, I'm playing the long game on this and have made sure our options are still open to appeal and potentially sue, but likely we'd only do that if a different administration comes in. This group is just extremely vindictive and petty.

In the meantime, I'll let you know what happens with Wellcome and if we get any other support.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website:
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664
&sdata=t9MZAjox3nt95uhUOWlA0Nh8FnVo%2BDmR7w1ttl2R5FA%3D &reserved=0
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:33 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

Thanks for getting back to me (and sorry to add to your email load). I'm pleased to hear about the gift from the Wallace Foundation and hope that the Wellcome Foundation will come through also. Jeremy Farrar is a very good guy!

We are trying to find out what happened at Francis Collins Advisory Board meeting, but no word yet. I had written to all members advising them of our letter.

If you think of anything else we could usefully do at this point please let me know.

Rich (not Robert)

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:55 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

Robert,

Thank you for getting back in touch. I read the email exchange with amusement below! Please tell your colleague that we have 'donate now' buttons on our website (https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2Fdonate&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664&sdata=fSQCnT1GUsG0S8D9pF66AoLHe800NbloGSqd29KmK50%3D &reserved=0) and they can specify what the donation is for - we take 'donor intent' very seriously.

It's hard not to speak out against this administration right now on so many levels: Public Health (e.g. WHO defunding); blatant racism from the top and its shocking consequences across society; using an anti-science agenda as a political tool without a care for people's health and lives. That said, we're all holding our tongues here - something we really have to do right now because we have other grants pending with NIH that could easily disappear, and because one of Trump's senators (Pennsylvania) wrote to DoD to complain about them funding us (he shared it with Breitbart News).

For those reasons, we won't be openly and actively fundraising to cover our loss from NIH - it would become a story and antagonize the Trump Team, who are actively pushing an anti-China narrative as part of their campaign. Have a look at the leaked GOP talking points that specifically refer to conspiracy theories at length around the work we did with Wuhan: p. 18 and on here..
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstatic.politico.com%2F80%2F54%2F2f321938
virus-big-book-4.17.20.pdf%3Fmc_cid%3D8bef7ea1d3%26mc_eid%3D4c6a7c6e0b
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&sdata=R1bOnpbM3TsKXs4dDlUN6LDXF1udkmlV9tFOHMeLr8Q%3D &reserved=0. It's quite blatant.

We do have some good news though. First of all we received the check from your Anonymous donor colleague (A great Joy!) and this will go a significant way to allowing us not to lay off staff from the China work. Secondly, we were approached by a Family Foundation (Wallace Research Foundation), who wanted to support us to the tune of (b) (4) . The Board chair got a bit of concern from one board member about potential political targeting if they funded us, and asked if we could find matching funds. We were able to use the Anonymous gift as a match, and have just submitted a proposal which we're told will be a formality. Very good news, and please pass on our gratitude to your colleagues. Of course, we can't publicize this right now either! Finally, as you mentioned I did hear from Jeremy Farrar and am pulling together a 3 page pitch this week. It will have to go through review, of course, and may not pan out, but we will do our best and even without that, we are on the way to being whole again.

As for our general situation - these are interesting times indeed. We're being FoIA'd by 'White Coat Waste', who are delighted the grant was terminated. We're fighting it of course. We're also being FoIA'd through our colleague Ralph Baric who works at UNC - a state university so his emails with us are fair game. We'll be fighting that. We're receiving a mixture of trashy hate mail (nothing like your past experiences) as well as small donor checks 'in honor of Donald Trump' from concerned citizens, and have had an uptick in donations on our website. At the same time, I've had personal attacks online and have met with the FBI to beef up security at home and in the office. Our Intel agencies are also continuing to ask questions, which is fine, but I wonder if anyone above them is even listening at this point! At the same time, right now I've got a Zoom call with colleagues at NAM/NAS to talk with colleagues from the Chinese Academy of Sciences as a quiet dialog to share information on COVID - these are precious times when we can talk openly with our Chinese colleagues without the politics. They are continuing to hold open an invitation to continue our work with them.

Thank you again for all you've done, and continue to do. We're keeping our fingers crossed that this toxic administration will disappear and we can get things back to some sense of normality.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website:
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664E
&sdata=t9MZAjox3nt95uhUOWlA0Nh8FnVo%2BDmR7w1ttl2R5FA%3D &reserved=0
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 10:34 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: FW: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

I thought you might be interested in this email exchange. I gather Wellcome have expressed an interest. Have you heard from them?

I hope you are managing OK both financially and healthwise. If there is more we can do please let me know.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel[b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

-----Original Message-----
From: [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 6:20 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Re: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had $20 when I get my social security check in mind. That's the sort of thing one generally donates through a crowd funding appeal - but let me know if there's another place to send it!

I suspect there's a lot of outraged people who would give a few dollars, and such funded Bernie Sanders' entire Presidential campaign.

Of course, many professionally paid people would donate a good deal more than $20.

Frankly, I'd like a chance to turn the President's face purple when word got out. His fists would flail, and he'd probably shout every manner of thing on Twitter. Not only would this be good for public morale, but every time it happens, he comes closer to losing the election.

Showing the Chinese that Trump isn't in control is downright useful.

Yours,

b6

On 6/2/20 5:04 PM, Roberts, Rich wrote:
>[b6]
>
> The main point of the letter was to raise awareness of the issue, especially at DHS and NIH, but also to funders who might offer to fill the gap. We have been actively soliciting the latter and already have one Foundation that will make a significant donation, but wishes to remain anonymous (all of their funding is made anonymously).
>
> If you are able to help in the regard please let me know.
>
> Incidentally after the letter was sent, 4 more Laureates joined as signatories.
>
> Rich Roberts
>
> Sir Richard J. Roberts Ph.D. F.R.S.
> 1993 Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine Chief Scientific Officer
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723 USA
>
> Tel: [b6] [b6]
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: [b6]
>
> Executive Assistant: [b6]
> Tel: [b6] [b6]
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: [b6]
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: [b6] >
> Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:51 PM
> To: Roberts, Rich [b6] >
> Subject: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of
> bat coronaviruses in China
>
> EXTERNAL SENDER
>
>
> Dr. Roberts:
>
> I see that you have been instrumental in organizing lobbying to get the NIH to reconsider their withdrawal of funding to EcoHealth Alliance, for international bat surveillance in China.
>
> The amount involved is three million dollars, which is not a small amount, nor a huge amount.
>
> I am wondering why I have heard neither of a crowdfunding effort for this work, nor other sources of funding for this work. For instance it sounds like something Bill Gates would be happy to contribute money to.
>
> I do hope your interest is in funding the bat surveillance and not in playing political baseball with the Trump administration, using worldwide health as the baseball.
>
> Please give consideration to these ideas. Even if you do not raise

> three million dollars, such an effort would raise quite a lot, make President Trump purple in the face, and enhance the regard the Chinese have for the American people.
>
> EcoHealth Alliance does take donations, but they seem to generally be involved with vague anti-development efforts, and it isn't clear atleast from their web site, that money given to them as a general donation would or might go to a specific pragmatic purpose.
>
> Thanks!
>
> Yours,
>
> **b6**
>
>

Date: Tue, 1 Dec 2020 10:09:03 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 1 Dec 2020 10:09:01 PM -0500
Subject: RE: You essay
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]

Thanks David,

You have really had a tough time with that vaccine. So sorry but things at least seem to be heading in the right direction.

As far as the draft is concerned, I have been mulling over the comments I had from Rich Roberts, Ron Corley and Nicki Lurie, who have each in their own way suggested it might not be a good idea. I also considered what certain people might say about my participation in the Lancet Commission Task Force on origins, with both me and Peter being pestered about the letter in Lancet in February to express our solidarity with the Chinese scientists battling the virus, their own government, and others in the outside world. Its not good to provide any additional manna for their charge of bias. In the greater sense I think getting the Task Force report written in a powerful and scientifically sound manner should take precedence.

I would be happy if you or others would take it up and press on, but I should not. I will find another way to pursue the issue about Francis, maybe back channel for now. I think the Biden administration has to understand why they should accept his resignation, even if he thinks it is perfunctory.

I'm looking forward to a more usual upbeat Morens email. Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 6:59 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: You essay

Jerry, i am sorry to be falling down, i am just resurfacing with a smidgen of energy and a hope that tomorrow i will be able to eat and het back to work

I have carefully read the essay and my first traction is wow. It is really good. I pencilled in thoughts and suggestions/additions but basically it is solid. Hopefully tomorrow i can type my extensive comments/edits up. I hope you will go forward. I am enthused. More maybe tomorrow when i catch up on the cascade of shot that rains down on me daily.

This is important to go forward on

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Thu, 11 Jun 2020 1:18:44 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 11 Jun 2020 1:18:42 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Follow up
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak <[b6]>;

You are again right. I'm just angry that a perversion of the peer review system has happened. Lauer the pawn on this chess board, and he has been betrayed by those above him running the game. But he had a choice, and he could have said hell no. Would it cost him his job? Maybe. Would he come out of it with dignity and other job offers? Yes. That's the rub, and why he has to be included – I'm thinking by quoting from his communications to Peter.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jun 10, 2020, at 7:01 PM, David Morens [b6] wrote:
>
> Jerry, i don't know Lauer either but you as a former IC director know that he is undoubtedly a minor paper pusher used as a puppet in This awful action. I doubt he is any more the villain than the executioner who guillotined the French king and queen. Just a "useful idiot" as the Russians say. What must have gone on behind the scenes between Azar, Collins, and Tony is totally unknown to me, but i wonder whether a high level call to Tony might at the Least reveal useful clues About what he might be able to do to help, without incurring risk to him. Alot of uncertainties here, but you have done a HUGE amount to move the ball forward, so i hope u will keep pushing on all fronts. I have a feeling that this is a prolonged struggle that science, and specifically Peter, can and will win. David
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Jun 10, 2020, at 18:42, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
> >
> > Very sensible. I will think more and deeper, and I can discuss it with the 91 other NAM members as I have created a forum for doing that, both to keep them engaged and to get input from some very smart people. I could see using the Nobel Laureate letter to Azar and Collins and the NAM statement as the focus of our follow up and that keeps it above NIAID and Tony. I don't have a grudge against Lauer but he is the instrument and maybe should be part of the focus since I could easily site from his letter. Thanks again for sage input. Jerry
> >
> > Sent from my iPhone
> >
> > > On Jun 10, 2020, at 5:20 PM, David Morens [b6] wrote:
> > >
> > > Jerry, I am not sure what is the best way to proceed. Yes, I am in a position to speak to Tony, and will do so if that is the best way, and yes, I can give you contact info for Hilary, but first let us think this through.
> > >
> > > To my knowledge Tony has not spoken to anyone in NIAID about this, including me and including our Deputy Director. That is, aside from the comments he made a few weeks ago at the Town Hall meeting, which I shared with you. I suspect he sees this as a delicate issue, not to be discussed even with

his own staff. Therefore, I am thinking the best way to approach him might be from someone at a very high level, perhaps you or someone else he considers an equal. This could be done by a phone call to him, asking him to return the call about a delicate matter when convenient. He is naturally very cautious about sticking his neck out, although he has begun to do so on several issues recently. I am not sure how he would respond. Perhaps negatively, but letting it be known he is on our side. Even that would be important info. In the end, he might be able to do as much or more behind the scenes than leading the charge. Whoever calls him should be someone he respects and trusts, and at a "senior" level. What do you think?

david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)

b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Wed, Jun 10, 2020 at 2:33 PM Keusch, Gerald T < b6 > wrote:

> I am in discussion with the 91 other signatories of the letter from NAM members to the three NASEM Presidents on how to follow up on the tepid statement released by Victor, without the endorsement of the other two Presidents.
>
> One suggestion is that now we can build on that statement and redraft the letter we sent to NASEM and redirect it to Azar and Collins. A couple say we should include Tony, as it was an NIAID grant. I am planning to redo the letter and this time send it to Azar and Collins and use some press connections to get it into the public domain. I am hesitant to include Tony unless he feels he has sufficient distance and firewall from the action taken. Maybe he would like an opportunity to respond to press coverage and further distance himself. So, David, are you in a

position to ask Tony about this? I know that you have told us his communications in are monitored, and what goes out is also monitored. I have an alternative strategy and that would be through Hilary Marston. I was in touch with her as Nicki Lurie and I were writing a brief on the R&D Preparedness Ecosystem for Victor to submit to the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board. That could be the subject of an email; I think I also have her phone (do they bug the phones of Institute OD professional staff?) so that would be an alternative, as I don't know if I have a non .gov email address for her.

Let me know. The goal is relentless pressure. Just when they think its quieted down we ratchet up again. I have to note that Harold Varmus tells me they won't listen to anything but on day 1 of the new administration the NIH Director will be replaced and Peter's grant will be restored. I'm not sure about the first (but you dismiss Varmus's opinions at your own peril), or the day 1 timeline, but I am convinced the grant will be restored.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine and Global Health
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 5:39:22 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 5:39:21 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Statement of Advisory Committee to the NIH Director about the Daszak grant termination
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6];

Wow! The best part was the look on Francis' and Larry's faces! Did you notice that early on Larry took a swig on something in a coffee mug? Probably Jack Daniels straight up. They both look as complicit as hell. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 16, 2020, at 15:55, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:

In case you haven't actually seen it, Rich Roberts sent me the link below to the video of the ACD meeting. At around 1 hour and 5 minutes into the videocast, Brenden Lee is given the floor to read a statement from 15/17 ACD members (2 abstentions) about what has happened to the EHA grant and calls on Collins to review and reverse if the action cannot be substantiated. It is an absolutely remarkable moment which can only be equaled by the lack of any meaningful response other than "thank you" from Francis.

https://videocast.nih.gov/watch=37816

Date: Tue, 10 Nov 2020 4:15:30 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 10 Nov 2020 4:15:27 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Re:
From: "Keusch, Gerald T' b6
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Attachments: NIH Follow-up to EHA 7 8 20.pdf

On another note, I restarted conversation with Rich Roberts and I suggested we do a combined follow up on the EHA situation, including his 77 Nobel laureates group with my 144 National Academy of Medicine group, focused on the July 8 NIH letter (attached, although you have probably seen it) and in the words of Harold Varmus "outrageous" conditions for reinstating the grant. Rich is going to contact Peter to see if his initial concerns about posting the letter for the public on Roberts website are now allayed. You may know that the Wall Street Journal had an article about this on August 19 (NIH Presses U.S. Nonprofit for Information on Wuhan Virology Lab https://www.wsj.com/articles/nih- presses-u-s-nonprofit-for-information-on-wuhan-virology-lab-11597829400). I am not a WSJ subscriber and can't access the whole article to read. Are you and if so can you download that and send me a copy? Or maybe Greg has it available? I didn't want to send another note to Peter just yet, especially as Roberts agreed to follow up with him first. Thanks.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 4:04 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T < b6
Subject: Re:

Right, my suckers comment was related to a couple others, so I will shut up and be professional! I have known Mike O for over 40 years and while he can go off the rails and become an alarmist, he is smart and energetic..... Goosby is great. I know Rick Bright only slightly but am VERY glad he has been resurrected, Lazarus-like. d

On 11/9/2020 6:28 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:
> I have already talked to Nicki and I'll continue to ask her for insight and what I can possibly do.
>
> Regarding the Task Force, I thought it was an interesting decision to include Rick Bright. I know Gawande, Osterholm and Goosby, and I don't think of them as sucker-uppers, but rather knowledgeable and willing to take decisions based on evidence. Mike Osterholm is sometimes a bit out of line, but basically I think he understands the issues, although I guess he could be a DC hanger-on. Same for Zeke Emanuel. What impressed me as they all are public health, global health, and many involved in clinical medicine. No Mike Pence in the bunch.
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: David Morens b6
> Sent: Monday, November 9, 2020 6:19 PM
> To: Keusch, Gerald T < b6
> Subject: Re:
>
> I don't know.... i am a mere scientist and don't often rub elbows with the insiders A friend told me that Nickie is in the loop, and you know her, so that is one idea. What about some of your NAM colleagues who might be connected? I guess the Q is who is the Biden team talking to? The list of the task force released this morning includes more than a few perennial Washington sucker-uppers, i eon't say who, so that is not encouraging. D
>

> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
>> On Nov 9, 2020, at 18:08, Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] wrote:
>>
>> I'm also talking to anybody I know who is inside the Biden transition team or has connections with them to make sure the issue of firing Collins is on the agenda, and to move Lauer out of OD to some obscure position. Any suggestions?
>>
>> Jerry
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
>> Sent: Monday, November 9, 2020 5:48 PM
>> To: Peter Daszak [redacted] ; Keusch, Gerald T
>> [redacted]
>> Subject:
>>
>> On cnn just a minute ago tony waffled on a Q about whether he'd be in his same job, then with bery strange words implied he would still be head of niaid, but with tortured verbiage. He also ducked the Q of whether he had spoken to Biden. D
>>
>> Sent from my iPhone
>> David M Morens
>> OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 9:09:14 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 9:09:13 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Statement of Advisory Committee to the NIH Director about the Daszak grant termination
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]

Agree. Now in addition to that we need the action reversed.

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 5:39 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: Re: Statement of Advisory Committee to the NIH Director about the Daszak grant termination

Wow! The best part was the look on Francis' and Larry's faces! Did you notice that early on Larry took a swig on something in a coffee mug? Probably Jack Daniels straight up. They both look as complicit as hell. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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>
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>
> https://videocast.nih.gov/watch=37816

Date: Tue, 10 Nov 2020 6:24:31 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 10 Nov 2020 6:24:30 PM -0500
Subject: RE:
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

I'll let you know. I sent an email to Aleksei and Robert Kessel at EHA.

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 6:23 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re:

If they dont have i am sure i can track down. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Nov 10, 2020, at 18:14, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> I bet EHA has it so I will ask Aleksi
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: David Morens [b6] >
> Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 5:54 PM
> To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] >
> Subject: Re:
>
> I am “away” for a couple days on all day zoom calls but will try to track this down. D
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
>> On Nov 10, 2020, at 16:15, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>>
>> On another note, I restarted conversation with Rich Roberts and I suggested we do a combined follow up on the EHA situation, including his 77 Nobel laureates group with my 144 National Academy of Medicine group, focused on the July 8 NIH letter (attached, although you have probably seen it) and in the words of Harold Varmus "outrageous" conditions for reinstating the grant. Rich is going to contact Peter to see if his initial concerns about posting the letter for the public on Roberts website are now allayed. You may know that the Wall Street Journal had an article about this on August 19 (NIH Presses U.S. Nonprofit for Information on Wuhan Virology Lab https://www.wsj.com/articles/nih- presses-u-s-nonprofit-for-information-on-wuhan-virology-lab-11597829400). I am not a WSJ subscriber and can't access the whole article to read. Are you and if so can you download that and send me a copy? Or maybe Greg has it available? I didn't want to send another note to Peter just yet, especially as Roberts agreed to follow up with him first. Thanks.
>>
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>>
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>>> From: David Morens [b6] >
>>> Sent: Monday, November 9, 2020 6:19 PM
>>> To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
>>> Subject: Re:
>>>
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>>>> Jerry
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>>>> Sent: Monday, November 9, 2020 5:48 PM
>>>> To: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T
>>>> [b6]
>>>> Subject:
>>>>
>>>> On cnn just a minute ago tony waffled on a Q about whether he'd be in his same job, then with bery strange words implied he would still be head of niaid, but with tortured verbiage. He also ducked the Q of whether he had spoken to Biden. D

>>>>
>>>> Sent from my iPhone
>>>> David M Morens
>>>> OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Fri, 1 May 2020 7:56:13 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 1 May 2020 7:56:06 PM -0400
Subject: Congressional questions now to DoD re. our contracts
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

As I feared - they're now digging into other contracts we have. This one doesn't even involve China.

https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2020/05/01/coronavirus- congressman-probes-pentagon-weapons-mass-destruction-grant-firm-sent-taxpayer-dollars-wuhan-lab/

Any advice welcome. This is just one Congress member asking for details. This contract doesn't involve China, but I'm getting nervous.

USAID have already asked for information and I expect that's next.

It's a harrassing drumbeat against us, taxpayer dollars going to China, as a distraction but one that could easily destroy our organization if DoD doesn't bother to defend us.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2020 5:22 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: FW: NIH funding!

-----Original Message-----

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2020 5:19 PM
To: Ben Plumley [b6]>
Subject: RE: NIH funding!

Better part of discretion is to keep EHA out of this. I think the key issue with congress is to generate support right now to reverse the termination of the grant, and to demand accountability from NIH for its actions. There is a FOIA request from a right wing organization (https://nlpc.org/2020/04/28/nlpc- seeks-niaid-documents-regarding-wuhan-lab-and-pandemic/) for material from NIAID to document connections and funding to the Wuhan lab, which they believe is the origin of the CoV-2 virus and the pandemic. How do we FOIA NIH Directors Office for information on the termination of the grant. As you know they were really clumsy, first saying it was for convenience (doesn't pertain to grants, just to contracts) and then backing off to say they really mean to say it was for cause. There is some reason to think that pertains to fraud, whether scientific or financial, and that there must be an investigation before it can be effected. In this case the "investigation" was 1 week and amounted to asking EHA to stop funding WIV (they weren't) and providing information on past interactions, which EHA did. That was acknowledged in a positive way a day later, and the next day the grant was terminated. Really fishy.

The important thing now is to move the spotlight off EHA and place it squarely on the Office of the NIH Director. Your contacts may be helpful in doing that.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Ben Plumley [b6]>
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2020 4:00 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: NIH funding!

Thanks Peter

Hang on in there! Im very impressed with the very diplomatic way you are handling this.

Ive been in discussions with a number of congressional representatives (bipartisan) about dedicated funding for the international COVID response in a future funding bill, and as you know, as well as being very supportive and close to EcoHealth Alliance, I am also on Barbara Lee's Executive Committee. I will be speaking with her over the weekend on a range of things, and if helpful would like to bring her up to speed.

Somewhat as Congress did for the Global Fund, when the Administration tried to defund/scale funding for it, there may be ways supporters can help bipartisan leaders to address this in a concrete but not inflammatory way.

Jerry - if I can be of any help at all, dont hesitate to reach out to me. And if discretion is the better part of valor at this stage, understand that too

Best

Ben

> On May 1, 2020, at 12:53 PM, Peter Daszak [b6]> wrote:
>

> It's a nightmare, to be honest. With this President being so vindictive, and fixated right now on trying to blame China, we're worried that our organization's other funding sources could be targeted. We're trying to encourage people to push the bigger message about 1) NIH's disgraceful, and likely illegal, behavior; 2) keeping politics out of science. We're also trying to carefully change the narrative around our organization back to the science we do and how it benefits the health of people right now with COVID-19 (e.g. our virus discovery program has fed right into the Remdesivir in vitro work and other drugs).
>
> Unfortunately, if it comes from us, we're a target. Even if the debate links back repeatedly to us, we are a target. I know Diane Feinstein's office are trying to move something, so is the House Appropriations for HHS.
>
> I've spoken with a few well-known people to try to get other loud voices speaking out in a sensitive way (Jeremy Farrar of Wellcome Trust etc.). I'm cc'ing one of them here, Jerry Keusch from Boston University's BSL-4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center. He'll fill you in on who he's spoken with and what's happening.
>
> Jerry - Ben worked with the London School Trop Med Hyg and runs a podcast out of the West Coast ("A Shot in the Arm"), and is currently going through the process of likely becoming an EHA Board member.
>
>
>
>
>
>
>
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
>
>
>
> Peter Daszak
> President
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 460 West 34th Street
> New York, NY 10001
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Ben Plumley b6 >
> Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 12:13 PM
> To: Peter Daszak b6 >
> Subject: NIH funding!
>

>
> Peter
>
> Am sure you are up to your ears in dealing with this appalling Administration decision. Is there anything I can do to help?
>
> I'm close with Nancy Pelosi's office here, and as you know, on Barbara Lee's Executive Committee. If ok, I'd like to highlight this to Congresswoman Lee. Im also close with Congressman Cox from CA 21, And he has been a strong supporter of Global Health investments. I wouldnt want to impose on your DC strategy - but if it's helpful to talk with someone in your office on how I could help, just let me know.
>
> Courage!
>
> Ben
> Sent from my iPhone

Date: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 12:27:35 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 12:27:32 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Two beauties from the internet!
From: "Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [redacted]
To: Peter Daszak [redacted]; Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
CC: Robert Kessler [redacted]>; Aleksei Chmura [redacted]>;

Oh my!

Sorry to hear that this continues, but I am not surprised. I hope science wins out over conspiracy mongering. I went through a lot of this regarding 1918 flu sequencing and reconstruction, and then influenza gain of function stuff 8 years ago. Same people…

Jeff

Jeffery K. Taubenberger, M.D., Ph.D.,
Chief, Viral Pathogenesis and Evolution Section
Deputy Chief, Laboratory of Infectious Diseases
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
33 North Drive, Room 3E19A.2 MSC 3203
Bethesda, MD 20892-3203 USA

Tel. [redacted] Fax. 1-301-480-1696
email: [redacted]

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Disclaimer: The information in this e-mail and any of its attachments is confidential and may contain sensitive information. It should not be used by anyone who is not the original intended recipient. If you have received this e-mail in error please inform the sender and delete it from your mailbox or any other storage devices. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases shall not accept liability for any statements made that are sender's own and not expressly made on behalf of NIAID.

From: Peter Daszak [redacted]>
Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 at 12:01 PM
To: "Keusch, Gerald T" [redacted]>, [redacted]" [redacted]>, "Taubenberger, Jeffrey (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [redacted]>
Cc: Robert Kessler [redacted]>, Aleksei Chmura [redacted]
Subject: Two beauties from the internet!

Back to the fun stuff. Check out this beauty I dug up on "GM Watch" website.

https://www.gmwatch.org/en/news/latest- news/19437

I'm cc'ing Jeff Taubenberger so he knows what's going on with Ebright and the others. Fairly ridiculous stuff, and would be funny, if it weren't for the fact that they're out to cause real trouble. At the end of the piece you'll see a list of 20+ people who've been very active on Twitter revealing names of EcoHealth's funders, calling us all criminals, and generally making up bizarre links with Gates, Soros, Fauci etc. At least one of them is a person who claims to have spent a few yrs in Federal Jail, many are QAnon, and some have been reported by me to the FBI…just in case.

I was also v. surprised to see this tweet below. Someone has inserted an image of my head, Zhengli Shi's and Fauci+Collins onto a cartoon, based on a South Park episode where the Aussie Crocodile Hunter Steve Irwin (me) catches a dangerous croc (the virus) and gets injured (metaphor for COVID). Badly done, bizarre and surprising people will spend this amount of time on this

issue.
You'll see the cartoon if you follow this link:
https://twitter.com/OneOfMa37459621/status/1264259178346041345?s=20

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Mon, 10 Aug 2020 2:22:03 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 10 Aug 2020 2:21:59 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Monday morning news from Wuhan & elsewhere...
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6];
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6];

No problem Jerry – got and incorporated all your changes. Toned down your comment about us being bad in the US to just "Our nation's willful and destructive disengagement has enabled others to act in similar fashion."

Once the White house see this paper, your cellphone won't work either!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:53 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: Monday morning news from Wuhan & elsewhere...

Thanks for the updates Peter. After I sent you my edits/comments on the transition team document I went back to review my emails and in some mysterious manner lost my cursor and I can't shut down or login again. Something really strange maybe Trump trying to spook me. I have a call in to my IT guy but I'm still in the Berkshires until the morning so I'm reduced to my cell phone unless I commander my wife's machine. I'm looking forward to the final final as I think it has become quite sharp and clear.

And happy to eat, drink and be merry in Wuhan. We should bring our favorite partner with us as well. Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 10, 2020, at 12:43 PM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

Great news clip and, you see, things are getting better. I have talked to a number of reporters, mostly off the record but some on, and have headed them both to you and Dennis. I just gave a reporter Dennis's contact info Friday and told them I thought he was temporarily out at Texas A & M, maybe at the Scowcroft Institute. BTW, I have worked a bit with the Scowcroft Institute and there are some good folks there, Republicans but good smart people. David

On 8/10/2020 11:24 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

Had a fun weekend w/ reporters breaking into my late breakfast. Here's a story from NBC where they actually went inside the lab.

https://www.today.com/video/inside- the-wuhan-lab-at-center-of-coronavirus-controversy-89836101738

Unfortunately Zhengli Shi is b6 this week so she didn't feature, but the very likeable Director of the Lab (the guy she interviews first) and the more political director of the Institute were interviewed.

Good to see Wuhan opening up to outside journalists. I look forward to a trip there with both of you one day, followed by a banquet, baiju drinking, and Karaoke with the very excellent singer Zhengli Shi!

On Wednesday we're expecting a full story from Wall St Journal on the origins of COVID. Apparently Tony is interviewed, Dennis Carroll and other Luminaries.

In other news, Dennis Carroll is now assisting the Biden Campaign in designing policy on Global Health. There'll be a story in the New York Times either today or tomorrow…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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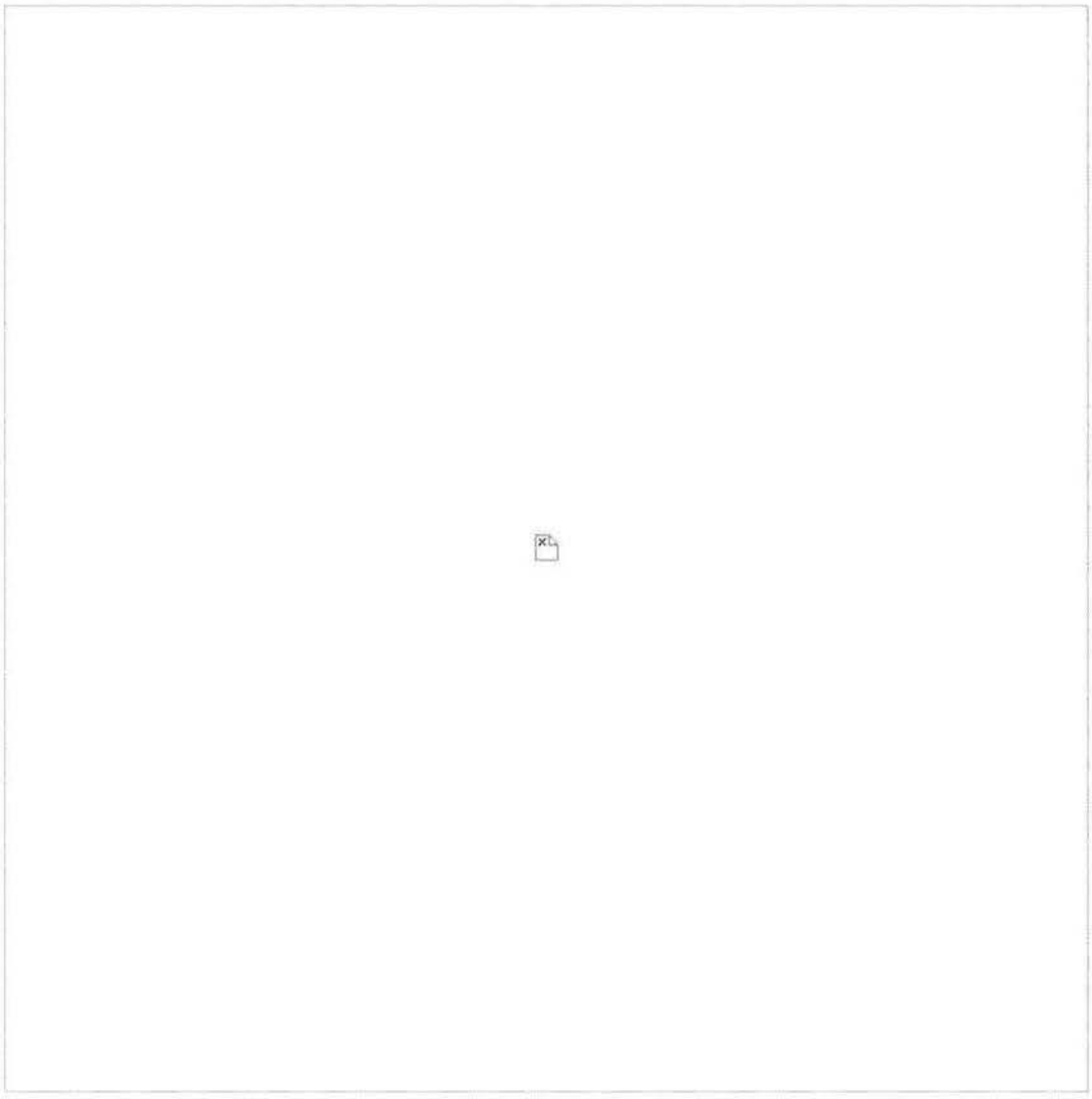
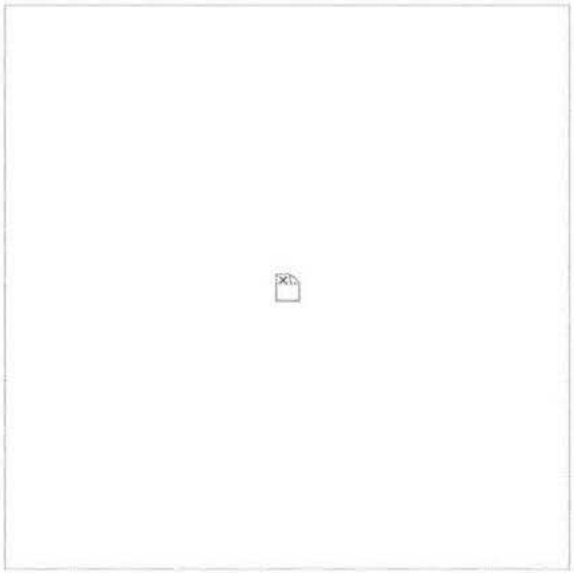
From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 7:44 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Wednesday Morning: Virus disinformation

Re Sinclair.....

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** The New York Times <nytdirect@nytimes.com>
> **Date:** July 29, 2020 at 06:49:36 EDT
> **To:** [b6]
> **Subject: Wednesday Morning: Virus disinformation**
> **Reply-To:** nytdirect@nytimes.com
>
> View in browser nytimes.com
> Continue reading the main story





July 29, 2020

Continue reading the main story

SUPPORTED BY

By David Leonhardt

Good morning. The attorney general spars with Democrats. Tech C.E.O.s prepare for criticism from Congress. And televised conspiracy theories are helping to spread the virus.

Information contagion



The Sinclair Broadcast Group published an interview highlighting baseless arguments by Dr. Judy Mikovits, a discredited scientist. Zuma Press, via Alamy

Sinclair Broadcast Group recently published an online interview with a conspiracy theorist who claimed that Dr. Anthony Fauci created the coronavirus using monkey cells. Sinclair — which operates almost 200 television stations — has also run segments downplaying the severity of the virus.

Fox News has repeatedly run segments promoting ideas that scientists consider false or that question the seriousness of the virus.

Breitbart published a video this week in which a group of doctors claimed that masks were unnecessary and that the drug hydroxychloroquine cured the virus. It received 14 million views in six hours on Facebook, my colleague Kevin Roose reports. (President Trump tweeted a link to it.)

Why is the U.S. enduring a far more severe virus outbreak than any other rich country?

There are multiple causes, but one of them is the size and strength of right-wing media organizations that frequently broadcast falsehoods. The result is confusion among many

Americans about scientific facts that are widely accepted, across the political spectrum, in other countries.

Canada, Japan and much of Europe have no equivalent to Sinclair — whose local newscasts reach about 40 percent of Americans — or Fox News. Germany and France have widely read blogs that promote conspiracy theories. "But none of them have the reach and the funding of Fox or Sinclair," Monika Pronczuk, a Times reporter based in Europe, told me.

Fox is particularly important, because it has also influenced President Trump's response to the virus, which has been slower and less consistent than that of many other world leaders. "Trump repeatedly failed to act to tame the spread, even though that would have helped him politically," The Washington Post's Greg Sargent has written. The headline on Sargent's opinion column is: "How Fox News may be destroying Trump's re-election hopes."

Another factor creating confusion: The lack of an aggressive response to virus misinformation from Facebook and YouTube. Judd Legum, author of the Popular Information newsletter, has identified some of this misinformation, and the two companies have responded by removing the posts he cited. But Legum told me he had pointed out only a small fraction of the false information, and the companies had done relatively little to remove it proactively.

Twitter took a slightly more aggressive step yesterday, putting temporary limits on the account of Donald Trump Jr. after he shared the false Breitbart video.

b6 **in Congress:** Jeff Bezos of Amazon, Tim Cook of Apple, Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook, and Sundar Pichai of Google's parent company, Alphabet, will testify today at a House hearing on whether their companies stifle competition. "It has the feeling of tech's Big Tobacco moment," one expert said.

The Times's editorial board has suggested questions lawmakers should ask each executive.

THREE MORE BIG STORIES

1. Barr spars with Congress



Attorney General William Barr testified on Capitol Hill on Tuesday. Pool photo by Matt McClain

Attorney General William Barr clashed with House Democrats in a hostile five-hour hearing.

Barr defended the deployment of federal agents in Portland, Ore., saying that "rioters and anarchists" had "hijacked" peaceful demonstrations. And he denied improperly interfering in criminal cases against Roger Stone and Michael Flynn, two allies of President Trump. Democrats portrayed him as a dangerous political enforcer for the president.

You can watch some of the most contentious exchanges in a Times video.

In other protest developments:

- The deputy director of the F.B.I. called protests against police brutality "a national crisis" in a memo in early June. The memo suggested that some top federal law enforcement officials embraced an aggressive response to the demonstrations from the start.
- The Minneapolis police believe an umbrella-wielding man who vandalized store windows during a May protest has ties to a white supremacist group and had hoped to foment looting and sow racial unrest.
- New York City police officers in plain clothes pulled a protester into an unmarked minivan. Critics said they were adopting tactics similar to those used by federal agents in Portland, Ore.; the police said the protester had damaged police cameras near City Hall.

---

2. Experts grow wary

My colleague Donald McNeil interviewed 20 public health experts about the coronavirus pandemic and found "a pervasive sense of sadness and exhaustion."

He writes: "Where once there was defiance, and then a growing sense of dread, now there seems to be sorrow and frustration, a feeling that so many funerals never had to happen and that nothing is going well."

In other virus news:

- More than 1,300 Americans died from the virus yesterday, the highest one-day number since late May.

- A recent report, sent to state officials by the White House's coronavirus task force and obtained by The Times, concluded that 21 states had outbreaks serious enough to justify more restrictions.
- Trump falsely claimed that "large portions of the country" were "corona-free."
- A Times analysis found at least 6,300 virus cases tied to about 270 colleges. And the new academic year has not even begun at most schools.

3. A breakthrough in Alzheimer's research



PET scans of a brain. Zephyr/Science Source

Scientists published a report on a new blood test that has the potential to make diagnosing Alzheimer's disease simpler, more affordable and widely accessible.

It's a significant step forward: The test identifies signs of the degenerative disease up to 20 years before memory and thinking problems are expected. Researchers estimate that such tests could become available in two to three years. The tests could speed up the hunt for treatments by screening participants for clinical trials more efficiently than is now possible.

"It's not a cure, it's not a treatment, but you can't treat the disease without being able to diagnose it," one expert said about the blood test.

Here's what else is happening

- Netflix secured the most Emmy nominations ever, and more than a third of the acting nominees are Black.
- Universal Pictures and AMC Entertainment, the world's largest movie chain, have reached a deal to shorten the window between U.S. theaters and streaming services to just 17 days — down from 90. The deal will probably change the way that Hollywood does business.

- The Times's Nate Cohn examined claims that recent polls are failing to interview Trump supporters. Cohn writes: "There are many reasons the polls might ultimately be wrong in November, as many state polls were four years ago, but there's no serious evidence that the polls are systematically missing Republican voters."
- **Lives Lived:** He was a familiar face on "Falcon Crest"; battled Bruce Lee in "Enter the Dragon"; and arm-wrestled Marlon Brando, to whom he was sometimes compared, in "The Appaloosa." John Saxon, who accumulated almost 200 film and TV credits in a career that began in the 1950s, died at 83.

Continue reading the main story

PAID POST: A MESSAGE FROM MOEN

Demand Congress suspend water shutoffs during a global pandemic.

Right now, millions of Americans are experiencing water shutoffs during a global pandemic, making handwashing impossible. Add your name at FoodAndWaterAction.org to demand Congress place a national moratorium on water shutoffs for the nearly 40 percent of Americans still at risk. Congress is expected to vote in the next week, and right now you have the chance to make your voice heard and #UnlockWaterForAll.

ACT NOW

IDEA OF THE DAY: ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Black Americans are more exposed to air pollution than white Americans. And researchers believe that air pollution causes higher rates of lung disease, asthma, heart disease and death from Covid-19.

In The Times Magazine, Linda Villarosa tells the story of Grays Ferry, a South Philadelphia neighborhood where most residents are Black. Created through a combination of redlining and public housing, the neighborhood sits across a highway from an aging oil refinery that produced most of the city's toxic emissions.

Villarosa describes how Grays Ferry residents fought an effort to build a new natural-gas facility — and how that may offer a template for the future of environmental justice

activism.

The racial wealth gap: Joe Biden released an economic plan focused on racial equity yesterday. The proposal would help business owners of color get loans, create a housing tax credit for lower-income Americans and direct clean-energy spending to disadvantaged communities.

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PLAY, WATCH, EAT, PAINT

A go-to vegetarian dinner



Bryan Gardner for The New York Times

For an easy weeknight dinner, try Yasmin Fahr's eye-catching recipe for baked feta with broccolini, tomatoes and lemon. Baking the tangy cheese lends it an almost creamy texture. Serve it with orzo to turn it into a filling meal.

People still love Bob Ross



Photo illustration by The New York Times

The painter Bob Ross grew up in Florida, where he once attempted to heal an injured baby gator in his family's bathtub. He was in the Air Force for 20 years — including 12 in Alaska, where he learned to paint. To save money on haircuts, he got a perm, the hairstyle that would become his signature.

Twenty-five years after his death, the painter with the gentle demeanor is still as popular

as ever, providing comfort to fans who may not have even been alive when his TV show originally aired. In The Atlantic, the writer Michael J. Mooney wrote a tribute to the painter and his enduring appeal.

One of the internet's favorite mysteries: Where are Ross's landscape paintings now? The Times found them.

Timely horror movies



A scene from "Relic."Jackson Finter/IFC Midnight

Horror movies thrive on isolation. Cabins in the woods, sparsely populated small towns, empty motels — these are all places where no one can hear you scream.

If you're itching for some fresh horror films to check out, the critic Jason Zinoman rounded up three new works, all directed by women, that are equal parts thrilling and thoughtful. The through-line that connects them is "a sensitivity to the punishing nature of loneliness and the sinister aspects of solitude," he writes.

Diversions

- Turn your desktop into a calming portal to somewhere else.
- The late-night hosts discussed the misleading video about hydroxychloroquine that the president and his son retweeted.

Games

Here's today's Mini Crossword, and a clue: Dog trick with a paw (five letters).

You can find all of our puzzles here.

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. I'll be interviewing Ai-jen Poo, an advocate for low-wage workers, and Robert Reich, a former labor secretary, about how to create an economy with more good-paying jobs — tomorrow at 5 p.m. Eastern.

You can see today's print front page here.

Today's episode of "The Daily" is about the changing relationship between the U.S. and China.

We'd like your feedback! Please fill out this short form.

Ian Prasad Philbrick and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at themorning@nytimes.com.

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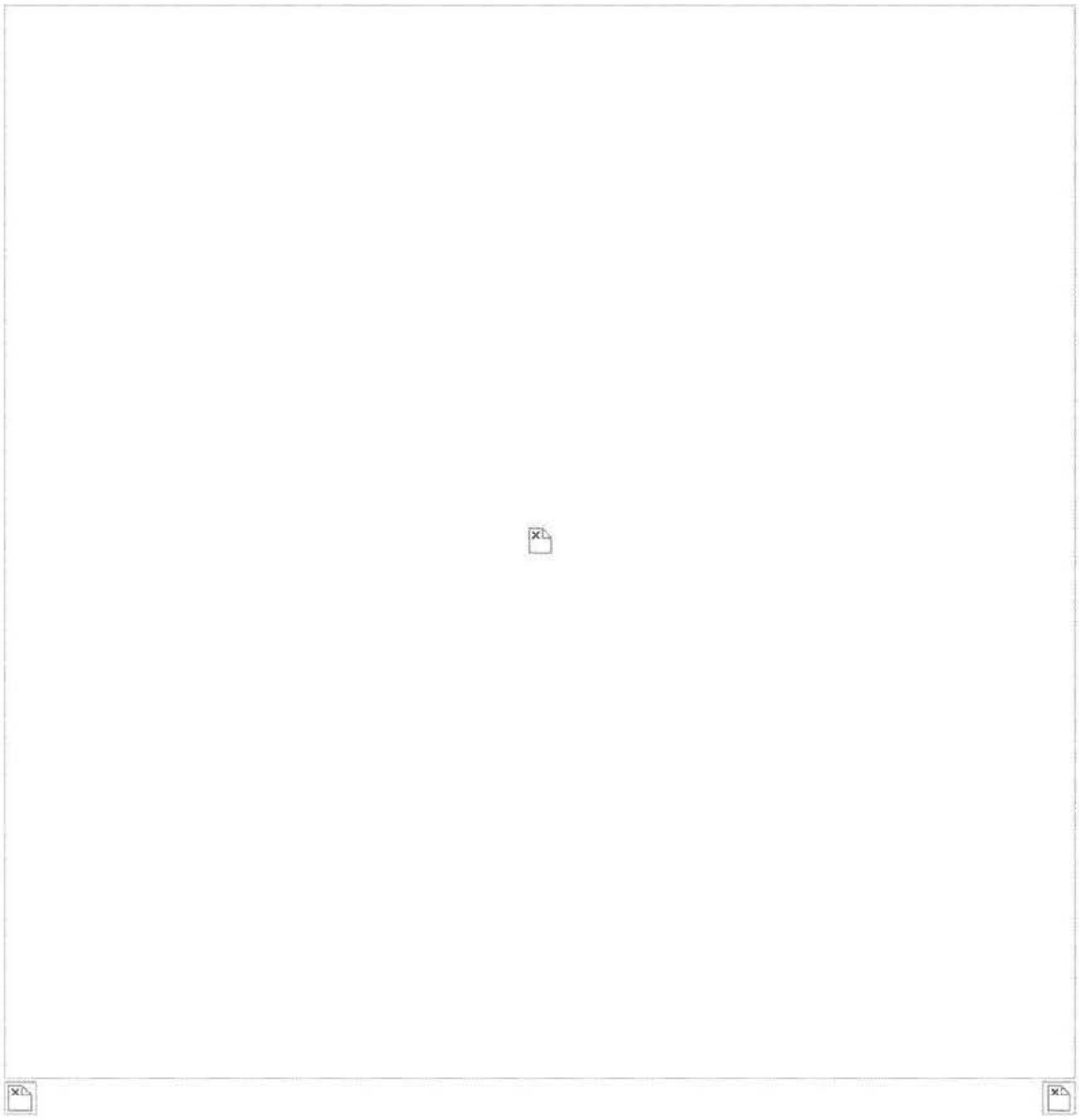

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The New York Times Company, 620 Eighth Avenue New York, NY 10018

Date:	Wed, 6 May 2020 9:43:10 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 6 May 2020 9:43:08 AM -0400
Subject:	RE: Union of Concerned Scientists
From:	"Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To:	Peter Daszak b6 >;
CC:	Dennis Carroll b6 >; David Morens b6 >;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.png

Hi Peter,

I have been thinking about UCS. I have been a member since my Fogarty days, and I was the first person at NIH to talk to them about the attempts by the Bush administration to control NIH and the only NIH person who was included in their report on scientific integrity in 2004. If you have a particular person in mind I wouldn't mind getting in touch with him/her.

Jerry

From: David Morens b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 8:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak < b6 >
Cc: Dennis Carroll < b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: Re: Union of Concerned Scientists

I don't know about it. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 5, 2020, at 19:59, Peter Daszak < b6 > wrote:
>
> BTW – I heard that Union of Concerned Scientists are asking the Wuhan lab about NIH scientist access to the lab. Is this something you all know about?
>
> Let me know - If so, I have some information I can send in an email that will help them.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 7:20 PM
To: Dennis Carroll <b6>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T <b6> Peter Daszak <b6>
Subject: Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab
https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Thanks, Dennis, I think we need all the rooting wed can get! david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:18 PM Dennis Carroll <b6> wrote:

> David, you can include me as rooting for Tony, and you, and all of NIH
>
> d
>
> On Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:36 PM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:
>
> > There's a lot of people really hoping Tony wins this one.
> >
> > Thanks for sharing.
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** David Morens <b6>
> > **Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:32 PM
> > **To:** Keusch, Gerald T <b6>

Cc: b6 Peter Daszak <b6>
Subject: Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Jerry, i doubt Tony is saying go ahead and fire me, but i think he is pushing his balancing act. Probably he hopes to stay one step ahead of eliciting Trump's firing wrath. Lots of others have played that game and lost, and if Tony wins, he'll be the first. But it is probably the right strategy to adopt. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 5, 2020, at 18:22, Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

I'm glad to see this. But I am also concerned. Trump is showing there is no limit to his paranoia. Firing the HHS IG and preventing Tony from talking to the House but allowing him to go to the Senate is just an indicator. Is Tony now saying, in a way, go ahead and fire me because I won't take this shit any more?

A lot of people are hoping and waiting for that. Is this pushback somewhat off the front page the strategy? Anyway, as my wife so often and so correctly tells me I have to read it before I can opine on it – whatever it happens to be.

Thanks, Jerry

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:15 PM
To: David Morens <b6> Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Subject: RE: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
Importance: High

Most important of all he stated that he doesn't buy the 'accidental lab release' hypothesis either – for the first time.

He's a hero to me, my wife and to our whole family.

We have our 'Fauci Mug' to prove that (see attached image). Please show that to the great man himself if there's an opportune moment over the next few weeks.

Cc'ing Dennis and Jerry on this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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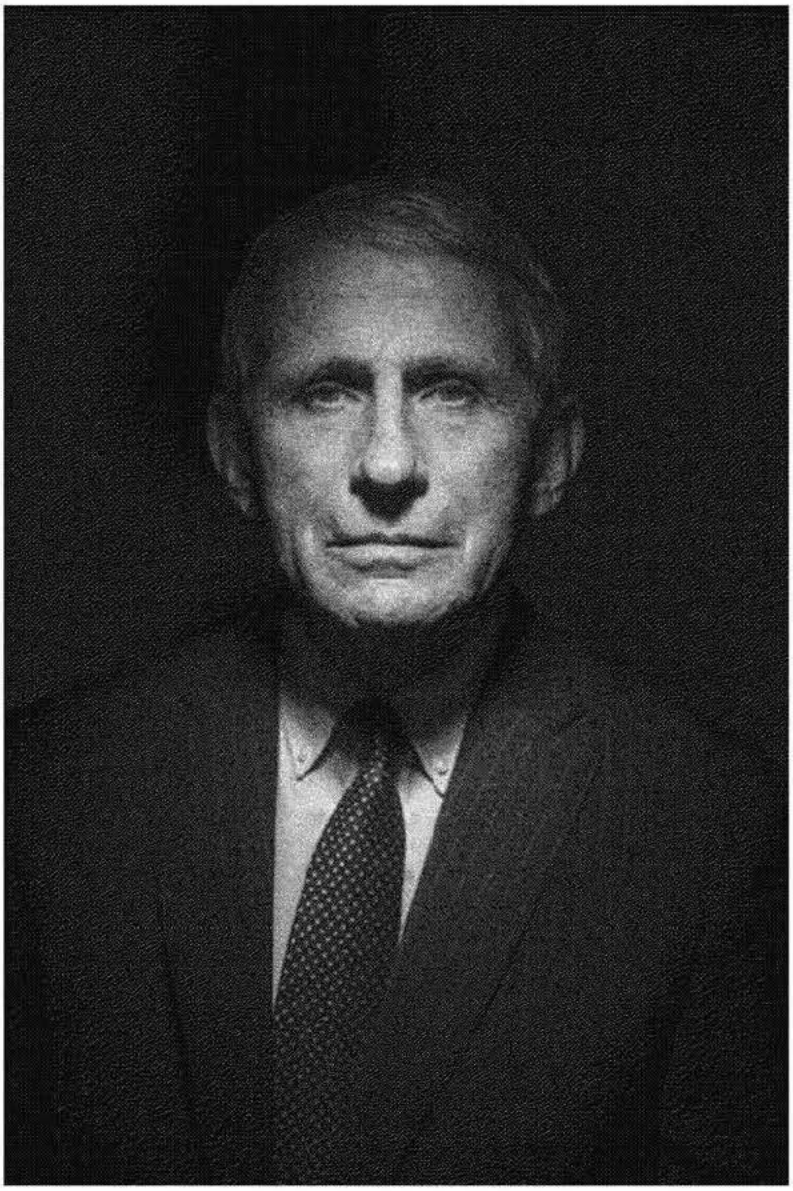
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:02 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Subject: Fwd: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>
> **Date:** May 4, 2020 at 20:58:15 EDT
> **Subject: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3**



ScienceCoronavirus Coverage

Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab

In an exclusive interview, the face of America's COVID-19 response cautions against the rush for states to reopen, and offers his tips for handling the pandemic's information deluge.

Anthony Fauci has been the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for almost 40 years, where he has tackled dozens of outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS. To him, the coronavirus is "extraordinary."

By **Nsikan Akpan** and Victoria Jaggard

PUBLISHED May 4, 2020

Anthony "Tony" Fauci has become the scientific face of America's COVID-19 response, and he says the best evidence shows the virus behind the pandemic was not made in a lab in China.

Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, shot down the discussion that has been raging among politicians and pundits, calling it "a circular argument" in a conversation Monday with National Geographic.

"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated … Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species," Fauci says. Based on the scientific evidence, he also doesn't entertain an alternate theory—that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, listens as President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 9, 2020, in Washington.

Photograph by Andrew Harnik, AP Photo

Fauci is most concerned that the United States will be put to the test this fall and winter by a second wave of COVID-19 if the country does not blunt the infection rate by the summer.

"Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter," he says, advising that the U.S. needs to make sure we not only have an adequate supply of tests available before a second wave hits, but also a system for getting those tests to the people who most need them.

"I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear," he says. "It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge." As such, Fauci says the U.S. should also focus this summer on properly reinforcing the nation's health care system, ensuring the availability of hospital beds, ventilators, and personal protective equipment for health care workers.

He also stressed the importance of continuing to social distance everywhere until the case counts start to fall in cities and states. The U.S. witnessed about 20,000 to 30,000 new cases every day in the month of April, suggesting the country is stuck in its peak.

Still, he remains optimistic that a vaccine will be ready within an historically short time frame, citing one promising candidate that he thinks may move into advanced clinical trials by the early summer. Fauci has said that he thinks a final vaccine could be available for general use as early as January, which would break records for the speed at which previous vaccines were developed.

One reason for his confidence is the "impressive" results being seen now in animals tested with a vaccine candidate made by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna Therapeutics, which brought it into human trials in a record 42 days. The candidate is what is known as an mRNA vaccine—a drug that uses snippets of a virus's genetic material—rather than the dead or weakened virus itself—to build the proteins that trigger the body's protective immune response.

To date, no type of mRNA vaccine has been licensed for use in humans, but Fauci believes there is great promise for this technology targeting the coronavirus, based in part on his experience developing treatments for HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and '90s.

"For some reason that we're still struggling with, the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV," he says. To fight off that virus, a vaccine has to work better than the body's own natural response. By contrast, "it's obvious that many people make

a very adequate immune response" to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the animal trials so far show that modest doses of the mRNA vaccine for coronavirus have also generated a strong immune response.

He adds that NIAID is still developing and supporting multiple vaccine efforts, in case those that go into trials soonest don't ultimately prove safe and effective. "You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time," he says.

Fauci told National Geographic he's concerned about states rushing to reopen before their infection rates fall. He also shared how he manages the barrage of new scientific information being released about COVID-19, and how his family and faith keep him going despite his increasingly hectic schedule.

(*The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.*)

Fauci on the vaccine

You've been the NIAID director since 1984, witnessing dozens of disease outbreaks. One of the first was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. How does that experience compare with COVID-19?

One of the important advantages is what we call targeted drug development. Viruses cause disease by binding to receptors on cells in your body, be they in your upper airway or in your lung, in the case of COVID-19. They then replicate at a rapid rate that triggers a variety of pathogenic processes. Targeting drugs to interfere at one or more vulnerable sites within this replication cycle is something that we learned with HIV.

Left:
U.S. President George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 19, 2008 to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland during ceremonies at the White House. The Presidential Medal of Freedom
… Read More
Photograph by Karen Bleier, AFP via Getty Images (Left) and Photograph by White House Photo / Alamy Stock Photo (Right)

SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] has the same sort of vulnerable points. We need to identify them and develop drugs, either alone or in combination, to block the replication.

Are there also lessons from HIV/AIDS that relate to developing a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are a bit different. We have a better chance of quickly getting, relatively speaking, a vaccine for the novel coronavirus than we did for HIV, because for some reason that's still unknown the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV.

We don't necessarily have that challenge with this coronavirus because it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response. They clear the virus, and they do well. As we know from the natural history of this disease, the majority of people actually either get well without any symptoms—they're called asymptomatic—or they have minimal symptoms, where they get a fever, some aches, and then they recover. The fact that the majority of people can actually clear the virus is a very good sign for the feasibility of developing a vaccine.

The two most widely discussed vaccine candidates are an mRNA vaccine from Moderna, which reached human trials in a record 42 days, and Oxford

University's candidate, based on what's known as a nonreplicating viral vector. Yet no vaccine based on these two technologies has ever been licensed for human use. What makes these two vaccines seem so promising, especially on this expedited timeline?

These vaccines are inducing, at least in animal models, really rather substantial immune responses, particularly the mRNA vaccine. When we look at the immune response that you can induce with a modest dose—one that's feasible to be translated into humans—and the amount of time it takes to get to that level of immunity, it is really quite impressive. It is also really easy to scale up with these two, in the sense of making a lot of doses pretty quickly. So you're right, they have not been approved, as many of the other vaccine platforms have, but the promise is great.

We at NIAID are either developing or supporting the development of multiple candidates. You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time—maybe June, July, or August—to get them into an advanced trial. The mRNA one is already well into phase one of clinical trials, and we're getting ready to go into phase two and three sometime in the early summer.

Fauci on reopening and masks

As states move to reopen businesses and warmer weather lures people outside, how concerned are you about a fresh spike in infections in the U.S.?

Take a look at the guidelines for Opening Up America Again. There are very well delineated checkpoints. There's a gateway where infections must go down for 14 days before you can enter into phase one for reopening. If you fulfill the requirements of phase one, you move to phase two. If you do it there, you go to phase three.

So when you see somebody in an environment in which the infections are not going down, and then you see 30 to 40 people on a beach with no mask … well that's very nice to have fun in the sun, but you're really putting yourself and everyone at risk for creating an even bigger spike in infections.

Do you fear a second wave?

What's impressed me the most—but clearly in a disturbing way—is the extraordinary efficiency of how the virus spreads. It spreads so much more efficiently than influenza does. You see situations where people at home try and physically separate; they have no contact except they've touched the plate or a doorknob, and they wind up getting infected.

The clusters in families, the outbreaks on the *Teddy Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, the enormous spread on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama harbor—it's a very, very transmissible virus.

Anthony Fauci hugs Nina Pham, the nurse who was infected with Ebola from treating patient Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, as Pham's mother Diana (sixth from left) and sister Cathy

… Read More Photograph by Alex Wong, Getty Images

We're going to be put to the test as we move toward the fall and winter of this year. If we do it correctly, then we could be able to blunt and diminish the daily rate of infections in this country as we get into the summer. I can't guarantee it, but if we do things right, that likely will happen.

But I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear. It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge. We now will have a few months—May June, July, August—to prepare, by making sure our health system is adequately supplied with ventilators, ICU beds, personal protective equipment, etcetera. We need to not only have tests, but to make sure the people who need tests can get tested.

So that by the time we get to September, we don't have the dialogue continually fixating on do you have enough tests? Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter.

What's your position on the general public wearing face masks?

I'm glad you asked, because it has evolved over the weeks and months. When there was first discussion, it was at a time when face masks—either surgical masks or N95 respirators—were at high scarcity.

Let's assume that we now have enough masks or that you could easily make a cloth covering, as was suggested appropriately by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I think those are reasonable assumptions. We know that the masks are better in the health-care setting to prevent someone who's infected from coughing and sneezing and infecting people in the environment. When you look at what the mask does for the general population, the data are not 100 percent: It doesn't 100 percent protect you from infecting somebody else, and it certainly doesn't 100 percent prevent somebody else from infecting you.

But if you wear a mask, you are getting some protection for yourself, and if you happen to be infected and don't know it, you're to some extent preventing transmission to someone else. Given that, it just makes sense that first of all, the best way to prevent spread is to maintain the physical distance of six feet.

So, if you're in a situation where you're in contact with no one, then you don't have to be walking around with a mask all day, that's for sure. But if you are in a situation where you are going to be within the realm of six feet—the grocery store or even walking out on the street—then wear it.

Fauci on the information deluge and the "virus made in Chinese lab" claim.

How do you keep up with the barrage of information and filter down to the most important science?

It's like drinking from a fire hydrant. It really is. Fortunately for me, I have a staff of three to four really good people who sift through the papers and when something looks unreasonable or "pie in the sky," they don't bother me with that. Then when all of these studies come across my desk, I read the title and the abstract. If it looks feasible, I'll put it aside and try and read it. When it's something that they think I should read, they make sure I read it.

Even with that screening process, it's still very difficult to consume everything that's out there, particularly with this relatively recent trend with these non-peer-reviewed, pre-publications [that have not gone through traditional vetting to appear in major journals].

So, what's your advice to the public at-large for sifting through the headlines and making sense of it all?

Dr. Anthony Fauci speaks with members of his laboratory during a meeting Aug. 31, 1990, where he describes a natural growth factor that is necessary for the AIDS virus to multiply.

Photograph by George Tames, The New York Times via Redux

Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about—and it's very difficult for the general public to distinguish. So, make sure the study is coming from a reputable organization that generally gives you the truth—though even with some reputable organizations, you occasionally get an outlier who's out there talking nonsense. If something is published in places like *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, or *JAMA*—you know, generally that is quite well peer reviewed because the editors and the editorial staff of those journals really take

things very seriously.

One topic in the news lately has been the origins of SAR-CoV-2. Do you believe or is there evidence that the virus was made in the lab in China or accidentally released from a lab in China?

If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats, and what's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved. A number of very qualified evolutionary biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species.

Sure, but what if scientists found the virus outside the lab, brought it back, and then it escaped?

But that means it was in the wild to begin with. That's why I don't get what they're talking about [and] why I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument.

Fauci's life right now

What's your typical day like?

I get up around five o'clock in the morning, and I usually wind up running downstairs, getting a quick breakfast, and looking at a thousand emails—literally a thousand.

I then head to the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for my day job—trying to develop a vaccine and drugs and running a $6 billion institution. I stay there until around one o'clock, and then I go down to the White House for multiple meetings. First, I meet with the doctor group—myself, coronavirus response coordinator Debbie Birx, director Bob Redfield from the CDC, commissioner Steve Hahn from FDA, and others. We then go into the task force meeting run by Vice President [Mike Pence], which usually lasts about an hour and a half. We summarize this pre-brief with the vice president and then go brief President [Donald Trump] for the press conference.

Then, the work starts … I head home or back to the NIH and work until the wee hours of the morning. The whole day is punctuated by everybody needing to talk to you: every governor in the states, every congressional leader, every leader in the White House. It's constant conference calls. It's an almost impossible situation—and that's seven days a week.

Then you superimpose upon that all the press you do—the TV or the radio or the interviews. It's kind of a surrealistic state. I have to wake up in the morning and literally, without being facetious, ask my wife, what day is it?

Wow, how do you unwind?

I power walk with my wife, usually at night or on the weekends. It's dark, but we still do it anyway.

Has it ever been too taxing?

A couple of months ago, I was foolish and just thought I could get away with almost no sleep. I mean, like three hours a night. I did that for a few weeks, and it almost killed me. It really wore me down badly. Thank goodness I have a very intelligent and clinically skilled wife who turned things around and said, You got to remember to eat, and you've got to remember to sleep. The day is still impossible, but I don't think I'm going to drop dead from it. I hope not.

You went to a Jesuit high school, where you learned the importance of doing good for the public. How has that experience informed your professional life?

My whole life was almost served to me on the basis that my mother and father were very much oriented toward service. They were never really interested in money or material things. That's just the way they were, both of them. So I never knew there was anything like going out there and making a lot of money, and that was really cemented when I went both to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, where the entire theme was service for others.

I almost never had any other inkling of doing anything except something that would

have a public service component to it. I'm very much of a people person, but I'm also scientifically inclined. My entire training is steeped in the humanities, and when you combine that with an aptitude for science, you wind up being a physician.

Victoria Jaggard is the senior editor for Science & Innovation at National Geographic.

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--

Dr Dennis Carroll
President, Global Virome Project
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University
Counselor and Advisor to the Faculty of Tropical Medicine at Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

mobile: b6
email b6

Date: Sun, 14 Jun 2020 2:17:05 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 14 Jun 2020 2:16:58 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

This is a disgrace and smacks of the McCarthy Era and the thought-police. I've read the background of every case that's been in the press. Some of them are clearly people committing prob criminal behavior (e.g. smuggling vials on planes). Others are people who are 'double-dipping' with companies in china and research in USA. Some are just unwitting scientists who've been given a stipend to talk in China and not realized the origin.

I get it that China is now the bad guy, but what if I get a Wellcome grant from the UK. Am I supposed to notify NIH – who would have known that? If the UK becomes a bad guy and we start digging back over the last decade or so (as has happened here), do we then have people who've gotten a Wellcome grant indicted!?

It's basically a tightening of regulations after the fact. I don't know where it says on my R01 form that I clearly have to make a statement on what funds I've received from foreign countries. I'm sure it's in the small print somewhere, but are we really at that moment in history where we're trying to catch scientists in a web like this? The message it sends to me and everyone else is "Do international research at your peril". That's bad news if the USA wants to stay engaged on the world stage scientifically…but I guess that's exactly the point: Trump doesn't want us to be and that's how he perceived he was voted. In.

I also note three phrases of particular concern to me:

- 41% of those under investigation (77 scientists) have been banned from further participation in NIH's well-regarded system of vetting grant proposals." That "well-regarded" moniker has been completely undermined by Collins' termination of my grant!
- "There are 399 scientists "of possible concern" to NIH, he told the advisory council,". Am I one of these people? Am I being investigated? I note that no one has actually asked me if I've received funds from China. I asked the FBI 2 weeks ago if I'm a 'person of interest' when I met with them and the bloody CIA out on my back porch (what a joke!) – they said 'No', but am I on the 18% of people who are 'pending'. Are NIH under any obligation to tell me they're investigating me? NIH has written back to "White Coat Waste" who filed FoIA's for our grant info and told them that there was an ongoing investigation so they can't have that info. Is that investigation into EHA or me?
- "Slightly more than one-half had been an NIH peer reviewer in the past 2 years, and 41% of those under investigation (77 scientists) have been banned from further participation in NIH's well-regarded system of vetting grant proposals." I was recently asked to serve as a reviewer on U01s for Flu (the next round of the CEIRS awards). I agreed, sent in my conflicts (very minimal) and then was declined. I was surprised by this. Here's the email I got back from the person organizing the review saying that this was because they're contracts not grants etc. (below). Is it because I'm now black-balled from reviews by NIH? I know this sounds paranoid, but this is the sort of reputational risk that Michael Lauer and Francis Collins clearly don't care about when they pursue people on these flights of fancy, and the fear factor is exactly what this Administration is trying to infuse into the system.

Dear Peter,

Sorry for not getting back to you sooner, but we were hoping to get a policy relaxation regarding having conflicted reviewers to serve on the contracts review panel. Unfortunately, we finally were not able to get this due to very strict rules with contracts reviews, and as a results we were not able to have you on this review panel. However, we will have another Influenza Transmission review meeting in November for grants applications in the U19 mechanism, and we hope you will be available to help. Since those are grants applications, conflicts can be easily managed, as conflicted reviews can still serve on the review panel. Thanks very much.

Best wishes,

Yong

****

L.-Yong Gao, Ph.D.
Scientific Review Officer
Microbiology Review Branch

Scientific Review Program, DEA
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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, April 26, 2020 10:08 PM
To: Gao, Yong (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Alison Andre b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Invitation to review NIAID/NIH contract proposals: Centers of Excellence for Influenza Research and Response
Importance: High

Dear Yong,

Many apologies for the delay – a lot going on last week. Here's my COI form.

There are few conflicts as you'll see, mainly because I haven't done much research on influenza for many years.

I did co-sign a statement in the Lancet a couple of months ago with some of the people on the list, but this was an editorial with 28 other authors, and I wouldn't say that creates a conflict.

I do have one person (Emily Gurley) that I've published quite a bit with on Nipah virus, and another who I'm on the advisory board to their organization (Juergen Richt).

Look forward to serving.

Cheers,

Peter

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2020 10:29 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Gerald Keusch b6
Subject: Fwd: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: June 13, 2020 at 10:13:51 EDT
Subject: Science: Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties

Fifty-four scientists have lost their jobs as a result of NIH probe into foreign ties

By Jeffrey MervisJun. 12, 2020 , 6:00 PM

Some 54 scientists have resigned or been fired as a result of an ongoing investigation by the National Institutes of Health into the failure of NIH grantees to disclose financial ties to foreign governments. In 93% of those cases, the hidden funding came from a Chinese institution.

The new numbers come from Michael Lauer, NIH's head of extramural research. Lauer had previously provided some information on the scope of NIH's investigation, which had targeted 189 scientists at 87 institutions. But his presentation today to a senior advisory panel offered by far the most detailed breakout of an effort NIH launched in August 2018 that has roiled the U.S. biomedical community, and resulted in criminal charges against some prominent researchers, including Charles Lieber, chair of Harvard University's department of chemistry and chemical biology.

"It's not what we had hoped, and it's not a fun task," NIH Director Francis Collins said in characterizing the ongoing investigation. He called the data "sobering."

In the vast majority of cases, Lauer reported, the person being investigated has been an Asian man in his 50s. Some three-quarters of those under investigation had active NIH grants, and nearly half had at least two grants. The 285 active grants totaled $164 million.

Lauer also presented data on the nature of the violations that NIH has uncovered. Some 70% (133) of the researchers had failed to disclose to NIH the receipt of a foreign grant, and 54% had failed to disclose participation in a foreign talent program. In contrast, Lauer said, only 9% hid ties to a foreign company, and only 4% had an undisclosed foreign patent. Some 5% of cases involved a violation of NIH's peer-review system.

Lauer said the fact that 82% of those being investigated are Asian "is not surprising" because "that's who the Chinese target" in their foreign talent recruitment programs. Some 82% are men, and their median age is 56, with the youngest being 48 and the oldest 59. Slightly more than one-half had been an NIH peer reviewer in the past 2 years, and 41% of those under investigation (77 scientists) have been banned from further participation in NIH's well-regarded system of vetting grant proposals.

NIH has been in the forefront of federal efforts to identify and block behavior that many U.S. government officials say poses a significant threat to the country's economic well-being and to national security. Several bills pending in Congress seek to limit that threat in various ways, including by limiting the flow of scientific talent from China to the United States, and by restricting access to federally funded research that provides a foundation for cutting-edge technologies and new industries.

Lauer's presentation also provided a glimpse into the scope of that broader investigation. There are 399 scientists "of

possible concern" to NIH, he told the advisory council, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation has fingered 30% (121) of them. An additional 44 have been flagged by their own institutions. Of that pool, Lauer said, investigations into 63%, or 256 scientists, came out "positive." Investigations into some 19% came up "negative," he noted, whereas the status of the remaining 18% is "pending."

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Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 10:54:13 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 10:54:11 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Politico story
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>;
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Nancye Green [b6]>; David Morens [b6]

Hi Alexi and Robert,
Has any news outlet picked up on the Politico story yet? Have they called you? Did you issue the longer statement (send me the final version when you have a chance)?

I expect to be talking with Peggy Hamburg this afternoon about AAAS getting involved.

Jerry

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 8:39 AM
To: David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]; Nancye Green [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>
Subject: Re: Politico story

Thanks, David.

I confirm receipt.

I note that our cancelled Coronavirus award is still listed on page 42!

Cheers,

-Aleksei

On Apr 28, 2020, at 06:37, David Morens [b6] wrote:

this and prior email, re new NIAID implementation plan, released last night d
Let me know if you got these docs, am having trouble with home gmail david

David M. Morens, MD
b6
b6
b6 (work)
(cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Mon, Apr 27, 2020 at 11:37 PM Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:

Hello Nancy,

I am in touch with various colleagues to determine the best response from the scientific community. Its late tonight and not much will happen until tomorrow, but when people read this and other reports sure to follow there will be concern and consternation. It cannot be left as it is. Lauer and Francis Collins will have to own this, and it will not be pretty for them. Francis will lost the respect of the scientific community – whether he is personally involved or not he is the head and therefore responsible for its actions. Lauer will be the fall guy. So be it.

Friends of EHA will stay in close touch with Peter and through you with the Board. Let us know as well if there are additional ways we can come to the support of the organization, scientific integrity, and the integrity of science.

Jerry Keusch

From: Peter Daszak <[b6]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 8:13 PM
To: [b6] David Morens [b6] ; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Politico story
Importance: High

Dear All,

I'm introducing you to Nancy Green, the Chair of our Board. David Morens – you both met at the Smithsonian Exhibit opening. Nancye – David is in the Office of the Director NIAID, reporting to Tony Fauci and a long time mentor of mine. Jerry Keusch is the Head of the Boston University Biosecurity Level 4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center, and another of my 'mentors'.

This is the story from Politico, with our statement embedded. It's not a rip-roaring call to arms for the defense of scientific integrity, but it's a start and at least exonerates us of any wrong doing. I'm hoping that powerful voices will now speak out and try to crush this political interference in work that was defined to protect our national health and security.

https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

I'll be reaching out to Jim Hughes and Rita Colwell tonight to set up a call.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

<NIAID COVID-19 Full Weekly Update 4.27.20.docx>

Date: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 4:56:28 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 4:56:16 PM -0400
Subject: RE: URGENT: Quick Chat at 4pm today?
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments: NASEM A Strategic Vision for Biological Threat Reduction-DOD [b6]

Here is the recently released NASEM report on the DOD BTRP program.

We emphasize the importance of personal relationships of trust, built through collaborations. See the highlighted sentence on page 9. A fuller discussion begins on page 101. In between and afterwards the importance of such relationships is emphasized and reemphasized time and time again. This is what you have with the Chinese and with Wuhan Institute of Virology. We need this now more than ever as the politics at the leadership level are strained and now they are introducing further strain into established and productive mutually beneficial scientific relationships. The point is that we need to know how the virus got from the bats to humans, and if you are shut out then every US investigator who has not been closed down by NIH will be shut out by the Chinese. WTF, that's so dumb as to be inconceivable, even with this administration. It may be useful to refer to relationships of trust between scientists at some point and this report, especially because it is about DOD and BTRP, offers a quick and very contemporary reference.

If you want I will look up some of the press releases. Dave Franz and I brief the house and senate armed services committees and they get it. They may not be happy with this interference in the flow of really important scientific information we not only want to know about first hand, but need to know about in order to plan a biologically relevant strategy to mitigate further transmission events.
Talk to you soon.

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 3:45 PM
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>
Subject: URGENT: Quick Chat at 4pm today?

Dear David and Jerry,

Could Peter speak with you both briefly at 4pm today?

If so, we can use the following Zoom Meeting log-in:

(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

b6 (office)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Fri, 22 May 2020 2:03:39 PM -0400
Subject: Re: WOW! FW: Science: Nobel laureates and science groups demand NIH review decision to kill coronavirus grant
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

WOW, PART 2. You are working miracles, and believe me it is appreciated, not just by me but by many others!!! All is not lost, and decency still lives..... Thank you, david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Fri, May 22, 2020 at 1:18 PM Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Hi David,

I have timed a letter to the Presidents of NASEM to add the voice of the National Academies to the growing demand for accountability to follow the 77 Nobel Laureates (I didn't want to upstage them). The attached just went out with an explanatory cover letter to McNutt, Anderson and Dzau. Please keep this confidential as I have promised I would not make a public release, the goal being to nudge NASEM to action but not to shame them.

This is going to be interesting in the coming week or two.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 1:14 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura < [b6] ; Bryan Morens [b6]
Subject: Fwd: WOW! FW: Science: Nobel laureates and science groups demand NIH review decision to kill coronavirus grant

-------- Forwarded Message --------

Subject: FW: Science: Nobel laureates and science groups demand NIH review decision to kill coronavirus grant
Date: Fri, 22 May 2020 17:12:09 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
To: David Morens b6

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520

b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 12:37 PM
Subject: Science: Nobel laureates and science groups demand NIH review decision to kill coronavirus grant

Nobel laureates and science groups demand NIH review decision to kill coronavirus grant

By Science News Staff May. 21, 2020 , 6:40 PM

Seventy-seven U.S. scientists who have won a Nobel Prize today asked Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, and Alex Azar, secretary of Health and Human Services, to "act urgently" to review a controversial NIH decision to terminate a grant that supported research into bat coronaviruses in China. NIH's explanation for killing the grant was "preposterous," the laureates write.

Thirty-one scientific societies have also written to Collins, calling on NIH "to be transparent about their decision-making process on this matter. … The action taken by the NIH must be immediately reconsidered."

On 24 April, NIH informed the nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, led by wildlife disease specialist Peter Daszak, that it was ending a grant, first awarded in 2014 and renewed in 2019 because it no longer aligned with the agency's priorities. The move came after Conservative U.S. politicians and media suggested—without evidence—that the coronavirus causing the pandemic escaped from a laboratory in Wuhan, China, that employs a Chinese virologist who had received funding from the grant. The termination also came 1 week after President Donald Trump, when asked about the project at a press conference, said: "We will end that grant very quickly."

In their letter, the Nobel laureates say they "are gravely concerned" about that decision. "We believe that this action sets a dangerous precedent by interfering in the conduct of science and jeopardizes public trust in the process of awarding federal funds for research. … Now is precisely the time when we need to support this kind of research if we aim to control the pandemic and prevent subsequent ones."

They write that "despite the high relevance of the studies to the current pandemic, and despite the very high priority score that his application for renewal had received during peer review, the NIH informed Dr. Daszak and his colleagues that the grant was being terminated because 'NIH does not believe that the current project outcomes align with the program goals and agency priorities.' Such explanations are preposterous under the circumstances."

Azar and Collins should, they write, "act urgently to conduct and release a thorough review of the actions that led to the decision to terminate the grant, and that, following this review … take appropriate steps to rectify the injustices that may have been committed in revoking it."

The signers of the letter include researchers who won a Nobel Prize as recently as 2019, and as long ago as 1975.

The letter from the scientific societies was organized by the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB). "Our aim with this effort is to stand up for a scientific enterprise that should be free of political influence on sound scientific research," said Benjamin Corb, public affairs director for ASBMB, in a statement. "The continued politicization of science during this pandemic crisis is an alarming trend that is risking not only the integrity of science, but also the lives of citizens."

Posted in:

- Science and Policy
- Coronavirus

doi:10.1126/science.abc9393

Science News Staff

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Date: Sun, 12 Jul 2020 1:24:38 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 12 Jul 2020 1:24:37 PM -0400
Subject: RE: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]

If you mean the two members of the team then no, have not heard anything about who they are. I have been wondering about it.

Jerry

----Original Message----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 12:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: FW: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission

Do you know who these people are? d

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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[b6] [b6] [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) [b6]
[b6]

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----Original Message----
From: promed-edr@promedmail.org <promed-edr@promedmail.org>
Sent: Saturday, July 11, 2020 9:35 PM
To: promed-post@promedmail.org; promed-edr-post@promedmail.org; promed-ahead-post@promedmail.org
Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (312): CHINA, SARS-COV-2 ORIGIN, ANIMAL RESERVOIR, WHO MISSION
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A ProMED-mail post
<http://www.promedmail.org>
ProMED-mail is a program of the
International Society for Infectious Diseases <http://www.isid.org>

Date: Fri 10 Jul 2020
Source: Science Magazine - News [edited] <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/who- led-mission-may-investigate-pandemic-s-origin-here-are-key-questions-ask>

The 2-person team from the World Health Organization (WHO) traveling to China today [10 Jul 2020] to address the origin of the COVID-19 pandemic is unlikely to come home with answers. Rather, the duo -- an epidemiologist and an animal health expert whose names have not been released -- will discuss with Chinese officials the scope of a larger international mission later, according to a WHO statement.

But this initial trip offers real hope that the mystery of the virus' origins, which has become a political powder keg and the subject of countless conspiracy theories, will finally be investigated more thoroughly and transparently. (A similar WHO-led mission to examine how China was handling its fight against the virus, launched after weeks of diplomatic wrangling, returned in February [2020] with a surprising wealth of information) [comment 1].

"Science must stay open to all possibilities" about the pandemic's origins, Mike Ryan, executive director of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, said at a press conference on 7 Jul [2020]. "We need to lay out a series of investigations that will get the answers that I'm sure the Chinese government, governments around the world, and ourselves really need in order to manage the risk going forward into the future."

Questions range from hunting for animals that might harbor the virus to examining the possibility that it came from a laboratory. There are plenty of details to investigate, and it could be a long road. Origin riddles for other new infectious diseases often took years to solve, and the route to answers has involved wrong turns, surprising twists, technological advances, lawsuits, allegations of cover-ups, and high-level politics. Determining how a pathogen suddenly emerges in people requires a lot of sleuthing, but past successes offer clues of where to look for new insights, as do the few data points that now exist for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The initial, tidy origin story told by health officials in Wuhan during the 1st few weeks of January [2020] was that a cluster of people connected to a seafood market developed an unusual pneumonia, and that the outbreak stopped after the market was closed and disinfected. But confusion about the origin of the novel coronavirus identified in Wuhan patients arose when researchers published the 1st epidemiologic studies of the city's outbreak: 4 of the 1st 5 cases confirmed to have SARS-CoV-2 infections had no link to the market.

Soon, other theories emerged. Some believe it's no coincidence that the city is host to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), home to leading bat coronavirus researcher Shi Zheng-Li. Her group, one of the 1st to isolate and sequence SARS-CoV-2, has trapped bats in the wild for 15 years, hunting for coronaviruses to help identify pandemic threats. In their 1st report about the new virus, the scientists described a bat coronavirus in their collection that was 96.2% similar to SARS-CoV-2 [comment 2].

U.S. President Donald Trump early on endorsed speculation that the virus entered humans because of an accident at WIV. A more contentious theory is that the lab created the virus. (Researchers at the lab insist neither scenario has any merit, and evolutionary biologists elsewhere have argued the virus shows no evidence of having been engineered.)

The most popular hypothesis is that SARS-CoV-2 spread into humans from an intermediate host, an animal species susceptible to the virus that acted as a bridge between bats and humans. In the case of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), civets turned out to play that role for the responsible coronavirus. For Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), also a coronavirus disease, it quickly became clear camels were the culprit because highly similar viruses were found in the animals and people caring for them.

Chinese officials have reported conducting tests for SARS-CoV-2 at the Wuhan seafood market, but what they found remains sketchy. China's state-run news agency, Xinhua, said "environmental samples" tested positive for the virus in a zone of the

market that sold wildlife, but the report had no details about the results or even a list of the species for sale. Other studies have discovered similarities between
SARS-CoV-2 and a coronavirus found in pangolins, an endangered species that eats ants, but the pangolin virus is more divergent genetically from SARS-CoV-2 than the closest bat virus, and there's no evidence pangolins or their scales -- used in traditional Chinese medicine -- were sold at the market.

So, assuming WHO's team and the Chinese government work out a deal for an international mission to study the pandemic's origins, where would it start? Here are some key questions that need answers.

- What, exactly, did the studies of the Wuhan seafood market sample, and what did the researchers find? With SARS, which emerged in a person in China's Guangdong province in November 2002 -- but was not reported to WHO for 3 months -- extensive sampling of animals at marketplaces in the province found its virus in palm civets by October 2003.

- Does more epidemiological data exist about the earliest cases than have been made public so far here and here? Where had they traveled?
Were they in contact with any animals? What interactions did they have with each other? Have antibody tests been done on any of their contacts? Do stored blood or tissue samples for any of their contacts exist that could show earlier infections?

For SARS, by June 2004, 14 months after the discovery of that virus, researchers had reported detailed epidemiological analyses of humans and animals: 39% of the earliest cases were food handlers, traders of live animals were 13 times more likely to have antibodies to the virus, and in that group, 72% handled civets. New interviews with the earliest COVID-19 cases could reveal surprising links between them.
COVID-19 clusters, for example, have occurred among people who were dining and drinking together, gathering at religious services, and even playing mahjong.

- How aggressively have Chinese researchers looked for SARS-CoV-2 in samples collected before the 1st known cases in Wuhan? Have they looked outside of Wuhan? How far back in time have they probed?

Hospitals and diagnostic labs sometimes store blood, nasal swabs, and tissue samples from patients, especially if they die from unexplained illnesses. Just such samples led to the realization that MERS, 1st recognized in Saudi Arabia in June 2012, had killed 2 people in Jordan in April of that year [2012]. Analyses of stored samples from those 2 people and blood sampling of others who became ill but survived that outbreak confirmed that they all had MERS. Scientists realized camels were the source of Middle East respiratory syndrome when highly similar viruses were found in the animals and people caring for them.

- Can widespread screens be done of bats and other wild animal species thought to be susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 and common in China, including primates, deer, and rodents? Animal feces or urine often contain genetic evidence of viruses. Shi's group at WIV has routinely found coronaviruses in fecal samples and nasal swabs of bats. The sampling of feces from chimpanzees in sub-Saharan Africa has greatly contributed to understandings of the origins of the HIV-1 epidemic, and the Nipah virus, which surfaced in Malaysian pig farmers in 1998, was found in flying bats 2 years later by sampling their urine and fruit that they had partially eaten.

- Can widespread screening of susceptible domesticated animals provide clues to COVID-19's origin? AIDS researchers discovered that pet monkeys harbored a simian immunodeficiency virus that is closely linked to HIV-2, a less common variant that also infects people. Shi's group did a study of domesticated and feral cats in Wuhan and found
SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in 15% of the 141 samples tested. No antibodies were found in samples taken before the Wuhan outbreak surfaced, but do veterinarians possibly have additional stored samples? Can more feral cats be tested? Cats, notably, have a thing for seafood, and the Wuhan market at least played a role in amplifying early spread.

- Do stored samples from farmed animals exist? The genetic signature of the influenza virus that caused a pandemic in 2009 showed it clearly had a pig origin, but it wasn't until 2016 that researchers reported the likely location of farms in Mexico that raised the infected pigs. Their study found 58 influenza viruses in respiratory samples stored by a central lab that diagnosed sick pigs. In all, the samples came from 22 farms in 6 Mexican states taken between 2010 and 2014. Phylogenetic analyses allowed the researchers to work backward from the genetic sequences of the viruses they found and pinpoint 2 states that

likely were the origin of the pandemic. The data further suggest the virus initially came to Mexico from pigs imported from Europe.

- Can widespread screening take place of people in China who might come in contact with bats or other wildlife that harbor SARS-CoV-2?
Peter Daszak of EcoHealth Alliance and Shi -- who had their funding from the National Institutes of Health cut in April [2020] after pressure from the White House -- published a study last year [2019] of blood taken from nearly 1500 people in Chinese provinces where bats carry SARS-related coronaviruses. They also interviewed people about their histories of illnesses and contact with animals. Only 9 people had evidence of being infected with a bat coronavirus, but as they noted, antibodies quickly wane. The team showed that spillovers from bats to humans occur routinely.

- Do government health reports contain any information about possible
COVID-19 cases that predate 1 Dec 2019, the 1st confirmed case of
SARS-CoV-2 in the scientific literature? The South China Morning Post reported having seen "government data" that a 55-year-old person from Hubei province had COVID-19 on 17 Nov [2019]. The article says 8 other cases of the disease occurred that month [November 2019]. Wuhan is Hubei's capital, but the government records did not specify where these people lived, the newspaper noted. It's possible the virus was first isolated from patients in Wuhan but emerged outside the city.
The influenza virus that caused the pandemic in 2009 first was isolated in San Diego, California, not in Mexico, where it originated.

- Are there stored samples from sewage plants in China that can be probed? Studies of stored sewage samples in Italy described in a press release from that country's National Institute of Health suggest
SARS-CoV-2 was circulating there in December 2019, even before doctors noticed the 1st case in Wuhan. A study from Barcelona, Spain, posted on medRxiv and not peer reviewed, claims to have found SARS-CoV-2 in sewage samples from March 2019. These reports have not been independently confirmed and have been subject to much criticism, but that does not undermine the potential value of studying archival sewage samples for SARS-CoV-2.

- What experiments with bat coronaviruses took place at WIV? This is the mother of all questions for those who suspect SARS-CoV-2 came out of the facility. Accidental lab releases do happen, and one even triggered a pandemic: An influenza strain that surfaced in 1977 was linked to strains in Russian labs collected 2 decades earlier.

- Is it possible that somebody at WIV became infected with the virus and then passed it on to others outside the lab? It's unknown which bat viruses WIV has in its collection of samples and whether any of them infect humans. And a controversy surrounds the closest bat virus to SARS-CoV-2, which is called RaTG13. As Shi and co-workers reported, they only fully sequenced this virus after SARS-CoV-2 surfaced, and they looked through their database for potential relatives. (The group often sequences only one small region of bat coronaviruses genomes that mutates infrequently, so changes indicate distinct viruses.) A great deal of speculation has circled around the naming of the partial
sequence: Shi's group earlier had reported a virus named BtCoV/4991 that exactly matches RaTG13 in that small region, but are they one and the same? Or could it be, as some assert, that BtCoV/4991 is
SARS-CoV-2 itself? What other bat coronaviruses has the lab yet to fully sequence? Could any of them offer clues?

Another outstanding question is whether Shi's team or other researchers in Wuhan manipulated bat viruses in "gain-of-function"
experiments that can make a virus more transmissible between humans.
In 2015, Shi co-authored a paper that made a chimeric SARS virus by combining one from bats with a strain that had been adapted to mice.
But that work was done at the University of North Carolina, not in Wuhan, and in collaboration with Ralph Baric. Did Shi's group later carry out other gain-of-function studies in Wuhan, and if so, what did they find?

Finally, diplomatic cables from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing in 2018 warned that a new, ultra-high-security lab at WIV had "a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators." Did Shi's team ever work with coronaviruses in that lab, and, if so, why?

If history repeats itself, it might take years -- or even decades -- to crack this case. Scientists haven't unequivocally identified Ebola's source 45 years after its discovery. But the key, time and again, to clarifying the origins of emerging infectious diseases is unearthing new data. WHO's push to organize the probe promises to, at the very least, accelerate what has been a plodding pursuit for answers.

[Byline: Jon Cohen]

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Communicated by
Mary Marshall
b6

[1. The report of the 1st WHO-China Joint Experts Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), 16-24 Feb 2020, was published on
28 Feb 2020. It included (p 8) the following segment, titled "Zoonotic
origins": "COVID-19 is a zoonotic virus. From phylogenetics analyses undertaken with available full genome sequences, bats appear to be the reservoir of COVID-19 virus, but the intermediate host(s) has not yet been identified. However, 3 important areas of work are already underway in China to inform our understanding of the zoonotic origin of this outbreak. These include early investigations of cases with symptom onset in Wuhan throughout December 2019, environmental sampling from the Huanan Wholesale Seafood Market and other area markets, and the collection of detailed records on the source and type of wildlife species sold at the Huanan market and the destination of those animals after the market was closed." A link to the report and the said text were reproduced in posting http://promedmail.org/post/20200312.7081842, with the following commentary: "Wishfully, animal-health specialists were included among the members of the WHO Joint Mission." It is relieving to note this comment may have been acknowledged.

2. Zheng-Li Shi team's pre-print paper, "Discovery of a novel coronavirus associated with the recent pneumonia outbreak in humans and its potential bat origin," in which the virus strain RaTG13 was addressed publicly for the 1st time, was published on 23 Jan 2020 at <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.01.22.914952> and reviewed in the commentary of http://promedmail.org/post/20200201.6943858. The paper's final version was published later in Nature (doi: 10.1038/s41586-020-2012-7).

Hopefully, the current visit of the 2 experts will pave the road to a thorough, science-based, fully transparent investigation into the origin of the pandemic, in the spirit of One Health and One World. In view of the Dutch experience, China's mink farms should be included in the investigation. Industries of other farmed animal species deserve consideration as well (e.g., rabbits, boars). - Mod.AS

HealthMap/ProMED-mail map:
China: <http://healthmap.org/promed/p/155>]

[See Also:
COVID -19 update (308): USA (TX) animal, dog conf.
http://promedmail.org/post/20200708.7554832
COVID-19 update (299): USA (GA) animal, dog conf
http://promedmail.org/post/20200703.7535112
COVID-19 update (284): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, spread, dog
http://promedmail.org/post/20200624.7506728
COVID-19 update (281): Netherlands (NB, LI) farmed mink, spread, animal, global
http://promedmail.org/post/20200623.7502849
COVID-19 update (280): animal, pangolin, research
http://promedmail.org/post/20200623.7502805
COVID-19 update (267): animal, domestic, wild, cat, research
http://promedmail.org/post/20200617.7480013
COVID-19 update (266): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, 1st rep

http://promedmail.org/post/20200617.7479510
COVID-19 update (251): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling
http://promedmail.org/post/20200610.7453845
COVID-19 update (248): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, mink, spread, culling, cat
http://promedmail.org/post/20200609.7446478
COVID-19 update (238): USA (MN) animal, cat
http://promedmail.org/post/20200605.7429133
COVID-19 update (236): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling
http://promedmail.org/post/20200604.7427849
COVID-19 update (231): USA (NY) animal, dog conf.
http://promedmail.org/post/20200602.7420541
COVID-19 update (230): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, control
http://promedmail.org/post/20200602.7420433
COVID-19 update (227): animal, cat, dog, research, experimental infection http://promedmail.org/post/20200601.7416648
COVID-19 update (215): Netherlands (NB) animal, mink-to-human, epidem., control
http://promedmail.org/post/20200527.7385049
COVID-19 update (212): Russia (Moskva) animal, cat, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200526.7379578
COVID-19 update (209): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human, cat, epid
http://promedmail.org/post/20200525.7375359
COVID-19 update (198): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human infect susp
http://promedmail.org/post/20200520.7359976
COVID-19 update (189): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research, cat, dog
http://promedmail.org/post/20200517.7344274
COVID-19 update (183): Japan/USA, animal, research, cat, experimental infection
http://promedmail.org/post/20200514.7337185
COVID-19 update (181): Germany (BY), France (AC), cat, OIE animal case definition
http://promedmail.org/post/20200513.7332909
COVID-19 update (177): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, Spain
(CT) cat susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200512.732858
COVID-19 update (174): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, comment
http://promedmail.org/post/20200511.7323845
COVID-19 update (169): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread, rabbit susp
http://promedmail.org/post/20200509.7316646
COVID-19 update (154): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research
http://promedmail.org/post/20200503.7294846
COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, epidemiology
http://promedmail.org/post/20200501.7286113
COVID-19 update (143): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, tests
http://promedmail.org/post/20200430.7284183
COVID-19 update (141): India, animal, wild tiger, susp, clarification, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200430.7281768
COVID-19 update (138): India, animal, wild tiger, fatal
http://promedmail.org/post/20200428.7275765
COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink
http://promedmail.org/post/20200427.7272289
COVID-19 update (130): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, new cases
http://promedmail.org/post/20200425.7266556
COVID-19 update (124): USA (NY) animal, cat, lion, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200423.7259119
COVID-19 update (123): USA (NY) animal, cat, conf
http://promedmail.org/post/20200422.7256272
COVID-19 update (113): USA (NY) cat, animal, susp, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200418.7240811

COVID-19 update (88): Germany, animal, research, pig, chicken, bat, ferret http://promedmail.org/post/20200407.7196506
COVID-19 update (85): USA (NY) animal, tiger, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200406.7191480
COVID-19 update (84): USA animal, tiger
http://promedmail.org/post/20200406.7191352
COVID-19 update (76): China (HU) animal, cat, owned, stray, seropositive http://promedmail.org/post/20200403.7179946
COVID-19 update (75): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200403.7179945
COVID-19 update (70): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, pets & stock
http://promedmail.org/post/20200402.7173286
COVID-19 update (58): Belgium, animal, cat, clinical case, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200327.7151215
COVID-19 update (56): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, final serology positive
http://promedmail.org/post/20200326.7146438
COVID-19 update (50): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR positive, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200323.7129951
COVID-19 update (45): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR positive
http://promedmail.org/post/20200319.7112693
COVID-19 update (37): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, prelim. serology negative
http://promedmail.org/post/20200312.7081842
COVID-19 update (30): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, serology pending
http://promedmail.org/post/20200306.7057595
COVID-19 update (25): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200302.7040373
COVID-19 update (22): companion animal, dog susp, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200229.7036661
COVID-19 update (17): China, animal reservoir, wildlife trade & consumption http://promedmail.org/post/20200225.7024245
COVID-19 update (11): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts, pangolin susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200220.7009213
COVID-19 update (08): companion animal, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200218.7002276
COVID-19 update (06): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts
http://promedmail.org/post/20200217.6997782
Novel coronavirus (40): animal reservoir, pangolin poss intermediate host, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200210.6972104
Novel coronavirus (28): China (HU) animal reservoir
http://promedmail.org/post/20200201.6943858
Novel coronavirus (22): reservoir suggested, bats
http://promedmail.org/post/20200129.6930718
Novel coronavirus (20): China, wildlife trade ban
http://promedmail.org/post/20200127.6922060
Novel coronavirus (18): China (HU) animal reservoir
http://promedmail.org/post/20200125.6915411
Novel coronavirus (15): China (HU) wild animal sources
http://promedmail.org/post/20200123.6909913
Novel coronavirus (03): China (HU) animal reservoir suggested, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200114.6887480
Novel coronavirus (01): China (HU) WHO, phylogenetic tree
http://promedmail.org/post/20200112.6885385
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (HU) (07): official confirmation of novel coronavirus
http://promedmail.org/post/20200108.6878869
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (05): (HU) novel coronavirus identified
http://promedmail.org/post/20200108.6877694
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (03): (HU) updates, SARS, MERS ruled out, WHO, RFI

http://promedmail.org/post/20200105.6872267
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (01): (HU) wildlife sales, market closed, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200102.6866757]
.....arn/tw/jh
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##
##

Date: Wed, 13 May 2020 6:47:05 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 13 May 2020 6:46:34 PM -0400
Subject: Re: A novel bat coronavirus closely related to SARS-CoV-2 contains natural insertions at the S1/S2 cleavage site of the spike protein: Current Biology
From: Edward Holmes [b6] >
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Thanks David.

The level of hate out there at the moment is truly shocking.

Cheers,

Eddie

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

> On 13 May 2020, at 9:54 pm, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:
>
> What has this world come to? DO stay safe and lie low. Hopefully the nutters don't have your home or office addresses
>
> Best to you! David
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On May 13, 2020, at 04:59, Edward Holmes [b6] > wrote:
> >
> > I spoke too soon…got my 1st death 'threat' today:
> >
> > <Screen Shot 2020-05-13 at 1.47.32 pm.png>
> >
> > ---
> > **PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS**
> > ARC Australian Laureate Fellow
> >
> > **THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY**
> > Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,

School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E b6

On 12 May 2020, at 11:29 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

Eddie, i DO understand and am so sorry you are going through this.

I did not realize the shit had reached so far. Of course your family and your sanity come first. Period. Peter has been receiving death threAts, he has a family too, and Tony and I have bern selectively censored. Tony has received death threats too. I have not, apart from maybe one, but this is crZy, for sure.

Can you point us to someone you trust who can help us with this? I can ID some folks here, but am not qualified to assess their ability to do this at a high level. Ideally, it would be good to find someone like you with a solid international reputTion. If not, then someone who can at least fully comprehend the data and implications

Again, i am sorry all this has come down on you. I really had no idea, i imaged thT you, halfwAy around the world, were safe from the craziness

Obviously not. Jesus. This is crazy.

Stay safe, you and your family. Someday this will pass and will end up in the history books. Maybe one day we will laugh about it! I'll buy you a Fosters or, if we are here in the States, one if our Imperial IPAs. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 11, 2020, at 20:56, Edward Holmes b6 wrote:

David, sorry, but while I fully support what you're doing, I'm going to have to pass on this.

This whole thing is taking a personal toll on me and I need to move into a different space. Yesterday, a local 'newspaper' published an utterly idiotic story (attached) that caused myself and my family a lot of stress over the last few days (particularly, as their initial attempt was to paint me as a stooge of the Chinese communist party). Fortunately, it's so pathetic that it went no where and has now been placed by tips to make the perfect pavlova.

I'm also getting trolled and receiving hate mate.

Life's too short. I've had enough.

Plus, and more pragmatically, because I work closely with a number of Chinese colleagues I am not going to be regarded as independent and this will only cause you more trouble. Believe me. You really need people that have no links to China at all.

Sorry again.

Eddie

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T b6
E

On 12 May 2020, at 10:41 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 > wrote:

Eddie, following up on your recent piece on corona phylogeny, and the vicious conspiracy stuff convulsing us all here in the States, not just Peter Daszak but many of us in and out of govt, several members of the ASTMH as well as Peter and Ralph Baric, have agreed to put together a scientifically based commentary/review For publication, that would dispassionately examine All the key questions of viral origin including why bioengineering is not very plausible, and that all evidence points to a natural Ultimately bat origin. To do this, Peter and Ralph will provide us with all possible background info including what viruses and sequences were in the hands of his Wuhan and non Wuhan colleagues, and various other things

Peter and Ralph would not be coauthors, so as not to create an appearance of defensiveness, but we need a handful of inyernationally recognized experts, a few of who have already agreed privately

But the key to this is phylogeny
and understanding of viral evolution and substrain/strain variations in enzootic viruses

I Am hoping you will agree to be a part of this

Hopefully its not alot of work but it would entail looking at partial and complete sequences of all viruses that are relevant. There might well be stuff you havent seen, i am not sure from emails with Peter. Jeff Taubenberger has signed on, as well as ASTMH President Joel Breman, and a few others, and i am certain other luminaries will join when we ask them

Can you join in? I realize you may be busy or may have good reason not to get involved in our American munted shitshow, and i would understand, but hope

you could in that event at least help us find someone else you recommend

This has become a crisis in American science and as many scientists hide from the storm, the rest of us need to do something

Thanks for considering this, david

https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/-9JfCoV1kpfkPOKlF1FEGb?domain=cell.com

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

<1273399985.pdf>

Date: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 12:17:23 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 9 Jul 2020 12:17:22 PM -0400
Subject: Re: [b6] news/china-found-coronavirus-strain-seven-22304139
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
To: Peter Daszak [b6]

OK, thanks.....

On 7/9/2020 12:00 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Hi David – it turns out there's a masters thesis in Mandarin that the internet trolls got hold of. It's inconclusive – the miners had bat-CoV antibodies, which is interesting but nor remarkable given they work in caves. They died of pneumonia but the masters' thesis apparently says that could have been bacterial.
>
> It's of course become yet another political football and something that your dear NIH Director and his crony has already latched on to. I'll tell you more later on today.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 5:43 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world- news/china-found-coronavirus-strain-seven-22304139

Peter, what is known about this 2012 outbreak? Was there anything published in any language, or anything more definitive that a news story? TY,

[b6]

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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--
David M Morens b6

Date: Thu, 28 May 2020 11:31:51 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 28 May 2020 11:31:48 AM -0400
Subject: RE: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6]

Thanks for spotting that. What's wrong with this guy – doesn't he understand the weight his words will carry at this point. He should know better than to answer that question directly with "no way of knowing". Politico's not at fault here – Collins just walked into the oldest trap in the book – you can't prove a negative, but don't give that quote.

Extremely disappointing on many levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 10:39 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Fwd: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" [b6]
> **Date:** May 28, 2020 at 10:33:44 EDT

To: David Morens [b6]
Subject: Fwd: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Sent from my iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

From: Karen Goraleski [b6]
Date: May 28, 2020 at 10:31:06 AM EDT
To: "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" [b6], Chandy John [b6], " [b6] " [b6], "Hill, David R. Prof." [b6] "Daniel [b6] [b6] >, "Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases)" [b6], "Walker, Patricia F" < [b6] >
Subject: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Unfortunately, the headline chosen by Politico fans the flames (does get more eyeballs on the story which is their goal). If one reads this, Collins says nature created this virus but that was not chosen as the headline. We know that Collins is speaking as a scientist when he says 'there is no way of knowing.' However, readers do not recognize that he says this as a scientist who understands there are always unknowns, even if highly highly unlikely.

NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

By Zachary Brennan

05/27/2020 06:52 PM EDT

National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins said the coronavirus is "absolutely not" manmade but he could not rule out the idea that it escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, where the first known cases emerged.

"Whether [the coronavirus] could have been in some way isolated and studied in this laboratory in Wuhan, we have no way of knowing," he told POLITICO on Wednesday.

What is clear, he said, is that "Nature created this virus, and has proven once again to be the most effective bioterrorist."

President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have repeatedly suggested that the virus may have somehow emerged from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — claims that the center's director has called "pure fabrication."

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence confirmed late last month that the government is investigating the pandemic's origin, but said that there is no reason to believe that the coronavirus was manmade or genetically modified.

Collins refused to comment on his agency's recent — and controversial — decision to pull fundingfrom researchers studying how coronaviruses spread from bats to people. In late April the NIH told the EcoHealth Alliance, whose collaborators included scientists at the Wuhan virology lab, that its project did not "align with the program goals and agency priorities."

Prominent scientific societies and 77 Nobel laureates have asked the administration to investigate why the non-profit group's grant was terminated, alleging that the decision was made for political, rather than scientific, reasons. The NIH awards grants using a merit-based system in which researchers evaluate the work of their peers, and ending a grant early is unusual.

Collins, who had not previously commented publicly on the situation, told POLITICO that "the NIH cannot discuss individual grants."

The agency chief, who is leading a public-private partnership called ACTIV to hunt for coronavirus vaccines and drugs, said that if "all goes perfectly," a few million doses of vaccine could be available in October for high-risk groups — with doses available sometime next winter for the rest of the country.

Trump has repeatedly promised a vaccine by the end of the year, far faster than any has ever been developed for any condition.

If China develops a coronavirus vaccine before the U.S. does, Collins said he "seriously hopes" that any tensions between the countries "wouldn't be a dominant factor" in determining whether the U.S. would have access to a Chinese-made shot.

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 5:53:12 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 5:53:07 PM -0400
Subject: Re: NIAID Funding Opportunities: Rapid Investigation of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19
From: David Morens [b6] >
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: [b6] Gerald T Keusch [b6] >; [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;

You gotta apply! D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 30, 2020, at 17:38, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Here's an ironic email – NIAID with opportunity to apply for coronavirus funding!

I guess they've now got $3.7 million more cash to spend..

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) [b6] >
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 4:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]

Subject: NIAID Funding Opportunities: Rapid Investigation of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19

Funding Opportunities

- PAR-20-177, Emergency Awards: Rapid Investigation of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) (R21, Clinical Trial Not Allowed)
- PAR-20-178, Emergency Awards: Rapid Investigation of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) (R01, Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

For more, see NIAID Opportunities & Announcements.

You can follow us on Twitter: @NIAIDFunding.

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases | National Institutes of Health

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This service is provided to you at no charge by National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

This email was sent to daszak@wildlifetrust.org using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases · 5601 Fishers Lane · Bethesda, MD 20892 · 1-866-284-4107

Date: Fri, 11 Dec 2020 12:34:41 AM -0500
Sent: Fri, 11 Dec 2020 12:34:38 AM -0500
Subject: An amusing article for your Friday read...
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] [b6] [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

First, just delighted to see that the honorable Dr. Fauci ("The Fautch") made the cover of Time as the 2020 "Guardian of the Year ". Well done David on supporting him in doing what he does – he raises us all, no matter how much he drives you senior advisors crazy!

Second, I thought you'd like this amusing piece in the Independent. It's a moral lesson, somehow. It started with me getting irritated last week when I heard Giuliani was getting Remdesivir, which was tested on bat-CoVs discovered under our NIH grant, now terminated, reinstated and suspended etc. It pissed me off because I remembered Giuliani causing trouble for our grant early on and now here he is being cured using the results of the work. I didn't say much, but then today I saw a piece in the Independent that bizarrely linked Giuliani's outrageous witness Melissa Carone who he had to hush in court last week, banging on about the conspiracy linking Obama, our NIH grant, and a Wuhan bioengineered virus that caused the 'Plandemic'. That was too much, so I tweeted a snarky comment letting Giuliani know he's welcome for the research, and wishing him well (not really of course). I then spotted an error in the piece that said we shipped live bats to the Wuhan lab. I contacted the reporter, showed him my tweet correcting this (by now the conspiracists were tweeting offensive responses). The nice reporter not only corrected my article, but incorporated my snarky tweet in it…Careful what you tweet for these days!

https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us- election-2020/giuliani-melissa-carone-obama-wuhan-covid-b1768921.html

Hope all's well – just finished the copy edited version of our Health Affairs piece – thanks for your review David – most of which was incorporated into our appendix. You really deserve authorship, but I hope some form of beverage-by-post will suffice!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date: Tue, 5 May 2020 5:45:15 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 5 May 2020 5:45:14 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
From: David Morens [b6] >
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >;
CC: [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Funny. Yes i will share. There is also now a real Fauci beer, brewed by some locally famous brewery in Decatur, GA, an Atlanta suburb! D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 5, 2020, at 17:15, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Most important of all he stated that he doesn't buy the 'accidental lab release' hypothesis either – for the first time.

He's a hero to me, my wife and to our whole family.

We have our 'Fauci Mug' to prove that (see attached image). Please show that to the great man himself if there's an opportune moment over the next few weeks.

Cc'ing Dennis and Jerry on this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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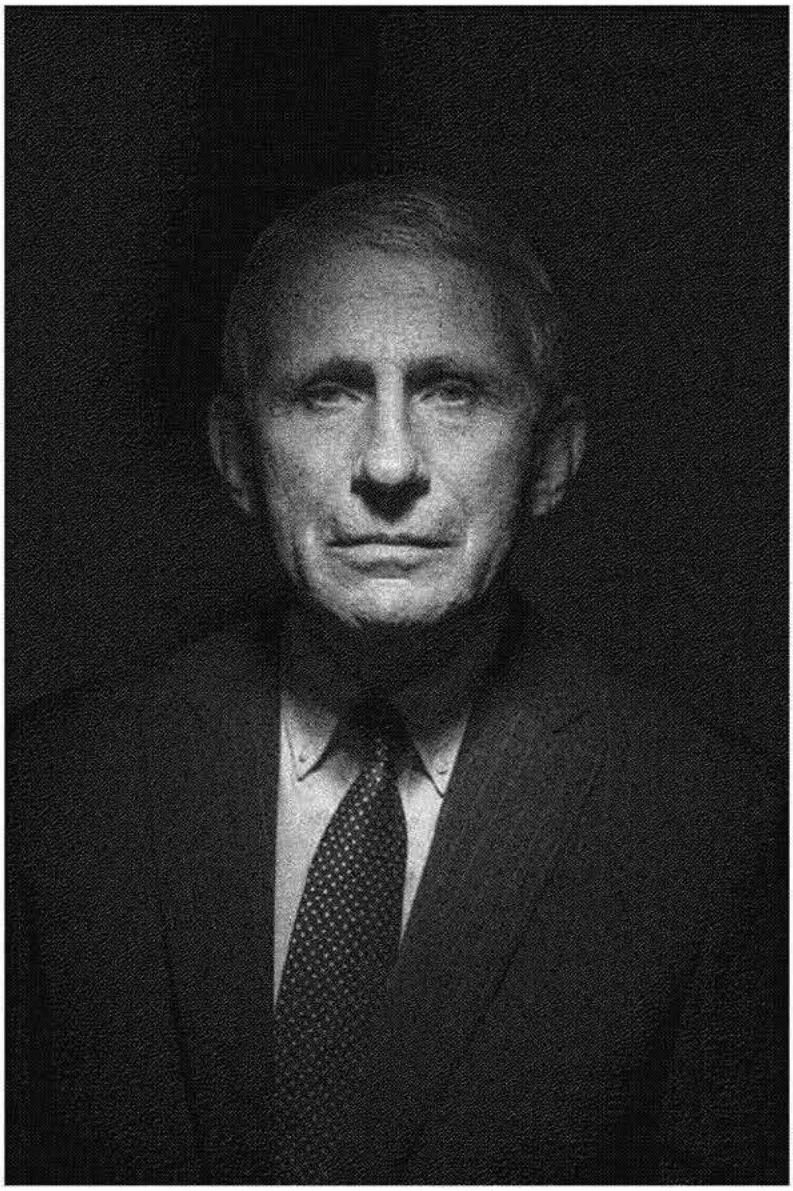
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:02 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: Fwd: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab
https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
> **Date:** May 4, 2020 at 20:58:15 EDT
> **Subject: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab**
> **https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3**



ScienceCoronavirus Coverage

Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab

In an exclusive interview, the face of America's COVID-19 response cautions against the rush for states to reopen, and offers his tips for handling the pandemic's information deluge.

Anthony Fauci has been the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for almost 40 years, where he has tackled dozens of outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS. To him, the coronavirus is "extraordinary."

By **Nsikan Akpan** and Victoria Jaggard

PUBLISHED May 4, 2020

Anthony "Tony" Fauci has become the scientific face of America's COVID-19 response, and he says the best

evidence shows the virus behind the pandemic was not made in a lab in China.
Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, shot down the discussion that has been raging among politicians and pundits, calling it "a circular argument" in a conversation Monday with National Geographic.
"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated … Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species," Fauci says. Based on the scientific evidence, he also doesn't entertain an alternate theory—that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, listens as President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 9, 2020, in Washington.
Photograph by Andrew Harnik, AP Photo

Fauci is most concerned that the United States will be put to the test this fall and winter by a second wave of COVID-19 if the country does not blunt the infection rate by the summer.
"Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter," he says, advising that the U.S. needs to make sure we not only have an adequate supply of tests available before a second wave hits, but also a system for getting those tests to the people who most need them.
"I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear," he says. "It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge." As such, Fauci says the U.S. should also focus this summer on properly reinforcing the nation's health care system, ensuring the availability of hospital beds, ventilators, and personal protective equipment for health care workers.
He also stressed the importance of continuing to social distance everywhere until the case counts start to fall in cities and states. The U.S. witnessed about 20,000 to 30,000 new cases every day in the month of April, suggesting the country is stuck in its peak.
Still, he remains optimistic that a vaccine will be ready within an historically short time frame, citing one promising candidate that he thinks may move into advanced clinical trials by the early summer. Fauci has said that he thinks a final vaccine could be available for general use as early as January, which would break records for the speed at which previous vaccines were developed.
One reason for his confidence is the "impressive" results being seen now in animals tested with a vaccine candidate made by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna Therapeutics, which brought it into human trials in a record 42 days. The candidate is what is known as an mRNA vaccine—a drug that uses snippets of a virus's genetic material—rather than the dead or weakened virus itself—to build the proteins that trigger the body's protective immune response.
To date, no type of mRNA vaccine has been licensed for use in humans, but Fauci believes there is great promise for this technology targeting the coronavirus, based in part on his experience developing treatments for HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and '90s.
"For some reason that we're still struggling with, the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV," he says. To fight off that virus, a vaccine has to work better than the body's own natural response. By contrast, "it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response" to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the animal trials so far show that modest doses of the mRNA vaccine for coronavirus have also generated a strong immune response.
He adds that NIAID is still developing and supporting multiple vaccine efforts, in case those that go into trials soonest don't ultimately prove safe and effective. "You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time," he says.
Fauci told National Geographic he's concerned about states rushing to reopen before their infection rates fall. He also shared how he manages the barrage of new scientific information being released about COVID-19, and how his family and faith keep him going despite his increasingly hectic schedule.
(*The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.*)

Fauci on the vaccine

You've been the NIAID director since 1984, witnessing dozens of disease outbreaks. One of the first was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. How does that experience compare with COVID-19?
One of the important advantages is what we call targeted drug development. Viruses cause disease by binding to receptors on cells in your body, be they in your upper airway or in your lung, in the case of COVID-19. They then replicate at a rapid rate that triggers a variety of pathogenic processes. Targeting drugs to interfere at one or more vulnerable sites within this replication cycle is something that we learned with HIV.

Left:
U.S. President George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 19, 2008 to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland during ceremonies at the White House. The Presidential Medal of Freedom
… Read More
Photograph by Karen Bleier, AFP via Getty Images (Left) and Photograph by White House Photo / Alamy Stock Photo (Right)

SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] has the same sort of vulnerable points. We need to identify them and develop drugs, either alone or in combination, to block the replication.

Are there also lessons from HIV/AIDS that relate to developing a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are a bit different. We have a better chance of quickly getting, relatively speaking, a vaccine for the novel coronavirus than we did for HIV, because for some reason that's still unknown the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV.

We don't necessarily have that challenge with this coronavirus because it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response. They clear the virus, and they do well. As we know from the natural history of this disease, the majority of people actually either get well without any symptoms—they're called asymptomatic—or they have minimal symptoms, where they get a fever, some aches, and then they recover.

The fact that the majority of people can actually clear the virus is a very good sign for the feasibility of developing a vaccine.

The two most widely discussed vaccine candidates are an mRNA vaccine from Moderna, which reached human trials in a record 42 days, and Oxford University's candidate, based on what's known as a nonreplicating viral vector. Yet no vaccine based on these two technologies has ever been licensed for human use. What makes these two vaccines seem so promising, especially on this expedited timeline?

These vaccines are inducing, at least in animal models, really rather substantial immune responses, particularly the mRNA vaccine. When we look at the immune response that you can induce with a modest dose—one that's feasible to be translated into humans—and the amount of time it takes to get to that level of immunity, it is really quite impressive. It is also really easy to scale up with these two, in the sense of making a lot of doses pretty quickly. So you're right, they have not been approved, as many of the other vaccine platforms have, but the promise is great.

We at NIAID are either developing or supporting the development of multiple candidates. You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time—maybe June, July, or August—to get them into an advanced trial. The mRNA one is already well into phase one of clinical trials, and we're getting ready to go into phase two and three sometime in the early summer.

Fauci on reopening and masks

As states move to reopen businesses and warmer weather lures people outside, how concerned are you about a fresh spike in infections in the U.S.?

Take a look at the guidelines for Opening Up America Again. There are very well delineated checkpoints. There's a gateway where infections must go down for 14 days before you can enter into phase one for reopening. If you fulfill the requirements of phase one, you move to phase two. If you do it there, you go to phase three.

So when you see somebody in an environment in which the infections are not going down, and then you see 30 to 40 people on a beach with no mask … well that's very nice to have fun in the sun, but you're really putting yourself and everyone at risk for creating an even bigger spike in infections.

Do you fear a second wave?

What's impressed me the most—but clearly in a disturbing way—is the extraordinary efficiency of how the virus spreads. It spreads so much more efficiently than influenza does. You see situations where people at home try and physically separate; they have no contact except they've touched the plate or a doorknob, and they wind up getting infected.

The clusters in families, the outbreaks on the *Teddy Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, the enormous spread on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama harbor—it's a very, very transmissible virus.

Anthony Fauci hugs Nina Pham, the nurse who was infected with Ebola from treating patient Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, as Pham's mother Diana (sixth from left) and sister Cathy

… Read More Photograph by Alex Wong, Getty Images

We're going to be put to the test as we move toward the fall and winter of this year. If we do it correctly, then we could be able to blunt and diminish the daily rate of infections in this country as we get into the summer. I can't guarantee it, but if we do things right, that likely will happen.

But I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear. It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge. We now will have a few months—May June, July, August—to prepare, by making sure our health system is adequately supplied with ventilators, ICU beds, personal protective equipment, etcetera. We need to not only have tests, but to make sure the people who need tests can get tested.

So that by the time we get to September, we don't have the dialogue continually fixating on do you have enough tests? Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter.

What's your position on the general public wearing face masks?

I'm glad you asked, because it has evolved over the weeks and months. When there was first discussion, it was at a time when face masks—either surgical masks or N95 respirators—were at high scarcity.

Let's assume that we now have enough masks or that you could easily make a cloth covering, as was suggested appropriately by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I think those are reasonable assumptions. We know that the masks are better in the health-care setting to prevent someone who's infected from coughing and sneezing and infecting people in the environment. When you look at what the mask does for the general population, the data are not 100 percent: It doesn't 100 percent protect you from infecting somebody else, and it certainly doesn't 100 percent prevent somebody else from infecting you.

But if you wear a mask, you are getting some protection for yourself, and if you happen to be infected and don't know it, you're to some extent preventing transmission to someone else. Given that, it just makes sense that first of all, the best way to prevent spread is to maintain the physical distance of six feet.

So, if you're in a situation where you're in contact with no one, then you don't have to be walking around with a mask all day, that's for sure. But if you are in a situation where you are going to be within the realm of six feet—the grocery store or even walking out on the street—then wear it.

Fauci on the information deluge and the "virus made in Chinese lab" claim.

How do you keep up with the barrage of information and filter down to the most important science?

It's like drinking from a fire hydrant. It really is. Fortunately for me, I have a staff of three to four really good people who sift through the papers and when something looks unreasonable or "pie in the sky," they don't bother me with that. Then when all of these studies come across my desk, I read the title and the abstract. If it looks feasible, I'll put it aside and try and read it. When it's something that they think I should read, they make sure I read it.

Even with that screening process, it's still very difficult to consume everything that's out there, particularly with this relatively recent trend with these non-peer-reviewed, pre-publications [that have not gone through traditional vetting to appear in major journals].

So, what's your advice to the public at-large for sifting through the headlines and making sense of it all?

Dr. Anthony Fauci speaks with members of his laboratory during a meeting Aug. 31, 1990, where he describes a natural growth factor that is necessary for the AIDS virus to multiply.

Photograph by George Tames, The New York Times via Redux

Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about—and it's very difficult for the general public to distinguish. So, make sure the study is coming from a reputable organization that generally gives you the truth—though even with some reputable organizations, you occasionally get an outlier who's out there talking nonsense. If something is published in places like *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, or *JAMA*—you know, generally that is quite well peer reviewed because the editors and the editorial staff of those journals really take things very seriously.

One topic in the news lately has been the origins of SAR-CoV-2. Do you believe or is there evidence that the virus was made in the lab in China or accidentally released from a lab in China?

If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats, and what's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved. A number of very qualified evolutionary biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species.

Sure, but what if scientists found the virus outside the lab, brought it back, and then it escaped?

But that means it was in the wild to begin with. That's why I don't get what they're talking about [and] why I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument.

Fauci's life right now

What's your typical day like?

I get up around five o'clock in the morning, and I usually wind up running downstairs, getting a quick breakfast, and looking at a thousand emails—literally a thousand.

I then head to the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for my day job—trying to develop a vaccine and drugs and running a $6 billion institution. I stay there until around one o'clock, and then I go down to the White House for multiple meetings. First, I meet with the doctor group—myself, coronavirus response coordinator Debbie Birx, director Bob Redfield from the CDC, commissioner Steve Hahn from FDA, and others. We then go into the task force meeting run by Vice President [Mike Pence], which usually lasts about an hour and a half. We summarize this pre-brief with the vice president and then go brief President [Donald Trump] for the press conference.

Then, the work starts … I head home or back to the NIH and work until the wee hours of the morning. The whole day is punctuated by everybody needing to talk to you: every governor in the states, every congressional leader, every leader in the White House. It's constant conference calls. It's an almost impossible situation—and that's seven days a week.

Then you superimpose upon that all the press you do—the TV or the radio or the interviews. It's kind of a surrealistic state. I have to wake up in the morning and literally, without being facetious, ask my wife, what day is it?

Wow, how do you unwind?

I power walk with my wife, usually at night or on the weekends. It's dark, but we still do it anyway.

Has it ever been too taxing?

A couple of months ago, I was foolish and just thought I could get away with almost no sleep. I mean, like three hours a night. I did that for a few weeks, and it almost killed me. It really wore me down badly. Thank goodness I have a very intelligent and clinically skilled wife who turned things around and said, You got to remember to eat, and you've got to remember to sleep. The day is still impossible, but I don't think I'm going to drop dead from it. I hope not.

You went to a Jesuit high school, where you learned the importance of doing good for the public. How has that experience informed your professional life?

My whole life was almost served to me on the basis that my mother and father were very much oriented toward service. They were never really interested in money or material things. That's just the way they were, both of them. So I never knew there was anything like going out there and making a lot of money, and that was really cemented when I went both to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, where the entire theme was service for others.

I almost never had any other inkling of doing anything except something that would have a public service component to it. I'm very much of a people person, but I'm also scientifically inclined. My entire training is steeped in the humanities, and when you combine that with an aptitude for science, you wind up being a physician.

Victoria Jaggard is the senior editor for Science & Innovation at National Geographic.

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Date: Thu, 26 Aug 2021 10:07:16 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 26 Aug 2021 10:04:00 AM -0400
Subject: Paper out today - new rat alpha-CoV w/ RRAR polybasic cleavage site in Spike. Samples from wildlife farm, train stations, hotels in S. China
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Edward Holmes [b6] >; David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6] Kristian Andersen [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments: Screenshot (649).png; Screenshot (651).png

This paper's just out today online first after peer review in J. Virol. Normally wouldn't be of any global interest, but given the BS around Furin Cleavage Sites, it'll probably get some traction. It's a rodent alpha CoV w/ a cleavage site in the S protein so it adds another coin to the philosophical scales balancing 'natural' vs. lab leak – more evidence that these inserts are found naturally in a wide diversity of viruses, incl. alpha- and beta-CoVs, incl. SARSr-CoVs.

Please send a copy to Nicholas Wade and David Baltimore if you have their email addresses.

Full text here: https://journals.asm.org/doi/epdf/10.1128/JVI.01173- 21

Journal url here: https://journals.asm.org/doi/10.1128/JVI.01173- 21

For David M. – this wasn't funded by NIAID, but please send a copy to NIH Director France Collins to help him understand why actually working with scientists in China might help give us some advance information about viruses that could threaten human health.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 8:04 AM
To: 'Edward Holmes' [b6]
Cc: 'David Morens' [b6] >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6] [b6]; 'Garry, Robert F' [b6] [b6]

Subject: RE: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins

Sadly, I think we're already pretty much there with the racism for many of these news outlets…

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Edward Holmes b6
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 1:24 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
b6 Garry, Robert F b6
Subject: Re: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins

I agree - that's a good sign although I hope it doesn't descend into overt racism.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E **b6**

On 25 Aug 2021, at 2:19 pm, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

Additionally, I'm seeing a shift in the Right wing press to start pointing the finger at China for its "Strange food fetishes", "industrialized wildlife farming" etc. which is actually a good sign that commonsense on the origins is beginning to be accepted, albeit that the Right wing is putting an anti-China slant on this as well (of course). Example is this Op Ed in today's WSJ, below.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid- 19-coronavirus-origins-china-wet-market-lab-leak-intelligence-agencies-biden-xi-11629839700

- OPINION
- BUSINESS WORLD

Let the Spooks Speak on Covid

The spy agencies can tell us a lot even if they can't nail down the virus's origins.

<image001.jpg>

By
Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.
Aug. 24, 2021 6:44 pm ET

- SAVE
- PRINT
- TEXT
- 133

<image002.jpg>

Security personnel stand near the Wuhan Institute of Virology during a visit by the World Health Organization investigators in Wuhan, China, Feb. 3.

PHOTO: NG HAN GUAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Listen to article
Length5 minutes
Queue

If the U.S. intelligence agencies adhered to the mandated schedule, and there's nothing magical about 90 days, the White House on Tuesday received spookdom's report on the origins of Covid 19.

Leaks already indicate the 18 agencies couldn't settle an internal disagreement over whether a natural origin or a lab release was more likely. There is much else they might usefully say, though, in the declassified release the administration has talked about making public in the next few days.

With 100% confidence, the agencies could certainly tell us that China has engaged in a deliberate coverup. With some degree of confidence, they might tell us whether they believe China itself knows how Covid got started.

The agencies could estimate how committed Xi Jinping and his regime are to the propaganda claim that the virus originated outside the country, perhaps in the U.S. Army facility at Fort Detrick, Md. They might tell us about China's efforts to steal the secrets of the West's superior vaccines.

On a related question, they could estimate how long China will stick with its zero-Covid policy, which has required a deepening, Mao-like control over its population and China's re-isolation from the world.

If news reporting is correct, China is sitting on samples from early Covid infections and much other information it hasn't shared. A Bloomberg News investigation elaborates on a point made by this column: China's leadership would likely be covering up even a natural origin, "embarrassed that its citizens were still eating wild animals bought in wet markets—a well-known path for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago."
China's scientists would know with documentary certainty by now whether the virus is related to one held and possibly manipulated in a government-run lab. Thus it matters whether secret evidence shows they are still trying to find answers to Covid's origins.

The Economist magazine suggests that, following on the work of private researchers, U.S. intelligence supercomputers may have scoured the web for traces of deleted viral sequences once housed by the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
CNN, citing leaks, reports that the agencies may be in possession of Wuhan lab records that the Chinese mysteriously tried to take offline in September 2019, weeks before the Wuhan outbreak became publicly known.
The stakes are rising, geopolitically and politically. Once the story seemed to be that China, with its strange dietary fetishes and industrially primitive food markets, inflicted the virus on the world. The integrated, rules-based, freedom-based outside world saved the day with mRNA vaccines.

That story is less satisfying now that Delta has emerged. Our vaccines, however fabulous, are proving not a one-and-done fix. Everybody now seems to have a Delta breakthrough story. In my circle, multiple acquaintances talk about colleagues or family members who previously had Covid, were vaccinated, and now have tested positive for Covid again.

More than ever, coping with the virus seems likely to involve long-term adjustments. We might take with a couple of sacks of salt reports this week that China beat down its own Delta outbreak spread over 17 provinces by conducting 100 million tests in a matter of days, including testing every resident of one city 12 times.

Whether China can carry on this way is doubtful. In the meantime, it has effectively entered into a biological-cum-chemical standoff with the outside world. The global population's immune systems are being hardened by multiple exposures as well as by vaccination, and people are getting back to normal life after much loss and suffering.

China's increasingly virulent propaganda is aimed not at outsiders but at its own people,

neutralizing what is bound to be a growing disgruntlement over recurrent iron-fisted lockdowns, over having to wait in lines repeatedly for mandatory testing, over the loss of tourism dollars, the loss of domestic and foreign travel and education opportunities, the loss of income and opportunities of every kind.

Three weeks ago I suggested the White House would likely prefer continued murk around Covid's origins for the purpose of rebuilding U.S.-China relations—that is, "unless the Biden administration's popularity is in free fall in three weeks and needs a foreign conflict to revive it." That caveat was offered in advance of the Afghanistan debacle, in advance of a now-avalanche of indicators suggesting the Delta surge is complicating what should be a shining recovery and renewing U.S. political fights over masks, vaccine mandates, schools and deteriorating hospital care in some locations.

The Biden administration has more reason now to treat the intelligence report on Covid's origins as a chance to lay down a tougher line on China's role in bringing this calamity on the world.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 12:03 AM
To: 'David Morens [b6]>; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]>; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins
Importance: High

Here's the 'nothing burger' from the US Intel Services.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/08/24/covid- origins-biden-intelligence-review/

Good quote from Bob Garry in here. Shameful disingenuous crap from David Relman, of course.

Hate to harp on about it, but we did have an active grant to work on "Understanding risk of emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses" in China that Trump/Francis Collins canceled, then suspended, and NIH is still refusing to release. We had active collaboration on the ground in the sites where the wildlife farms supplied Huanan and other markets, and I know that WIV is ready, willing and able to continue this work with us. Surely that's a better option than increasing the ranks of the CIA with people who "have significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens" that Biden is quoted as saying below.

This is beyond ironic at this point.

Cheers,

Peter

Biden receives inconclusive intelligence report on covid origins

The report falls short of concluding whether the coronavirus jumped from animal to human, or might have accidentally escaped from a lab in China

By
Ellen Nakashima
,
Yasmeen Abutaleb
and
Joel Achenbach

Today at 10:32 p.m. EDT
260
President Biden on Tuesday received a classified report from the intelligence community that was inconclusive about the origins of the novel coronavirus, including whether the pathogen jumped from an animal to a human as part of a natural process, or escaped from a lab in central China, according to two U.S. officials familiar with the matter.

The intelligence community will seek within days to declassify elements of the report for potential public release, officials said.

The assessment is the result of a 90-day sprint after Biden tasked his intelligence agencies in May to produce a report "that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion" on the origins of a virus that has killed more than 4 million people globally and wrecked national economies. But despite analyzing a raft of existing intelligence and searching for new clues, intelligence officials fell short of a consensus, said the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the report is not yet public.

The debate over the virus's origins has become increasingly rancorous since former president Donald Trump said last year that the virus originated in a Chinese lab. Efforts to understand the virus's provenance have been complicated by Chinese authorities' steadfast refusal to allow a more intensive inquiry by international investigators.

Biden's directive came after he received a May report from the agencies saying that they had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" but had not reached a conclusion. He disclosed that two agencies leaned toward the hypothesis that the virus emerged from human contact with an infected animal, while a third leaned toward the lab accident scenario.

The leader of the intelligence community, Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, cautioned in June that the agencies might not solve the mystery. "We're hoping to find a smoking gun," she told Yahoo News in an interview. But, she said, "it's challenging to do that," adding that "it might happen, but it might not."

The review involved dozens of analysts and intelligence officials across multiple agencies, Haines told Yahoo. She said she deployed "red cells," or groups to test analysts' assumptions and ensure the intelligence is scrutinized from every angle.

Another official said the intelligence community is "not necessarily best equipped to solve this problem," which is fundamentally an issue of science. Although spy services are "positioned to collect on a range of foreign actors," the official said, they are not necessarily poised to dive into global health data sets.

Biden himself, in his first visit to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in July, voiced the need for a more robust group to track pathogens. "You're going to have to increase your ranks with people with significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens," he said at the time.

Officials in the Biden administration hammered China's lack of transparency ahead of a World Health Organization report on the origins of the coronavirus. (JM Rieger/The Washington Post)

Many scientists familiar with the origin debate have been skeptical that the 90-day review would settle it, and some have said the inquiry could require years of research.

"We should not even be thinking about closing the book or backing off, but rather ratcheting up the effort," David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist who has pushed for a broad investigation of all origin hypotheses, said late Tuesday in an email.

The notion that the virus may have escaped from a lab got sharply increased interest this spring after 18 scientists wrote a letter to the journal Science in May saying that all possible origins needed to be investigated, including a laboratory accident.

Proponents of that theory point to classified information, first disclosed in the waning days of the Trump administration, that three unidentified workers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — one of the world's preeminent research institutions studying coronaviruses — went to the hospital in November 2019 with flu-like symptoms. In China, people visit the hospital for routine and mild illnesses.

Throughout 2020, that hypothesis became enmeshed in election-year politics. Trump's assertion that the virus emanated from a lab came as he and other administration officials were blaming China for the global outbreak and trying to deflect attention from their botched handling of the virus at home.

Many scientists, however, noted that viruses have a long history of jumping from animals to humans. There are many plausible scenarios in which that might have occurred, including the possibility the virus spread from wild and domestically raised animals sold in crowded markets. Many early cases were clustered around a seafood market where traces of the virus were later detected on surfaces.

That zoonosis theory was bolstered by a June 7 report, published in the journal Nature, documenting 38 species of animals sold in 17 markets in Wuhan before the pandemic. The authors said many of the animals suffered from poor hygiene and were known to carry zoonotic diseases.

"We now know for sure that [coronavirus] susceptible animals were in fact sold at the markets in Wuhan,

which changes the calculus tremendously," Robert Garry, a Tulane University microbiologist who strongly supports the zoonosis theory, said in an email.

Experts in viral genome evolution also determined that the novel coronavirus almost certainly was not engineered as a bioweapon because it has several naturally occurring features seen in many other coronaviruses. But even scientists favoring a natural origin have said that without definitive evidence of animal-to-human transmission, it is not possible to rule out the possibility that a laboratory accident led to the outbreak.

And many questions remain unanswered. The animal that carried this virus before it infected people has not been identified — a process that has taken years in previous disease outbreak investigations. Nor have the lab-leak advocates found any direct evidence that SARS-CoV-2 was inside a laboratory in Wuhan before the pandemic, although the lab has not released its records, which have been sought by scientists and governments around the world.

A delegation of investigators from the World Health Organization made a brief visit to the Wuhan laboratory in February and later declared that there were multiple possible origins, with a natural zoonosis most likely and a lab leak "extremely unlikely."

But the WHO director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, undercut that conclusion, saying it would be premature to rule out the lab-leak theory. The WHO effort was also criticized by some international scientists and researchers, who called for further investigation.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Monday said the public would be told the report's outcome. "I don't know what format that will take at this point in time," she said.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:36 AM
To: Jason Gale b6 >
Cc: b6 b6 b6 ; b6 ; Garry, Robert F <r b6

Subject: Re: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

TY, i think this is different from the article in The Economist a week or two ago? That one was interesting as i recall.,.. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 23, 2021, at 03:08, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

In case you missed it, FYI.
Seems to lay things out well. I feel sorry for the int'l team. They didn't decide on/agree to the terms of reference, so the response from the DG on the final report (which he waited for until weighing in) seems disingenuous to me.

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:40:56 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

"The virus mystery" broadcast on August 12th, drew uncommonly wide attention for a Danish television documentary. That was because it featured Peter Ben Embarek, an expert on food security and zoonotic diseases, casting doubt on the conclusions of a "joint study" on the origins of the covid-19 pandemic carried out earlier this year under the auspices of the World Health Organisation (who). Dr Ben Embarek was the senior who figure who went to China as part of that study.

In March the joint study reported that it was "extremely unlikely" that the virus had been released in a laboratory accident. Dr Ben Embarek revealed that this conclusion did not come from a balanced assessment of all the relevant evidence but from a steadfast refusal by the Chinese members of the joint study to support anything stronger. Indeed they only allowed even that minimal assessment on the condition that the report did not call for further investigation into the question. He also pointed out that the idea that the point of spillover was someone collecting bat samples for research purposes belongs in the "likely" basket, along with other human interactions with wild bats.

Problems in the joint study had long been clear. Within the
who one source describes it as "riddled with compromises and sloppiness". Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the
who's director-general, was uneasy about the way it was carried out. He pushed back at the marginalisation of the lab-leak hypothesis, particularly when the final report was released in March. He has since called for further investigations into it, as well as into other possibilities.

The further unravelling of the joint study matters because, more than a year and a half after the covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, a city in Hubei, was first recognised as the work of a new pathogen, there has been nothing like a thorough international investigation of how that pathogen,
sars-cov-2, got into humans and spread round the world. The pandemic's death toll stands at 9m-18m, according to a model which *The Economist* has built on the basis of excess-mortality reports and other indicators. The question of how it started

matters both for the relatives of the dead and for those who wish to prevent such an outbreak happening again. China's efforts to stop the world from answering it are both shabby and, to an extent, self-defeating. The more the truth seems hidden, the more it seems suspicious.

Earnest calls for an international investigation into the origins of covid-19 began in April 2020, voiced most clearly by Scott Morrison, the prime minister of Australia. The next month the World Health Assembly, the gathering of government representatives which serves as the who's decision-making body, passed a motion calling for a study into the origins of the pandemic. But in order to be acceptable to China—which had reacted furiously to Mr Morrison's original suggestion—the work was set up as a joint research project between two teams of scientists, one Chinese, one international. And it was to be based on "scientific and collaborative field missions", rather than a targeted and forensic inquiry into all the relevant circumstances.

The terms of reference, which were subsequently negotiated behind closed doors, allowed the Chinese hosts to frame the joint study's work in the way which best suited them. The study was set up to build on pre-existing Chinese research, not to delve into unvetted data. Investigating the laboratories that had been working with coronaviruses like sars-cov-2 in Wuhan was not part of its terms of reference.

After a lot of wrangling, the international team got to China in January this year. Data about the first reported covid-19 cases, those from December 2019, were one subject of friction with their hosts. The Chinese had reported 174 such cases, but would not share the underlying data on which those reports were based. Hearing that these vital data were not being made available worried Dr Tedros enough that he lobbied the Chinese government for access. The authorities declined, citing concerns over citizens' privacy. It could have been anonymised.

Elsewhere the team appears to have been knowingly misled. Take, for example, the live-animal trade at the Huanan seafood and wildlife market, a site associated with a number of Wuhan's earliest recorded cases of covid-19. In its final report, the study group took at face value claims there was no credible evidence that live mammals were sold there in 2019. A lot of eyewitness accounts gainsay that; so does a study published in *Scientific Reports*, a journal, this summer.

One report and no more

The *Scientific Reports* paper found that 18 species of mammal had been for sale in Wuhan between May 2017 and November 2019; gunshot wounds and trapping injuries suggested that almost a third of them were taken from the wild. Although the paper was published only recently, it was submitted to the journal in October 2020. Chinese law requires that all covid-19 research be reviewed by the government before it is sent to a journal. Some Chinese authorities would have known of its contents before the team arrived.

The market is not the only way for animals and the pathogens they carry to get into Wuhan. The horseshoe bats in which the closest wild relatives to sars-cov-2 have been found do not live anywhere near the city, but the two laboratories there that were known to have engaged in coronavirus research received samples from bat caves around the country. The joint-study team was not allowed to investigate the procedures around, or documentation of, this research; when it visited the laboratories the team was shown presentations on safety procedures but no more.



When the researchers left Wuhan the who

's Geneva headquarters told them that their report needed to be laid out scientifically and could express dissenting opinions; the international members and the Chinese members did not have to reach a consensus. However, according to sources within the
who
, the team felt committed to producing a joint report with their Chinese counterparts. Dr Tedros was so unhappy with what finally emerged from the processes that he nobbled the report as it left the starting blocks, rejecting its contention that the possibility of a lab leak needed no further investigation.

On May 26th President Joe Biden ordered America's intelligence services to report on the pandemic's origins in 90 days (time will be up on August 24th). When he and his fellow
g7
leaders met in June they joined in calling for a timely, transparent and science-based follow-up study. On July 16th Dr Tedros laid out the next steps which the
who
wants to see taken. They include further work on the Wuhan animal markets, studies of early cases and audits of local laboratories.

The Chinese government has reacted angrily to the idea of further studies on its territory. Zeng Yixin, the vice-minister of China's National Health Commission, said he was "shocked" by the plan to investigate a lab leak, saying it was "impossible" to accept. According to the *Global Times*, a tub-thumping tabloid run by the Communist Party, 55 countries have sent written complaints about the proposal for further investigations to the
who
. Dr Tedros, elected director-general with China's support in 2017 and derided by President Donald Trump as China's puppet, may now face a Chinese-backed candidate when he looks for reappointment later this year.

In the absence of any hope that China will co-operate, sources of data beyond its control have become increasingly important. One area of interest is genetic sequence data. Another is early cases exported from China.

See what you did there

An online open-source-intelligence group which calls itself
drastic
has been scouring sequencing data to get insight into activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (wiv). When researchers publish sequences they typically post the raw data from which those sequences are assembled to public databases such as the sequence-read archive at America's National Centre for Biotechnology Information. Contamination events in the laboratory, or within sequencing machines themselves, mean these data sometimes contain sequences not meant to be there. In theory such evidence could reveal nefarious goings-on.

Such work, while promising, takes a lot of resources. If you have the sort of supercomputers available to America's national labs it gets easier. Gilles Demaneuf, a data scientist who works with
drastic
, says he has a hunch the American intelligence community's 90-day study is working the same angle. It is conceivable that the intelligence services might have been able to filch raw sequence reads directly from Chinese sequencing machines, thus picking up even more data.

Sequencing data only offers a way forward if the virus did indeed leak out of a lab, something which remains a possibility but which is far from proven. The study of early cases should be useful whatever route it took; the closer you get to understanding the when and where of the crossing-over from animal to human, the

easier it should be to learn something of the how.
On the basis of information provided by China the joint study concluded it was unlikely for there to have been any substantial transmission in Wuhan before December 2019. That is unlikely to be true. For one thing the *South China Morning Post*, a newspaper based in Hong Kong, obtained government documents in 2020 which showed one to five new cases a day in Wuhan from November 17th 2019 onwards. Further evidence has strengthened the possibility that the virus could have been in circulation much earlier than the official story allows.

That circulation need not have been limited to China. There is increasing evidence suggesting early infections elsewhere. These cases would have been exported from China; no virologists doubt that Hubei was where the virus got going within humans. But if circulation in Hubei goes back further than thought and cannot be directly assessed through studies there, the presence of cases elsewhere offers an alternative way to get an idea of the timing. If a specific travel link were identified, that might help identify a group in Hubei which was infected early on.
A recent study of blood samples from 9,144 adults in 12 different regions of France found seven which contained antibodies against sars-cov-2, all of them taken in November 2019. An Italian lung-cancer screening trial has found samples taken in September 2019 which seem to contain anti-sars-cov-2 antibodies. Another antibody study suggests the virus was circulating at a low level in northern Italy at the same time, notably in Lombardy, a region which has close connections to Wuhan through the garment trade, and saw Europe's first major outbreak of covid-19 in March 2020.
Antibody tests can give false positives. In a preprint published on August 6th by the *Lancet*, researchers in Lombardy reported on looking instead for sars-cov-2 gene sequences. Examining 289 swabs and urine tests taken from people who had presented with a rash as far back as the second half of 2019, they found sars-cov-2 sequences in 13, the earliest of which was taken on September 12th.
Sudhir Kumar of Temple University in Philadelphia says the *Lancet* preprint is likely to inspire other investigators to go back and look at retrospective hospital samples. That should help his own research into the origins of the virus. A family tree Dr Kumar and his colleagues have built from vast numbers of published sars-cov-2 genomes allows them to predict the sequence of the progenitor virus from which they are all descended. This sequence differs in three places from that found in the earliest samples taken from patients in Wuhan, meaning there had been enough spread for a certain amount of viral mutation to take place before December. Dr Kumar says that an analysis of the Lombardy sequences suggests that the timeline for the origin of the virus in China might now extend back to the late summer.
More systematic international research into these early infections and their circumstances is needed. Maria Van Kerkhove, head of emerging diseases and zoonoses at the who, suggests it may be possible to prioritise work in areas which saw the earliest outbreaks in America, France, Italy and Spain. "I think the floodgates will open one day," says Dr Kumar.

A last line of light

An early origin would fit with the timeline that lab-leak proponents tend to favour. Early this August, the minority Republican staff on the House foreign-affairs committee released an 84-page report arguing this case. It makes much of a small but deadly disease outbreak which took place at an abandoned copper mine in Yunnan in 2012. As drastic showed last year, a virus studied at WIV which had been taken from that mine is the closest known relative to sars-cov-2.

The report sees importance in the removal, on September 12th 2019, of a database containing details of sequences and samples from the
wiv
. This is read as the beginning of a cover-up, and thus as the point when the authorities first knew something had gone amiss, arguing for a leak in late August or early September. The
wiv
says it was a response to cyber-attacks.

A leak is not the only research-related possibility. The first person infected could have been someone employed by the
wiv
or another lab to collect bats and samples—the prospect to which Dr Ben Embarek pointed in his television interview. And it is important to remember that some other form of spillover outside the lab, either directly from a bat or by way of some other species, may well be to blame.

China clearly does not want lab-leaks investigated; but that does not mean it knows one happened. It is also being misleading about Huanan market, denying access to early-case data and obfuscating in various other non-lab-leak-specific ways. The most obvious explanation is that it does not really want any definitive answer to the question. An unsanitary market, a reckless bat-catcher or a hapless spelunker would not be as bad in terms of blame as a source in a government laboratory. But any definite answer to the origin question probably leaves China looking bad, unless it can find a way to blame someone else. To that end China has called for an investigation of Fort Detrick in Maryland, historically the home of American bioweapons research; state media regularly publish speculations about its involvement.

The possibility of spillover from wild bats does not have to be studied in China. Yunnan abuts onto Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, and bats are not sticklers in matters of territory. Samples taken outside China could provide a good idea of viral diversity the other side of the border. A thorough evaluation of the existing farm-animal and wildlife trade in the region would also be useful.

Yet there is an inherent risk in such work that needs to be considered. Efforts to uncover the roots of covid-19 by seeking out a natural reservoir of something very like
sars-cov-2 would, by definition, expose people to the sort of risks that can seed pandemics. Ironically, the very possibility of a lab leak raises questions about how most safely to pursue investigations into other possibilities.

When he called for further inquiries in July, Dr Tedros also announced the formation of a new permanent group of pathogen hunters, the International Scientific Advisory Group for Origins of Novel Pathogens (sago). He wants it to organise further studies of
sars-cov-2. But it will also need to look at more general questions for the future—such as how to be sure that, come what may, studies of pathogens involved in past disease outbreaks never create further outbreaks of their own.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 14:34:52 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

I saw. But it's behind a paywall. U have full access?

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:23:52 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

icymi

From: b6 At: 08/22/21 15:23:17 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

The Economist | Putting it all together

https://www.economist.com/international/2021/08/19/the-world-needs-a-proper-investigation-into-how-covid-19-started?frsc=dg%7Ce

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Date: Tue, 7 Sep 2021 10:40:46 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 7 Sep 2021 10:40:37 PM -0400
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs
From: Edward Holmes [b6] >
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] Jason Gale [b6] Rasmussen, Angie [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >; Stephen Goldstein [b6]

Completely agree Kristian. It's appalling mistreatment.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

On 8 Sep 2021, at 12:29 pm, Kristian G. Andersen [b6] wrote:

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h

NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With

@fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release

<image001.jpg>

New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab

More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.

theintercept.com

<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"

https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…

"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…

<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

7h

There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6; Kristian G. Andersen b6; Edward Holmes < b6; Jason Gale b6; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen b6; Edward Holmes b6
Cc: Jason Gale b6; b6; b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6] >
Cc: Jason Gale [b6]; [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] Garry, Robert F < [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
>
> The University of Sydney

On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) < j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

Just FYI

https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Sun, 27 Jun 2021 10:57:02 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 27 Jun 2021 10:56:58 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Personal attack piece in the Times, UK
From: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>;
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]>; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>; Rich Roberts [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>;

David: I think an off-the-record conversation between you and Jon, focusing on the scientific issues at play, would be helpful. (In my earlier life at Merck, I was interviewed often by Jon and I agree with your characterization of his approach – honest, fair, and wanting to get it right.)

Best regards,
Jeff

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 10:48 PM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]>; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Rich Roberts [b6] Robert Kessler <[b6]
Subject: Re: Personal attack piece in the Times, UK

Maybe some of us
who know Jon can talkto him off the record. I have done so with Don McNeil, Joel Achenbach, Nick Shifrin, and a number of others, alas not very succefully, often being out-talked by. the crazies. (Silly me, I always assume reporters will listen to logic and common sense).... But Jon is an honest and well meaning guy And whip-smart. But let's slso remember that in the past week or so Jon has written some iffy stuff. I bet he would be glad to consider some good hard science that tells a different story. I'd buy him a drink any time and fill his ear.

Bottom line, Jon etc are "opinion makers", and we could press them. They will listen. What they write is hard to predict, but science is on our side. d

d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jun 27, 2021, at 22:18, Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] wrote:
>
> Jerry:
>
> I agree with you that now is not the time for Peter D to talk with Jon Cohen – any direct response to the *Times* piece will just sound defensive – but perhaps Jon, who is a serious science journalist, can bring some reason into the discussion, particularly if he has a chance to talk with you and Peter Hotez.
>
> Best regards,
> Jeff
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Sent:** Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:25 PM
> **To:** Peter Daszak [b6]>; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
> **Cc:** David Morens [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]; Robert Kessler <

b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6
Subject: RE: Personal attack piece in the Times, UK

Jon Cohen was in touch with me last week as he was trying to reach Peter without success. I said it was understandable given the attacks. He got back to me and said let him know when Peter D can talk. I would be happy to get back to Jon Cohen, but Peter H, if you want to contact Jon bring me into it as would represent two different task forces and I would be happy to talk to him about what's going on with the Commission. I don't think it is the time now for Peter to be directly involved in such conversations, and Robert and Jeff Sturchio can comment on that as necessary.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:18 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Rich Robert b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Robert Kessler b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6
Subject: RE: Personal attack piece in the Times, UK

Any help or suggestions are welcome. Cc'ing in Jeff Sturchio and Robert Kessler so they can follow this.

Rich, David – Jeff Sturchio is working with EcoHealth Alliance to help manage any statements we make at all right now. We're being as minimalist as possible, trying to avoid press, but clearly people are out to find a villain, and are pointing directly at our work, EcoHealth and me as a target.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 1:40 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 ; Rich Roberts b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: Re: Personal attack piece in the Times, UK

I could ask someone like Nick Kristof or Carl Zimmer at NY Times or Amy Maxmen at Nature or Jon Cohen at Science to write something that gives people reality testing?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: **p.hotez**
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: 713-798-1199

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 27, 2021, at 12:12 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

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Just mortified by this.

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the- rise-and-fall-of-british-virus-hunter-peter-daszak-05q8brpz7

The rise and fall of British virus

hunter Peter Daszak

The scientist who led opposition to the claim that Covid leaked from a Wuhan lab is engulfed in controversy after it was revealed his charity had funded the institute at the centre of the row

Peter Daszak became the face of the WHO mission to find the origins of the coronavirus

On January 18, Peter Daszak, born and raised in the mill and mining town of Dukinfield, near Manchester, awoke to a winter's dawn in central China, 5,500 miles away. "Sunrise in Wuhan — my early morning view on day 4 of quarantine — beautiful," he tweeted, with a photograph of skyscrapers against a hazy orange sky.

His presence there in a delegation from the World Health Organisation (WHO) on a mission of global significance showed a remarkable rise for the 55-year-old parasitologist with a PhD from the University of East London.

Ostensibly he was visiting the city to find the truth about where the coronavirus pandemic began before it swept across the world — killing nearly four million people. Five months later, however, the trip to Wuhan has placed Daszak at the centre of a growing web of controversy. The wry Mancunian humour that singled him out from fellow scientists of international renown has dried up.

"When you see him on the television now, he's not the funny northerner," said one old friend and colleague. "There's so much nastiness and vitriol out there, this must have been a challenging time for him."

Daszak faces questions about a crucial conflict of interest in four interlocking aspects of his professional life: his role on the WHO-led mission to Wuhan; his relationship with the Wuhan virologist Shi Zhengli, known as the "bat woman"; his presidency of a federally funded American charity that gave money to her laboratory; and his chairmanship of a commission investigating the pandemic's possible origins for The Lancet medical journal.

The Lancet commission, supported by the United Nations sustainable development solutions network, is looking, among other things, at the explosive question of whether the virus

escaped accidentally from Shi's Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), which Daszak — like China — has consistently denied.

Critics ask how Daszak can objectively investigate something he has such fixed views about, in a lab his charity has funded. The WIV appears to have received almost $600,000 of a $3.7 million grant awarded to Daszak's EcoHealth Alliance in 2014 by the US Department for Health and Human Services for the purposes of "understanding the risk of bat coronavirus emergence".

Last week The Lancet acknowledged the conflict of interest by announcing that Daszak had recused himself from its commission. It said that in future "technical work will be conducted by independent experts who were not themselves directly involved in US-China research activities that are under scrutiny".

It was a heavy blow, and not the first time Daszak's impartiality has been in question. He strongly attacked the lab leak theory before, during and after the WHO mission, which concluded that it was "extremely unlikely". In an episode of the US TV show *60 Minutes* in March, he faced a grilling about his "conflict of interest". And in April a US congressional committee requested evidence from EcoHealth Alliance about its funding.

SPONSORED

Yet little is known about the figure in the middle of this maelstrom. How did the boy from Manchester become the president of a charity bankrolled by the Pentagon and America's National Institutes of Health (NIH), the face of the WHO mission, the Wuhan lab's biggest cheerleader and now one of the most controversial characters in the pandemic saga?

Daszak lives in New York state's wealthy Rockland county, 30 miles northwest of Manhattan. Seven years ago he and his wife Janet bought a sprawling house in two acres for $665,000. In 2019 he was paid $354,065 by EcoHealth Alliance, based in Manhattan.

It is a world away from Dukinfield, where Daszak's Anglo-Welsh mother and Ukrainian father Bohdan raised their family. One son, John, a year younger than Peter, became a tenor with the English National Opera. But Peter Daszak's passions lay elsewhere: his childhood dreams were of becoming a "zoologist in the Amazon", he told the podcast *This Week In*

Virology in 2019. "I think that once you get hooked on research and finding new things out, there's something that plays to a fundamental need to discover in the human psyche."

Daszak started off with a BSc in zoology at the University of Bangor in Wales — a teacher recalls that he was "really bright" — before his PhD and postdoctoral research. At Kingston University one project proved to be a springboard. With a colleague, Andrew Cunningham, he discovered the cause of a mass die-off of frogs from Australia to Panama, unexplained for a decade. Daszak suggested that the fungus responsible was linked to the wildlife trade in bullfrogs, sold as pets or food. This was the first step in a career focused on the interaction between humans, nature and viruses.

He moved to America with his wife, an immunologist, when she got a job in Georgia. His frog fame followed him, and over the next few years his research on emerging infectious disease gained attention, partly due to outbreaks of several rare and deadly diseases in humans, including Nipah virus, ebola and Sars.

In 2001 he joined the Wildlife Trust, a small, privately funded charity that would later become EcoHealth Alliance. Throughout the ensuing decade, Daszak was adept at promoting his projects. In an interview on America's National Public Radio in 2004 he compared his frog research to a Monty Python sketch: "John Cleese goes into the pet shop and says, 'Yeah, this parrot's dead.' 'Well, actually, sir, it's just resting.' And they just looked like frogs that were resting, who were perfectly OK, but dead."

In an episode of the TV programme *60 Minutes* the same year, clad in head-to-toe khaki on a boat speeding towards the remote Malaysian island of Pulau Tioman, Daszak was referred to as a "virus hunter" off to search for bats suspected of harbouring the Nipah virus. He says: "Almost 75% of the emerging diseases in humans actually come from wildlife ... or domestic animals," he warns. "We are looking for the next HIV, the next Sars." This nascent area of scientific study, now known as conservation medicine, shaped the next 16 years of Daszak's career.

By 2010 Daszak was busily fund- raising for the newly reconfigured EcoHealth Alliance. Millions of dollars worth of grants rolled in: 87.6 per cent of it from US government sources in 2019, including the NIH and the Pentagon.

According to one prominent scientist, who asked not to be named, Daszak did not have a laboratory of his own, nor was he performing his own research, as most grant recipients did. What he did have, however, was a network of partnerships with other laboratories, including Shi's WIV.

With Shi, Daszak helped to co-ordinate visits to remote mines in China to look for bat coronaviruses to study in the lab in the hope of getting ahead of natural spillovers into local populations. Then in late 2019 the pandemic erupted in Wuhan.

When President Donald Trump first suggested in January 2020 that the virus had leaked from Shi's lab, Daszak was quick to leverage connections and lobby colleagues to push the counternarrative that it came directly from animals.

In February 2020, he organised an open letter in The Lancet with 26 scientists, condemning "conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin". He also wrote an article in The Guardian in June last year under the headline: "Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn't created in a lab".

When it was suggested to him by *60 Minutes* in March that, as a member of the WHO mission, he had technically been investigating his own colleagues at the Wuhan lab, Daszak said: "I'm on the WHO team for a reason ... and if you're going to work in China on coronaviruses and try and understand their origins you should involve the people who know the most about that, and for better or for worse I do."

Last week in an update on The Lancet site, Daszak wrote that his organisation collaborated with a range of universities and governmental health and environmental science organisations in China. He said that neither the EcoHealth Alliance nor he personally received funding from the Chinese government.

Despite Daszak's best efforts, President Joe Biden lent credence to the lab-leak theory when he approved a full investigation into it last month.

Suddenly Daszak's vehement attacks on the hypothesis appeared to some to be less about the science and more about a serious conflict of interest — one that a growing number seem

unwilling to ignore any longer.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Wed, 6 Oct 2021 1:14:23 AM -0400

Sent: Wed, 6 Oct 2021 1:12:45 AM -0400

Subject: 2nd batch of emails possibly FoIA'd

From: Peter Daszak [b6]

To: David Morens [b6] Gerald Jerry Keusch [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>; Jeff Sturchio [b6]

Attachments: RE You essay.msg; Re USA Today 'Compromised position' Dr Anthony Fauci on why he thinks he hasn't heard from Joe Biden's team https bit ly 3nFxXVZ.msg; RE .msg; Re Slight harrassment on my current NIAID contract.msg; Re NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic.msg; Re NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic.msg; FW Daily Beast A Notorious COVID Troll Actually Works for Dr Fauci Bill Crews is a PR official at the National Institutes of Health But he also has another job an anonymous Red.dat; Re New (non-peer reviewed) report on origin of SARS-CoV-2.msg; RE Confidential updates.msg; RE Confidential updates.msg; RE Confidential updates.msg; Fwd STAT NIH awards $7 5 million grant to EcoHealth Alliance months after uproar over political interference.msg; OK It's been announced you got the award so now I can say CONGRATS!!!

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date:	Tue, 15 Jun 2021 9:52:47 PM -0400
Subject:	Fwd: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX
From:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To:	Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
Date: June 15, 2021 at 21:45:49 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]>, Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: Re: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

Yes, this is difficult. But let us view-it as a process, and not despaIr at every twist and turn.

There will be many twists and turns, but they do not predict the outcome. The outcome is that the important scientific work that needs to be done, will be done. And the questions that need to be answered will be answered. And in the history books, your place is already assured

That said, the challenge is how to keep from despairing until we get to the finish line…

I had a very long phone chat with Tony tonight. He called because he is getting nervous about scheduled testimony before Congress a few weeks from now, and wNts to be reassured on multiple technical points, also asking that i help him do a "murder session", an internal run through in which surrogates attack him as if they were Republican nut jobs, and he practices how to respond

In that discussion he asked me to reassure him it was not a man made virus, that Bob Redfield was in lala land re his recent statements, and i also relayed to him, in some detail, our phone discussion today in which i told him that you had convinced me that broad viral sequencing across the 5-6 countries would yield the virus origin, and i told him i pressed you on that, that you convinced me, and that therefore it was critical the work go forward.

Admittedly, he is more concerned with his own being squeezed than with the fate if your work, but also realize
that at the end if the day he is Always going to support what the science says.

On another subject, don't forget to send me your thoughts on at least 5 or so top research things that need to be done to get to the bottom of not only viral origin but also prevention/ control of future pandemic emergences

d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2021, at 21:16, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

You've got it exactly right Jerry. I've had a tough day – trying to hang on to a funder this afternoon, then trying to talk sense to a former board member who said I've brought ecohealth into the crosshairs. I told him our work did that, not me, but he says I came out too strong on the 'debate' from the beginning. So frustrating, not to mention this is no debate, these are two hypotheses with very imbalanced weights of evidence, in fact one has zero evidence. He wasn't listening – just buys into the idea that China was probably 'up to something'.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 5:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

There is always the clash between special knowledge and expertise versus conflicts of interest because of personal bias, at least in the minds (such as they are) of some who see the world differently. Our only recourse is to declare our potential for a true biased conflict of interest to be open and truthful and to insist, like a juror, that we can review evidence and reach conclusions based on the evidence obtained and presented. Otherwise there is no reason to become trained and expert in any area of science. As in the past just claim special knowledge and expertise – or the not very distant past like Trumps claim to know more than everybody else when he propped people with COVID ingest or be injected with bleach to kill the virus (it can't grow in a dead person killed by bleach) – and skip the years and the costs of education and training.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 4:51 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

Really good to see this – the 2nd sentence in particular is extremely valuable:

"However, misinformation, unsubstantiated claims, and personal attacks on scientists surrounding the different theories of how the virus emerged are unacceptable, and are sowing public confusion and risk undermining the public's trust in science and scientists, including those still leading efforts to bring the pandemic under control."

The comment about "minimizing conflicts of interest" and implying that natural origin and lab leak are just two scenarios worth investigating, is of less use – the WHO mission is the only viable game in town to do this work, and I've been accused of having 'egregious' conflicts and this was pointed to in the Science letter that David Relman coordinated. Can't help this undermines my role in the work. It also undermines the WHO work, which clearly indicated that one of these scenarios was far more likely. Given the paper in Nature on live wildlife trade in Wuhan this week, and the paper in Cell on another close virus from bats in China, it seems one is clearly more worth our concern than the other – that's how science works, is it not – hypothesis, data, thesis (conclusion)…?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 4:42 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry ([b6] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] [b6]
Subject: FW: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
301 496 4409
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 2:20 PM
Subject: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies
https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies

Statement | **June 15, 2021**

The origin of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and the circumstances of the first cases of human infection, remain unknown. Science is our best tool to ascertain, or to understand to the extent possible, the origins of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, which could help prevent future pandemics. However, misinformation, unsubstantiated claims, and personal attacks on scientists surrounding the different theories of how the virus emerged are unacceptable, and are sowing public confusion and risk undermining the public's trust in science and scientists, including those still leading efforts to bring the pandemic under control.

We urge that investigations into the origins of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 be guided by scientific principles, including reliance on verifiable data, reproducibility, objectivity, transparency, peer review, international collaboration, minimizing conflicts of interest, findings based on evidence, and clarity regarding uncertainties. In the case of SARS-CoV-2, there are multiple scenarios that could, in principle, explain its origin with varying degrees of plausibility based on our current understanding. These scenarios range from natural zoonotic spillover

(when a virus spreads from non-human animals to humans) to those that are associated with laboratory work. Scientists need to be able to evaluate all of these scenarios, and all viable hypotheses, with credible data. Data accessibility, transparency, and full cooperation from China, of course, will be essential for a proper and thorough investigation.

Although much still needs to be done to stop the pandemic, particularly in developing nations, science has made remarkable headway, especially through the rapid development of effective vaccines. The same scientific robustness, rigor, and cooperation should be applied to examining important questions about how the pandemic began.

Marcia McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
John L. Anderson
President, National Academy of Engineering
Victor J. Dzau
President, National Academy of Medicine

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Date: Tue, 7 Dec 2021 2:23:29 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 7 Dec 2021 2:19:58 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg

Just brilliant to see this David – Tony's been a total stalwart throughout this, sticking to the science and not bending and shifting with politicians' whims…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 2:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'

Peter, am trying to catch up now. Attached the commentary to come out in NEJM next week. NOT very eye opening but it DOES show Tony, in print, saying we need to work internationally to do the very things you have been doing all along, e.g., surveillance of viruses and animals. The irony isn't lost on him. david

David M. Morens, MD
b6

b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Wed, Dec 1, 2021 at 5:12 PM Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> Hope all's well – Jerry forwarded me a response to him. Please start cc'ing me back in – I'll be extremely careful to only use your gmail account.
>
> Great to hear the news about this vaccine commentary paper – please let me know when it's coming out and in which journal so I can get ready…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> **From:** David Morens <b6>
> **Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 5:05 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
> **Subject:** Re: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'
>
> Good news, keep it up.
>
> I had a long off the record chat with PBS Newshours's Nick Schifrin this morning. The craziness is receding

at least a bit.

I forgot to clarify in my email yesterday that BOTH my gmail and phone calls are now safe. Text is NOT, as it can be FOIA'd, as can my govt email.

So you and Peter and others should be able to email me on gmail only, with the caveat that no other govt. employee is copied at a govt address, as all govt emails are potentially FOIA'able.

I think Tony has calmed down a little about his attacks. In our recent meetings he has been relaxed and curious about the science. The corona vaccine commentary paper he asked me to write and which I sent him the final yesterday, with Jeff Taubenberger as a coauthor (since he and I are working on coronavirus vaccines), has a section that says that before we start making next generations vaccines we need to characterize the sarbecovirus universe and essentially work together with China and the SEA countries to study bats, animals, humans esp. in various occupations, all; the stuff that Peter has been doing. he seemed to like that and his name will be on it.

david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Fri, Nov 19, 2021 at 2:32 PM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

> How utterly ironic.
>
> I did follow up with Peter regarding your new secure cyber connections.
>
> And when the Washington Post rejected my Opinion piece I got a lead into Science from Jon Cohen and today I reworked it and submitted it to them a short while ago. Jon says to expect rejection and plan for the next submission in line. He suggested Michael Hiltzig at the LA Times. Its big and influential enough to garner attention in Building One. There is The Hill and Politico still to be considered. Its really a lot easier to get fake news and junk published than it is to shed light and truth.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
> **Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 9:09 AM

To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: FW: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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[b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
301 496 4409
[b6]

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, November 19, 2021 8:56 AM
Subject: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'

NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'



By Rachel Roubein
Today at 8:17 a.m. EST

Good morning! And welcome to our first Health 202 collab with our good pal Yasmeen Abutaleb, who wrote today's top with us.

Today: The House is planning to pass Biden's social spending bill after a record-breaking speech from House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy: 8 hours and 32 minutes. This comes after the Congressional Budget Office delivered much-anticipated projections for how much the bill will cost and a key estimate on how much Democrats' drug pricing deal will save. But first:

Francis Collins wants online misinformation spreaders "brought to justice"



NIH Director Francis Collins spoke forcefully against the spread of misinformation. (Alex Wong/Getty Images)

NIH Director Francis Collins has a stern message for the American public: The country has, what he called, an epidemic of misinformation and disinformation. And it's fueling a dangerous distrust in science.

"Conspiracies are winning here. Truth is losing. That's a really serious indictment of the way in which our society seems to be traveling," said Collins, who will soon step down as the National Institutes of Health director after serving in both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Collins made his most forceful comments yet against the pervasive spread of falsehoods online to our colleague Yasmeen Abutaleb. He was defending his own colleague, **Anthony Fauci,** Biden's chief medical adviser, against the biggest onslaught of angry messages and threats he's received throughout the entire pandemic.

Those attacks stemmed in part from a viral and false claim that Fauci, who leads the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, had funded a medical experiment that involved trapping beagles' heads in mesh cages filled with diseased sand flies. Fauci received so many messages — 3,600 phone calls in 36 hours — that his assistant quit answering the phone, Yasmeen and Beth Reinhard report in a story out this morning.

- **The claim was amplified by a little-known animal rights group** called the White Coat Waste Project, which leveraged existing hostility among conservatives toward Fauci to further its cause, The Post's investigation found. The outrage was supercharged by a bipartisan letter signed by 24 members of Congress that questioned the agency's funding of medical research on dogs.

- **The claim originated with an error by scientists.** NIAID was initially listed as a funder on the study in a paper in a scientific journal in late July. Even after the researchers and the medical journal corrected the error, White Coat Waste continued to promote and fundraise off the false claim. The group said it does not believe NIAID's denial or the corrections.

- **White Coat Waste's message was amplified** by a right-wing echo chamber eager to thrash Fauci over everything from vaccine directives to NIH funding of coronavirus research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and created the biggest firestorm yet for Fauci.

The episode serves as a prime example of how fast a false claim can spread online — and how it can stymie the highest levels of government. The surge of threats and harassment in recent weeks has forced Fauci's staff to spend significant time debunking misinformation and grappling with security concerns.


Fauci testifies before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in July. J. Scott Applewhite/Pool via REUTERS/File Photo (Pool/Reuters)

Here are excerpts from Yasmeen's interview with Collins:

Cracking down

The rapid-fire spread of misinformation has altered public opinion of the pandemic and coronavirus vaccines. Some **6 in 10** Americans say they either believe the government is exaggerating the number of deaths from the virus or aren't sure. Nearly **1 in** 4 Americans believe covid-19 shots contain microchips or don't know if the claim is true, according to a recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey.

- **"Truth is supposed to be truth,"** Collins said, "and the fact that your truth would be so heavily modified by your social circle or where you get your news tells you we're in real trouble."

- **He said he worries about a society where** "somebody's Facebook post carries as much weight as a statement from the director of the CDC about what is the truth of a public health crisis."

He sees two ways of attempting to curb the spread of misinformation, though admits he's unsure how successful either has been.

- **The first:** Identify those who are purposefully spreading false information online and bring them to justice.

- **The second:** Find a better way to counter false claims with real information. He didn't specify what exactly either one would entail.

Standing firm

Fauci has been a controversial figure throughout the pandemic, as he openly clashed with **President Donald Trump** over masks and unproven covid cures, Yasmeen and Beth note. **The sparring and public**

criticism over the last two years has led some "very credible people" to ask Collins if it's time for Fauci to resign.

- **"I was like, are you kidding me?,"** Collins recalled. "Do you then want to hand a victory on a platter to the people who have made up stories and incessantly thrown around information that is absolutely untrue to try to take him down? You want to say okay, they win? Is that your proposal?"

Collins himself has been the target of attacks. Whenever he pushes back on conspiracies, he says he knows he's going to get "some of the most vile email responses that you can imagine."

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Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 11:15:16 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 11:15:13 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Politico story
From: Nancye Green [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]

David,
Good to re-meet you as well. Thank you for your insights and support. We certainly are navigating uncertain times and hopefully a quick turn in the news cycle could put this behind us soon.

All the best,
Nancye

Nancye Green
Donovan/Green
O: +1 [b6] [b6] [b6]
M: +1 [b6] [b6] [b6]
[b6]
www.donovangreen.com

EcoHealth Alliance, Chair

From: David Morens [b6]>
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 at 8:28 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Nancye Green [b6]>, "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]>, Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: Politico story

Peter, it's a decent story, rather cautiously written it seems

Nancy, good to re-meet you.

We will soon see how this all unfolds. Best wishes to all of you. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 27, 2020, at 20:13, Peter Daszak [b6]> wrote:
>
> Dear All,
>
> I'm introducing you to Nancy Green, the Chair of our Board. David Morens – you both met at the Smithsonian Exhibit opening. Nancye – David is in the Office of the Director NIAID, reporting to Tony Fauci and a long time mentor of mine. Jerry Keusch is the Head of the Boston University Biosecurity Level 4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center, and another of my 'mentors'.
>
> This is the story from Politico, with our statement embedded. It's not a rip-roaring call to arms for the defense of scientific integrity, but it's a start and at least exonerates us of any wrong doing. I'm hoping that powerful voices will now speak out and try to crush this political interference in work that was defined to protect our national health and security.
>
> https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

I'll be reaching out to Jim Hughes and Rita Colwell tonight to set up a call.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Sat, 25 Sep 2021 11:04:07 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 25 Sep 2021 11:04:01 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6];

Jerry et al:

Sorry to be slow here. I was appalled by this amendment. I will try to contact Harold, Tony, Francis and Eric Lander by email and see if they have any suggestions. I have to confess that I don't know how possible it is to remove stupid amendments like this.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, September 25, 2021 9:03 PM
To: David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>
Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks David,

I will plan on doing that. I have a call with Richard Horton at noon to discuss whether the Lancet will appoint us a Working Group reporting directly to the Lancet. He was prepared to do that, extracted a promise from Jeff he wouldn't be out in the public space after he altered the Commission website, and asked up to develop a proposal. We did and listed all 12 of the task force members as the new Working Group. With the WSJ piece and other media vehicles picking up on it we are not inclined to give one inch and it will be all 12 of us or none of us. We are still holding our public voice silent, but the issue is not if but when, and then what we will say.

What I want to talk to Tony about is the amendment to defund EHA in the defense appropriation bill passed by the House. I am sure staff were largely unaware. Just like I expect Richard Horton to stand on the side of scientific integrity so too must the NIH, and it is time for Francis Collins to set the record straight - Peter and EHA did nothing wrong, their science was important and helped the world prepare for the emergence of COVID rather than being responsible for it happening. I think Tony can speak to Francis - who probably won't be listening - but even more important to Biden, his senior staff, and to Eric Lander.

Long story short is I can call Tony in the 1:30-2:30 time frame. If you can let him and his secretary know that would be great. Is that still Patty Conrad because she will most likely recognize my name.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Saturday, September 25, 2021 4:08 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Roberts, Rich [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >
Subject: Re: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate

Jerry, i would call him on his land line at work on Monday. [b6] and his assistant Kim will answer. I can give her a heads up of who you are and that u will be calling.

In a pinch i can give you his cell phone, but there is a sort of rule that us piss-ons shouldn't give it out. Although i sm sure he would be fine

But as he is so swamped all the time, i think the land line call is best, so that he will know in advance that you are going to call. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 25, 2021, at 15:59, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> David. What's the best way for me to contact Tony. I don't know what he could achieve in trying to get Collins to do what is right here but he can have a lot of influence on Biden and Eric Lander. I will raise what our mutual mentor, Shelly Wolff, would have done - make it clear this is egregious and get the Govt to do what is right.
>
> Jerry
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
>> On Sep 25, 2021, at 11:50 AM, David Morens [b6] > wrote:
>>
>> Peter, sorry for not replying earlier I was in a sort of urgent
>> situation and was tied up the whole past two days.
>>
>> First, it is hard to believe this passed or will be allowed to stand,
>> I suspect most Democrats and Republicans didn't even know about it
>> because some staffer sneaked it in. Also, and I dread appearing
>> charitable, I doubt even most Republicans would want this.
>>
>> beyond that, the law prevents me from doing anything about it other
>> than fume, so please accept my sympathetic fuming and hope that this
>> will die a rapid death. d
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>>

>> David M. Morens, MD
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>> b6
>> b6 b6 b6 (work)
>> b6 b6 b6 (cell)
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>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash,
>> which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
>> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
>>
>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
>> NIAID address
>>
>>> On Sat, Sep 25, 2021 at 9:30 AM Peter Daszak
>>> b6 > wrote:
>>>
>>> Jerry – this is very good to hear. Yesterday was a very worrying day. If this amendment becomes law, we will have to lay off staff and basically close down. It penalizes us for something that we didn't do, without due process. It sets a terrible precedence for congress members ability to shut down a non-profit or a university's line of research based on rumor and hearsay. It's also based on a falsehood that there is any evidence that the virus came out of a lab, of course.
>>>
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>>>
>>> There's a lot of drum-banging going on out there, and the attacks on us continue. We're trying to do the right thing by keeping quiet and not talking to the press, but this also means they have a field day at our expense when every rumor or hyped-up article comes out.
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>>> Cheers,
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>>> Peter
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> President
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance
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>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>>> New York, NY 10018-6507
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>>> USA
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>>> Tel.: b6
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>>> Website:
>>> https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww
>>> .ecohealthalliance.org%2F &data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C853
>>> d932d3b7646dc522708d9808973fb%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c384b%7C0
>>> %7C0%7C637682150139383917%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMD
>>> AiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000 &sdata=0T
>>> jmAR7%2FZc%2FfPvQ1ibI0AHDtfJo9lnJDJJbgQMDOMao%3D &reserved=0
>>>
>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:05 PM
>>> To: Peter Daszak b6 ; David Morens
>>> b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 >
>>> Cc: Robert Kessler b6
>>> Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
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>>>
>>> I'm going to contact my congressional representative and senators, and Tony Fauci and Victor Dzau as
well.
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>>>
>>>
>>> If Rich gets in touch with Harold that could help some, at least with Eric Lander who sits in the cabinet

and has the ear of the White House leadership.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> Jerry
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
>>>
>>> Professor of Medicine
>>>
>>> Associate Director
>>>
>>> National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
>>>
>>> Boston University, Boston MA 02118
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]
>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:31 PM
>>> To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T
>>> [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
>>> Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
>>> Subject: FW: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>> Importance: High
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>>> Dear Robert, David, and Jerry,
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>>> Sorry to send this, but please read the email below and you'll see that a bill filed by a Republican congressman from PA then became a single line amendment attached to the Defense Appropriations bill, and actually passed the House last night.
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>>>
>>> We're very worried here because we rely on Federal funding and this puts our organization in great threat. Any advice is welcome. We're reaching out to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, but I'm really worried that if they are too busy to get involved for a small non-profit with no political clout, we'll be drummed out of business.
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>>> If you have colleagues who know how to deal with this sort of issue, and are willing to help, we would be extremely grateful for any advice, suggestions and support. I realize you've all spent social and political capital helping our organization since we were first targeted by Pres. Trump, but this is truly an existential threat to us, considering 80-90% of our budget is from federal grants and contracts.
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>>> Cheers,
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>>> Peter
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance
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>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>>> New York, NY 10018-6507
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>>> Tel.: b6
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>>> Website:
>>> https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww
>>> .ecohealthalliance.org%2F &data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C853
>>> d932d3b7646dc522708d9808973fb%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c384b%7C0
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>>> jmAR7%2FZc%2FfPvQ1ibI0AHDtfJo9lnJDJJbgQMDOMao%3D &reserved=0
>>>
>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]
>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:11 PM
>>> To: 'Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)'
>>> [b6] 'Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)'
>>> [b6]
>>> Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; Robert Kessler
>>> [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
>>> [b6]
>>> Subject: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed
>>> by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>> Importance: High
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> Dear Jamison and Gilbert,
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> You were kind enough to talk with us a couple of months ago about attacks on our New York City-based 501c3 non-profit from the hard right wing regarding the work we've done in the past trying to protect us from new emerging diseases coming out of China and other hotspots. As you remember, this work was largely funded by NIH, DoD and USAID and has become a target for Republican-led attacks on the Biden administration.
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>>> We're very concerned that one of the House Republicans, Congressman Reschenthaler, filed a bill titled HR591 "Defund EcoHealth Alliance Bill" in Jan. 2021 and managed to get this attached as Amendment 148 to the National Defense Authorization Act (HR 4350). The five other co-sponsors are all Republicans: Van Drew, Perry, Harshbarger, Keller, and Budd:
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frules.house.gov%2Fbill%2F117%2Fhr-4350
&data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C853d932d3b7646dc522708d9808973fb%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f74066
&sdata=aY6taCJdf6XdumnQGbYQ2L6l3AmDrR6LD%2BQayiAB6%2FA%3D &reserved=0. The House passed the NDAA last night
(https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Farmedservices.house.gov%2Fndaa
&data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C853d932d3b7646dc522708d9808973fb%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f74066
&sdata=JZxPouf7JlKquc6Lusx8vaKwoyu8bAY1e1pufTdyri0%3D &reserved=0) and unfortunately this Amendment is now progressing with it.
>>>
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance is a non-profit based in Midtown Manhattan that employs around 50 people whose jobs depend on the funding we receive each year. If this amendment continues forwards, we stand to all lose our jobs and close down the organization. This amendment is based on a false premise that our organization acted wrongly and was involved in the origin of the COVID pandemic. In fact it's the opposite, we worked with federal approval to help protect US citizens against this and other pandemic risks. If passed, it would penalize an organization doing public good, without any due process or consideration of the facts. Also of great concern is that this amendment would set a precedent that any single member of Congress can specifically block funding to an organization or institution through a simple amendment, bypassing all political norms.
>>>
>>>
>>>

>>> We are urgently hoping that you will be able to make Sen. Gillibrand aware of our issue and move to strike out this amendment at the first possible opportunity. We are at this point very worried for our staff, and our work around the world protecting the US against the next pandemic.
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>>> Yours sincerely,
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>>> Peter
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> President
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance
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>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>>> AiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000 &sdata=0T
>>> jmAR7%2FZc%2FfPvQ1ibI0AHDtfJo9lnJDJJbgQMDOMao%3D &reserved=0
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>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
>>> Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 10:46 AM
>>> To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>> [b6]>; Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)
>>>[b6]
>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura
>>> [b6]>; Robert Kessler
>>>[b6]
>>> Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>>
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>>>
>>> That would be perfect. It'll be me, our chief of staff Aleksei Chmura, and our Communications Director Robert Kessler.
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>>> Thanks for making time!
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>>> Cheers,
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> .ecohealthalliance.org%2F &data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C853
>>> d932d3b7646dc522708d9808973fb%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c384b%7C0
>>> %7C0%7C637682150139383917%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMD
>>> AiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000 &sdata=0T
>>> jmAR7%2FZc%2FfPvQ1ibI0AHDtfJo9lnJDJJbgQMDOMao%3D &reserved=0
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>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> From: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>> b6 >
>>> Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 8:42 AM
>>> To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Ruiz, Gilbert
>>> (Gillibrand) b6
>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll b6 >; Aleksei Chmura
>>> b6 >; Robert Kessler
>>> b6
>>> Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> Happy to chat. Would Monday at 2:30pm over zoom work for you all?
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> From: Peter Daszak b6 >
>>> Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 3:38 PM
>>> To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>> b6 >
>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll b6 >; Aleksei Chmura
>>> b6 >; Robert Kessler
>>> b6
>>> Subject: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>> Importance: High
>>>

>>>
>>>
>>> Dear Brooke,
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> I hope you don't mind me contacting you directly – I was given your email address by my colleague Dennis Carroll.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> As you may know, I'm the President of EcoHealth Alliance, based here in NYC, and also Chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats and member of the National Academy of Medicine. I mentioned the latter, because I received a very kind letter from Senator Gillibrand when I was voted onto the NAM a couple of years ago – it's now framed on my wall!
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> You may have heard our organization's name (EcoHealth Alliance) and mine being mentioned in the press recently in the general discussion of identifying the origins of COVID-19. For the last 17 years, we've worked closely with colleagues in China to get ahead of emerging viruses, including by collaborating with their premier virologists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Unfortunately, this work has become a very public target politically following over a year of conspiracy theories online that have now gone mainstream about the possibility COVID emerged as a leak from a biosafety laboratory in Wuhan. This was amplified a few weeks ago with testimony by Dr. Fauci and the release of FoIA'd emails that have put our organization in the cross-hairs of efforts to attack the current administration. This includes proposals by some minority members for bills that would significant harm our international work to prevent pandemics, as well as directly defund our organization.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> I've attached a letter in Lancet that came out last week that helps provide some context of the way this issue is being viewed by serious scientists, but as you can imagine we're worried about the impact on work that we believe is critical to preventing future pandemics. I wondered if you would be interested in my giving you a short briefing on this issue, to explain in more detail what the evidence behind these theories is, and to get your take on the political issues we are concerned about?
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>>> Cheers,
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>>> Peter
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> .ecohealthalliance.org%2F &data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C853
>>> d932d3b7646dc522708d9808973fb%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c384b%7C0
>>> %7C0%7C637682150139383917%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMD
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>>> jmAR7%2FZc%2FfPvQ1ibI0AHDtfJo9lnJDJJbgQMDOMao%3D &reserved=0
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>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> Disclaimer
>>>
>>> The information contained in this communication from the sender is confidential. It is intended solely for use by the recipient and others authorized to receive it. If you are not the recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking action in relation of the contents of this information is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.
>>>
>>> This email has been scanned for viruses and malware, and may have been automatically archived by Mimecast, a leader in email security and cyber resilience. Mimecast integrates email defenses with brand protection, security awareness training, web security, compliance and other essential capabilities. Mimecast helps protect large and small organizations from malicious activity, human error and technology failure; and to lead the movement toward building a more resilient world. To find out more, visit our website.
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>>> Disclaimer
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>>> The information contained in this communication from the sender is confidential. It is intended solely for use by the recipient and others authorized to receive it. If you are not the recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking action in relation of the contents of this information is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.
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>>> This email has been scanned for viruses and malware, and may have been automatically archived by Mimecast, a leader in email security and cyber resilience. Mimecast integrates email defenses with brand protection, security awareness training, web security, compliance and other essential capabilities. Mimecast helps protect large and small organizations from malicious activity, human error and technology failure; and to lead the movement toward building a more resilient world. To find out more, visit our website.
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>>> The information contained in this communication from the sender is confidential. It is intended solely for use by the recipient and others authorized to receive it. If you are not the recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking action in relation of the contents of this information is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.
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>>> This email has been scanned for viruses and malware, and may have been automatically archived by Mimecast, a leader in email security and cyber resilience. Mimecast integrates email defenses with brand protection, security awareness training, web security, compliance and other essential capabilities. Mimecast helps protect large and small organizations from malicious activity, human error and technology failure; and to lead the movement toward building a more resilient world. To find out more, visit our website.

Date: Sat, 8 May 2021 8:14:31 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 8 May 2021 8:11:00 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment
From: Peter Daszak [redacted]
To: David Morens [redacted]
CC: Roberts, Rich [redacted] Keusch, Gerald T [redacted]; Aleksei Chmura [redacted]; Robert Kessler [redacted]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]

No problem – haven't really had a day off since I began my Ph.D….luckily my wife's also a scientist, so gets it.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 8, 2021 5:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak [redacted]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [redacted]; Keusch, Gerald T [redacted]; Aleksei Chmura [redacted]; Robert Kessler [redacted]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, thanks fir this really helpful info! Although there still seem to be missing pieces, it is good to know that so many top notch folks have looked At this so carefully. I feel MUCH better now, and sorry to have eaten up much of your "day off" (as if aNy of us have days off anymore). D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 8, 2021, at 17:14, Peter Daszak [redacted] wrote:
>
> Hi David – answers/comments in the body of your email below…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, May 8, 2021 3:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Roberts, Rich b6; Keusch, Gerald T < b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6; Robert Kessler b6; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, I still need to get more educated on furin cleavage sites in coronaviruses. A few articles, e.g., the one attached, claim that in the evolutionary history of multiple different coronaviruses, FCS's do appear independently, although this is less common in sarbecoviruses. Is that your understanding?

[Peter Daszak:] yes – it seems to be uncommon

And is there any idea what determinants might favor insertion of these sites. Also, do we know about the levels of expression of furin in cells of mammals that might be sarbecovirus co-hosts? I assume that all such mammals have furin activity similar to humns, but is that known?

[Peter Daszak:] not really known well, or discussed that I've seen.

I ask this because the notion that a furin cleavage site indicates human engineered origin needs to be rebutted or at least countered. This is one of several of the Wade points that will appear, to the layman, to be damning. David

[Peter Daszak:] This has been rebutted regularly since January 2020. It was the key reason that this whole lab leak idea was discussed at the White House level in the first place. It was missed by Zhengli in her Nature paper. Likewise, Ralph Baric missed it when he first looked at the SARS-CoV-2 genome sequences in early Jan. Apparently Trevor Bedford & Eddie Holmes pointed it out to Jeremy Farrar, saying it could indicate lab origin (i.e. a virus that gained a furin cleavage site during cell culture). Jeremy mentioned it to Fauci, who mentioned it to Bob Kadlec (if I remember correctly) at the WH. They then convened a panel via NAM to discuss that included me, Ralph and the others. Ralph pointed out that it could have been acquired naturally during human-to-human transmission. I pointed out that it could have been acquired during transmission through an intermediate host. We all pointed out that influenza, and other CoVs have these, although rare. That ad hoc committee then transformed into the NASEM COVID-19 rapid response committee that became largely ignored under Trump and has now

basically ended.

There have been lots of active virologists rebutting the theory that the presence of a furin cleavage insertion indicates lab leak because these are found in nature, and because close relatives of SARS-CoV-2 have insertions albeit slightly different sequences at the same site. Here are some links with rebuttals or discussion:

> ***Kristian Andersen pointing out that the furin cleavage site is seen repeatedly across the CoV phylogenetic tree:*** *https://twitter.com/K_G_Andersen/status/1330565966745403392?s=20*
>
> ***The article on Virological.org that he refers to:*** *https://virological.org/t/naturally-occurring-indels-in-multiple-coronavirus-spikes/560*
>
> ***Florian Krammer arguing on Twitter with a lab-leak conspiracist:*** *https://twitter.com/florian_krammer/status/1390347972458725380?s=20*
>
> ***Interesting article showing that the RmYN02 similar site suggests natural evolutionary origin:*** *https://virological.org/t/the-sarbecovirus-origin-of-sars-cov-2-s-furin-cleavage-site/536*
>
> ***Interesting article from Vincent Racaniello pointing out other Human CoVs (which are thought to have originated in bats by the way) also have insertions at this site:*** *https://www.virology.ws/2020/05/14/sars-cov-2-furin-cleavage-site-revisited/*

As you can see when you read these, people who know about these things do not find them unusual and certainly don't believe it demonstrates (or even could be considered leaning towards) a lab origin. Unfortunately, it's just scientifically complicated enough to convince the intelligent reader. Throw in phrases like "Gain of function" or "Seamless ligation" and then sprinkle "lab biosafety concerns from state dept cables", and voila, you have a very exciting story – good enough for a science fiction novel, but absolutely not science fact!

T

On 5/8/2021 2:26 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Appreciate your comments David. Please read the letter I just sent to Rich Roberts. I've made some quick comments to refute some of the stuff in the Wade piece. RE. the furin cleavage site – there's nothing special about it and it does not suggest a lab origin. MERS-CoV, feline CoV and some rat CoVs all have similar insertions. Simple explanations for its presence in SARS-CoV-2 could be:
>
> > It was present in a bat-CoV (one of the many thousands awaiting our discovery), and we selected for its spillover by having 14 million people working in wildlife farms in china in places where bats live. Given a continued exposure to myriad bat-CoVs, one with a furin cleavage site would be more likely to emerge
> >
> > It evolved in people early on in the COVID outbreak. WHO report and modeling suggest spillover occurred in last few months of 2019. It could have easily been selected for as the virus spread from human-to-human during that early period
> >
> > It evolved after a progenitor bat-CoV spilled over into wildlife in farms in S. China. SARS-CoV-2 spillover into mink in Europe led to rapid evolution of strains that bore similarities to pangolin-CoVs. Mink strains then re-infected people in the Netherlands. Now, there's a report of mink clearing the virus, showing antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 and being reinfected later – all good evidence that farms full of raccoon dogs, ferret badgers and civets in S. China could have had circulation of SARS-CoV-2 for many months prior to it emerging.
>
> Hope this all helps. One day, the research will be done and all this will be demonstrated. Unfortunately, the one group that had access to China to do this work (EcoHealth) is currently blocked from doing it!
>
> Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, May 8, 2021 1:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T < b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 >; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, I agree, and I think we should try to not use the term GOF, notly because it suggests something nefarious, but also, at least as I would define it, it doesnt apply to your work, as you just said. In my mind it doesn;'t apply to Ralph's work either.

Secondly, I re-read the Wade article carefully, and did NOT conclude that just about everything he said was wrong. I think it is the best researched, and most literate and thorough media article on the subject. BUT. I think it is biased and uses cherry-picked facts. Moreover, it tries to pretend non-bias in a disingenuous way.

In short, high order sophistry.

I am also troubled by David Baltimore's opinion that finding a furn-cleavage site indicates human manipulation. I suspect that may not be true, since these viruses hyper-circulate in bats and spillover into mammals and people frequently, and also frequently recombine in spike protein sequences. But I am not knowledgeable about such things. In this context, the idea of David Robertson, cited in the Wade article, is of particular interest: the idea that the precursor virus had become a "generalist" by long evolving through bats and mammals including humans. Something analogous happens with arboviruses, e.g., dengue, which serially pass through humans and mosquitos every couple weeks, and have to be well adapted to two very different alternating hosts.... d

On 5/8/2021 1:51 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> I also think it's important to let the journalist know that nothing in the work we were doing in China could

be reasonably called "Gain of function". The only recombinant viruses were bat-CoVs, with spike proteins of other bat-CoVs. None had enhanced transmissibility or cell infectivity. None are known to be infectious to people.

I believe the whole 'gain of function' phrasing used to describe the Wuhan CoV research is just a ruse to scare a gullible public – journalists today have been using phrases like "making viruses more dangerous in the lab in Wuhan" etc. None of this is true.

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:09 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Peter Daszak < b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Robert Kessler b6
Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

David:

Probably not too helpful to describe every growth of a virus in a lab is a GOF experiment.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6

Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:44 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessle [b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] < [b6]
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter, I just tsalked to Ms. Eban for an hour, and connected her with Jim LeDuc and Jeff T. I also sent her a paper I and others wrote with David Baltimore 10 years ago about the BENEFITS of GOF research vis a vis the 1918 flu virus. To wit, the growing up of the virus and studying it in primate challenges, and in vitro, yielding hugely important info on flu pathogenesis.

Rich, this relates to my own feeling that GOF is a double-edged sword, so to speak, that while we must work to prevent dangerous use of virologic techniques, totally agree on that point, we must also consider that every infection of a cell, in tissue culture, organ culture, experimental animals, humans, whatever, is in essence a GOF experiment (and also a loss of fuinction experiment, since host adaptation usually results in ftness penalties), without which we would have no viral vaccines except vaccinia, and arguably not even that.

Her interest in David B results from his comments in the Wade article about the SARS-CoV-2 furin cleavage site, about which I am a tiny bit skeptical, not fully understanding the complexities of cleavage site evolutions in RNA viruses. I asked Jeff and his folks to comment. He and I had a discussion about David's comments yesterday, but I will let him follow up on that, since he has been thinking about RNA virus cleavge sites with respect to flu A and other viruses for over 20 years. It seems to be more complicated than one might think..

The Wade article also cites some ideas by a guy named David Robertson. Do you know him? I do not. But he posits that the SARS-CoV-2 precursor may have become a "generalist" by circulating between bats and mammals, maybe even humans. No eviodence for this, but the idea makes alot of sense to me. Plausible in my mind, what do u think?

David

On 5/7/2021 6:20 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Really interesting to hear those comments about "Blah blah" and "Deng deng". It just saddens me because I know Zhengli's English is not the best, and I don't think she realizes that every word she says publicly, even in response to a question at a University seminar, is being manipulated and used politically. It feels like racism to me.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

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From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:01 AM
To: David Morens b6 >; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

The letter to Blinken includes the following statement:

"…the release of these documents from the Department could help to refute contradictory statements that have been made regarding the possibility of a laboratory leak from the WIV." This could be taken in a positive sense, that the documents will refute the lab release hypothesis, although I don't think that's how they mean it.

Regarding what Peter previously said about Shi's use of the phrase blah blah, which will surely be characterized as dismissive and therefore put into a negative perspective. I have access to a senior endowed full professor of Chinese politics at Harvard and I asked about the meaning of blah blah when a Chinese native speaker uses it while speaking English. Here is the answer:

"In my experience many Chinese mistakenly use "blah, blah" as equivalent to the Chinese term "deng, deng" which means "and so forth" and has no negative connotation."

So Peter was right, and now we know the Chinese term it is trying to translate, however awkwardly. This might be useful in any conversation with a report about her remarks or the Republicans letter.

Jerry

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 ; Aleksei Chmura <

[b6] g >; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, i will reply eventually when i get some time, but until then, note yet another Josh Rogin editorial in this morning's Post, this time disclosing the Republican letter to Tony, which i have not yet seen and may or may not see. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 6, 2021, at 23:34, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Sorry for yet another email, but this one is so bizarre it's almost funny. It's a letter from the House E&C Committee Republicans to Blinken asking him to release the classified intel that people in the Wuhan lab were sick prior to COVID, and that the WIV does military research. It quotes some comments from a recent talk my collaborator Zhengli Shi from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, gave during a lecture at Rutgers. Some of the online conspiracists heard about the talk in advance and they packed the audience – some of their questions from the chat were read out. Her response included a very common "blah blah" phrase used in China when speaking English – here's the quote:

During a March 23, 2021 seminar at Rutgers University, a WHO advisory committee member asked Dr. Shi if [knew].. whether "the U.S. government claims of classified Chinese military research being carried out at the WIV [are] correct, and if so, did you have full awareness of and access to all aspects of this research?"[4]

Dr. Shi answered: From my knowledge, all our research work is open, is transparent. At the beginning of COVID-19, we heard the rumors that claimed our laboratory would have some project blah blah with army blah blah . . . but this is not correct, because I am the director and responsible for research activity. I don't know any kind of research work performed in this lab.[5]

This is ridiculous, of course, and they're obviously using that quote to suggest Dr. Shi doesn't take these questions seriously, but it's actually a racist trope – people in China use the phrase "blah blah" to simply mean "and so on, and so forth". Just unfortunate…

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM
To: 'David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; 'Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: New: Letter from Republican Rep. Gallagher to Dr. Fauci re. WIV and gain of function
Importance: High

David,

A Republican representative sent a letter to Tony Fauci today asking some pretty simple questions that are clearly designed to play to their political base.

If Tony Fauci is going to respond to the attached letter that was made public today, I hope he's ready to point out that the work we did was NOT gain of function. This phrase has been bandied about now for a few months and is utterly incorrect.

If he decides to draft a response, I'd be happy to do a quick briefing with you and him to explain the work that has been done up to now with WIV, and was planned to be done on our NIAID grant.

Cheers,

Peter

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Date: Tue, 7 Dec 2021 11:38:14 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 7 Dec 2021 11:35:35 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Eric Lander meeting 12/10
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>; David Morens <b6>;
CC: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Jeff Sturchio <b6>; Roberts, Rich <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>;
Attachments: image001.png

One of my favorite movies. Favorite character, Marshal Zhukov, of course – seemed like such a fun chap!

Here's a clip of his grand entrance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNbvepjd46A

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 3:14 PM
To: David Morens <b6>
Cc: Peter Daszak <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Jeff Sturchio <b6>; Roberts, Rich <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: Re: Eric Lander meeting 12/10

Definitely!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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E-mail: b6
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Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Dec 7, 2021, at 2:02 PM, David Morens b6 > wrote:

No laughing matter, but when you need a bit of black humor, see the film Death of Stalin...

d
David M. Morens, MD
b6
b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH

email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, Dec 7, 2021 at 2:23 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> The parallels are awfully real. I've already ghost-written articles to be presented by others because my name can't be associated publicly – just like the McCarthy Era screenwriters in Hollywood.
>
> My father, who was born in the Ukraine at the height of Stalin's purges and efforts to starve them out and russify the country, will be turning over in his grave right now…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 12:20 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Jeff Sturchio [b6]; Roberts, Rich < [b6]>; David Morens <[b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]
Subject: Re: Eric Lander meeting 12/10

Like Lysenko preventing Vavilov from attending meetings at the Russian Academy of Sciences

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

> On Dec 7, 2021, at 10:59 AM, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>
> *****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Here's the NAM directly telling me not to attend a really important meeting, and my strong pushback.

I'm trying my best to avoid this becoming a media story, but if this goes to a full investigation, and weeks of further waiting while I respond to these ridiculous accusations, I just see my reputation, job, health, family safety, and EHA staff undergoing further awful attrition.

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 11:55 AM
To: 'Bogard, Kimber' < b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b6 >
Subject: RE: Eric Lander meeting 12/10

Dear Kimber,

I'm very disappointed that baseless political attacks are behind you being asked to not include me in this discussion, particularly after I've put in so much hard work over the past year to this activity.

It's also extremely concerning that, despite my repeated requests, the rules and procedures which apparently state that a member who's been put in this awful position cannot take part in NAM activities, have not been sent to me. Instead I'm told they are not for members or the public to see.

I do not see the NAM upholding the integrity of science, or its members, against political attack here. Rather, it comes across as NAM doing its best to protect the organization at the expense of a member's reputation. I am deeply upset that it has come to this.

Peter

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---

From: Bogard, Kimber b6
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 7:55 AM
To: b6
Subject: Eric Lander meeting 12/10

Dear Peter,

I have been informed that you are ineligible to serve on committees and other activities of the NAM while your situation is being evaluated. Therefore, I do not expect you to attend the Eric Lander meeting this Friday 12/10.

Thank you for your contributions.

Best wishes,
Kimber

Kimber Bogard, Ph.D. (she, her, hers)
Deputy Executive Officer, Programs
nam.edu | @theNAMedicine

NATIONAL ACADEMY of MEDICINE

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Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 9:51:12 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 9:51:08 AM -0400
Subject: RE: WHO mission on COVID origins - report and annexes
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Su Yadana [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6] David Morens [b6]

Thanks

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 9:41 AM
To: Su Yadana [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6] David Morens [b6] >; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: WHO mission on COVID origins - report and annexes
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear All (Su – please forward to Lancet Taskforce members),

Here's a draft copy of the WHO report on COVID origins as shared with member states (attached). The Annexes are available here:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/l53hn8rdtk4t0n6/Annexes_20210328.pdf?dl=0

The final version will be released on the WHO website today:

https://www.who.int/health- topics/coronavirus/origins-of-the-virus

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 8:38:42 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 8:35:49 AM -0400
Subject: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.
From: Peter Daszak < b6
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Jason Gale b6
CC: b6 b6 Garry, Robert F b6 >; b6
Attachments: image003.jpg; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png; image007.png; image008.jpg; image009.gif; image010.jpg

Nicholas Wade's at it again – another miserable innuendo-filled attack on science and the process by which scientists email, talk and come to decisions. Nothing new of course, just trash journalism published in a pseudo-scientific journal. Pretty shameless smear on some of us – no facts of course, no sue-able accusations, just snipey comments and excerpts from Social Media. It's as if we can't now be scientists and actually colleagues who break bread and share a glass any more.

https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/how- covid-19s-origins-were-obscured-by-the-east-and-the-west/

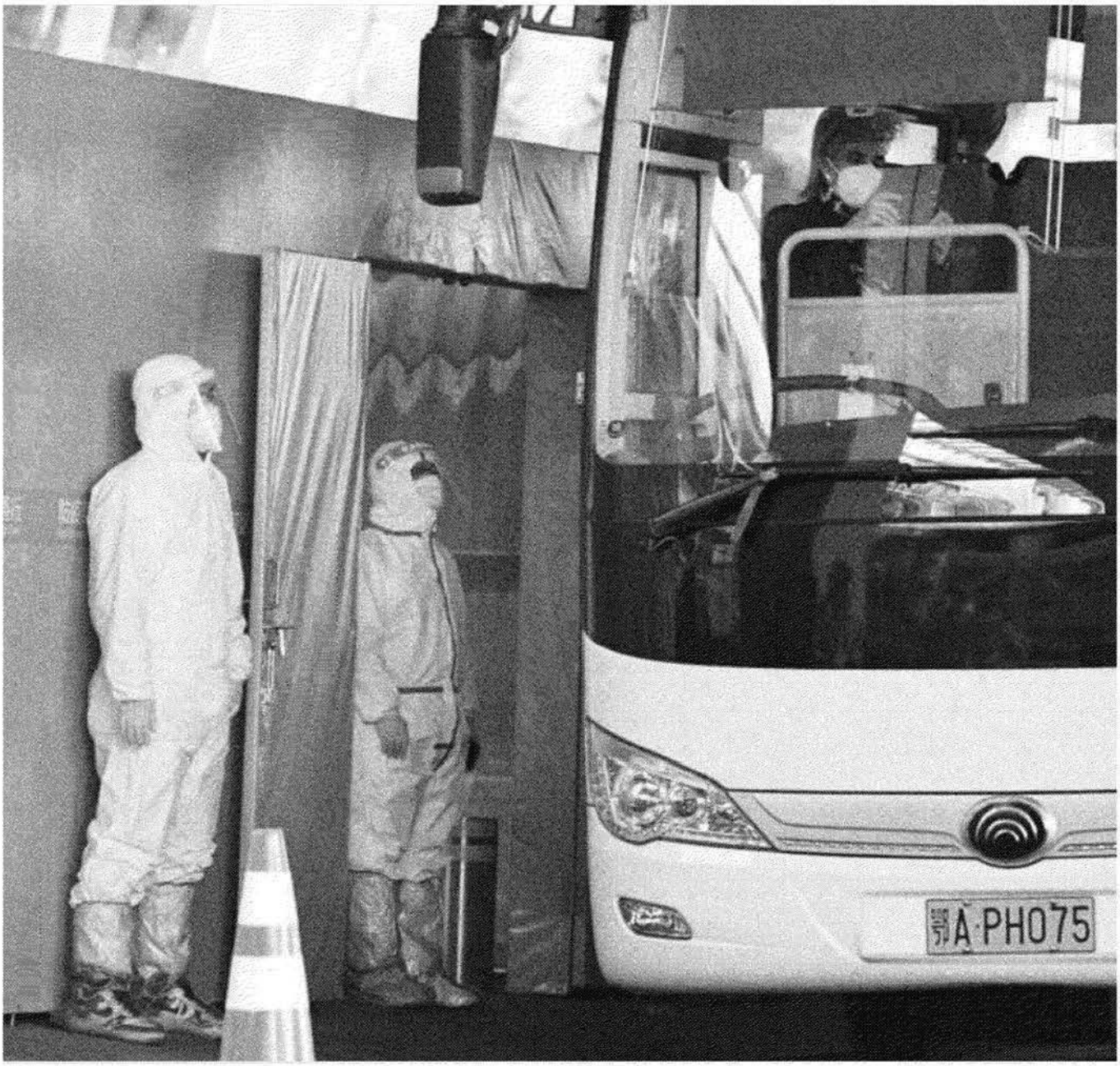
The irony is in the ending – he claims the lab leak is an albatross hanging around China's neck that they won't be able to shake off until they open up the lab videos, books, freezers etc. The truth is his and others continued attacks are what put the albatross there in the first place. Does anyone really believe that if China gave access to all the above and no further evidence was found, that these folks would simply say "OK, it wasn't a lab leak after all"!!!

Cheers,

Peter

How COVID-19's origins were obscured, by the East and the West

By Nicholas Wade | August 17, 2021

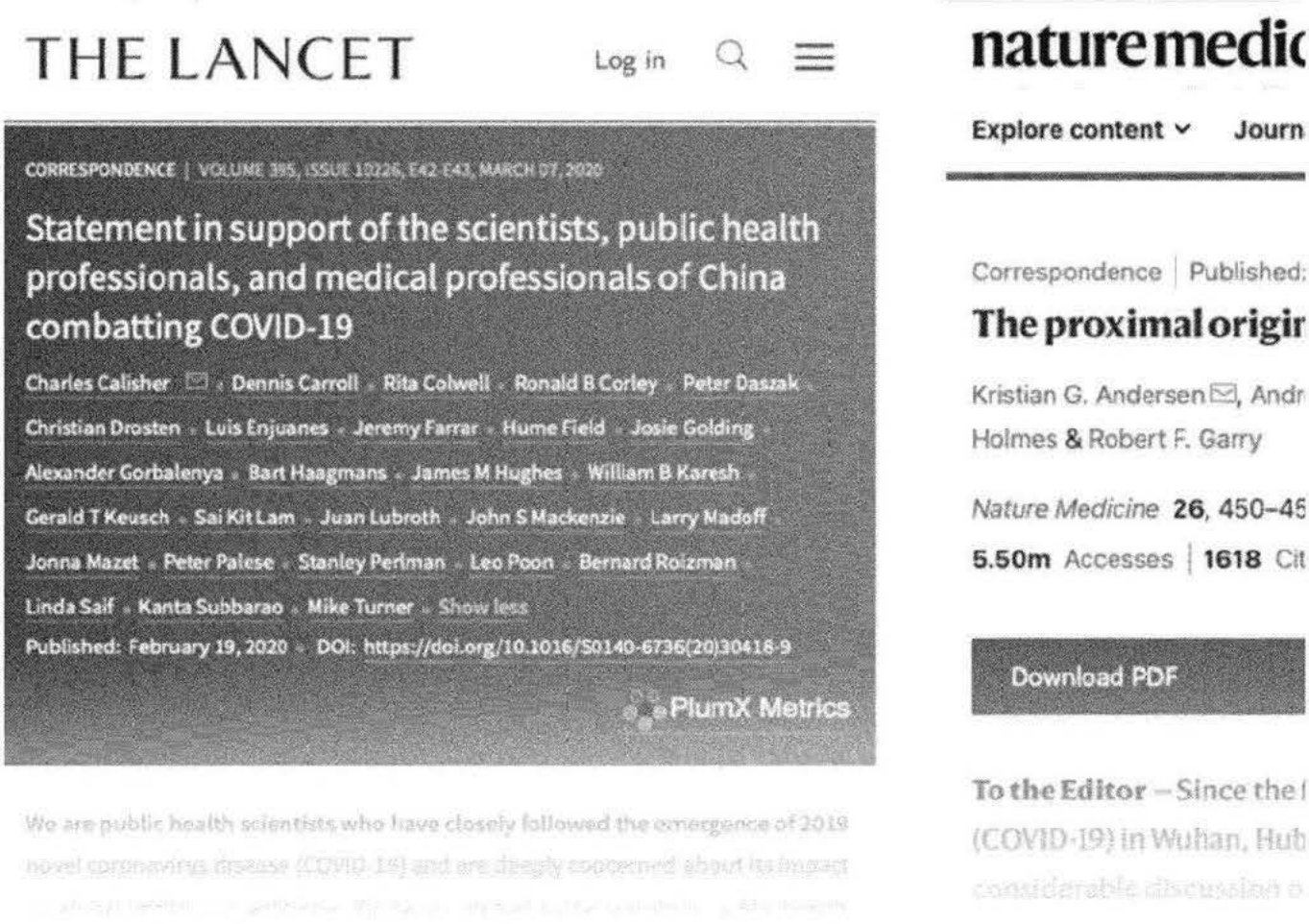


A bus carrying a team of experts from the World Health Organization departs an airport in Wuhan on Jan. 14, 2021, after arriving in the Chinese city to investigate the origins of the coronavirus pandemic. That investigation is widely seen as having been obstructed by Chinese authorities. (Photo by Kyodo News via Getty Images)

Some 20 months after the Covid-19 pandemic first broke out, its origins remain obscure. A vigorous campaign of concealment by the Chinese authorities is the principal reason. But China received considerable help, strange to say, from senior medical research officials in the United Kingdom and United States who mishandled and effectively derailed the initial inquiry into the virus's origins.

The mishandling began at a pivotal teleconference held on February 1, 2020. The organizer was Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, a large medical research charity in London. News of the conference emerged with the release this June of emails from the office of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Farrar supplied further information in his book *Spike*, published on July 22.

The conference was held to discuss the unanimous view of a group of virologists that the SARS2 virus had been manipulated in a lab. Yet within a few days of the meeting, the virologists abruptly reversed their conclusion. The meeting's participants were later involved in two letters to scientific journals that stated the virus must have emerged naturally and that condemned any suggestion of manipulation as a conspiracy theory. These two letters, to *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*, shaped the views of the mainstream media for more than a year.



THE LANCET

Log in

CORRESPONDENCE | VOLUME 395, ISSUE 10226, E42-E43, MARCH 07, 2020

Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19

Charles Calisher, Dennis Carroll, Rita Colwell, Ronald B Corley, Peter Daszak, Christian Drosten, Luis Enjuanes, Jeremy Farrar, Hume Field, Josie Golding, Alexander Gorbalenya, Bart Haagmans, James M Hughes, William B Karesh, Gerald T Keusch, Sai Kit Lam, Juan Lubroth, John S Mackenzie, Larry Madoff, Jonna Mazet, Peter Palese, Stanley Perlman, Leo Poon, Bernard Roizman, Linda Saif, Kanta Subbarao, Mike Turner, Show less

Published: February 19, 2020 · DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30418-9

PlumX Metrics

We are public health scientists who have closely followed the emergence of 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and are deeply concerned about its impact

nature medic

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Correspondence | Published:

The proximal origir

Kristian G. Andersen, Andr
Holmes & Robert F. Garry

Nature Medicine **26**, 450–45

5.50m Accesses | **1618** Cit

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To the Editor – Since the
(COVID-19) in Wuhan, Hub
considerable discussion o

Letters published by *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* in early 2020.

Even today, no one can say for sure whether the SARS2 virus emerged naturally or escaped from a lab. Much less could anyone have been sure back then. If the conferees had stuck to known facts, they would have left the question open to the two hypotheses, and the full exploration of the virus's origins might not have been sidetracked for over a year.

More significant, the Chinese government would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to manipulate the World Health Organization (WHO) into setting terms of reference that favored China's obstructive goals and kept WHO inspectors who visited China this February from accessing records vital to understanding the origin of the pandemic. China now insists those terms of reference cannot be changed, blocking further investigation into the origin of the SARS2 virus. "The two groups that produced the infamous letters in *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* paved the way for the Chinese government and helped enormously to facilitate all of that," says Milton Leitenberg, an arms control expert at the University of Maryland. The reversal of the virologists' conclusion about SARS2's artificial origin is thus a matter of some significance.

At 10:32 p.m. on the evening before the February 1 conference, Fauci had received an electrifying memo from Kristian G. Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research institute in California. Andersen reported that the virus seemed to be man-made. "The unusual features of

the virus make up a really small part of the genome," he wrote, referring presumably to a genetic component known as a furin cleavage site, which greatly enhances the virus's infectivity, "so one has to look really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentially) look engineered."

From: Kristian G. Andersen [redacted] (b) (6)>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 10:32 PM
To: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted] (b) (6)
Cc: Jeremy Farrar [redacted] (b) (6)>
Subject: Re: FW: Science: Mining coronavirus genomes for clues to the outb

Hi Tony,

Thanks for sharing. Yes, I saw this earlier today and both Eddie and myself a great article, but the problem is that our phylogenetic analyses aren't able t sequences are unusual at individual residues, except if they are completely the virus looks totally normal and the close clustering with bats suggest tha The unusual features of the virus make up a really small part of the genome really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentia

We have a good team lined up to look very critically at this, so we should kn the weekend. I should mention that after discussions earlier today, Eddie, B the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory. But w more closely and there are still further analyses to be done, so those opinio

Best,
Kristian

_A key email from Kristian Andersen to Anthony Fauci.
Andersen went on to note that "after discussions earlier today, Eddie, Bob, Mike and myself all find the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory"— meaning that, in their unanimous view, the virus didn't come from nature. "Those opinions could still change," Andersen added. Eddie is Edward C. Holmes of the University of Sydney. Bob is Robert F. Garry of Tulane University. Mike is Michael Farzan at Scripps Research.
The message sent Fauci into a whirlwind of activity. "You will have tasks today that must be done," he emailed his deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, two hours later at 12:29 am on February 1. One of these urgent tasks evidently concerned NIAID funds that had been passed, via the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, to Zhengli Shi, China's leading bat virus expert, at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci was doubtless anxious to check whether his agency's funding

of Shi's work had complied with US law, which banned funding gain-of-function research from 2014 to 2017 and required it be reported to a government panel thereafter. "Gain of function" refers to research in which a pathogen's ability to cause disease is enhanced. Auchincloss replied a few hours later that efforts were underway to ascertain "if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Meanwhile Farrar, who had independently heard of the Andersen team's conclusion from Holmes, says in *Spike* that he arranged a teleconference set for 7 p.m. London time, convenient for both Washington and Australia, where Holmes was based.

The participants included Fauci and possibly his nominal boss, Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health. (Farrar says in *Spike* that Collins was present, but Collins's name is not on the list of invitees in the Fauci emails.) Officials on the UK side were Farrar and Patrick Vallance, the chief scientific adviser to the UK government. The others were mostly virologists, including Andersen, Holmes, and Andrew Rambaut of the University of Edinburgh. Far from being selected at random, the conferees were associated through a complicated web of relationships, a sort of virologists' old boy network that included senior medical officials in China. Farrar was well acquainted with George Fu Gao, the head of China's counterpart of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has described Gao as an "old friend," who in fact had called a month earlier, on December 31, 2019, to tell Farrar about the initial cases in Wuhan of what turned out to be Covid-19. Farrar says in his book *Spike* that on the weekend of the teleconference, he called another highly placed Chinese official, Chen Zhu, China's minister of health from 2007 to 2013, to tell him of "rumours that the novel coronavirus could be the result of a lab accident." As for Holmes, he has published many papers both with Farrar and with Gao and has been a guest professor at Gao's CDC from 2014 until 2020.

Because of these varied connections, it seems likely that Chinese authorities knew about the conference almost from the moment it occurred and, if so, would have had the opportunity to influence deliberations that followed it.

At the conference there was a notable imbalance of power between the virologists and the officials. Fauci and Farrar together control a large portion of the funds available for virological research in the Western world. A virologist keen to continue his career would be very attentive to their wishes. Two of the conference participants had multimillion-dollar grant proposals under final review with NIAID at the time of the call.

Almost all references to what was discussed at the teleconference have been redacted from the Fauci emails under exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act. The conference would doubtless have included explanation from Andersen and Holmes as to why they had concluded the previous evening that the virus had been altered through laboratory manipulation. "Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call," Farrar writes in one of the Fauci emails.

RELATED:

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19

From: Jeremy Farrar [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, February 1, 2020 1:13 PM
To: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]; Patrick Vallance [redacted]
Cc: Drosten, Christian [redacted]; Marion Koopmans [redacted]; R.A.M. Fouchier [redacted]; Andrew Rambaut [redacted]; Kristian G. Andersen [redacted]; Paul Schreier [redacted]; Ferguson, Mike [redacted]; Collins, [redacted]
Subject: Re: Teleconference

Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call. Thank yc

Hope it will help frame the discussions.

_A Jeremy Farrar email about the teleconference.
Whatever was said at the meeting, it was followed by a remarkable and almost immediate about-face. By at most three days later, Andersen had executed a 180 degree turn in his views about the virus. In an email of February 4, 2020 to Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, which had directed NIAID funds to Shi, Andersen wrote, "The main crackpot theories going around at the moment relate to this virus being somehow engineered with intent and that is demonstrably not the case." The email was obtained by U.S. Right to Know, an investigatory group.
Participants have not explained what was said at the meeting or found in the days immediately following it to induce the change of mind. Media offices at the Wellcome Trust and NIAID declined to comment on this article. Andersen, Holmes and Rambaut did not reply to emails seeking an account of the reversal.
Farrar, not Fauci, seems to have been the leader in the teleconference's deliberations. "This is not my area of expertise so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy," Fauci wrote on February 13 to a CDC official. US officials were not to take the lead in this pivotal inquiry.

From: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Thu, 13 Feb 2020 22:36:17 +0000
To: Messonnier, Nancy (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD)
Subject: RE: NAS

Nancy:

The official USG group will be convened by NAS. Bob Kad direct knowledge of that. In addition, there is an ad hoc gro Jeremy Farrar of Wellcome Trust. This group has about 15 p are highly respected scientists, mostly evolutionary biologist by e-mail and conference calls (I have been on 2 of these cal invited me) to look at all of the bat, pangolin and human co to try and determine the evolutionary origin. This is not my so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy.

Best,

Tony

Fauci's "leaving it all to Jeremy" email.

Farrar had a direct hand in the two letters that went out to the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*. He was a signatory of the *Lancet* letter, a draft of which Daszak, the organizer of the letter, began circulating just five days after the conference. The letter sought to squelch all discussion of the possibility that the virus had escaped from a lab by deriding it as a conspiracy theory. When Daszak wrote an article in the *Guardian* elaborating on the same theme, Farrar promoted it with a tweet, saying "as always worth reading @PeterDaszak."

Farrar also recruited the five authors who drew up the *Nature Medicine* letter, his spokesman told the writer Ian Birrell. (The spokesman referred to the *Lancet* letter but evidently meant the *Nature Medicine* letter, which has five authors.) The *Nature Medicine* letter, accepted on March 6 and published on March 17, 2020, presented a detailed and influential case that the virus had emerged naturally from animals. Its authors were Andersen, Rambaut, W. Ian Lipkin, Holmes and Garry.

In his book *Spike*, Farrar portrays the events between the February 1 conference and publication of the two medical journal letters as a judicious process in which he held an agnostic view and played no role other than asking questions. "On a spectrum if 0 is nature and 100 is release—I am honestly at 50!" Farrar says he emailed to Fauci and Collins a day after the conference. But if that were honestly so, he fails to explain his switch from 50 to 0 when signing

the *Lancet* letter a few days later.

According to *Spike*, it wasn't until March, "after the addition of important new information, endless analyses, intense discussions and many sleepless nights" that Andersen and his four fellow virologists "were ready to pronounce on the origins of the novel coronavirus." Why then was Andersen, the virologists' leader, ready to pronounce just 3 days after the conference that lab release was a conspiracy theory? Farrar's account does not match with the available facts. Nor does Andersen's. In a June interview with the *New York Times,* he painted a picture that includes a change of mind on the possible engineering of the virus "in a matter of days, while we worked around the clock," and then that quick reversal being buttressed by drawn-out research. "This is a textbook example of the scientific method, where a preliminary hypothesis is rejected in favor of a competing hypothesis as more data become available and analyses are completed," he said in a statement released by Scripps Research after his Jan 31 email to Fauci had become public. "I cautioned in that same email that we would need to look at the question much more closely and that our opinions could change within a few days based on new data and analyses—which they did," Anderson said in the *New York Times* interview. In that same interview, he also said that "more extensive analyses, significant additional data and thorough investigations to compare genomic diversity more broadly across coronaviruses led to the peer-reviewed study published in *Nature Medicine*."

These later data and analyses would not have been available three days after the conference, the date of Andersen's volte-face email to Daszak. And they would not have been available to Farrar as he signed the *Lancet* letter, which was published just 17 days after the teleconference. More puzzling is Andersen's statement that in his preliminary studies "the genome of RaTG13, a SARS-related coronavirus found in bats, wasn't yet available." In fact its full sequence had been deposited by Shi in a data bank on January 24, 2020, a week before Andersen's report to Fauci, and Farrar says in *Spike* that he had seen the sequence by the time of the conference. RaTG13 is the closest known relative of SARS2, and the fact that it lacks the furin cleavage site found in SARS2 would have been a major reason for the Andersen group to suppose that this genetic element had been inserted into SARS2 in a lab.

Given his role in leading the February 1 teleconference, in presiding over the virologists' 180 degree change of views, and in arranging or influencing the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* letters, Farrar was evidently the driving force of the campaign to persuade the public that the SARS2 virus could not possibly have leaked from a lab. This was an unfortunate position for any scientist to take, given that he was assuring the public of something he could not be sure was true.

Farrar now says in *Spike* that, although natural emergence is more likely, "nobody is yet in a position to rule out an alternative." But his campaign sought very vigorously to do exactly that. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," Farrar and his cosignatories wrote in the *Lancet* on February 18, 2020. This lapse in scientific judgment reflects also on the other senior participants in the conference who saw what was happening but apparently took no steps to insist that scientific truth should take precedence over unjustifiable professions of certainty.

RELATED:

Caltech's David Baltimore discusses the debate over origins of SARS-CoV-2

The decision to quash any notion of lab escape seems to have brought relief all round. At least until the tide of opinion began to change a year later, Fauci and Collins didn't have to endure unpleasant questions about why they had been funding hazardous research in minimally safe conditions at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from

a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Daszak emailed Fauci after a White House press briefing on April 17.

In August 2020 the NIAID announced it would award $82 million over five years to 10 participants in its new network for detecting infectious diseases. Among the lucky winners: Daszak, Andersen, and his associate Robert Garry.

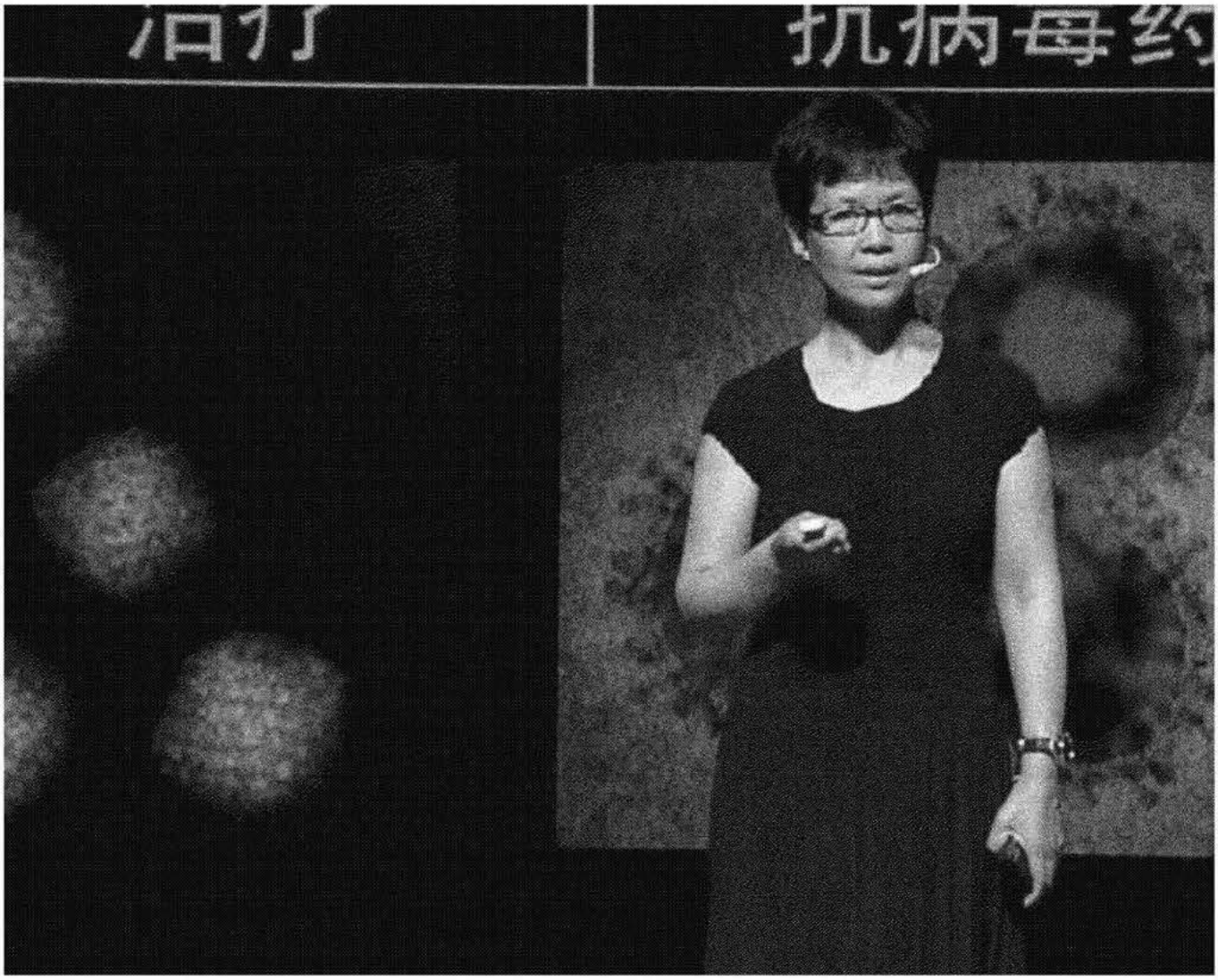
The perturbing lab leak theory raised by Andersen and his colleagues on January 31, 2020 had been safely laid to rest. Farrar and his colleagues had succeeded in the one goal also pursued by the autocrats in Beijing, that of suppressing discussion of whether the SARS2 virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab.

Beijing's way of squelching inquiry about the virus was, unintentionally, somewhat more obvious than the methods used in London. Chinese authorities tried so hard to stamp out information about the virus's origin that they left a rather clumsy trail of footprints pointing to where they didn't want people to go.

One of the more informative suppressions of data was the closure of China's main database on bat and other viruses. Zhengli Shi, China's leading expert on bat coronaviruses, told the BBC that it was taken off line because of numerous hacking attempts. It's conceivable that in January 2020, after the pandemic broke out, people without authorized access might have tried to hack into the database. But in fact the database went off line on September 12, 2019. Who would have wanted to hack into a bat virus database back then? More likely, that is the date at which Chinese authorities realized they had a virus escape problem.

In February of last year, President Xi referred to the need to ensure biosafety and biosecurity, and the Chinese Communist Party followed by tightening up their biosafety rules in October 2020, accelerating a long planned revision. "To me, the fact that the CCP enacted a major series of laboratory biosafety regulations this past year is an indication that China's political leadership believes that a lab accident is likely to have caused the pandemic," says a biosurveillance expert who has monitored China's disease outbreak reporting for the past two decades.

Major clues as to what happened are evident in Shi's various pronouncements about the virus. The omissions and untruths in these statements are specific enough to outline the very body of facts the censors have sought to conceal.



Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli spoke about SARS during a Yixi event (comparable to a TED talk) on June 23, 2018. (Yixi video)

In looking at Shi's questionable statements, it's only fair to keep in mind that they may have been compelled. Her train of deceptions began immediately after the genetic sequence of the SARS2 virus was published on January 10, 2020, by Yong-zhen Zhang of Fudan University, against the wishes of Chinese authorities who subsequently closed his lab for a time. Where did this strange new virus come from? Shi wanted or was told to establish SARS2's pedigree as a bat virus, with an ancestry analogous to that of SARS1, the bat virus that caused an epidemic in 2002. In an important paper published on February 3, 2020, Shi reported that the genome of SARS2 is 96 percent similar to that of a bat virus, RaTG13, "which was previously detected in [the bat species] *Rhinolophus affinis* from Yunnan province."

Shi neglected to mention a salient difference between the two viruses, namely that SARS2 possessed a furin cleavage site and RaTG13 did not. Alina Chan, of the Broad Institute in Cambridge, has likened the omission to describing a unicorn by reporting all its horse-like features, but neglecting to mention the horn. Evidently the Chinese authorities were highly sensitive to the furin cleavage site's presence.

Shi also failed to say when and where she had discovered the RaTG13 virus, surely important data for the closest known relative of SARS2. In fact, she had found RaTG13 in 2013, in an abandoned mine in Tongguan—the same place where six miners had fallen sick the year

before. At that time, she analyzed just one of its genes and reported the virus under another name, BtCoV/4991. Daszak, the holder of her NIAID grant, told the London Times, perhaps on misinformation from Shi, that the virus was then thrown in a freezer and forgotten about until 2020. This was untrue—the virus was of much greater interest. Shi had analyzed its full genome, probably by 2018, but did not publish it. It was only when she needed a bat virus pedigree for SARS2 that Shi released information about the virus, which she now renamed RaTG13. The fact that BtCoV/4991 and RaTG13 were one and the same was discovered by Monali Rahalkar and Rahul Bahulikar, two internet-sleuthing researchers in Pune, India.

It's not acceptable practice among scientists to report something already published under a different name as if were new. Shi's February paper had the goal of portraying SARS2 as just another bat virus while concealing the true provenance of its closest known relative—a cave known to harbor lethal viruses.

When RaTG13's connection to the Tongguan mine was pointed out, Shi still tried to conceal the lethality of the mine's bat viruses, saying the miners had died of a fungus infection. This untruth was corrected when a master's thesis by a Chinese doctor, Li Xu, was unearthed by the internet sleuth who calls himself TheSeeker268. The thesis reported that the miners had died of a SARS-related virus with symptoms identical to those of Covid-19 and with CT scans similar to those of Covid patients. The only evident difference between that virus's effects and those of SARS2 is that the miners' virus was not readily transmissible from one person to another.

The specificity of what Shi's statements concealed—the furin cleavage site, RaTG13's identity with BatCoV/4991, the latter's origin in the mine where six miners were infected, the death of the three miners from infection by a virus with symptoms very similar to those of SARS2—all point to the involvement of these elements in a scenario the Chinese authorities are determined to cloak. That scenario may have been the storage or generation of the SARS2 virus in Shi's lab from one of the many viruses recovered from the Tongguan cave.

The Chinese government's persistent stonewalling and Shi's pattern of evasions do not amount to proof that the SARS2 virus escaped from her lab. But they seem less like the actions of innocent people and more like attempts to cover up a fatal accident, one that has caused the deaths of maybe 10 million people and counting.

Perhaps proof will one day emerge that the virus emerged naturally. If not, the likelihood that SARS2 escaped from a researcher's laboratory is an albatross that will hang round China's neck in perpetuity. China's only hope of release from this terrible encumbrance lies in opening its laboratory doors and either establishing its innocence or admitting its fateful error.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 6:26 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6 ; Garry, Robert F < b6
Subject: RE: feedback on wild animals

Jason, not sure whose office politics is worse, but there is many a day I'd rather be in Australia, even if I had to drink that awful beer Fosters. (To quote Grouco Marx as he help up a glass of questionable beer: "last time I saw something like this, they had to shoot the horse")…. But I do have fond memories of Australia, and two of my closest freiends, both ex-students of mine, are out in Perth, the only large city there (if oy can call it that) I have never been, although it's high on my bucket list if this damn pandemic ever ends. He's an American public health physician and she's an Australian-Tongan PhD virologist, both wondeful smart people.

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
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(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; Garry, Robert F < [redacted] > [redacted]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Thanks, David.
I just got off a video conf call with the current editor in NY (the one asking all the latest questions). He's very nice and I feel like he gets its. He thinks it's a fascinating story.
Problem we have in journalism is that there are some people who aren't interested in actual journalism and telling stories; they want to climb to the top and manage people. I rejected the latter route 10 years ago, but am so grateful that I still get to meet so many remarkable people, visit cool places and see all aspects of humanity.
A difficulty working for a NY-based organization is that it's assumed that all the best people are in NYC, so being in Melbourne (where I need to be to be close to my kids in Adelaide), is that folks consider Australia a backwater and, by association, I mustn't be all that important/valuable.
But my new role as "global biosecurity czar" is helping somewhat.
Ahhhhh... Office politics!

From: [redacted] At: 08/15/21 09:03:03 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Jason, all I can say is that it must be harder to be a journalist than a scientist.... I had no idea someone at your level would get pushed back.

Usually i get from one to 4 reviewer responses to a ms. and three of those are out to lunch. Occasionally i get a reviewer who really understands the work: half of those are helpful, the other half are trashers.

Maybe it's like being in the government where i am: there is endless push back, but the push-backers are brainless idiots who don't know what they are talking about.

Do you ever get to a point where the editors leave you alone on the science? Or do they all think they are science geniuses? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 14, 2021, at 16:05, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Thanks, Bob. In journalism, getting to the truth even when it's genuinely and actively pursued, can be a tortuous process!
----- Original Message -----
From: Robert F Garry [b6]
To: JASON GALE, [b6], [b6], [b6]
At: 08/15/21 01:45:11 UTC+10:00

Looking forward to this important article. Truth is stronger than fiction.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:41 AM
To: [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6]
Subject: Fwd:Re:feedback on wild animals

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Hi guys, in case you have nothing better to read over the weekend, this is some of the dialog I am having with editors in the U.S. Essentially, my response to questions from editor #6.
I thought I could claim victory when it looked like the story could be published this morning, but the editor of Businessweek objected and thinks he can make it better with another revision and an ETA of Tuesday. Sigh.
Jason

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/14/21 16:36:58 UTC+10:00
To: Cristina Lindblad (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , Eric Gelman (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: Joel Weber (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:feedback on wild animals

Hi.
Thanks for the feedback and the questions, which I have tried to answer in detail.
It's often easier to have a conversation over Nexi or the phone to explain nuanced information, or details that are

clear to me, but might not be to someone coming at this fresh, but that's tricky with the time difference.
When you look back at what's happened here, it seems that in trying to deflect blame for the pandemic, which became increasingly vicious as the cataclysmic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded around March-April 2020, China tried to conceal a very obvious, very plausible source of the pandemic: it's flourishing wildlife trade (worth about $90 billion in 2016).
It was an obvious cause of the pandemic because an almost identical scenario triggered an international outbreak caused by a very similar coronavirus (SARS) in 2003-04.
But in attempting to cover up the wildlife trade, and making like there were never any wild animals being sold in Wuhan's wet markets, things began to backfire on China; questions were raised about the nearby lab studying these coronaviruses. The more geopolitical, heated and vicious the arguments and accusations became, the less cooperative China became. In response, the more intent/adamant some groups have become in their belief that China is covering up a lab-leak. It's become a vicious circle. If China isn't coming clean on the wild animals, what else is it trying to hide?? China's defensiveness means we may never get the cooperation needed to find the answers. If China had been honest and transparent about the wild animals in the wet markets, it might not be in this mess now.

Anyway, here are my response to your queries in green.

By the way, I wonder if the current headline:
Delayed Paper Gives Credence to Wuhan Market Covid Origin Story
doesn't convey much more than what we had 2 months earlier when we reported Xiao's findings: China Markets Sold Mink, Civets, Stoking Natural Origins Theory
Perhaps Obscured China Paper Scuppered Chance to Trace Covid Origins
would hits "China", "Covid" and "Origins" in a way that won't alienate people who already believe it was a lab-leak

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According to the report, minks, civets, raccoon dogs and other mammals known to harbor coronaviruses were sold in plain sight for years in shops across the city, including the now infamous Huanan wet market, to which many of the earliest Covid cases were traced. The evidence collected over 30 months by **Xiao Xiao** a I'D NAME HIM HERE [[i don't know that naming a researcher no one has ever heard of adds much]] researcher working at a lab affiliated with China's Ministry of Education was hastily drafted into a manuscript and submitted to a scientific journal [Joel, we

cannot name the first journal they delivered it to because the authors decline to give us the name, saying it may affect their future chances of being published] in February 2020, just weeks before the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

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While the study received wide attention when it was eventually released by a different publisher [Publisher (Springer Nature) and publication (Scientific Reports) are different. Might add confusion DO YOU WANT TO ADD NAME HERE?], its long and torturous journey to publication gave **Chinese officials an opportunity to weave alternative narratives in which the virus may have come from abroad, even from a U.S. Army biological research facility**. [the stuff in bold is not contested and we go on to show how that happened, documenting with links when available]I TWEAKED WORDING HERE BUT THIS STILL ISN'T QUITE RIGHT. IF THE REPORT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED EARLIER CHINESE OFFICIALS COULD STILL HAVE DONE WHAT THEY DID—THEY COULD HAVE JUST SAID THE REPORT WAS SHODDY, OR WHATEVER, AND THEY ALSO COULD HAVE JUST IGNORED IT. I disagree. The evidence that Xiao et al provide was meticulously documented and supported by photographs that would have been difficult/impossible for China to dismiss (as older published photos and media reports had been). What's more, Newman understands that Xiao collected blood-sucking ticks from the wild animals he studiously cataloged. His frozen tick samples could be tested for blood/antibodies/virus, which could be extremely helpful in identifying infected species PRIOR to December 2019. The WHO team knew nothing of this, so couldn't have asked China for this research or any results, had they actually done the research. The delay in the publication of Xiao's paper delayed the evidence that there were live animals sold in the Huanan market. The WHO researchers couldn't have asked about tests on wildlife that ostensibly were never there. Likewise, Chinese authorities couldn't have done the tests on animals that didn't exist. The problem is that in January and February 2020, it was widely assumed the animals HAD been there and that the necessary tests and tracing of animals (the sampling of animals on farms they were raised on, testing of farm workers, animal hunters, transporters and traders **had all been done** by researchers in China -- the very things that ultimately led to the discovery of the origins of SARS and of MERS viruses. **None of these things were done** (or at least, there is nothing publicly available to show that they were done) **because the animals "weren't there"**. Now that we all know they were there, China as lost considerable face. The issue has become so political than there is much less/?no willingness to cooperate and conduct the additional

research that the WHO-led team recommended. Ideally, Xiao's ticks should be studied, but it's doubtful that will now happen (I wouldn't be surprised if he's been ordered to incinerate them!) Hope this is clear.

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An international team of experts convened by the WHO traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to seek answers—a trip that might have yielded different results if the scientists had known about the work of Xiao Xiao, a virologist whose roles straddled epidemiology and animal research at the government-funded Key Laboratory of Southwest China Wildlife Resources Conservation and at Hubei University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.'MIGHT HAVE YIELDED DIFFERENT RESULTS' SEEMS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. WHAT RESULTS DID IT YIELD? I'D CUT THIS GRAF
As mentioned above, the WHO-convened team of researchers was told by market authorities, vendors and regular market visitors that there were no live animals sold in the Huanan market. That undermined completely the premise that the Huanan market was the kind of place where live animals from different species are stacked in cages, with urine and fecal material drips from one cage to the one below it, where there are splatters of blood and guts from animals, and lots of potential for the spread of diseases from one species to another (including Homo sapiens). Instead, the market (and one other one known to have been selling live wild animals in 2019) was presented as selling only frozen wild animals and aquatic species and things unlikely to be the source of SARS-CoV-2. The WHO researchers were told there were frozen ferret badgers and other wildlife found in freezers. Some of the carcasses actually came from Yunnan, the province where the closest coronavirus related to SARS-CoV-2 was found in bats -- thus establishing a potential route from Yunnan to Wuhan in wildlife. That was actually important. When the researchers showed their Chinese counterparts photos of caged raccoon dogs taken in the Huanan market by Prof. Edward Holmes five or six years earlier, they were told by Chinese scientists that the photos may have been faked, and that the market had ceased selling such live animals anyway. The WHO researchers saw no evidence (empty cages, animal pelts, etc) to dispute what the Chinese scientists told them, although they did smell "animals" -- but were told they were smelling rotten meat, sewage etc. Three people associated with the WHO-led mission told me that they didn't believe the information they were given by anyone associated with the market. But since there was no evidence to the contrary, they were unable to push the Chinese scientists further on this. **The fact that the mission concluded that frozen, not live wild animals were sold in the market undermined the thesis that Covid**

resulted from an animal spillover. And the absence of strong evidence pointing to a spill over from wild animals to humans made the lab-leak theory look, in relative terms, more plausible.

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Six months and two revisions later, the journal's publishers rejected the paper. "They did not think it would have widespread appeal," says Newman, who declined to name the publication [do you want us to say why he won't name it? I don't think it's necessary. There's no upside for scientists to make a publisher look bad (most journals are published by a handful of publishers)] "It caused us, especially our Chinese co-authors, concern that these data would not be taken seriously."

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The manuscript underwent a third revision to include data on China's pangolin trade networks (an earlier study, later contested, had implicated pangolins in the virus's spread to humans)WHO ASKED THAT THIS INFO BE INCLUDED? (I did, because we're trying to explain here why WHO missed the significance of Xiao's evidence. The WHO was slammed by other papers being submitted PLUS Xiao's paper had a weird title. That title seemed relevant to the authors back in January-February 2020, when pangolins were considered a possible SARS-CoV-2-spreading culprit. But in October 2020, pangolins were off the hook, so the title would have seem irrelevant/unimportant at first glance at WHO). It was then sent to the online journal *Scientific Reports*.

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The China-based researchers had reason to be cautious. In February 2020, the China Center for Disease Control (CCDC lets not use "CCDC". It's not commonly used like the U.S. "CDC" is, and it's going to force readers to go back and figure out what the "CCDC" is) prohibited scientists working on Covid-relate

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~~CCDC~~ Disease detectives arriving from Beijing (think this makes it clear that these are China's disease "feds" arriving) on the first day of 2020 ordered environmental samples to be collected from drains and other surfaces at the market. Some 585 specimens were tested, of which 33 turned out to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. "All current evidence points to wild animals sold illegally," China CDC Director George Gao and colleagues wrote in the agency's

weekly bulletin in late January. All but two of the positive specimens came from a cavernous and poorly-ventilated section of the market's western wing, where many shops sold animals.

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~~The information void kindled a raging political debate that's already caused a trade war between China and Australia, as nations~~ demand to know ~~how Covid emerged.~~ Australia in April 2020 called for a global inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, including China's handling of the initial outbreak. Days later, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo used part of his Earth Day message to call on China to close its wet markets to "reduce risks to human health inside and outside of China."

Based on a discussion today with someone with knowledge of the WHO-led mission to Wuhan in Jan-Feb 2021, a significant catalyst for China's defensiveness is the emergence of **claims for reparations** that extended from the finger-pointing at China's wet markets. These surfaced in April 2020, and have continued as recently as June 2021 (when Trump pushed for it again at a rally in the Midwest)

SO IS THIS THE POINT AT WHICH CHINA, WHICH SEEMINGLY ACCEPTED THE WET MARKET HYPOTHESIS, BEGAN TRYING TO CREATE A DIFFERENT NARRATIVE? (I think it was incremental. I believe China was embarrassed that its citizens were still buying wild animals in wet markets to eat -- a well-known hazard for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago. But that embarrassment/humiliation morphed into rigid denial and obfuscation when governments began openly blaming the Chinese Communist Party and agitating for China to pay reparations for the pandemic. See these clips:

- USA Today: Blame the Chinese Communist Party for the coronavirus crisis: Coronavirus crisis proves communism is still a grave threat to the entire world. If Beijing had just been honest, the pandemic could be preventable. April 5, 2020
- Yahoo News: More than half of Americans think China should pay coronavirus reparations, poll shows April 9, 2020
- Voice of America: Americans Join Coronavirus Lawsuit to Make China Pay April 10, 2020
- Washington Post Opinion: China must pay reparations to Africa for its coronavirus failures April 16, 2020
- Reuters: In a first, Missouri sues China over coronavirus economic losses April 22, 2020
- Washington Post: Missouri is suing China over the

coronavirus pandemic. It's the latest conservative gambit, April 22, 2020

- New York Post: Top German paper demands $165 billion coronavirus reparations from China April 22, 2020
- Attorney General Fitch Prepares to Sue China on Behalf of Mississippians April 22, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump on U.S. Seeking Compensation From China Over COVID-19: 'We Have Not Determined the Final Amount' April 28, 2020
- The Guardian: Trump says China could have stopped Covid-19 and suggests US will seek damages April 28, 2020
- Intelligencer: Trump Thinks He Can Make China Pay for the Virus Like Mexico Paid for the Wall, April 30, 2020
- Washington Post: U.S. officials crafting retaliatory actions against China over coronavirus as President Trump fumes April 30, 2020
- Lawfare: Does China Really Owe the World Trillions of Dollars? May 7, 2020
- Fortune: Trump's demand that China pay coronavirus reparations evokes an ugly history May 8, 2020
- South China Morning Post: Why China won't be paying the West coronavirus reparations any time soon May 15, 2020
- Deccan Herald, India: Abhijit Bhattacharyya | Why China needs to pay reparations to the world June 4, 2020
- Why calls for reparations from China for coronavirus are an unfeasible distraction June 9, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump Demands China 'Pay Reparations' for COVID, Says $10 Trillion Not Enough June 12, 2021

In response, Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied "wildlife wet markets" existed in the country. Government researchersCAN WE BE MORE SPECIFIC? Twenty-two researchers from mostly nationally-funded laboratories (I think it's the Chinese equivalent of the NIH in the U.S.) and institutes attached to the Chinese Academy of Sciences) now dismiss the market hypothesis completely. "SARS-CoV-2 could not have possibly evolved in an animal market in a big city and even less likely in a laboratory," they wrote in a paper released last month ahead of publicationWHERE/WHEN WILL IT BE PUBLISHED? It was released as a "pre-print" on a Chinese academic repository ahead of publication that appears to be managed/owned by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Papers are usually released in pre-print form before they have been accepted for publication or peer-reviewed as a way of expediting public access to the information. In this case, there is no information to suggest if, where or when the paper will be published.

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A more recent paperBY WHOM? (China CDC's Gao and eight other scientists mostly from the Chinese of Academy of Sciences' institutes) contends that the virus may have been imported from multiple locations worldwide, including parts of Europe where mink are raised in areas inhabited also by horseshoe bats known to harbor coronaviruses. “The official narrative changed not because the evidence changed,” says Robert Garry, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Tulane University’s School of Medicine in New Orleans “A spillover from a wet market was what caused SARS, and, embarrassingly for China, those wet markets were never shut down.” Garry is the co-author of one of the earliest papers on the origins of Covid but wasn’t involved in the research on Wuhan’s markets.

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I DON’T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT POINT THIS GRAF IS TRYING TO MAKE. This is intended to demonstrate the kind of gaslighting that has occurred. Some of the WHO-led researchers are veterinarians and zoologists -- they know what animals smell like, and could smell their lingering presence a year later, but were told essentially that it was impossible that they were smelling animals because **there "were no live animals there"**.) The researchers noted a mixed smell of animals and disinfectant in some areas of the market, but they were told by the market’s manager that they were probably smelling the lingering stench of rotten meat and sewage, according to a joint WHO-China report. [should we add “according to Laing Wannian etc here? Liang Wannian was the leader of the Chinese research team collaborating jointly with the WHO-led research team. The source for the above description are in the annexes to the official joint WHO-China report released at the end of March 2021.]

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Earlier the same day, the international research team visited Wuhan’s larger Baishazhou market, where Xiao had regularly surveyed two sellers of live wild animals. Yet the group was told only frozen food, ingredients, and kitchenware were on offer there. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist who led the Chinese experts collaborating with the WHO-convened team, says his group had no knowledge of Xiao’s data either. [if the above information on what the delegation saw all comes from this same source, maybe we should include his name higher up (The source for the description of what the origins researchers saw on Jan. 31, 2021, comes from the official 120-page joint WHO-China report and its 193-page annexes, not from Liang. Since we are essentially accusing China of

concealing the information that Xiao documented, we asked Liang at a press conference in late July 2021 when the Chinese team first knew about Xiao's findings -- that the Huanan market and three others in Wuhan were selling live animals permissive to SARS-CoV-2 infection -- and what research China has done subsequently as a follow-up on this information? Liang gave a very long-winded response in Chinese in which he said essentially "we didn't have that information in January-February 2021 when the research team was in Wuhan". I think it's important we keep this to demonstrate that we have tried to ascertain what China knew/has done and have given the Chinese researchers the opportunity to respond. In addition, I have emailed China CDC Director George Gao at least twice and not received any response.]

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Among the earliest clusters of infections recorded in Wuhan, one involved three Covid cases among staff working at a stall in Huanan. One of the employees, a 32-year-old who fell ill on Dec. 19, traded goods back and forth between the Huanan and Baishazhou markets.
WHERE DOES THIS FACT COME FROM? NOT THE REPORT, RIGHT? WHEN DID IT FIRST BECOME KNOWN? This information was from the joint WHO-China report released in March 2021, however, the WHO-led researchers went to the Baishazhou market more as a demonstration by the China team of what a perfectly functioning large food market looks like. The WHO-led team was oblivious to Xiao's research that showed there were at least two stalls in Baishazhou that had been selling live wild animals for human consuption. So this detail and its significance was lost on the WHO researchers at the time.)

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A confirmed case linking two markets that sold wild animals is “very intriguing,”says Stephen Goldstein, a research associate in evolutionary virology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. But tracing any contact the employee might have had with infected wildlife is impossible now that the animals are long gone.WOULD TIMELY PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT HAVE CHANGED THIS? It's unlikely that Xiao et al's paper would have been *published* soon after It was drafted in February 2020, but it could have been *released* as a pre-print ahead of publication and peer-review that same month. That would have **confirmed** what almost everyone had suspected: that there **was** a flourishing wildlife trade in Wuhan that provides a plausible pathway by which coronavirus-infected wildlife from Yunnan and beyond could have introduced the virus to the city, sparking the Covid outbreak. It's also possible

that swift recognition of these potential wild-animal vectors could have allowed scientists to test them for the virus and for antibodies against the virus while they were still alive (perhaps not the ones from Huanan, but wildlife in the three other Wuhan markets). Because of the statements the Chinese authorities had been making in January and February that strongly supported the animal spill over theory, it was assumed that this research was being done. Of course, the pandemic was raging then, so it would have been challenging. But, because of the denial by Chinese researchers that wild animals were being sold in Wuhan wet markets before the pandemic, there was never that level of follow up. At least, if there was, it was never made public.)

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"It seems to me, at a minimum, that local or regional authorities kept that informationWHAT INFORMATION? (that Wuhan had a flourishing live wild animal business going on in its wet markets before the pandemic) quiet deliberately," Goldstein says. "It's incredible to me that people theorize about one type of cover-up, but an obvious cover-up is staring them right in the face."

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Date: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 12:42:05 PM -0400
Subject: RE: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

To add to that – another damaging article in the New York Times today.

https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/07/health/coronavirus- lab-leak-who.html

Please read the details and at the end the comment from Jamie Metzl – these people are lining up to shut down scientific research on viruses in wildlife – that's the exact opposite of what we'll need to do if we want to be prepared for the next pandemic.

I can't fight this fight on my own – I'm cited in this article as usual, along with Marion Koopmans – both of us under daily attack from these conspiracists. We need bigger and louder voices fighting against this movement before it starts to do damage to scientific research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 11:25 AM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'Keusch, Jerry' < [b6]
Subject: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
Importance: High

Just read your email about being allowed to do interviews on the WHO report David. Interesting and disappointing. Clearly the issue of COVID origins is not the political problem – it's the WHO report that's the problem. It's quite telling really, that the Biden Admin decided the WHO report would be a political football and therefore NSC/White House agenda, not a scientific issue and therefore NIH/NIAID agenda.

This is a symptom of a bigger issues – over the last 2-4 weeks, all of the allies who would normally talk to reporters about the science have either been silenced/sidelined, or are following a political agenda, e.g. the White House, the WHO Director-General

(who single-handedly threw the whole WHO expert team under the bus), the former CDC director, and now NIAID – all following the political line.

The attacks reached a crescendo over this same period with daily op-eds in NY Post, WSJ, Daily Caller and other Right Wing papers bleeding over into CNN and even NPR. My Board are now beginning to get concerned and this puts me personally in a very difficult position – it's a risk to my job, my family's security, and my career. It's not a real problem yet – if the attacks die down a bit (which I believe they will), and if my Board continue to support me (I believe they will), the long game will win out.

But at this point I'm reaching out to call for help! Can we line up some allies who will help speak publicly about the science here on wildlife-to-human spillover vs. lab leak? Critically, there is still no evidence at all that a lab leak occurred, there is also no evidence at all that EcoHealth (or NIAID) funded or supported Gain-of-function work in China. Likewise, stories about EcoHealth 'hiding' DoD funding, being funded by China, not clearly indicating the source of funding on all public documents, etc. etc. are false and/or misleading. Still, the damage is being done and I'm worried that today the momentum is with the conspiracists.

Any and all ideas are welcome – ASTMH, NAM, NASEM, others?

Jerry – what about reaching out to Benjamin Corb and others?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6 ; Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Fwd: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Guys, see below..... The Biden admin apparently won't let any of us at NIH, including Tony, discuss the WHO report....

On the surface this sounds bad, but there is the possibility they just want one org to manage the message because they are trying to put out a fire. Or am I just Pollyanna? d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview
Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 17:43:09 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6

To: David Morens b6

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: NIAID OCGR NSWB <NIAIDOCGRNSWB@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens –

For your awareness (and in case she also reaches out to you directly), Mariana Lenharo followed up today on her request to speak with you or another NIAID expert about the WHO report, which as you know came out today. We've been asked to refer requests for comment about the report to the National Security Council, and we will be directing her there.

Best,
Hillary

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:57 AM

To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Thanks for the background! Once we know what the WHO report says, we'll be better poised to make decisions about how to handle requests to discuss it… as you note, it is a bit of a hot issue.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:46 AM
To: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

That's fine, although I think she wants me because I spoke to her before, and because I published the major paper dealing with it, along with Breman at FIC and ex-FIC director Keusch, and other authors.

Also, just off the record, we may want to not give this to Tony as he has been unfairly criticized over some of the issues. It could be a hot subject for him….d

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From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens,

Thanks for sending. I'll write back to this reporter and ask her to send a fresh request to the press office once the WHO report is available – we can at that time better assess whether it makes sense for you or another NIAID expert to speak with the media about it.

Best,
Hillary

Hillary Hoffman, Ph.D., Writer/Editor
Office of Communications and Government Relations, NIAID, NIH
5601 Fishers Lane #6G38
Rockville, MD 20852
b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:26 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Mariana Lenharo b6
> **Date:** March 16, 2021 at 18:21:42 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
> **Subject: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview**
>
> Dear Dr. Morens,
>
> I hope you are doing well. It's been a few months since we spoke for the article on the origins of SARS-CoV-2.

Now, as the WHO mission to study the origins of the virus is about to publish their report, I'm planning to write a new article on the topic to analyze the mission's conclusions.

I was wondering if you would be available for a new interview on this topic once the full report is published (it should be either this week or the next one).

I'm very interested to get a sense of how the scientific community is evaluating the mission's effort into finding the origin of SARS-CoV-2.

Thank you so much,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T: b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Wed, Oct 21, 2020 at 11:02 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Thanks, you did a great job!
>
> **b6**
>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> (b) (6)(b) (6)
> b6
>
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>
> 

From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 9:18 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

The story for which I interviewed you was published this morning. Here is the link:
https://elemental.medium.com/why- covid-19s-origin-story-is-still-a-mystery-46b0b336f122

Thank you again for the collaboration and I hope to be able to interview you again for future stories.

Kind regards,

Mariana

On Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:07 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

I will be at [b6] [b6] my cell.... ty

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
[b6]

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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Thank you, Dr. Morens. How about we schedule the call for tomorrow, Wednesday, at 12:30?

Should I reach you at your office number [b6] [b6]

Thank you very much!

Best,

Mariana

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:04 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

> Mariana, it looks like I have tomorrow from about 1215 to 130
>
> Late Thu might work after 4 or 5, not sure when earlier meeting will be done.
>
> Friday looks good except about 1 to about 4
>
> **b6**
>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> 301 496 4409
> [b6]

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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:37 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

Thank you so much for getting back to me. I have a pretty open schedule in the next few days. These are the times I 'll be available:

Wednesday: anytime after 8 am
Thursday: from 8 am to 9 am OR anytime after 1 pm
Friday: from 8 am to 3 pm

Please let me know if any of those work for you and how would you prefer to be contacted at that time.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. [b6]
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:03 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

> Hi Mariana,
>
> Our media office indicated you would like to speak to me at some point this week. Let me know when. I am always busy and moving between various offices and meetings, bu5t I do have spaces of free time here and there. In general, mid afternoons, eg, from 130 until 330 or later, are not good….
>
> TY
>
> **b6**

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
301 496 4409
b6

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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]>
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 2:50 PM
To: NIAID NEWS (NIH/NIAID) <NIAIDNEWS@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Hello!

My name is Mariana Lenharo, I'm a science and health journalist and I'm working on a story about the work of scientists investigating the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic. This story will be published in Elemental ([b6]), a Medium publication focused on science-backed health coverage.

As I was reading about this topic, I came across this very interesting article, "The Origin of COVID-19 and Why It Matters" and I'd love to interview one of the authors, Dr. David M. Morens. This would be a 20-30-minute interview by phone/skype/zoom preferably this week. Please let me know if you think this would be possible.

Thank you very much!

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T +[b6]
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 1:09:07 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 1:04:50 PM -0400
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: bioRxiv: Convergent evolution of SARS-CoV-2 spike mutations, L452R, E484Q and P681R, in the second wave of COVID-19 in Maharashtra, India /B.1.617 https://bit.ly/3sQvBFV
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.png; image001.png; image003.jpg; image002.gif; image004.jpg; image003.jpg

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
301 496 4409
[b6]

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2021 10:35 AM
To: Musser, James M., M.D., Ph.D. [b6]>
Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Gygli, Sebastian (NIH/NIAID) [F] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]>; Rich Roberts

(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) (

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: bioRxiv: Convergent evolution of SARS-CoV-2 spike mutations, L452R, E484Q and P681R, in the second wave of COVID-19 in Maharashtra, India /B.1.617 https://bit.ly/3sQvBFV

Well, i think Eddie was just thinking that all rna viruses mutate wildly as they rip through populations, and such mutations typical do not increase pathogenicity or transmissibility. There are exceptions such as H3N2 becoming slowly more pathogenic over time, or certain EVs apparently being more transmissible because of respiratory adaptation, but as a general rule, with clear exceptions, Eddie was right. Now, it looks like SARS-CoV-2 may also be one of those exceptions, but i wouldn't have bet in that at the beginning.

Note that after a year of lying low, under vicious death threats, Eddie is sticking his neck out again

Most significantly, in a recent interview, he said that 5 years ago Chinese officials actually took him to the Wuhan market and said if a pandemic is gonna start anywhere, here is the perfect place. He agreed. We all had a crystal ball, but no one was looking at it

David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 25, 2021, at 10:21, Musser, James M., M.D., Ph.D. [b6] > wrote:

Yes, the ongoing game of whack a mutant. I don't see any end in sight: relatively small percent of global population immunized, apparently increasing numbers of people in US only getting dose 1, large number of relatively immunocompromised people walking around, the pediatric carrier, etc. Massive virus population size, massive immune pressure on spike, good luck on all of this.

Preparing a couple of talks for this week and one of my lab members reminded me of the paper below. Not really clear to me what Eddie was thinking.

We haven't identified the India variant below in our 40,000 Houston genomes.

Jim

Whoops! Really? Let's see...

nature

We shouldn't worry when a virus mu disease outbreaks

Mutation. The word naturally conjures fears of unexpected and freakish changes. Ill- mutations thrive during virus outbreaks, including the ongoing spread of SARS-CoV- natural part of the virus life cycle and rarely impact outbreaks dramatically.

Nathan D. Grubaugh, Mary E. Petrone and Edward C. Holmes

From: David Morens b6
Date: Sunday, April 25, 2021 at 9:07 AM
To: Jeff Taubenberger b6 "Gygli, Sebastian (NIH/NIAID) [F]" b6 James M Musser b6
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: bioRxiv: Convergent evolution of SARS-CoV-2 spike mutations, L452R, E484Q and P681R, in the second wave of COVID-19 in Maharashtra, India /B.1.617
https://bit.ly/3sQvBFV

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Another bad guy to surveil..... it seems like these variants are increasingly developing multiple mutations at potentially bad sites, as if all roads lead to Rome, and the to the Roman catacombs. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: April 24, 2021 at 23:03:30 EDT
Subject: bioRxiv: Convergent evolution of SARS-CoV-2 spike mutations, L452R, E484Q and P681R, in the second wave of COVID-19 in Maharashtra, India /B.1.617 https://bit.ly/3sQvBFV

Convergent evolution of SARS-CoV-2 spike mutations, L452R, E484Q and P681R, in the second wave of COVID-19 in Maharashtra, India

Sarah Cherian, Varsha Potdar, Santosh Jadhav, Pragya Yadav, Nivedita Gupta, Mousmi Das, Soumitra Das, View ORCID ProfileAnurag Agarwal, Sujeet Singh, Priya Abraham, Samiran Panda, Shekhar Mande, Renu Swarup, Balram Bhargava, Rajesh Bhushan, NIC team, INSACOG Consortium
doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2021.04.22.440932
This article is a preprint and has not been certified by peer review [what does this mean?].

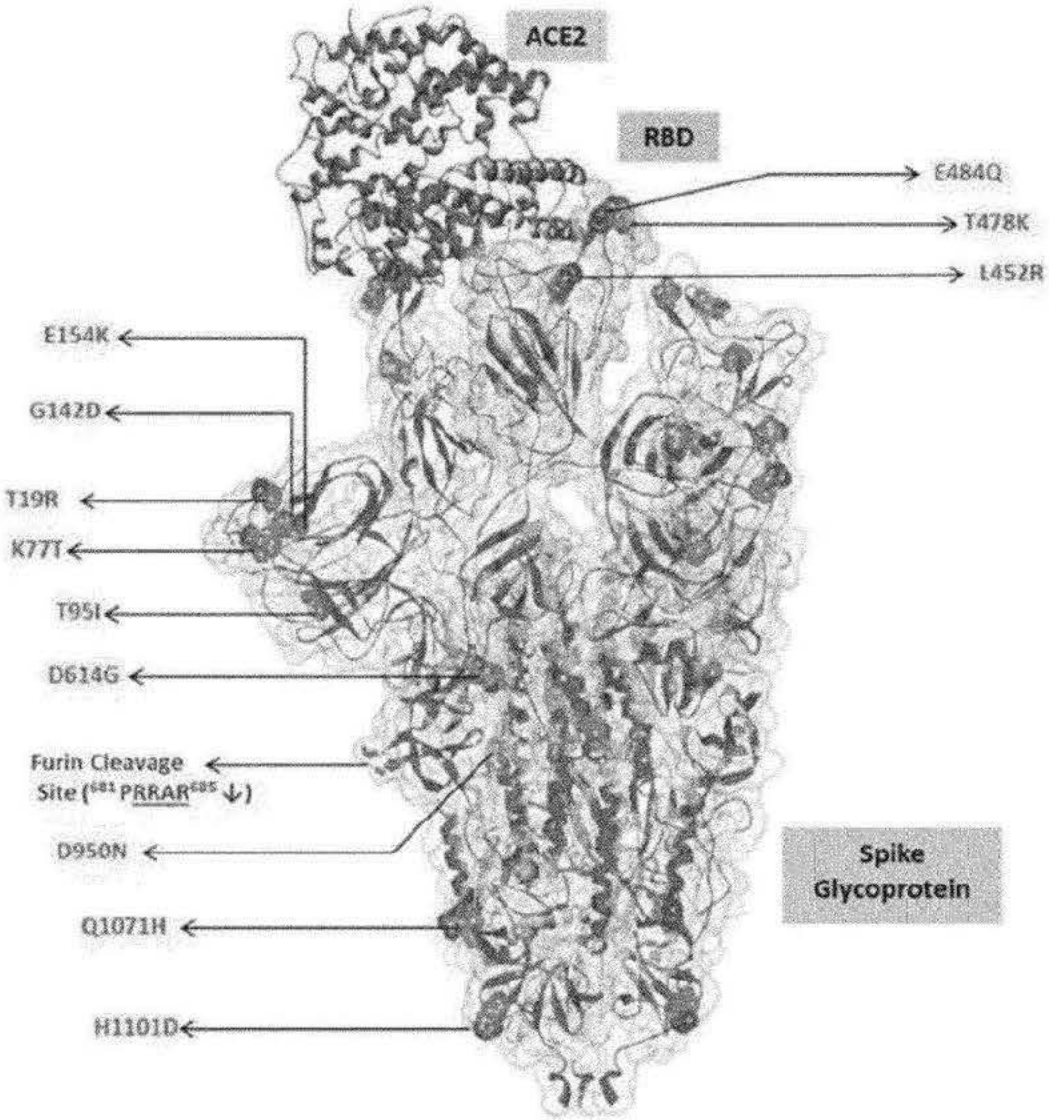
- Abstract
- Info/History
- Metrics
-
- Preview PDF

Abstract

As the global severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic expands, genomic epidemiology and whole genome sequencing are being constantly used to investigate its transmissions and evolution. In the backdrop of the global emergence of variants of concern (VOCs) during December 2020 and an upsurge in a state in the western part of India since January 2021, whole genome sequencing and analysis of spike protein mutations using sequence and structural approaches was undertaken to identify possible new variants and gauge the fitness of current circulating strains. Phylogenetic analysis revealed that the predominant clade in circulation was a distinct newly identified lineage B.1.617 possessing common signature mutations D111D, G142D, L452R, E484Q, D614G and P681R, in the spike protein including within the receptor binding domain (RBD). Of these, the mutations at residue positions 452, 484 and 681 have been reported in other globally circulating lineages. The structural analysis of RBD mutations L452R and E484Q along with P681R in the furin cleavage site, may possibly result in increased ACE2 binding and rate of S1-S2 cleavage resulting in better transmissibility. The same two RBD mutations indicated decreased binding to selected monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) and may affect their neutralization potential. Experimental validation is warranted for accessing both ACE2 binding and the effectiveness of commonly elicited neutralizing mAbs for the strains of lineage B.1.617. The emergence of such local variants through the accumulation of convergent mutations during the COVID-19 second wave needs to be further investigated for their public health impact in the rest of the country and its possibility of becoming a VOC.

Competing Interest Statement

The authors have declared no competing interest.
Paper in collection **COVID-19 SARS-CoV-2 preprints from medRxiv and bioRxiv**



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Date: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 12:00:59 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 12:00:57 PM -0400
Subject: Two beauties from the internet!
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6];

Back to the fun stuff. Check out this beauty I dug up on "GM Watch" website.

https://www.gmwatch.org/en/news/latest- news/19437

I'm cc'ing Jeff Taubenberger so he knows what's going on with Ebright and the others. Fairly ridiculous stuff, and would be funny, if it weren't for the fact that they're out to cause real trouble. At the end of the piece you'll see a list of 20+ people who've been very active on Twitter revealing names of EcoHealth's funders, calling us all criminals, and generally making up bizarre links with Gates, Soros, Fauci etc. At least one of them is a person who claims to have spent a few yrs in Federal Jail, many are QAnon, and some have been reported by me to the FBI…just in case.

I was also v. surprised to see this tweet below. Someone has inserted an image of my head, Zhengli Shi's and Fauci+Collins onto a cartoon, based on a South Park episode where the Aussie Crocodile Hunter Steve Irwin (me) catches a dangerous croc (the virus) and gets injured (metaphor for COVID). Badly done, bizarre and surprising people will spend this amount of time on this issue.
You'll see the cartoon if you follow this link:
https://twitter.com/OneOfMa37459621/status/1264259178346041345?s=20

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 5:39:54 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 5:37:51 PM -0400
Subject: FW: Thank you for your public comments re COVID-19's origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2020 11:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: RE: Thank you for your public comments re COVID-19's origins

Peter:
Many thanks for your kind note.
Best regards,
Tony

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2020 9:43 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] < [b6]
Cc: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Thank you for your public comments re COVID-19's origins
Importance: High

Tony (cc'ing David so that you might pass this on to Tony once he has a spare second)

As the PI of the R01 grant publicly targeted by Fox News reporters at the Presidential press briefing last night, I just wanted to say a personal thankyou on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence

supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

It's been a very hard few months as these conspiracy theorists have gradually become politicized and hardened in their stance. Especially because the work we've been doing in collaboration with Chinese virologists has given us incredible insight into the risks that these viruses represent, so that we can directly help protect our nation from bat-origin coronaviruses. We're fighting to keep the communications open with our Chinese colleagues, so that we can better address future pandemics like COVID-19.

From my perspective, your comments are brave, and coming from your trusted voice, will help dispel the myths being spun around the virus' origins.

Once this pandemic's over I look forward thanking you in person and let you know how important your comments are to us all.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Sun, 19 Sep 2021 6:59:58 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 19 Sep 2021 6:59:51 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
To: Edward Holmes [b6] >;
CC: Jason Gale [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] Wang Linfa [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Attachments: Screenshot from 2021-09-19 17-04-25.png; Screenshot from 2021-09-19 17-04-25.png

Eddie, please clarify, i don't « get » all the phylogenetic asumptions you guys understand, but can you put it in lsyman's terms? As you know, i have said repeatedly to look past Yunnan to all of SE Asia, as i have bennunconconvinced of the Yunnan centrality of all this, suspecting thAt the universe of these viruses crosses borders to include not only SW and S China but all of SEA.

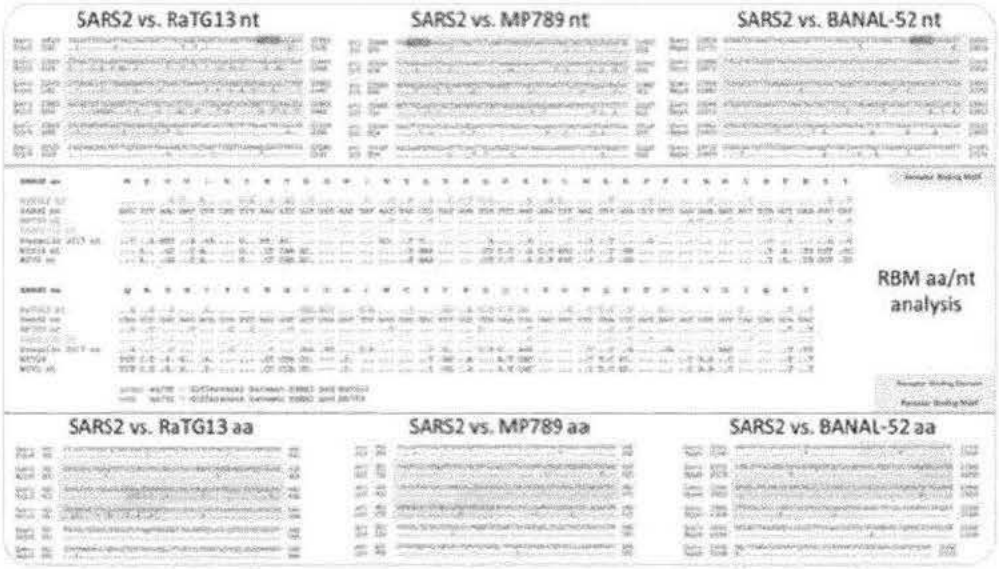
If that is so, the implications ate huge: this is annintetnational problem demanding international cooperation. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 19, 2021, at 18:33, Edward Holmes [b6] > wrote:
>
> Yes, good idea.
>
> The receptor binding domain of some of these Laotian bats is so close to that of SARS-CoV-2 even some of the die-hard leakers are beginning to see the light…
>
> This also effectively excludes that virus-receptor relationship was generated through lab passage, that the pangolin sequences were faked, and that this outbreak had anything to do with the Mojiang mine as a virus from a different country is now closer. That mine will go down in history as the reddest of herrings.
>
> That said, I am a little worried about confirmation bias for the origin being bats from Yunnan/Laos/Cambodia. The more they find there, the more they sequence. But no doubt these Laotian samples are of huge significance. As are the Hubei civets.

Yuri Deigin
@ydeigin

Wow. On a nucleotide level the new Laotian RBD/RBM is MUCH closer to SARS2 than that of the pangolin CoV. A VERY important piece of the puzzle that essentially proves the RBM *itself* was not engineered but actually came from a bat CoV. Doesn't rule out a lab leak/passaging etc.



2:26 PM · Sep 19, 2021 · Twitter Web App

11 Retweets **5** Quote Tweets **59** Likes

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E **b6**

On 20 Sep 2021, at 7:52 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6> wrote:

Yes, do it! This is important and i say modestly, game changing. The whole « origin »

controversy needs to be rethought from the ground up

We have been too micro-focusing (as i have long said to hard push back) but the sarobecovirus and merbecovirus problems are geographically and virologically complex and require us to drop back and study the viral-host universe. Thst universe is huge, complicated , and holds surprises, in my view. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 19, 2021, at 17:36, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) < j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

I'm planning to pull the threads Peter has so eloquently laid out into a story. Bob, Stephen, Joel (and Kristian), if you have time/interest to get on Zoom today, let me know. Thanks a lot. Jason

From: b6 At: 09/20/21 07:31:51 UTC+10:00
To: b6

Cc: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , b6
b6 b6 b6
b6 b6 b6 ,
b6 ,
b6

Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

nPeter, as i am perennially swamped with work that has nothing to do with COVID issues of importance, i am always catching up on reading the important stuff

Just now i poured a martini and-read word for word your "A strategy..." paper with first author Sánchez. Also Kevin and Lin-fa were coauthors. Wow!!!

This is dynamite and also beautifully written. I mean, Hemingway, Conrad, Nin, couldn't have written it better. Beautiful job and so important.

I think you need to promote this work, and emphasize that the conclusions are far reaching and a sort of call to arms.

Let us all keep pushing,
and keep our eyes on the
prize of getting to the bottom of it all
david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 18, 2021, at 12:05, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

I put it all in a twitter thread while drinking coffee in my local diner (Saturday is "full English breakfast" day for me).

https://twitter.com/peterdaszak/status/1439236376776658945?s=21

No doubt ill be attacked by multiple lab leak aficionados but so be it - at least eddie, Garry and Kristian won't see. The horrors of that…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Sep 18, 2021, at 10:26 AM, Garry, Robert F [b6] wrote:

Of course, the momentum on the lab leak side will continue, with books by Sharri Markison, Alina Chan/Matt Ridley, Op Eds that criticize scientists, 70+ FoIAs by one organization alone, many other FoIAs on their way, 900 pages of FoIA'd grants and reports from EHA/NIAID showing zero evidence of lab leak.

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Date: Mon, 29 Mar 2021 11:13:36 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 29 Mar 2021 11:13:30 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Response to Michael Lauer letters
From: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
To: David Morens [b6]

Thanks, David!!

-Aleksei

On Mar 29, 2021, at 11:06, David Morens [b6] wrote:

TY, i will have it back well before then, possibly late today, altho am jammed a bit today. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Mar 29, 2021, at 10:34, Aleksei Chmura [b6] wrote:

David,

Peter was planning to send this Michael Lauer on Thursday.

Cheers!

-Aleksei

On Mar 29, 2021, at 10:03, David Morens [b6] wrote:

Peter, i will go over and get back to you. Do you have a deadline for getting this done? David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Mar 29, 2021, at 02:15, Peter Daszak <[b6]> wrote:

Hi Jerry, David, and Rich

I can't remember which of you offered to review our draft response to Michael Lauer at NIH, but it would be very helpful if one of you could. I'm sending it to my pro bono lawyers as well, and they'll rip into it, but your advice and edits (using track changes) would be most helpful…

By the way, the WHO report comes out Tuesday morning our time (I think).

I'll have a final draft version tomorrow that I'll try to get out to you early.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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<State Dept Cables re. WIV highlighted.pdf>

<NIH Response to EcoHealth Response to Suspension_10_23_20 Three further demands.pdf>

<Daszak 7 8 20 Reactivation & Suspension with seven demands.pdf>

<Response to NIH April 2021 re. reactivation and suspension of 2R01AI110964.docx >

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Date: Wed, 26 May 2021 2:45:45 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Re. the 3 sick people at Wuhan – I have no new information on this. We asked WIV about sick staff at the time, and they said nothing unusual was reported, and all staff who worked in the bat-cov group were tested for SARs2 antibodies after the outbreak – all negative. They've made a follow up, similar statement last week.

I think that if there were any reliable intel on this, the people who've seen the intel wouldn't be quoted on CNN as saying the following:
Importantly, the intelligence community still does not know what the researchers were actually sick with, said the people briefed, and continues to have low confidence in its assessments of the virus' precise origins beyond the fact that it came from China. "At the end of the day, there is still nothing definitive," said one of the people who has seen the intelligence.

Or another quote:
"My own personal belief is we're never going to know the answer to this," this person said. "And the answer is not going to be found out by the CIA, because that would suggest the Chinese are looking for it themselves," which this person said they were not.
"If the answer exists it's not going to be found by traditional spycraft," this person added.

Here's the article
https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/23/politics/us- intelligence-report-wuhan-lab-researchers-coronavirus-origin/index.html

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6] <[b6]>; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I am going to talk to a reporter from Mother Jones tomorrow, who is well known to my colleague

Nahid Bhadelia and who put the reporter in touch with me.
Two things that you may know something about.

First, primarily for Peter (amplified by David if you have any insights), is there any reliable information you know of about the 3 sick WIV staff who were hospitalized in November? This is now the point of the spear alleging the lab was the source – not just an asymptomatic infected individual but full blown disease.

Second, primarily for David, I see comments that since the NIH created the review process for certain genetic research on pathogenic microorganisms, there have been just two grants referred by evaluation through the mechanism to block GOF research that could be too dangerous to do and the expected information yield was not sufficient to grant an exception. Is that right? Just two? There have to have been a hell of a lot more grants proposing to study the role of a variety of genes and virus properties on virulence and pathogenesis, and just two (probably Ralph Baric grants) were of sufficient concern to even activate the review process?

On the UK request I replied simply "Decline".

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] {b6}
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:09 PM
Subject: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

1 hour ago - World

Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins



Zachary Basu



Photo: Win McNamee/Getty Images

President Biden announced Wednesday he has asked the U.S. intelligence community to "redouble their efforts" to investigate the origins of the coronavirus and provide a report within 90 days that "could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion."

Why it matters: The debate over the origins of COVID-19 has been reinvigorated in recent days by previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, that three researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology fell ill enough to be hospitalized in November 2019.

The state of play: Biden said in a statement that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios"

for the origins of the virus — one, that it emerged from human contact with an infected and animal, and two, that it was the result of an accidental laboratory leak.

- A joint team from the World Health Organization and China issued an inconclusive report in March that described the so-called lab-leak theory as "extremely unlikely."
- But the report has been criticized by the U.S. and WHO leadership for its methodology and lack of transparency from the Chinese government, and top U.S. officials have called for a new investigation.

What they're saying: Biden said the U.S. intelligence community's current position is that "while two elements in the IC leans toward the former scenario and one leans more toward the latter – each with low or moderate confidence – the majority of elements do not believe there is sufficient information to assess one to be more likely than the other."

- "I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said in a statement.
- "As part of that report, I have asked for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for China. I have also asked that this effort include work by our National Labs and other agencies of our government to augment the Intelligence Community's efforts. And I have asked the Intelligence Community to keep Congress fully apprised of its work."

Our thought bubble: Whether COVID-19 ultimately originated in an animal or in a lab, the bulk of the evidence is in China, which limits what the U.S. can find out. But Biden's statement underscores the fact that this debate will not end any time soon, and that the U.S. could ramp up pressure on China to cooperate.

Go deeper: The COVID lab-leak theory goes mainstream

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Date: Mon, 8 Mar 2021 3:32:46 PM -0500
Sent: Mon, 8 Mar 2021 3:32:42 PM -0500
Subject: Re: Yet another article
From: David Morens [b6]>
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>;
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Kessler Robert [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Jerry, i am not sure what the next step should be. You are better at thinking these things through snd have higher placed contacts. There may be no slam dunk, but every little bit of push back may have value. A short letter to the editor can't hurt and these are screened by a different staff which looks for balance. A gentle prod that the emperor's new clothes are threadbare has a chance of getting heard. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Mar 8, 2021, at 15:21, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

So what's the rebuttal? The Washington Post won't be interested in denigrating their own editorial board opinion pieces. Its interesting that the guy in charge of the editorial board, Fred Hiatt, is the son of a former Dean of Harvard School of Public Health, Howard Hiatt (now 95 years old). This made me think about connecting with former IOM President Harvey Feinberg (who succeeded Howard Hiatt at HSPH) and figuring out some way to respond publicly to the WaPo stuff. Harvey chose not to support the letter I organized to the NASEM presidents, or to sign on to the Op-Ed in The Hill, but that probably doesn't capture his views or concerns, which I believe are rather to the left.

I think there needs to be some response which won't be buried by the attention now devoted to the stimulus package, voting rights, Andrew Cuomo, filibuster and getting vaccine out to people and in their arms, to the exclusion of most everything else. I'm wondering if there is some way to stimulate the editorial team at Science, Jon Cohen, Meredith Wadman, also Kai Kupferschmidt to write something about the follow up from NIH to Peter, the threats, the security, the WHO team and the fact he is the only American to be selected by WHO and the only one who has personal connections to Wuhan to be able to have real conversations about what happened. I'm willing to reach out to prod them along. 60 minutes would be another given the program they did last year, and the interest in the WHO report which will greatly increase when its published and the yahoos begin to denigrate its value.

David, what do you think might be a next step (note I sent this to your gmail account so if you respond to all it will stay just among us friends and colleagues). I'm willing to get on it.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 11:37 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Kessler Robert [b6]
Subject: RE: Yet another article

Same one I sent you a bit ago…… I think the Post is being duped by its own columnists

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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[b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
[b6]

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 10:04 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Kessler Robert [b6]
Subject: Yet another article

Josh rogin, who drama-queened up the state dept cables about their Wuhan visit now had a book and he's touting it in an excerpt in politico todsy.

It's one hit piece a day at this point!

https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/03/08/josh- rogin-chaos-under-heaven-wuhan-lab-book-excerpt-474322

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Feb 25, 2021, at 6:53 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Just going through your emails over last few days. It turns out that this is the source of the annoying letter from the Republicans – complete misinterpretation of the facts – WIV is eligible, but no contracts are current or pending. The R wing press and Trumpian republicans then used this to try to attack NIH-WIV-EHA again, no doubt to have another dig at Tony Fauci, and play to their base.

I also saw Pompeo had an Opinion in the WSJ attacking the Wuhan lab again… Tedious…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 12:24 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]g >; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]

Subject: FW: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

<image002.gif>

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
301 496 4409
b6

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<image003.jpg>

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 8:34 AM
Subject: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

By Post Editorial Board
February 21, 2021 | 5:37pm | Updated
Enlarge Image
<image004.jpg>
The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China. Photo by HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP via Getty Images
The Wuhan Institute of Virology remains the most likely source of the coronavirus pandemic, yet it is set to receive US taxpayer dollars for the next three years. Worse, the cash will fund more animal research.
The National Institutes of Health told the Daily Caller that the Wuhan lab has an active Foreign Assurance file that authorizes it for US funding until 2024. When the virus first broke out, the Wuhan Institute had reportedly been testing coronaviruses in bats with $600,000 of US funding routed via the nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.
The NIH terminated that EcoHealth grant, with the promise to restore it if an independent investigation cleared the Wuhan Institute of involvement in the outbreak. Now a World Health Organization delegation tasked with investigating the lab has preliminarily concluded that a leak was "extremely unlikely," which may let the contract resume. Never mind that the head of the WHO and the US State Department remain unwilling to rule out that possibility.
Here's where it gets really swampy: Not only did the WHO delegation fail to do its own investigation, merely accepting reports from China's government, the WHO team's only American member happens to be the EcoHealth Alliance's president, Peter Daszak — who demands that Washington unequivocally accept the delegation's findings. (This also tells you how pathetic the whole WHO investigation was.)
Anthony Bellotti, who heads nonpartisan watchdog group White Coat Waste Project, called for EcoHealth to be stripped of funding and asked Congress to finally conduct a real investigation into how the pandemic really

started.
If this grant goes ahead, you'll know the Biden administration is committed to restoring Washington business-as-usual in all its disgusting ingloriousness.
Filed under Coronavirus , editorial , taxpayers , world health organization , 2/21/21

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Date: Tue, 5 May 2020 9:12:01 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 5 May 2020 9:11:58 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Union of Concerned Scientists
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >;
CC: David Morens [b6] >; Dennis Carroll [b6] >;
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.png

Not to my knowledge but I haven't tried to get in touch with UCS.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 5, 2020, at 8:00 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

BTW – I heard that Union of Concerned Scientists are asking the Wuhan lab about NIH scientist access to the lab. Is this something you all know about?

Let me know - If so, I have some information I can send in an email that will help them.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 7:20 PM
To: Dennis Carroll [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]

Subject: Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Thanks, Dennis, I think we need all the rooting wed can get! david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:18 PM Dennis Carroll <b6> wrote:

> David, you can include me as rooting for Tony, and you, and all of NIH
>
> d
>
> On Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:36 PM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:
>
> > There's a lot of people really hoping Tony wins this one.
> >
> > Thanks for sharing.
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** David Morens <b6>
> > **Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:32 PM
> > **To:** Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
> > **Cc:** <b6>; Peter Daszak <b6>
> > **Subject:** Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
> >
> > Jerry, i doubt Tony is saying go ahead and fire me, but i think he is pushing his balancing act. Probably he hopes to stay one step ahead of eliciting Trump's firing wrath. Lots of others have played that game and lost, and if Tony wins, he'll be the first. But it is probably the right strategy to adopt. D
> >
> > Sent from my iPhone
> > David M Morens
> > OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 5, 2020, at 18:22, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

I'm glad to see this. But I am also concerned. Trump is showing there is no limit to his paranoia. Firing the HHS IG and preventing Tony from talking to the House but allowing him to go to the Senate is just an indicator. Is Tony now saying, in a way, go ahead and fire me because I won't take this shit any more?

A lot of people are hoping and waiting for that. Is this pushback somewhat off the front page the strategy? Anyway, as my wife so often and so correctly tells me I have to read it before I can opine on it – whatever it happens to be.

Thanks, Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:15 PM
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]
Subject: RE: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
Importance: High

Most important of all he stated that he doesn't buy the 'accidental lab release' hypothesis either – for the first time.

He's a hero to me, my wife and to our whole family.

We have our 'Fauci Mug' to prove that (see attached image). Please show that to the great man himself if there's an opportune moment over the next few weeks.

Cc'ing Dennis and Jerry on this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:02 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Subject: Fwd: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Date:** May 4, 2020 at 20:58:15 EDT
> **Subject: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab** https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
>
> <image001.jpg>

ScienceCoronavirus Coverage

Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab

In an exclusive interview, the face of America's COVID-19 response cautions against the rush for states to reopen, and offers his tips for handling the pandemic's information deluge.

Anthony Fauci has been the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for almost 40 years, where he has tackled dozens of outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS. To him, the coronavirus is "extraordinary."

By **Nsikan Akpan** and **Victoria Jaggard**

PUBLISHED May 4, 2020
Anthony "Tony" Fauci has become the scientific face of America's COVID-19 response, and he says the best evidence shows the virus behind the pandemic was not made in a lab in China.
Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, shot down the discussion that has been raging among politicians and pundits, calling it "a circular argument" in a conversation Monday with National Geographic.
"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific

evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated … Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species," Fauci says. Based on the scientific evidence, he also doesn't entertain an alternate theory—that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.
<image002.png>

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, listens as President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 9, 2020, in Washington.
Photograph by Andrew Harnik, AP Photo

Fauci is most concerned that the United States will be put to the test this fall and winter by a second wave of COVID-19 if the country does not blunt the infection rate by the summer.

"Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter," he says, advising that the U.S. needs to make sure we not only have an adequate supply of tests available before a second wave hits, but also a system for getting those tests to the people who most need them.

"I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear," he says. "It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge." As such, Fauci says the U.S. should also focus this summer on properly reinforcing the nation's health care system, ensuring the availability of hospital beds, ventilators, and personal protective equipment for health care workers.

He also stressed the importance of continuing to social distance everywhere until the case counts start to fall in cities and states. The U.S. witnessed about 20,000 to 30,000 new cases every day in the month of April, suggesting the country is stuck in its peak.

Still, he remains optimistic that a vaccine will be ready within an historically short time frame, citing one promising candidate that he thinks may move into advanced clinical trials by the early summer. Fauci has said that he thinks a final vaccine could be available for general use as early as January, which would break records for the speed at which previous vaccines were developed.

One reason for his confidence is the "impressive" results being seen now in animals tested with a vaccine candidate made by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna Therapeutics, which brought it into human trials in a record 42 days. The candidate is what is known as an mRNA vaccine—a drug that uses snippets of a virus's genetic material—rather than the dead or weakened virus itself—to build the proteins that trigger the body's protective immune response.

To date, no type of mRNA vaccine has been licensed for use in humans, but Fauci believes there is great promise for this technology targeting the coronavirus, based in part on his experience developing treatments for HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and '90s.

"For some reason that we're still struggling with, the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV," he says. To fight off that virus, a vaccine has to work better than the body's own natural response. By contrast, "it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response" to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the animal trials so far show that modest doses of the mRNA vaccine for coronavirus have also generated a strong immune response.

He adds that NIAID is still developing and supporting multiple vaccine efforts, in case those that go into trials soonest don't ultimately prove safe and effective. "You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time," he says.

Fauci told National Geographic he's concerned about states rushing to reopen before

their infection rates fall. He also shared how he manages the barrage of new scientific information being released about COVID-19, and how his family and faith keep him going despite his increasingly hectic schedule.
(*The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.*)

Fauci on the vaccine

You've been the NIAID director since 1984, witnessing dozens of disease outbreaks. One of the first was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. How does that experience compare with COVID-19?

One of the important advantages is what we call targeted drug development. Viruses cause disease by binding to receptors on cells in your body, be they in your upper airway or in your lung, in the case of COVID-19. They then replicate at a rapid rate that triggers a variety of pathogenic processes. Targeting drugs to interfere at one or more vulnerable sites within this replication cycle is something that we learned with HIV.
<image002.png>

<image002.png>

Left:
U.S. President George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 19, 2008 to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland during ceremonies at the White House. The Presidential Medal of Freedom
… Read More
Photograph by Karen Bleier, AFP via Getty Images (Left) and Photograph by White House Photo / Alamy Stock Photo (Right)

SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] has the same sort of vulnerable points. We need to identify them and develop drugs, either alone or in combination, to block the replication.

Are there also lessons from HIV/AIDS that relate to developing a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are a bit different. We have a better chance of quickly getting, relatively speaking, a vaccine for the novel coronavirus than we did for HIV, because for some reason that's still unknown the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV.

We don't necessarily have that challenge with this coronavirus because it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response. They clear the virus, and they do well. As we know from the natural history of this disease, the majority of people actually either get well without any symptoms—they're called asymptomatic—or they have minimal symptoms, where they get a fever, some aches, and then they recover. The fact that the majority of people can actually clear the virus is a very good sign for the feasibility of developing a vaccine.

The two most widely discussed vaccine candidates are an mRNA vaccine from Moderna, which reached human trials in a record 42 days, and Oxford University's candidate, based on what's known as a nonreplicating viral vector. Yet no vaccine based on these two technologies has ever been licensed for human use. What makes these two vaccines seem so promising, especially on this expedited timeline?

These vaccines are inducing, at least in animal models, really rather substantial immune responses, particularly the mRNA vaccine. When we look at the immune response that you can induce with a modest dose—one that's feasible to be translated into humans—and the amount of time it takes to get to that level of immunity, it is really

quite impressive. It is also really easy to scale up with these two, in the sense of making a lot of doses pretty quickly. So you're right, they have not been approved, as many of the other vaccine platforms have, but the promise is great.

We at NIAID are either developing or supporting the development of multiple candidates. You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time—maybe June, July, or August—to get them into an advanced trial. The mRNA one is already well into phase one of clinical trials, and we're getting ready to go into phase two and three sometime in the early summer.

Fauci on reopening and masks

As states move to reopen businesses and warmer weather lures people outside, how concerned are you about a fresh spike in infections in the U.S.?

Take a look at the guidelines for Opening Up America Again. There are very well delineated checkpoints. There's a gateway where infections must go down for 14 days before you can enter into phase one for reopening. If you fulfill the requirements of phase one, you move to phase two. If you do it there, you go to phase three.

So when you see somebody in an environment in which the infections are not going down, and then you see 30 to 40 people on a beach with no mask … well that's very nice to have fun in the sun, but you're really putting yourself and everyone at risk for creating an even bigger spike in infections.

Do you fear a second wave?

What's impressed me the most—but clearly in a disturbing way—is the extraordinary efficiency of how the virus spreads. It spreads so much more efficiently than influenza does. You see situations where people at home try and physically separate; they have no contact except they've touched the plate or a doorknob, and they wind up getting infected.

The clusters in families, the outbreaks on the *Teddy Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, the enormous spread on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama harbor—it's a very, very transmissible virus.

<image002.png>

Anthony Fauci hugs Nina Pham, the nurse who was infected with Ebola from treating patient Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, as Pham's mother Diana (sixth from left) and sister Cathy

… Read More Photograph by Alex Wong, Getty Images

We're going to be put to the test as we move toward the fall and winter of this year. If we do it correctly, then we could be able to blunt and diminish the daily rate of infections in this country as we get into the summer. I can't guarantee it, but if we do things right, that likely will happen.

But I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear. It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge. We now will have a few months—May June, July, August—to prepare, by making sure our health system is adequately supplied with ventilators, ICU beds, personal protective equipment, etcetera. We need to not only have tests, but to make sure the people who need tests can get tested.

So that by the time we get to September, we don't have the dialogue continually fixating on do you have enough tests? Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter.

What's your position on the general public wearing face masks?

I'm glad you asked, because it has evolved over the weeks and months. When there was first discussion, it was at a time when face masks—either surgical masks or N95 respirators—were at high scarcity.

Let's assume that we now have enough masks or that you could easily make a cloth covering, as was suggested appropriately by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I think those are reasonable assumptions. We know that the masks are better in the health-care setting to prevent someone who's infected from coughing and sneezing and infecting people in the environment. When you look at what the mask does for the general population, the data are not 100 percent: It doesn't 100 percent protect you from infecting somebody else, and it certainly doesn't 100 percent prevent somebody else from infecting you.

But if you wear a mask, you are getting some protection for yourself, and if you happen to be infected and don't know it, you're to some extent preventing transmission to someone else. Given that, it just makes sense that first of all, the best way to prevent spread is to maintain the physical distance of six feet.

So, if you're in a situation where you're in contact with no one, then you don't have to be walking around with a mask all day, that's for sure. But if you are in a situation where you are going to be within the realm of six feet—the grocery store or even walking out on the street—then wear it.

Fauci on the information deluge and the "virus made in Chinese lab" claim.

How do you keep up with the barrage of information and filter down to the most important science?

It's like drinking from a fire hydrant. It really is. Fortunately for me, I have a staff of three to four really good people who sift through the papers and when something looks unreasonable or "pie in the sky," they don't bother me with that. Then when all of these studies come across my desk, I read the title and the abstract. If it looks feasible, I'll put it aside and try and read it. When it's something that they think I should read, they make sure I read it.

Even with that screening process, it's still very difficult to consume everything that's out there, particularly with this relatively recent trend with these non-peer-reviewed, pre-publications [that have not gone through traditional vetting to appear in major journals].

So, what's your advice to the public at-large for sifting through the headlines and making sense of it all?

<image002.png>

Dr. Anthony Fauci speaks with members of his laboratory during a meeting Aug. 31, 1990, where he describes a natural growth factor that is necessary for the AIDS virus to multiply.

Photograph by George Tames, The New York Times via Redux

Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about—and it's very difficult for the general public to distinguish. So, make sure the study is coming from a reputable organization that generally gives you the truth—though even with some reputable organizations, you occasionally get an outlier who's out there talking nonsense. If something is published in places like *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, or *JAMA*—you know, generally that is quite well peer reviewed because the editors and the editorial staff of those journals really take things very seriously.

One topic in the news lately has been the origins of SAR-CoV-2. Do you believe or is there evidence that the virus was made in the lab in China or accidentally released from a lab in China?

If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats, and what's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved. A number of very qualified

evolutionary biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species.

Sure, but what if scientists found the virus outside the lab, brought it back, and then it escaped?

But that means it was in the wild to begin with. That's why I don't get what they're talking about [and] why I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument.

Fauci's life right now

What's your typical day like?

I get up around five o'clock in the morning, and I usually wind up running downstairs, getting a quick breakfast, and looking at a thousand emails—literally a thousand.

I then head to the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for my day job—trying to develop a vaccine and drugs and running a $6 billion institution. I stay there until around one o'clock, and then I go down to the White House for multiple meetings. First, I meet with the doctor group—myself, coronavirus response coordinator Debbie Birx, director Bob Redfield from the CDC, commissioner Steve Hahn from FDA, and others. We then go into the task force meeting run by Vice President [Mike Pence], which usually lasts about an hour and a half. We summarize this pre-brief with the vice president and then go brief President [Donald Trump] for the press conference.

Then, the work starts … I head home or back to the NIH and work until the wee hours of the morning. The whole day is punctuated by everybody needing to talk to you: every governor in the states, every congressional leader, every leader in the White House. It's constant conference calls. It's an almost impossible situation—and that's seven days a week.

Then you superimpose upon that all the press you do—the TV or the radio or the interviews. It's kind of a surrealistic state. I have to wake up in the morning and literally, without being facetious, ask my wife, what day is it?

Wow, how do you unwind?

I power walk with my wife, usually at night or on the weekends. It's dark, but we still do it anyway.

Has it ever been too taxing?

A couple of months ago, I was foolish and just thought I could get away with almost no sleep. I mean, like three hours a night. I did that for a few weeks, and it almost killed me. It really wore me down badly. Thank goodness I have a very intelligent and clinically skilled wife who turned things around and said, You got to remember to eat, and you've got to remember to sleep. The day is still impossible, but I don't think I'm going to drop dead from it. I hope not.

You went to a Jesuit high school, where you learned the importance of doing good for the public. How has that experience informed your professional life?

My whole life was almost served to me on the basis that my mother and father were very much oriented toward service. They were never really interested in money or material things. That's just the way they were, both of them. So I never knew there was anything like going out there and making a lot of money, and that was really cemented when I went both to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, where the entire theme was service for others.

I almost never had any other inkling of doing anything except something that would have a public service component to it. I'm very much of a people person, but I'm also scientifically inclined. My entire training is steeped in the humanities, and when you combine that with an aptitude for science, you wind up being a physician.

Victoria Jaggard is the senior editor for Science & Innovation at National Geographic.

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Dr Dennis Carroll
President, Global Virome Project
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University
Counselor and Advisor to the Faculty of Tropical Medicine at Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

mobile: b6
email:

Date: Tue, 11 May 2021 6:07:24 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 11 May 2021 6:07:22 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Busy day for my blood pressure - mostly good so far
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]

Peter:

That's pretty good news.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 1:29 PM
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Busy day for my blood pressure - mostly good so far
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just to let you know that the saga continues…

First, I got an email from a GAO group "examining issues related to scientific integrity and independence at HHS agencies, including NIH, at the request of Senators Warren, Peters, and Murray, and Rep. Tonko" requesting an interview re. the terminated grant. I'll be setting up an interview with them and hope this might lead somewhere. It might be part of the new Scientific Integrity Taskforce that Biden's setting up via OSTP – I'll find out (https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/10/politics/biden-task-force-science/index.html) – their first meeting is Friday

Second, Sen. Marshall (R) published a resolution calling for Covid-19 Select Investigative Committee, including "secret research and gain-of-function zoonic (sic) research at WIV" and "funding distributed by WIV by NIAID, NIH and organizations of higher education" https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/marshall- resolution-calling-for-covid-19-select-investigative-committee/b44a9780- 7653-4004-8887-ed24ace6dce8/ I doubt it will go anywhere – it's grandstanding.

Third – just saw excellent testimony before a senate committee where Dr. Fauci duked it out with Sen. Rand Paul re. 'gain-of-function': Dr. Fauci stated that "The NIH has not ever, & does not now, fund 'gain of function research' in the Wuhan Institute." He was then asked about our terminated grant and said: "Let me explain to you why that was done, the SARS COV-1 originated in bats in China. It would have been irresponsible of us if we did not investigate the bat viruses & the serology to see who might have been infected." http[b6]policy/healthcare/552857- rand-paul-clashes-with-fauci-over-coronavirus-origins. The video is worth watching if you have a spare 10 mins: Full hearing here https://help.senate.gov, the Q&A with Rand Paul begins at 01:11:59. Fauci dodges the question on whether he 'supports funding of WIV', and just repeats that NIH did not fund GoF work there. It's categorically correct. He also points out that the expt. that Rand Paul talks about (a supervirus – actually SARS with a bat spike that is less able to infect human cells than sars!) was conducted in North Carolina, not Wuhan.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Fri, 14 May 2021 6:58:51 AM -0400

Subject: Re: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

CC: Roberts, Rich [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] [b6];

Well said! D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 13, 2021, at 21:56, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> I think maybe we should say it is the least likely hypothesis, and it would be useful if we were able to join with others including the Chinese to do broader, deeper, more systematic investigation, and the sooner the better rather than being dismissive. It's the latter that stirs the pot for those whose pot is ripe for stirring.
>
> Jerry
>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 5:32 PM
> To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
> Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
> I think that's good.... I have known him for years and have always found him to be careful, thorough and fair. He is always curious, more interested in understanding things than getting g a hot story. But, as I said, he doesn't sound certain the lab hypothesis is almost impossible.
>
>
>
> d
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>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) [b6]
> [b6]
>
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>
>
>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 5:30 PM
> To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
> Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
> He asked who the small band of scientists I referred to were, and I told him he could probably figure it out.
>
> He sounds reasonable and smart, and on your recommendation I fired both barrels.
>
> Jerry
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 5:17 PM
> To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
> Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
> Thanks, Jerry, for speaking to him. I sent him the article you mentioned shortly after I saw it, and I have also been talking to Arthur on background about this over recent months.
>
> Bravo for what you said, which is pretty much what I have been saying to him.
>
> I suggested Arthur try to interview Tony directly and connected him to our "secret" back channel. He emailed Tony a few hours ago.
>
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>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) [b6]
> [b6]
>
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>
>
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>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 1:30 PM
> To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
> Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
> Just off the phone with Arthur Allen from Kaiser Family Foundation News, thanks to an introduction from David. I spent 45 minutes talking to him about this GOF stuff, and why that was a pejorative term being used to drum up support to ban certain kinds of research into evolutionary biology of viruses and viral pathogenesis, with the ban being far more dangerous than any possible leak of a created super pathogen. Peter, I characterized you as a hero. Don't disappoint me or undermine my credibility (said tongue in cheek to be absolutely clear). In response to a question I said you were the member of the WHO team who would most want to find out if there was a leak of virus from the laboratory because your integrity as a scientist would want to know how this virus became a human pandemic so that we can try to better prevent it in the first place, and if not find it as quickly as possible in order to stop it from spreading. So while on the list of priorities the emergence from bats through some mammal to spillover to humans was at the very top, and lab origin was at the very bottom, you would not be the one to eliminate the latter from the list. That said, I do think that after characterizing it as highly unlikely, it was a mistake for the WHO report to say it should not be explored any further. I suspect that was more an offering to the Chinese to keep the door open to the next step in the investigation than anything else. After all, it would not be at all possible if the Chinese didn't actually agree to allow it to happen.
>
> I also saw the Garry paper this morning and not only brought it to Allen's attention (he said he had just become aware of it 30 minutes before we spoke) but I also characterized it as the first piece of actual field derived evidence to evaluate, and really very powerful evidence that the evolution of the precursor virus to CoV-2 happened in nature and not in a lab. I think he will look at it carefully and use it.
>
> We also talked politics and the consequences of continuing expression of concerns about GOF research, with my take that if certain lines of research were cut off instead of managed/regulated/overseen the lost benefits for humankind would so overwhelm the miniscule chance of unintended harm like an asymptomatic infected person leaving a lab and initiating a global pandemic resulting in (according to Chris Murray et al) more than 900,000 deaths in the US to date, and over 7 million global deaths and counting as the deadly outbreak in India continues to wreak havoc, and without doubt spread to other countries, travel bans or not. I made the analogy to recombinant DNA, and more recently to CRIPR where the benefits overwhelm the chance of inadvertent harm. And I said the small number of scientists who are on this bandwagon can really harm the future of science to explore, understand, and use knowledge about microbial evolution and pathogenesis to develop treatment, vaccines, and diagnostics, playing into the hands of the crazies, the conspiracy community, and scientifically illiterate so called communities of conscience or those who have no concern for the common good.
>
> I asked him to do a good job in his write up. He promised, and I will hold him to it if I can figure out how to accomplish that.
>
> Jerry
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 11:29 AM

> To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>
> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
> Subject: Re: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
> I agree. I have only skimmed it too, so will have to really read it carefully. Also it will be helpful for independent phylogeneticists to take a look. David
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
>> On May 13, 2021, at 10:53, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:
>>
>> David:
>>
>> That is a very interesting article. I will have to read it more fully, but on quickly skimming through it does make a strong argument against the lab-leak theory.
>>
>> Rich
>>
>> Richard J. Roberts
>> New England Biolabs
>> 240 County Road
>> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
>> USA
>> Tel: [b6] [b6]
>> Fax: (978) 412 9910
>> email: [b6]
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
>> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:54 AM
>> To: Peter Daszak [b6]
>> [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
>> [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
>> Subject: FW: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of
>> SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has
>> a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>>
>> EXTERNAL SENDER
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>> See link way down below
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>> David M. Morens, M.D.

>> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the
>> Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and
>> Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room
>> 7A-03
>> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
>> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
>> b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) b6
>> b6
>> b6
>>
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>>
>>
>>
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
>> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:31 AM
>> To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
>> Subject: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of
>> SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has
>> a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>>
>>
>> https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fviro
>> logical.org%2Ft%2Fearly- appearance-of-two-distinct-genomic-lineages-of
>> -sars-cov-2-in-different-wuhan-wildlife-markets-suggests-sars-cov-2-ha
>> s-a-natural-origin%2F691&data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C770222
>> d6f783495c5fad08d916168d4b%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c384b%7C0%7C0%
>> 7C637565108407156387%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQI
>> joiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000 &sdata=DWMmogMoU%2
>> BVEmatA3mQt1BQkOkTVJnEP6gHTb28Tp0E%3D &reserved=0
>>
>>
>> Sent from my iPhone
>> David M Morens
>> OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 7:51:12 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 7:51:09 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Important re. Tony Fauci Comments just now
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]

See below. I added a couple of phrases.

You might consider adding that the virus sequences obtained via the collaboration were bat viruses with no known human virulence and therefore would be worked on at BSL-2 in the US including the NIH.

We can discuss.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jun 4, 2021, at 7:35 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Here is the response we're planning to give this reporter:
>
> "As with all research organizations, EcoHealth Alliance must follow the local laws of the countries in which we work. Biosafety regulations are determined country-by-country and while EcoHealth Alliance would welcome universal WHO guidance dictating biosafety regulations that all counties would agree to, those do not currently exist"
>
> I need to respond within an hour, so if you have any suggestions they'd be welcome.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: [b6]
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 7:27 PM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'David Morens [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Cc: 'Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Important re. Tony Fauci Comments just now
Importance: High

Very worried that Tony Fauci said the comment below. It feels like he's throwing us under a bus here.

I've attached the rules for BSL for a bunch of different viruses around the world.

Rabies is cultured at BSL-2 in the USA.

Cedar virus, a bat-paramyxovirus related to Hendra and Nipah is cultured at BSL-2 in the USA.

Chimeric Cedar virus with Hendra & Nipah genes inserted into it is cultured at BSL-2 in the USA

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kiran Stacey [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 6:34 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: FT request

Dear Peter, I wanted to give you a chance to respond to a comment Tony Fauci made to me in an interview which we are publishing tomorrow. Referring to the accusation that some work on bat

coronaviruses in Wuhan was done at BSL-2, he said:

"We will have to go back and look at that, but that is something that should have been monitored by EcoHealth Alliance."

Can you let me know if you have a response?

Thanks
Kiran

--
Kiran Stacey
Washington Correspondent
Financial Times

Office:
Mobile: b6

@kiranstacey



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Date: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 4:40:54 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 4:40:52 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]

Thanks for doing this David. I suspect that deep down Tony is not naïve, but that he likes to keep a calm and in control public persona.

The optimal way to reach him will be through Harold Varmus, and its good Rich agreed to be in touch with him. I'm purposely not including Rich on this note because I don't want to be seen as pressuring him further. I think he will follow up, he has as good a connection to Harold as I do, and if necessary I will follow up. Harold has consistently stayed in the background when I have asked him about doing certain things or writing certain commentaries etc. but he has not been reluctant to speak rather frankly about Francis and the Lauer affair when he believed it was necessary or he was directly approached by the reporters at Science, for example. I did try to get Jon Cohen and Meredith Wadman moving on a new article but as you know they both declined at this point because it was not news. I think that was a cop out decision, and depending on what Rich has to day I might just copy Harold on that and see if he is willing to contact them because they will most likely have a different response to him than to me.
We just have to stay on this, not panic, and not waiver from the ultimate goal. Timing is always critical. So is the messenger. Lander may be the right person, and Harold has indicated to me that he has been in contact with Eric on this issue.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 3:24 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 22, 2021, at 15:06, David Morens [b6]> wrote:
>
> Hi Jerry and colleagues, just spent 40 minutes on Zoom with Tony and one of two possibilities: either we are all unnecessarily alarmed, or else he is not taking the threats seriously
>
> He said repeatedly, in a low key jocular way, that no one could mess with him or niaid since we haven't done anything wrong, apparently not counting as "messing with us" the fact that we had an important research project terminated in an unprecedented manner for political reasons.
>
> He also repeated alot of macho comments about how there is always a guy with an AR-15 right outside his door (true, and sometimes two other armed secret service guys) and everywhere he goes outside the office he has at least two bodyguards, also true...9

I hope he is right that the wackos won't gain any further traction, but i am not so sure. For one thing, there was huge collateral damage a few years back with the H5N1 gain of function mess. It is true that neither Tony nor other NIH staff got into any trouble, but thousands of professional hours were wasted over several years time and, far more importantly, the research moratorium, which went in for years, caused labs across the country to close, or move into other areas, caused lab people on grants to lose their jobs, and grad students to lose their dissertation work and postdocs to lose their projects. It was a mess that ought not to be forgotten

If i had to bet, i would guess that beneath Tony's macho I-am-not-worried reaction he really is concerned. And whatever the case he should be very concerned about what happened to Peter, to our research portfolio in an extremely important area, and to scientific independence

He did not know about either the Miller Commission or the letter from Rep Rogers which i emailed to him on gmail later

I also commented that Lauer's letters to you Peter, and the Rogers letter to you, had alot of overlap and seemed to reflect input of at least one scientist, whether or not one of our grantees. In other words, i feel that regarding those letters someone or someones are working in cahoots with the politicians who wish to do harm to NIH He didn't seem particularly troubled by that.

In the end he said thanks for filling me in and asked me to call him on his private cell phone (which is what i normally do anyway) if i hear anything that might be important

So, i am not sure where things stand. I absolutely DO feel that it would be a good thing if one of you luminaries were to approach him and try to make sure he understood what is going on out there, and perhaps discuss what the larger community of scientists can do to lock arms in unity and push back. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:24, David Morens [b6] wrote:
>
> Thanks, Jerry, i will let you know how it goes, although he may not indicate to me his next steps. The way it works with us is that he tries to never ask me things directly, like ask for my advice on what to do, but rather does alot of homework ahead of time, figures out what i am likely to say, then HE tells ME what he thinks so that i can confirm it. Yes, we all have our peculiarities, but as long as the machine runs smoothly its ok
>
> I DO know that he has great respect for Harold, and i think also admires Harold's charge-ahead no-BS style, which is the opposite of Tony's extreme caution. So i have little doubt that he would welcome that kind of help. D
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:09, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
> >
> > David,
> > Thanks for the note, and I recognize what you say is what I know about Tony. He is a remarkable person, but like all of us he isn't perfect. I think your strategy to lay out the issues and let him run with it to decide what can be effectively addressed and with what strategy.
> >
> > Rich's suggestion to talk to Harold is on track, and it would be great Rich if you were to do that. I know that they have a very close and positive history of working together, that Harold is very strategic in his thinking, he prefers to work in the background (something I have confirmed multiple times this past year as I have

asked for his advice on things I could take on), and that he will be really frank in talking to Rich. Harold has very recently told me that he has worked closely with Rich on a number of issues related to the concerns we all have.

Let us know how the chat goes tomorrow. I think you have the right perspective heading in to it, and lots of good information at your fingertips.
Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:33 PM
To: David Moren [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Hi:

If I am to do something I would talk to Harold first. I'll see what he has to say as a possible path forward.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Robert Kessler < [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

EXTERNAL SENDER

Jerry, The way it works with Tony, at least at my level, is you can't suggest he do anything. If you do, he won't do it on principle. The trick is to make him think of doing something himself, and then he will ask you to help him do it

My strategy tomorrow is to tell him that alarming things are at work, to the point that many scientists (our grantees and others) have become increasingly worried and are looking for the way forward. In that context i will share with him verbally Peter's information, and offer to get to him any of the materials he wants to see, or connect him directly with Peter, who he very much respects

I have not heard that he has engaged Harold, or the National Academies, or the professional societies, although i might not know if he did. He is very much a loner about things like this. He prides himself on being like teflon, but I am worried that he may not be as invulnerable as he may think

Our Chief of Staff, Greg Folkers (who has Masters degrees in both journalism and PH), is among the only folks here, partly excepting Cliff Lane, in whom Tony confides when the subject is difficult or personal, only rarely to me.... and Greg told me today that he thinks Tony is getting worried that the brown stuff is about to hit the fan, and that he may have become a major target

There is very little i can do to help because i am a mere scientist, not a NL, or member of the NAM, or head of a prestigious society (the only kinds of people Tony will usually engage with, as he is very proud).

So if he doesn't become more proactive, what remains is for scientists and science orgs at the very highest level to come together forcefully to push back against the craziness

Who would be willing to approach him directly and "talk turkey"? Harold? Rich? You? Victor? A couple of you?

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 15:01, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Tony will be well aware of this kind of push back. That's not the issue for you tomorrow. Its really how to get the scientific societies engaged once again in the campaign for clarity and resolution of the breech in integrity and the grants management beginning a year ago.

Maybe there would be a moment to suggest that he talk to Harold Varmus about strategy?

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 2:57 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Jerry, i am traveling without much news access, but this is really depressing. My concern has grown to alarm and i am afraid to think what comes next

We seem to have arrived at that Orwellian point where all investigations of important matters have to exclude participation of the subject experts, since being a subject expert is disqualifying on the grounds that all expertise is inherently biasing.

Before George Orwell, we had Lewis Carroll telling us this. We are in grave danger of going down-the-rabbit-hole-with-Alice.....
D
Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 14:36, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

The COVID Commission Planning Group includes people like Mike Osterholm. I don't put him into the category of Lipsitch, but am I missing something here? He was one of the people on the Biden

COVID task force I talked to in December-January about the shattered integrity at the level of NIH/OD. He didn't say much to me, and I didn't take that as a signal that he was on the darker side of the divide.

I saw the results of a focus group of Trump supporters reported on today: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/04/20/vaccine-hesitant-republicans/ A bit of text in this report is about Tony.

"Every participant said they preferred hearing from politicians over the medical expert, who has been pilloried by conservative media for months over his coronavirus warnings. The data have shown that unfortunately Dr. Fauci has been politicized, and we need different messengers, because even the right messages coming from the wrong messengers aren't always helpful," Castrucci said, noting his foundation's polling [de Beaumont Foundation] found Americans trust their personal doctors more than the government's top infectious-disease doctor".

This is the fundamental problem we have, as the politicians will only use this as an echo chamber to amplify their support from their public supporters and constituents. It does point back to the scientific societies which have weighed in previously, but no more impact than we have had as individuals. It doesn't stop this approach, its just that we need some deus ex machina to help us. Is that going to be Eric Lander? What's happening with his approval? I haven't heard much of late.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 12:41 PM
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
Importance: High

Thanks for the email David - comments below. Also please see the attached word doc with links to some of the political actions that I'm concerned about. Tell Tony that this is very early days, with most of these coming from the Right, and many that can be headed off at the pass by positive outreach to Democrats, which I believe people will be doing.

I've also put in a link to the new " Covid Commission Planning Group (Covid CPG)" that has no official role from USG, but boldly states as its core mission "to prepare the way for a National Covid Commission". Members include David Relman & Marc Lipsitch and I have heard from many on the conspiracy theory chatter networks online that this will focus partly on advocating for reduction in biosafety labs, viral work in wildlife, and gain-of-function.

Please feel free to share any docs that I've sent to you, with Tony.
Hopefully you can do that in a way that avoids FoIA, and if not possible,
just show him stuff on screen share on Zoom.

Please also see comments below...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Gerald Keusch b6; Rich Roberts b6; Robert Kessler b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Peter, i am on leave in Florida for my granddaughters graduation from Florida State

Tomorrow at 130 i will be having a zoom call with Tony to tip him off on some of the info you sent in your recent email

I want to be sure about what info or docs you would or would not want me to share
[Peter Daszak:] Any and all

Other than what i see on tv, the jousting with Rand Paul and Jim Jordan, for example, i do not know how much of this Tony is aware of. To my knowledge he doesn't share it with anyone up here

I think issues he will be most concerned about are not your grant, although i add i am sure he would do anything he could to restore the funds and get

the hellhounds of your back, but rather 1) the possibility that people like Rep Rodgers and her committee are about to turn up the heat and put Tony, personally, in their crosshairs, and 2) the possibility the NIH funded scientists or other esteemed scientists, are in cahoots with politicians wanting to attack him or niaid
[Peter Daszak:] agreed

As background, we all went through the original version of this crap about 10 years ago with the original GOF attacks surrounding H5N1. As Tony's scientific advisor, i spent much of the year, along with Jeff T, helping brief him and get him up to speed, which he did. At the time, David Relman, who had been one of Tony's favorites, was leading the charge, and we all wondered why a young guy with so much promise would choose demagoguery over science. Lipsitch was only a minor player at that time, but relished his attack role and seem to become more alarmist as time went on. Now these guys are in the NAM. How did that happen???? Ebright has always been a crackpot, in the mold of Peter Duseberg, remember him?, and no one took him seriously except some of the press who didn't know any better
[Peter Daszak:] I had the unfortunate issue of voting on Marc Lipsitch's membership of NAM. He's an accomplished scientist. He's also very opinionated, arrogant and pushy on whatever issue he believes in. I voted on his science acumen.

I was unclear from your email on a couple points you might clarify. Obviously the Rodgers letter asking you to produce all those dox not only overlaps with the Lauer letter to you, but could not have been written without the help of a virologist.
[Peter Daszak:] I have it on good authority (Ebright's Twitter account) that he was involved. They are also getting pressured from Jamie Metzl who's working with the internet conspiracy networks actively to promote their "Research"

Actually, given that there are a few points in the letter that someone knowledgable about coronavirus virology would have corrected, my suspicion is that the letter was put together with the help of a legitimate scientist who needs to do more homework on coronaviruses.
[Peter Daszak:] you're right..! Metzl isn't a virologist, neither's Ebright. The internet 'researchers' are led by a banker and some junior scientists, many from human genetics, mol boil world.

Do you agree, and do you think that person was Ebright? Do you think Relman, Lipsitch, Imperiale, or other current or former grantees might have been involved?

I am not sure we ever funded Ebright, but we did fund the others. I would like to think that Relman et all are only mouthing off to the press, but do you think there is more to it than that, eg, that any of them are working with the politicians?
[Peter Daszak:] David Relman is talking with reporters a lot about this, including casting aspersions on my motives for speaking out about this virus emerging via wildlife-to-human spillover (he's quoted as saying my motives are to protect the research I've been doing and reputations of our collaborators). Ebright is very actively (and obnoxiously) critical on social media calling me a 'Grifter' on a weekly basis and promoting unsubstantiated arguments for a lab leak. I had to look up what 'grifter' meant at first...

Your earlier comments about this proposed investigative committee, and the possible role of these folks in it, are alarming. Can you be more specific

about where this stands and what is being done to forward it and to squelch it?
[Peter Daszak:] Nothing's being done to squelch it, and neither should it be - there will be other committees that also pop up. My concern is their bold claim that they're laying the groundwork for a 9/11 type commission (and have a 9/11 commission person involved). It may be that just by saying that a lot, and having well known people involved, they end up forming one. They're clearly politically connected and are advocating for this politically. Jerry and I also proposed this in our paper published in Health Affairs, but we assumed this would be led by NAM or some other well-respected institution.

When i speak with Tony i do not want to step into the politics of all this, as that's not my job and he wouldn't want me to. If he needs further info it might be best to connect you two, in an off the record manner. Would that be OK? We are getting FOIA'd non stop, so it's most important that Tony not have anything on the record that could come back to bite
[Peter Daszak:] Totally agree. Tell him I'm happy to speak with him at any time and will do so in a way that's not FoIA-ble. One thing I could do is either on a zoom call or by sending you a document, is lay out responses to the Mendendez questions so that the arguments are known and well-supported. For example, everyone's saying that this is a 'gain-of-function' issue, but actually that's not the case - we worked on bat viruses, not human pathogens. The expts produced loss of function, not gain of function, all appropriate conditions and approvals were demonstrably checked and correctly answered.

Finally, i didn't read all of the Menendez bill-in-committee, which is longer than Les misérables, but what's the gist? Do you think that in their zeal to take a hard stance against the PRC, these Democrats are purposely, or accidentally, getting sucked into the evil-WIV scenario? Is there real danger here?
[Peter Daszak:] The Menendez bill is the only one that stands a chance so far of becoming law because it's bipartisan. The WIV, gain-of-function stuff is thrown in as a very small part of it. The draft wording only calls for a report from NIH after 180 days on these issues, and they are easily addressed. However, if it does pass and the anti-China mood hardens in the US, it may end up with calls to testify and the Republicans may use that to undermine NIH, and in particular Tony, given the rabid GoF myth they've been building.

Anything you think might be helpful, I'd appreciate

TY, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Sun, 19 Sep 2021 8:12:48 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 19 Sep 2021 8:12:37 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
From: Edward Holmes [b6] >
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Jason Gale [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] Wang Linfa [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Just need to keep sampling, but that sampling ought to be broader.

We need something >99% similar across the whole genome.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

On 20 Sep 2021, at 9:59 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

Agree totally except your certainty that China is the ultimate source. Admittedly much data point in that direction but how can you be sure? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 19, 2021, at 19:28, Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:

It's not phylogenetics.

One thing is ascertainment bias which could be huge.

Second thing is to distinguish the long-term ecology of these viruses from the short-term emergence of the virus. These Laos viruses are the former. Clearly these viruses are commonplace in SE Asia. And I don't just think that bats and pangolins will be the only animals with SC2-like viruses. Virus ecology does not work like that. But this is not the same as determining the events that happened in Wuhan. To me, China still looks like the most likely source.

Third, I'm pretty certain that groups in China are sitting on more SC2-like viruses. If you sample bats you find them. It is striking to me that CCDC have published so little on this yet have

supposedly sampled so many animals. That doesn't add up. Never discount the politics.

Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
The University of Sydney

> On 20 Sep 2021, at 9:00 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:
>
> Eddie, please clarify, i don't « get » all the phylogenetic asumptions you guys understand, but can you put it in lsyman's terms? As you know, i have said repeatedly to look past Yunnan to all of SE Asia, as i have bennunconconvinced of the Yunnan centrality of all this, suspecting thAt the universe of these viruses crosses borders to include not only SW and S China but all of SEA.
>
> If that is so, the implications ate huge: this is annintetnational problem demanding international cooperation. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Sep 19, 2021, at 18:33, Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:
> >
> > Yes, good idea.
> >
> > The receptor binding domain of some of these Laotian bats is so close to that of SARS-CoV-2 even some of the die-hard leakers are beginning to see the light…
> >
> > This also effectively excludes that virus-receptor relationship was generated through lab passage, that the pangolin sequences were faked, and that this outbreak had anything to do with the Mojiang mine as a virus from a different country is now closer. That mine will go down in history as the reddest of herrings.
> >
> > That said, I am a little worried about confirmation bias for the origin being bats from Yunnan/Laos/Cambodia. The more they find there, the more they sequence. But no doubt these Laotian samples are of huge significance. As are the Hubei civets.
> >
> > <Screenshot from 2021-09-19 17-04-25.png>
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS**
> > ARC Australian Laureate Fellow
> >
> > **THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY**
> > Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
> > School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
> > The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia

T
E b6

On 20 Sep 2021, at 7:52 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <
b6
> wrote:

Yes, do it! This is important and i say modestly, game changing. The whole « origin » controversy needs to be rethought from the ground up

We have been too micro-focusing (as i have long said to hard push back) but the sarobecovirus and merbecovirus problems are geographically and virologically complex and require us to drop back and study the viral-host universe. Thst universe is huge, complicated , and holds surprises, in my view. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 19, 2021, at 17:36, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

I'm planning to pull the threads Peter has so eloquently laid out into a story. Bob, Stephen, Joel (and Kristian), if you have time/interest to get on Zoom today, let me know. Thanks a lot. Jason

From: b6 At: 09/20/21 07:31:51 UTC+10:00
To: b6

Cc: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , b6
b6 b6
b6
b6
b6
b6 b6
b6

Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

nPeter, as i am perennially swamped with work that has nothing to do with COVID issues of importance, i am always catching up on reading the important stuff

Just now i poured a martini and-read word for word your "A strategy…" paper with first author Sánchez. Also Kevin and Lin-fa were coauthors. Wow!!!

This is dynamite and also beautifully written. I mean, Hemingway, Conrad, Nin, couldn't have written it better. Beautiful job and so important.

I think you need to promote this work, and emphasize that the conclusions are far reaching and a sort of call to arms.

Let us all keep pushing,
and keep our eyes on the
prize of getting to the bottom of it all
david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 18, 2021, at 12:05, Peter Daszak <
> b6
> wrote:
>
> I put it all in a twitter thread while drinking coffee in my local diner (Saturday is "full English breakfast" day for me).
>
> https://twitter.com/peterdaszak/status/1439236376776658945?s=21
>
> No doubt ill be attacked by multiple lab leak aficionados but so be it - at least eddie,
> Garry and Kristian won't see. The horrors of that…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> Peter Daszak
> (Sent from my iPhone)
>
> President
> EcoHealth Alliance
>
> 460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA
>
> www.EcoHealthAlliance.org
>
> > On Sep 18, 2021, at 10:26 AM, Garry, Robert F <
> > b6
> > wrote:
> >
> > Of course, the momentum on the lab leak side will continue, with books by Sharri Markison, Alina Chan/Matt Ridley, Op Eds that criticize scientists, 70+ FoIAs by one organization alone, many other FoIAs on their way, 900 pages of FoIA'd grants and reports from EHA/NIAID showing zero evidence of lab leak.

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<Screenshot from 2021-09-19 17-04-25.png>

Date: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 11:46:46 AM -0400
Sent: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 11:46:45 AM -0400
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; [b6]

Jerry and Peter,

This is sent from my gmail account. Please send all replies here To gmail

I have let Tony know but have not spoken to him directly. There are things I can't say except Tony is aware and I have learned that there are ongoing efforts within NIH to steer through this with minimal damage to you, Peter, and colleagues, and to nih and niaid. No guarantees, but let us hope. I imagine this will be handled at the level of Francis and Tony, within nih, and I don't expect to be in the loop.

I don't have any insight into what happened or how it happened, but the fact that your termination letter came from "Building 1", that is, the NIH directors office, and not from NIAID, is telling

Whatever is going on, I very much doubt that Tony or any of our niaid leadership would willfully throw you under the bus, or any grantee, for that matter. Indeed, I expect we would do everything possible to protect you. I have reason to believe that there are already efforts going on to protect you

What I said on the phone last night stands. I urge you to meet asap with this guy Lauer and with Eric and Emily. Lauer may well decline to meet with you, but I think you should press him. You have a right to demand a face to face explanation for such an unprecedented action. If your grant is from DMID Virology you may also want to meet with Virology Branch Chief Mark Challberg, and of course with Cristina, who is Emily's deputy and a respiratory virologist. These DMID folks will be your advocates. If any part of the grant goes through Columbia, or UNC (isn't that where Ralph is?), or any University, they may be able to apply pressure too.

If you can get down here, these meetings should be in person, although of course many nih folks are working from home, so that may not be possible.

In the meantime I would NOT go to the press. The first step is to find out in detail what happened and what your rights are. But I would line up advocates, as I suggested and Jerry as well. The press may find out about this in any case, but I think if so it is better to let friends defend you than for you to fight on your own. At least for now. Of course, however this plays out in the short term, it will end up in the public domain and the truth will come out. So hold on to that certainty, small comfort now, I know

Finally, I am so sorry you and your colleagues are going through this. You don't deserve it; if anything you deserve a medal. Please hang in there and press ahead firmly but collegiality

As a coda, Tony knows about your work. Sometime around 1 Feb I sent him an email outlining your work over recent years, and why it was so important to science. This was mostly because I anticipated new money, but also in the back of my mind was the possibility that something really dark like this could happen

Again, whatever role NIH might be playing in these events, I truly expect that we will be doing what is possible to protect you and your research over the long haul

I think I need another Scotch, and it's only 1145 am
David

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 26, 2020, at 06:43, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: April 25, 2020 at 22:03:15 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >, "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thanks Peter,

I know Dave Morens – everybody knows Dave Morens. I had another thought about this and it would be to alert Victor Dzau who works very closely with Tony, of course, and even though I consider myself a friend as well as a colleague I think Victor would have a pretty direct route to Tony. It is an issue the National Academies should be interested in, and have some traction. We need to get Peggy Hamburg involved to bring AAAS on board. It is like the Bush administration attempts to control NIH but on steroids. Anyone but an idiot would understand why it is essential to maintain our scientific connections with China so that we can engage with them to figure out what happened. What the Trump idiots are doing is totally and absolutely counterproductive. I do think – as we discussed yesterday – that for the moment keeping cool is the best strategy. But influential people need to know and its probably better if you are not directly involved.

I watched the session on COVID-19 this afternoon for the Academies meeting via Zoom or some platform. Tony, Jeremy, George Gao, Sanjay Gupta, Susan Weiss, and Richard Hatchett, All of the questions about the emergence and the reservoir or spillover host for which there is no information are the strengths of your programs and your collaborations. How absolutely stupid to close those off, but how absolutely unacceptable it is from the perspective of the separation of politics and science in a free society. That Francis would allow it is hard to believe. That Tony would allow it is even harder to believe – and for that reason I expect it is at levels below him and he is too busy at the moment trying to keep focused on rational decision making while the idiot in chief

tells us to swallow a UV-C lamp or shove it up out butt – I can tell you whose butt I would shove it – and for good measure have a Chloroxitini or just do a total cleansing with H2O2 (the rationale would be if H2O is good for us wouldn't H2O2 be better, after all it would have another one of those O's whatever they are.

Dave, get in touch so we might strategize, and for certain reasons keep Peter out of the loop.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6] [b6]
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry – great to read this – thanks for your support.

I also spoke with David Morens today who was equally shocked and said this has never happened. He also said there are influential people who would come to our defense at the right moment. In the meantime, he's going to talk with Greg Folkers (Chief of Staff for Tony Fauci) to find out if Tony knows, and why it happened. He's then going to let Tony know. I think you and him are on the same page in that you're both right that this is a clear political interference in NIH business. Trump said at his press briefing Friday 17th that he would 'end' the grant, and one week later I got the termination notice from NIH.

In the meantime, we're working on a short draft of how we could have easily changed the geography to the countries adjacent to China, as we proposed to Erik Stemmy and Emily Erbelding. We'll be talking with them next week early to try and find out why this happened. We won't respond to the termination notice (Michael Lauer) until we've found out more.

FYI – re. the FoIA - I'm contacting the FBI to talk about the risk of our FoIA and how I've been threatened by QANON related to this and our Chinese colleagues have had their lives threatened.

I'm not going to talk to the media about this, not our representatives, until I've tried all possible ways with NIAID/NIH to change the decision from a cancelation. I'm also very concerned that Trump could target our organization or me personally, leading to our EIDRC being nixed and we don't even have an NoA on that, so it could quietly disappear.

I'll get back in touch with you once I've found out more from Erik Stemmy, Emily Erbelding and Cristina Cassetti.

In the meantime is it OK if I email introduce you and David so you could possibly coordinate in some way, or at least stay in touch? Right now I'm feeling particularly vulnerable – the power of the President is pointed at us, the CIA, FBI and someone from Medical Defense Intelligence (or something) are interviewing staff, QAnon are threatening me, and our colleagues in China have death threats against them. That's just this week! Having you out there talking with others at this level is extremely important right now.

By the way, here's a list of our Board: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/board- of-directors

It includes two people you know – Jim Hughes (former head of NCID/CDC, Rear Admiral Public Health Service Rtd, Asst. Surgeon General Rtd) and Rita Colwell (Former Head of NSF under 3 presidents: Clinton, Bush sr, Bush Jr – I think). I'll be talking with Jim Hughes tomorrow or Monday and Rita Colwell on our Baord meeting Friday.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Hi Peter and Aleksei,

I want to change my recommendation from earlier this evening. Put the really good Cabernet aside and drink the disinfectant instead. This is an afront to science, after the language in the first letter and your response to comply. It must be challenged. The question is not only how but also when – certainly not before the EIDRC funding comes through. And then in a smart manner. I want to chat again next week – I need the weekend off having just finished the draft report on the R&D preparedness ecosystem for NAM working with Nicki Lurie. There are some smart and very influential people I can talk to - and keep you out of the conversation – when we agree it makes sense. I mentioned Maria Freire from FNIH and Mary Woolley from Research!America. I also thought about Harold Varmus and former Representative John Porter who was a great supporter of NIH (made the doubling happen) and CDC even though he is a Republican. But I too will do nothing for a few days.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: FW: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <b6
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 >; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 >; Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email: b6

From: Aleksei Chmura b6 g >
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 >, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6 >, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &
Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
(mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <michael.lauer@nih.gov> wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: b6

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6, Aleksei Chmura <b6>, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6>, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records
2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.
Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Olival b6; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.
- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it

appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.

- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.
- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email:

From: Kevin Olival b6
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak b6 who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.
2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,
Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (direct)
b6 (mobile)
1.212.380.4465 (fax)
b6
EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics *and* promote conservation

On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 wrote:

Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received.

The sooner you can get us that information, the better.

Best, Mike

From: Naomi Schrag [b6]
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6], " [b6] " [b6] >, Naomi Schrag < [b6]
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6]
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,
I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.
Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To: [b6]; Naomi Schrag [b6]
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: [b6]

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

Date: Wed, 1 Dec 2021 5:13:48 PM -0500
Sent: Wed, 1 Dec 2021 5:12:28 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg

Dear David,

Hope all's well – Jerry forwarded me a response to him. Please start cc'ing me back in – I'll be extremely careful to only use your gmail account.

Great to hear the news about this vaccine commentary paper – please let me know when it's coming out and in which journal so I can get ready…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Friday, November 19, 2021 5:05 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'

Good news, keep it up.

I had a long off the record chat with PBS Newshours's Nick Schifrin this morning. The craziness is receding at least a bit.

I forgot to clarify in my email yesterday that BOTH my gmail and phone calls are now safe. Text is NOT, as it can be FOIA'd, as can my govt email.

So you and Peter and others should be able to email me on gmail only, with the caveat that no other govt. employee is copied at a govt address, as all govt emails are potentially FOIA'able.

I think Tony has calmed down a little about his attacks. In our recent meetings he has been relaxed and curious about the science. The corona vaccine commentary paper he asked me to write and which I sent him the final yesterday, with Jeff Taubenberger as a coauthor (since he and I are working on coronavirus vaccines), has a section that says that before we start making next generations vaccines we need to characterize the sarbecovirus universe and essentially work together with China and the SEA countries to study bats, animals, humans esp. in various occupations, all; the stuff that Peter has been doing. he seemed to like that and his name will be on it.

david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don 't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Fri, Nov 19, 2021 at 2:32 PM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

> How utterly ironic.
>
> I did follow up with Peter regarding your new secure cyber connections.
>
> And when the Washington Post rejected my Opinion piece I got a lead into Science from Jon Cohen and today I reworked it and submitted it to them a short while ago. Jon says to expect rejection and plan for the next submission in line. He suggested Michael Hiltzig at the LA Times. Its big and influential enough to garner attention in Building One. There is The Hill and Politico still to be considered. Its really a lot easier to get fake news and junk published than it is to shed light and truth.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
> **Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 9:09 AM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T b6
> **Subject:** FW: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
301 496 4409
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, November 19, 2021 8:56 AM
Subject: Wpost: NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'

NIH director: 'Conspiracies are winning here'



By Rachel Roubein
Today at 8:17 a.m. EST

Good morning! And welcome to our first Health 202 collab with our good pal Yasmeen Abutaleb, who wrote today's top with us.

Today: The House is planning to pass Biden's social spending bill after a record-breaking speech from House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy: 8 hours and 32 minutes. This comes after the Congressional Budget Office delivered much-anticipated projections for how much the bill will cost and a key estimate on how much Democrats' drug pricing deal will save. But first:

Francis Collins wants online misinformation spreaders "brought to justice"



NIH Director Francis Collins spoke forcefully against the spread of misinformation. (Alex Wong/Getty Images)

NIH Director Francis Collins has a stern message for the American public: The country has, what he called, an epidemic of misinformation and disinformation. And it's fueling a dangerous distrust in science.

"Conspiracies are winning here. Truth is losing. That's a really serious indictment of the way in which our society seems to be traveling," said Collins, who will soon step down as the National Institutes of Health director after serving in both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Collins made his most forceful comments yet against the pervasive spread of falsehoods online to our colleague Yasmeen Abutaleb. He was defending his own colleague, **Anthony Fauci,** Biden's chief medical adviser, against the biggest onslaught of angry messages and threats he's received throughout the entire pandemic.

Those attacks stemmed in part from a viral and false claim that Fauci, who leads the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, had funded a medical experiment that involved trapping beagles' heads in mesh cages filled with diseased sand flies. Fauci received so many messages — 3,600 phone calls in 36 hours — that his assistant quit answering the phone, Yasmeen and Beth Reinhard report in a story out this morning.

- **The claim was amplified by a little-known animal rights group** called the White Coat Waste Project, which leveraged existing hostility among conservatives toward Fauci to further its cause, The Post's investigation found. The outrage was supercharged by a bipartisan letter signed by 24 members of Congress that questioned the agency's funding of medical research on dogs.

- **The claim originated with an error by scientists.** NIAID was initially listed as a funder on the study in a paper in a scientific journal in late July. Even after the researchers and the medical journal corrected the error, White Coat Waste continued to promote and fundraise off the false claim. The group said it does not believe NIAID's denial or the corrections.

- **White Coat Waste's message was amplified** by a right-wing echo chamber eager to thrash Fauci over everything from vaccine directives to NIH funding of coronavirus research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and created the biggest firestorm yet for Fauci.

The episode serves as a prime example of how fast a false claim can spread online — and how it can stymie the highest levels of government. The surge of threats and harassment in recent weeks has forced Fauci's staff to spend significant time debunking misinformation and grappling with security concerns.


Fauci testifies before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in July. J. Scott Applewhite/Pool via REUTERS/File Photo (Pool/Reuters)

Here are excerpts from Yasmeen's interview with Collins:

Cracking down

The rapid-fire spread of misinformation has altered public opinion of the pandemic and coronavirus vaccines. Some **6 in 10** Americans say they either believe the government is exaggerating the number of deaths from the virus or aren't sure. Nearly **1 in 4** Americans believe covid-19 shots contain microchips or don't know if the claim is true, according to a recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey.

- **"Truth is supposed to be truth**," Collins said, "and the fact that your truth would be so heavily modified by your social circle or where you get your news tells you we're in real trouble."

- **He said he worries about a society where** "somebody's Facebook post carries as much weight as a statement from the director of the CDC about what is the truth of a public health crisis."

He sees two ways of attempting to curb the spread of misinformation, though admits he's unsure how successful either has been.

- **The first:** Identify those who are purposefully spreading false information online and bring them to justice.

- **The second:** Find a better way to counter false claims with real information. He didn't specify what exactly either one would entail.

Standing firm

Fauci has been a controversial figure throughout the pandemic, as he openly clashed with **President Donald Trump** over masks and unproven covid cures, Yasmeen and Beth note. **The sparring and public criticism over the last two years has led some "very credible people" to ask Collins if it's time for Fauci to resign.**

- **"I was like, are you kidding me?,"** Collins recalled. **"**Do you then want to hand a victory on a platter to the people who have made up stories and incessantly thrown around information that is absolutely untrue to try to take him down? You want to say okay, they win? Is that your proposal?"

Collins himself has been the target of attacks. Whenever he pushes back on conspiracies, he says he knows he's going to get "some of the most vile email responses that you can imagine."

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Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 6:11:26 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 6:11:23 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Politico story
From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
To: Jerry Keusch [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Nancye Green [b6] David Morens [b6]

Dear Jerry,

The Politico Reporter is Sarah Owermohle. Here are her contact details:

Phone: [b6]
Email: sowermohle@politico.com
https://www.politico.com/staff/sarah- owermohle

Cheers!

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura, PhD
Chief of Staff

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
(mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 28, 2020, at 18:01, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Can you give me the contact information for the reporter who wrote the Politico article. I would like to contact her to suggest that she should be digging in to whether or not any other grants working with Wuhan and on bat viruses have been terminated or impacted. I would also urge her to investigate when – if ever – NIH has terminated a highly regarded research program for convenience, eliminating any grants suspended or revoked because of scientific or financial fraud.

Jerry

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 11:21 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]>; Nancye Green < [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: Re: Politico story

Thanks so much, Jerry!

We have posted the longer statement online here:

https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2020/04/regarding- nih-termination-of-coronavirus-research-funding [ecohealthalliance.org]

Cheers,

-Aleksei

On Apr 28, 2020, at 10:54, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:

Hi Alexi and Robert,
Has any news outlet picked up on the Politico story yet? Have they called you? Did you issue the longer statement (send me the final version when you have a chance)?

I expect to be talking with Peggy Hamburg this afternoon about AAAS getting involved.

Jerry

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 8:39 AM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] >; Peter Daszak [b6] >; Nancye Green < [b6] ; Robert Kessler < [b6]
Subject: Re: Politico story

Thanks, David.

I confirm receipt.

I note that our cancelled Coronavirus award is still listed on page 42!

Cheers,

-Aleksei

On Apr 28, 2020, at 06:37, David Morens [b6] wrote:

this and prior email, re new NIAID implementation plan, released last night d
Let me know if you got these docs, am having trouble with home gmail david

David M. Morens, MD

b6

[b6] [b6] [b6] (work)
[b6] [b6] [b6] (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Mon, Apr 27, 2020 at 11:37 PM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

Hello Nancy,

I am in touch with various colleagues to determine the best response from the scientific community. Its late tonight and not much will happen until tomorrow, but when people read this and other reports sure to follow there will be concern and consternation. It cannot be left as it is. Lauer and Francis Collins will have to own this, and it will not be pretty for them. Francis will lost the respect of the scientific community – whether he is personally involved or not he is the head and therefore responsible for its actions. Lauer will be the fall guy. So be it.

Friends of EHA will stay in close touch with Peter and through you with the Board. Let us know as well if there are additional ways we can come to the support of the organization, scientific integrity, and the integrity of science.

Jerry Keusch

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 8:13 PM
To b6; David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: Politico story
Importance: High

Dear All,

I'm introducing you to Nancy Green, the Chair of our Board. David Morens – you both met at the Smithsonian Exhibit opening. Nancye – David is in the Office of the Director NIAID, reporting to Tony Fauci and a long time mentor of mine. Jerry Keusch is the Head of the Boston University Biosecurity Level 4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center, and another of my 'mentors'.

This is the story from Politico, with our statement embedded. It's not a rip-roaring call to arms for the defense of scientific integrity, but it's a start and at least exonerates us of any wrong doing. I'm hoping that powerful voices will now speak out and try to crush this political interference in work that was defined to protect our national health and security.

https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

I'll be reaching out to Jim Hughes and Rita Colwell tonight to set up a call.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

<NIAID COVID-19 Full Weekly Update 4.27.20.docx>

Date: Fri, 22 May 2020 12:17:34 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 22 May 2020 12:17:32 AM -0400
Subject: RE: NIH Director Francis Collins honored for work to bridge science and religion | Science | AAAS
From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Carroll Dennis [b6]

All this talk of hair is making me nervous. Dennis should be too – your locks define you sir.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 1:58 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Carroll Dennis [b6]
Subject: Re: NIH Director Francis Collins honored for work to bridge science and religion | Science | AAAS

Me neither, but ya never know what the future holds, if we live long enough! d

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Thu, May 21, 2020 at 12:59 PM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

I wouldn't know, my pilo needs no pill.

From: David Morens <b6>
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 12:20 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Cc: Peter Daszak <b6>; Carroll Dennis <b6>
Subject: Re: NIH Director Francis Collins honored for work to bridge science and religion | Science | AAAS

No need to check it out. I think there's a pill for that, no?

d
David M. Morens, MD
b6

b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Thu, May 21, 2020 at 11:42 AM Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

My suggestion is to fugedaboudit and have a glass of a nice Cab or Merlot. Its irrelevant to what we must deal with now, so stay focused about what gets your piloerection going (note the 'pilo' and check this out if necessary: https://www.google.com/search?q=piloerection &tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1 &fir=rVWGSk4V99CT2M%253A%252C4zgNPNWbGwYhmM%252C_ &vet=1&usg=AI4_-kTNEAo0wkDgl69Z99JdP7d7oYaiPA &sa=X &ved=2ahUKEwjh4bKwpcXpAhVVYTUKHYccBOMQ_h0wAXoECAsQBg#imgrc=rVWGSk4V99CT2M)

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 11:09 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Carroll Dennis [b6]
Subject: Re: NIH Director Francis Collins honored for work to bridge science and religion | Science | AAAS

I knew about this a few days ago but didn't want to say anything. I knew you'd blow a gasket, as well you should

Who knows, maybe there will come a day of reckoning

Maybe the arc of history does bend towards justice

On that future day, I'll buy ya a beer

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 21, 2020, at 10:25, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
>
> Checkout the story from science below and my "quote". I was disgusted to see Francis Collins gushing on twitter at how honored he was to win this $1.2 million prize etc so I threw over a few molatov tweets one of which science picked up. I know we don't want him to resign or get fired, but I'm on a long game here to undermine his image as heroic and if the dems win I'll go into full attack mode - he failed in his prime directive of the job - to protect the integrity of our peer review process for funding. Oh and by the way - he works for me, the US taxpayer!
>
>
> https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/05/francis- collins-honored-work-bridge-science-and-religion
>
>
> Yours angrily,
>
> Peter
>
>
>
> Peter Daszak
> (Sent from my iPhone)
>
> President
> EcoHealth Alliance
>
> 460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA
>
> www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

Date: Wed, 19 Aug 2020 10:31:15 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 19 Aug 2020 10:31:02 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Copy of Wall Street Journal story.
From: Robert Kessler [b6]>
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments: wsj.com-NIH Presses US Nonprofit for Information on Wuhan Virology Lab.pdf

Here it is.

On Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 10:30 AM Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Can any of you send me a pdf of the story? I don't subscribe and can't open the link and see beyond the first couple of lines.

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 10:23 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Wall Street Journal story.

Thanks for the follow up Peter. I had informed Peter that Harold asked me over the weekend if I knew anything about this new situation and I shared the July 8th letter with him (Peter had sent it to me after he gave the reporter my name as somebody to talk to). I was wondering what Varmus was going to do and now I know – much more to the point, the history of NIH, and the right person to rebut current NIH leadership – and this is important.

The question now is how to get the congress to move and subpoena Azar, Collins, and Lauer. I will follow up with the Chiefs of Staff of the 4 committees that had requested a briefing from Azar as I received no reply when I sent the opinion piece I had in The Hill, along with 140 other members of the National Academy of Medicine. I didn't push then because the focus in congress was on the need to address the ongoing economic fallout of the outbreak. But this is more ammunition for us to put in front of them. I will send this to all of those who signed opinion piece in The Hill and ask them to send messages to the 4 house committees requesting they follow up and demand and broaden their request to be briefed by Azar by a subpoena and including NIH leadership.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 8:56 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Wall Street Journal story.
Importance: High

Hi Jerry and David,

I know that Jerry's aware of this, but reporter from the *Wall Street Journal* who wrote the very positive piece on our role in predicting COVID last week (https://www.wsj.com/articles/a- deadly-coronavirus-was-inevitable-why-was-no-one-ready-for-covid-11597325213) had contacted NIH to confirm the cancelation of our grant. Well, we'd received a letter from NIH (Directors office) on July 8th to tell us that our grant is reinstated and instantly suspended, and that we won't be able to access funding unless we fulfil conditions they've placed on the work. They include demanding that we find out details about staff and work done at the Wuhan Institute of Virology before our grant started, that we obtain a vial of SARS-CoV-2 that Wuhan used to initially sequence the virus, find out about an alleged member of staff removed from their website, demand NIH inspects the lab and notebooks, find out about work that Wuhan did before our grant and independent of us testing some workers that died in a mineshaft and were SARSr-CoV IgG positive (this is a widely spread conspiracy theory being promoted on the web).

As always, when we received the letter, we did not go to the press and hoped we could avoid negative publicity. Unfortunately, as they did last time, NIH leaked – telling the WSJ reporter that the grant was reinstated. I spoke with her on Friday and the story came out today: https://www.wsj.com/articles/nih- presses-u-s-nonprofit-for-information-on-wuhan-virology-lab-11597829400. I think they've done a fair job of reporting what is a ridiculous situation and one that feels like harassment right now.

It includes this quote from Harold Varmus: The NIH's list of conditions "is outrageous, especially when a grant has already been carefully evaluated by peer review and addresses one of the most important problems in the world right now—how viruses from animals spill over to human beings," Harold E. Varmus, a former NIH director, said in an interview. "What could be more important at the moment?" Dr. Varmus is one of 77 Nobel laureates who asked NIH Director Francis Collins and Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar in May to review the NIH's termination of the grant the month before. "This whole episode is just a woeful attack on the traditional way NIH has maintained its integrity," he said.

We're probably going to talk to more reporters about this over the next couple of weeks – it's hard to avoid them considering we have interviews scheduled just about every day. I just wanted you to be aware. As always, I'll be politely critical of the behavior of the current NIH Director and the way he'd rather smear our organization than stand up and fight for the dignity of the NIH review process. I will NOT criticize NIAID in any way whatsoever, and hope that none of this causes any problems for anyone in the Institute.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

--

Robert Kessler
Communications Manager

he/him

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Ste. 1200
New York, NY 10018

b6 (direct)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 6:47:39 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 6:47:38 PM -0400
Subject: RE: brief statement for reporter tonight
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6];
CC: David Morens [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]

I think that strategy works. I hope you did send it to the reporter at 6. Let's regroup some time tomorrow morning when you can see what has come out and who picked it up to disseminate it.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 6:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] gov) [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: RE: brief statement for reporter tonight

OK – David – what do you think?

If you're good with this, we'll send it out and maybe work on a broader statement, but my instinct is to lie low for tonight and tomorrow and let the news agencies have at it, wait for good powerful people to come to our defense, and hope our organization is not targeted by Trump.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6] [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 5:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6];
Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: brief statement for reporter tonight

Succinct, essential information only, clear next step to understand what this means, it is measured, there is no hyperbole. Good job.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2020, at 5:49 PM, Peter Daszak [redacted] wrote:
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 460 West 34th Street
> New York, NY 10001
> USA
>
> Tel.: [redacted]
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> <statement to politico.docx>

Date:	Tue, 5 May 2020 7:59:57 PM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 5 May 2020 7:59:55 PM -0400
Subject:	Union of Concerned Scientists
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6]; Dennis Carroll [b6];
CC:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6];
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.png

BTW – I heard that Union of Concerned Scientists are asking the Wuhan lab about NIH scientist access to the lab. Is this something you all know about?

Let me know - If so, I have some information I can send in an email that will help them.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel. [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 7:20 PM
To: Dennis Carroll [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Thanks, Dennis, I think we need all the rooting wed can get! david

David M. Morens, MD
[b6]

b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:18 PM Dennis Carroll [b6] > wrote:

> David, you can include me as rooting for Tony, and you, and all of NIH
>
> d
>
> On Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:36 PM Keusch, Gerald T (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) (> wrote:
>
> > There's a lot of people really hoping Tony wins this one.
> >
> > Thanks for sharing.
> >
> > **From:** David Morens [b6]
> > **Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:32 PM
> > **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> > **Cc:** [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]
> > **Subject:** Re: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
> >
> > Jerry, i doubt Tony is saying go ahead and fire me, but i think he is pushing his balancing act. Probably he hopes to stay one step ahead of eliciting Trump's firing wrath. Lots of others have played that game and lost, and if Tony wins, he'll be the first. But it is probably the right strategy to adopt. D
> >
> > Sent from my iPhone
> > David M Morens
> > OD, NIAID, NIH
> >
> > On May 5, 2020, at 18:22, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:
> >
> > I'm glad to see this. But I am also concerned. Trump is showing there is no limit to his paranoia. Firing the HHS IG and preventing Tony from talking to the House but allowing him to go to the Senate is just an indicator. Is Tony now saying, in a way, go ahead and fire me because I won't take this shit any more?
> >
> > A lot of people are hoping and waiting for that. Is this pushback somewhat off the front page the strategy? Anyway, as my wife so often and so correctly tells me I have to read it before I can opine on it – whatever it happens to be.

Thanks, Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:15 PM
To: David Morens [b6]; [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]
Subject: RE: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
Importance: High

Most important of all he stated that he doesn't buy the 'accidental lab release' hypothesis either – for the first time.

He's a hero to me, my wife and to our whole family.

We have our 'Fauci Mug' to prove that (see attached image). Please show that to the great man himself if there's an opportune moment over the next few weeks.

Cc'ing Dennis and Jerry on this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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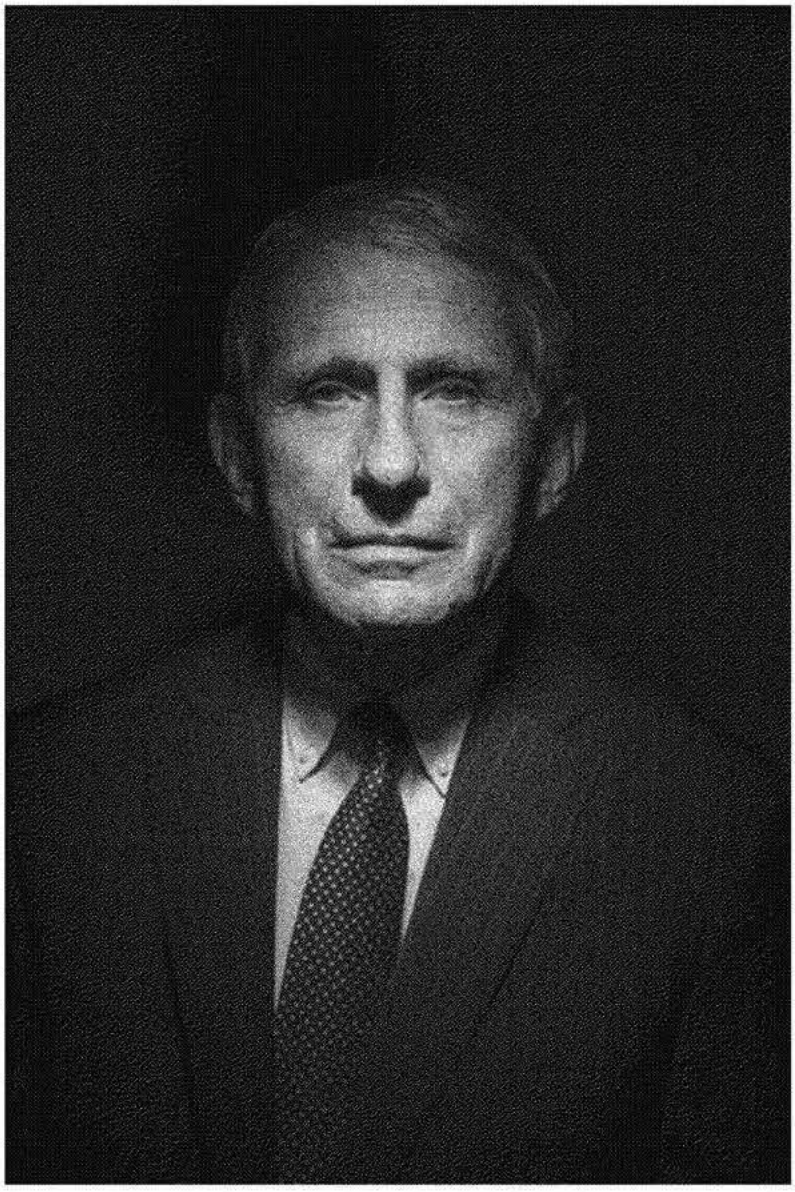
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:02 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>

Subject: Fwd: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Date:** May 4, 2020 at 20:58:15 EDT
> **Subject: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab** https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3



ScienceCoronavirus Coverage

Fauci: No scientific evidence the

coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab

In an exclusive interview, the face of America's COVID-19 response cautions against the rush for states to reopen, and offers his tips for handling the pandemic's information deluge.

Anthony Fauci has been the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for almost 40 years, where he has tackled dozens of outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS. To him, the coronavirus is "extraordinary."

By **Nsikan Akpan** and **Victoria Jaggard**

PUBLISHED May 4, 2020

Anthony "Tony" Fauci has become the scientific face of America's COVID-19 response, and he says the best evidence shows the virus behind the pandemic was not made in a lab in China. Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, shot down the discussion that has been raging among politicians and pundits, calling it "a circular argument" in a conversation Monday with National Geographic.

"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated … Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species," Fauci says. Based on the scientific evidence, he also doesn't entertain an alternate theory—that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, listens as President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 9, 2020, in Washington.

Photograph by Andrew Harnik, AP Photo

Fauci is most concerned that the United States will be put to the test this fall and winter by a second wave of COVID-19 if the country does not blunt the infection rate by the summer.

"Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter," he says, advising that the U.S. needs to make sure we not only have an adequate supply of tests available before a second wave hits, but also a system for getting those tests to the people who most need them.

"I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear," he says. "It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge." As such, Fauci says the U.S. should also focus this summer on properly reinforcing the nation's health care system, ensuring the availability of hospital beds, ventilators, and personal protective equipment for health care workers.

He also stressed the importance of continuing to social distance everywhere until the case counts start to fall in cities and states. The U.S. witnessed about 20,000 to 30,000 new cases every day in the month of April, suggesting the country is stuck in its peak.

Still, he remains optimistic that a vaccine will be ready within an historically short time frame, citing one promising candidate that he thinks may move into advanced clinical trials by the early summer. Fauci has said that he thinks a final vaccine could be available for general use as early as January, which would break records for the speed at which previous vaccines were developed.

One reason for his confidence is the "impressive" results being seen now in animals tested

with a vaccine candidate made by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna Therapeutics, which brought it into human trials in a record 42 days. The candidate is what is known as an mRNA vaccine—a drug that uses snippets of a virus's genetic material—rather than the dead or weakened virus itself—to build the proteins that trigger the body's protective immune response.

To date, no type of mRNA vaccine has been licensed for use in humans, but Fauci believes there is great promise for this technology targeting the coronavirus, based in part on his experience developing treatments for HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and '90s.

"For some reason that we're still struggling with, the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV," he says. To fight off that virus, a vaccine has to work better than the body's own natural response. By contrast, "it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response" to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the animal trials so far show that modest doses of the mRNA vaccine for coronavirus have also generated a strong immune response.

He adds that NIAID is still developing and supporting multiple vaccine efforts, in case those that go into trials soonest don't ultimately prove safe and effective. "You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time," he says.

Fauci told National Geographic he's concerned about states rushing to reopen before their infection rates fall. He also shared how he manages the barrage of new scientific information being released about COVID-19, and how his family and faith keep him going despite his increasingly hectic schedule.

(*The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.*)

Fauci on the vaccine

You've been the NIAID director since 1984, witnessing dozens of disease outbreaks. One of the first was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. How does that experience compare with COVID-19?

One of the important advantages is what we call targeted drug development. Viruses cause disease by binding to receptors on cells in your body, be they in your upper airway or in your lung, in the case of COVID-19. They then replicate at a rapid rate that triggers a variety of pathogenic processes. Targeting drugs to interfere at one or more vulnerable sites within this replication cycle is something that we learned with HIV.

Left:
U.S. President George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 19, 2008 to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland during ceremonies at the White House. The Presidential Medal of Freedom
… Read More
Photograph by Karen Bleier, AFP via Getty Images (Left) and Photograph by White House Photo / Alamy Stock Photo (Right)

SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] has the same sort of vulnerable points. We need to identify them and develop drugs, either alone or in combination, to block the replication.

Are there also lessons from HIV/AIDS that relate to developing a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are a bit different. We have a better chance of quickly getting, relatively speaking, a vaccine for the novel coronavirus than we did for HIV, because for some reason that's still unknown the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV.

We don't necessarily have that challenge with this coronavirus because it's obvious that many

people make a very adequate immune response. They clear the virus, and they do well. As we know from the natural history of this disease, the majority of people actually either get well without any symptoms—they're called asymptomatic—or they have minimal symptoms, where they get a fever, some aches, and then they recover.

The fact that the majority of people can actually clear the virus is a very good sign for the feasibility of developing a vaccine.

The two most widely discussed vaccine candidates are an mRNA vaccine from Moderna, which reached human trials in a record 42 days, and Oxford University's candidate, based on what's known as a nonreplicating viral vector. Yet no vaccine based on these two technologies has ever been licensed for human use. What makes these two vaccines seem so promising, especially on this expedited timeline?

These vaccines are inducing, at least in animal models, really rather substantial immune responses, particularly the mRNA vaccine. When we look at the immune response that you can induce with a modest dose—one that's feasible to be translated into humans—and the amount of time it takes to get to that level of immunity, it is really quite impressive. It is also really easy to scale up with these two, in the sense of making a lot of doses pretty quickly. So you're right, they have not been approved, as many of the other vaccine platforms have, but the promise is great.

We at NIAID are either developing or supporting the development of multiple candidates. You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time—maybe June, July, or August—to get them into an advanced trial. The mRNA one is already well into phase one of clinical trials, and we're getting ready to go into phase two and three sometime in the early summer.

Fauci on reopening and masks

As states move to reopen businesses and warmer weather lures people outside, how concerned are you about a fresh spike in infections in the U.S.?

Take a look at the guidelines for Opening Up America Again. There are very well delineated checkpoints. There's a gateway where infections must go down for 14 days before you can enter into phase one for reopening. If you fulfill the requirements of phase one, you move to phase two. If you do it there, you go to phase three.

So when you see somebody in an environment in which the infections are not going down, and then you see 30 to 40 people on a beach with no mask … well that's very nice to have fun in the sun, but you're really putting yourself and everyone at risk for creating an even bigger spike in infections.

Do you fear a second wave?

What's impressed me the most—but clearly in a disturbing way—is the extraordinary efficiency of how the virus spreads. It spreads so much more efficiently than influenza does. You see situations where people at home try and physically separate; they have no contact except they've touched the plate or a doorknob, and they wind up getting infected.

The clusters in families, the outbreaks on the *Teddy Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, the enormous spread on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama harbor—it's a very, very transmissible virus.

Anthony Fauci hugs Nina Pham, the nurse who was infected with Ebola from treating patient Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, as Pham's mother Diana (sixth from left) and sister Cathy … Read More Photograph by Alex Wong, Getty Images

We're going to be put to the test as we move toward the fall and winter of this year. If we do it correctly, then we could be able to blunt and diminish the daily rate of infections in this country as we get into the summer. I can't guarantee it, but if we do things right, that likely will happen.

But I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear. It's going to be

around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge. We now will have a few months—May June, July, August—to prepare, by making sure our health system is adequately supplied with ventilators, ICU beds, personal protective equipment, etcetera. We need to not only have tests, but to make sure the people who need tests can get tested.

So that by the time we get to September, we don't have the dialogue continually fixating on do you have enough tests? Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter.

What's your position on the general public wearing face masks?

I'm glad you asked, because it has evolved over the weeks and months. When there was first discussion, it was at a time when face masks—either surgical masks or N95 respirators—were at high scarcity.

Let's assume that we now have enough masks or that you could easily make a cloth covering, as was suggested appropriately by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I think those are reasonable assumptions. We know that the masks are better in the health-care setting to prevent someone who's infected from coughing and sneezing and infecting people in the environment. When you look at what the mask does for the general population, the data are not 100 percent: It doesn't 100 percent protect you from infecting somebody else, and it certainly doesn't 100 percent prevent somebody else from infecting you.

But if you wear a mask, you are getting some protection for yourself, and if you happen to be infected and don't know it, you're to some extent preventing transmission to someone else. Given that, it just makes sense that first of all, the best way to prevent spread is to maintain the physical distance of six feet.

So, if you're in a situation where you're in contact with no one, then you don't have to be walking around with a mask all day, that's for sure. But if you are in a situation where you are going to be within the realm of six feet—the grocery store or even walking out on the street—then wear it.

Fauci on the information deluge and the "virus made in Chinese lab" claim.

How do you keep up with the barrage of information and filter down to the most important science?

It's like drinking from a fire hydrant. It really is. Fortunately for me, I have a staff of three to four really good people who sift through the papers and when something looks unreasonable or "pie in the sky," they don't bother me with that. Then when all of these studies come across my desk, I read the title and the abstract. If it looks feasible, I'll put it aside and try and read it. When it's something that they think I should read, they make sure I read it.

Even with that screening process, it's still very difficult to consume everything that's out there, particularly with this relatively recent trend with these non-peer-reviewed, pre-publications [that have not gone through traditional vetting to appear in major journals].

So, what's your advice to the public at-large for sifting through the headlines and making sense of it all?

Dr. Anthony Fauci speaks with members of his laboratory during a meeting Aug. 31, 1990, where he describes a natural growth factor that is necessary for the AIDS virus to multiply.

Photograph by George Tames, The New York Times via Redux

Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about—and it's very difficult for the general public to distinguish. So, make sure the study is coming from a reputable organization that generally gives you the truth—though even with some reputable organizations, you occasionally get an outlier who's out there talking nonsense. If something is published in places like *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, or *JAMA*—you know, generally that is quite well peer reviewed because the editors and

the editorial staff of those journals really take things very seriously.

One topic in the news lately has been the origins of SAR-CoV-2. Do you believe or is there evidence that the virus was made in the lab in China or accidentally released from a lab in China?

If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats, and what's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved. A number of very qualified evolutionary biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species.

Sure, but what if scientists found the virus outside the lab, brought it back, and then it escaped?

But that means it was in the wild to begin with. That's why I don't get what they're talking about [and] why I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument.

Fauci's life right now

What's your typical day like?

I get up around five o'clock in the morning, and I usually wind up running downstairs, getting a quick breakfast, and looking at a thousand emails—literally a thousand.

I then head to the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for my day job—trying to develop a vaccine and drugs and running a $6 billion institution. I stay there until around one o'clock, and then I go down to the White House for multiple meetings. First, I meet with the doctor group—myself, coronavirus response coordinator Debbie Birx, director Bob Redfield from the CDC, commissioner Steve Hahn from FDA, and others. We then go into the task force meeting run by Vice President [Mike Pence], which usually lasts about an hour and a half. We summarize this pre-brief with the vice president and then go brief President [Donald Trump] for the press conference.

Then, the work starts … I head home or back to the NIH and work until the wee hours of the morning. The whole day is punctuated by everybody needing to talk to you: every governor in the states, every congressional leader, every leader in the White House. It's constant conference calls. It's an almost impossible situation—and that's seven days a week.

Then you superimpose upon that all the press you do—the TV or the radio or the interviews. It's kind of a surrealistic state. I have to wake up in the morning and literally, without being facetious, ask my wife, what day is it?

Wow, how do you unwind?

I power walk with my wife, usually at night or on the weekends. It's dark, but we still do it anyway.

Has it ever been too taxing?

A couple of months ago, I was foolish and just thought I could get away with almost no sleep. I mean, like three hours a night. I did that for a few weeks, and it almost killed me. It really wore me down badly. Thank goodness I have a very intelligent and clinically skilled wife who turned things around and said, You got to remember to eat, and you've got to remember to sleep. The day is still impossible, but I don't think I'm going to drop dead from it. I hope not.

You went to a Jesuit high school, where you learned the importance of doing good for the public. How has that experience informed your professional life?

My whole life was almost served to me on the basis that my mother and father were very much oriented toward service. They were never really interested in money or material things. That's just the way they were, both of them. So I never knew there was anything like going out there and making a lot of money, and that was really cemented when I went both to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, where the entire theme was service for others.

I almost never had any other inkling of doing anything except something that would have a public service component to it. I'm very much of a people person, but I'm also scientifically inclined. My entire training is steeped in the humanities, and when you combine that with an aptitude for science, you wind up being a physician.

Victoria Jaggard is the senior editor for Science & Innovation at National Geographic.

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Dr Dennis Carroll
President, Global Virome Project
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University
Counselor and Advisor to the Faculty of Tropical Medicine at Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

mobile
email: b6

Date: Tue, 12 May 2020 1:15:11 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 12 May 2020 1:15:10 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Just went out
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6];
Attachments: Letter to Secretary Azar.pdf; Untitled attachment 48605.html

Fantastic! D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 12, 2020, at 13:11, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] > wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: May 12, 2020 at 13:09:27 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >, "Aleksei Chmura [b6]" [b6] >, "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
Subject: FW: Just went out

Mary Woolley has followed up on my request to make a statement. She has used the 60 Minutes program very effectively.

Jerry

From: Mary Woolley [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 1:04 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Just went out

Hi Jerry – the impact of the 60 Minutes report provided some additional impetus on the topic du jour. See our letter, attached.

Be safe and well,

Mary

Date: Mon, 4 May 2020 6:04:22 AM -0400

Sent: Mon, 4 May 2020 6:04:16 AM -0400

Subject: RE: Summary of evidence that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China

From: Daniel Bausch [b6]

To: David Morens [b6]; Joel Breman [b6]; Karen Goraleski [b6]; Chandy C John [b6] Julie Jacobson [b6];

Thanks David. Good to have Peter onboard. I'm sure one way or another we'll work him into the program for Toronto, be it in person or remotely.

Enjoy the wine,
D.

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: 04 May 2020 01:21
To: Joel Breman [b6]; Karen Goraleski [b6]; Daniel Bausch [b6]; Chandy C John [b6] Julie Jacobson [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Summary of evidence that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China

colleagues, attached an email from our Charlie Calisher (ACAV) to Peter Daszak

Also, just talked to Peter D at length and he says he is joining astmh, asap. I had promised him that if he did, I'd pay his first year's dues, but he says absolutely not, He won't accept it and on top will bring me as a gift his prize bottle of cabernet sauvignon.

Who says it isn't great to be a scientist????? David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
> **Date:** May 3, 2020 at 20:13:17 EDT
> **To:** David Morens [b6]
> **Subject: Fwd: Summary of evidence that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** Peter Daszak [b6]
> > **Date:** May 3, 2020 at 19:48:13 EDT
> > **To:** [b6], "Ksiazek, Thomas (Galveston National Labortory-UT)" [b6], "Tesh, Robert B." [b6], Tom Monath < [b6], Kevin Olival [b6], "Rovnak,Joel" < "Quackenbush,Sandra" [b6], Jeff Wilusz < [b6]
> > **Cc:** Shelley [b6], Dan Calisher [b6], Sarah Haworth < [b6] Yanrong Lu [b6], "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID)"
> > **Subject: RE: Summary of evidence that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China**
> >
> > Thanks Charlie – appreciate you sending that round. I've seen this, read it in detail and every single point they make can be easily countered.

I can assure everyone on this email chain, as someone who has worked with this lab for 15 yrs on bat-CoVs, that there is no evidence whatsoever to support these allegations – at the most basic they simply didn't have isolates of any virus anywhere close to SARS-CoV-2.

On the other hand, we've amassed substantial evidence of bat-CoVs able to infect human cells, to cause SARS-like disease in humanized mice, and of people exposed to bat-CoVs in rural China. Extrapolating the ~3% IgG prevalence we found in Yunnan communities to the rural populations in SE Asia where these bats live, we estimate 1-7 million people per year get exposed to bat CoVs just living and working in rural SE Asia. That's where we need to focus, in my opinion.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: b6
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Tom Ksiazek b6 'Tesh, Robert B. b6 ; Peter Daszak < b6 >; Tom Monath b6 >; Kevin Olival < b6 ; 'Rovnak,Joel' b6 ; 'Quackenbush,Sandra' < b6 ; Jeff Wilusz b6
Cc: Shelley b6 >; 'Dan Calisher' b6 >; 'Sarah Haworth' < b6 ; 'Yanrong Lu' b6 >; 'David Morens' <
Subject: FW: Summary of evidence that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China

From a friend outside the USA.

No useful comment from me but just FYI.

Charlie

Forward to a friend | View it in your browser

Summary of evidence that

Researchers draw attention to hazards posed by biosafety labs and "gain-of-function" research

SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China

An excellent summary of evidence suggesting the virus responsible for the COVID19 pandemic may have originated in laboratory in Wuhan, China, has been published by “an anonymous group of researchers” who claim not to be “affiliated with any company, nation state, or organization”.

The document focuses on evidence implicating two potential culprits: the Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV). Both are known to have been working on bat coronaviruses that are closely related to SARS-CoV-2.

The authors write, "The goal of this document is to examine evidence that may prove that (1) the SARS-CoV-2 virus was present at a biolaboratory in Wuhan, China, and (2) the SARS-CoV-2 virus was introduced into the greater Wuhan population by an infected lab worker or animal. These claims from this point on will be referred to as Claim 1 and Claim 2.

"This document does not attempt to provide a concrete conclusion on whether either claim is factually true. Rather, it examines the probability that each claim is true to allow the reader to make his or her own conclusions. While either claim cannot be irrevocably proven true, an attempt has been made to ensure the evidence used to support these claims is as factual as possible."

The authors do not state or imply that the virus was deliberately engineered as a bioweapon or released as one. They are also keen to distance themselves from the anti-Chinese sentiment that is being whipped up in some sectors of the media around the lab escape hypothesis, calling this trend "racist".

The document does, however, present convincing evidence that the virus could have been the product of laboratory "gain-of-function" studies.

Gain-of-function studies are intended to make pathogenic viruses more virulent or more transmissible. They are often carried out for vaccine or therapeutics development, or for "biodefence" reasons. The authors state that one of their aims is "to further spread global awareness of the hazards posed by biolaboratories, in particular gain-of-function studies, and proximal location to urban areas".

These types of studies have been coming in for increasing criticism from scientists and others for several years, due to their ability to result in pathogen escapes.

The new document is extensively sourced and professionally written in a way that makes it easy for the layperson to understand the arguments. It clearly forms part of an ongoing investigation, as the authors periodically post notices of evidence gaps and ask for readers to contribute further evidence.

We are publishing the Conclusion to the new document below because it summarizes the arguments well – but do read the full document at the original URL to see all the evidence and sources cited.

Evidence SARS-CoV-2 emerged from a biological laboratory in Wuhan, China

Published April 16, 2020; Updated May 2, 2020
https://project-evidence.github.io/

Conclusion

Up until this point, we have been presenting each of our claims in a vacuum. Let us put them together:

At some point in late 2019, many people who visited the The Huanan Seafood Market fell ill due to a new disease. To date the origin of this disease is unknown.

This market is less than 9 miles away from The Wuhan Institute of Virology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, which:
* Collaborated with French authorities to construct its BSL-4 lab, however the company meant to inspect its safety standards bailed out of the project and French scientists who were supposed to work there were never sent there
* Developed chimeric SARS-like coronaviruses
* Conducted 'dangerous' gain-of-function research on the SARS-CoV-1 virus
* Established a 96.2% match with SARS-CoV-2 and a virus they sampled from a cave over 1,000 miles away from Wuhan
* Injected live piglets with bat coronaviruses as recently as July 2019: Paper 5, Paper 7, Paper 8
* Tested its disinfecting procedures with a bat coronavirus
* Published a paper on a close descendant of SARS-CoV-1, MERS-CoV, in November 2019
* Collected bat samples with improper PPE even after a researcher was bitten by one

* Was hiring researchers to work on bat coronaviruses as recently as November 2019
* The United States State Department claimed had 'inadequate safety'
* Deleted a press release detailing a U.S. State Department visit
* Has not provided concrete evidence that one of their prior researchers is still alive, despite rumors on Chinese social media that they are "Patient Zero", despite one of their other top researchers coming out and swearing the virus had nothing to do with her lab
* Had a researcher accuse the director of the Institute of selling infected lab animals to vendors on Weibo (with pictures of herself and her employee ID included); afterwards, she claimed she was 'hacked'
* Had staff trained by a Chinese-Canadian scientist at Canada's only BSL-4 lab who has now been under RCMP investigation for nearly a year following a shipment of Ebola and Henipahvirus from that lab to a lab in China

The market is also less than 3 miles away from the Wuhan Centre for Disease Control, which:
* Was actually already accused of being the source of the outbreak from a now-withdrawn academic paper from a notable Chinese scholar at the South China University of China
* Once kept horseshoe bats, a known reservoir of SARS-CoV-1, within its labs
* Once performed surgery on live animals within its labs
* Had a researcher who quarantined on two separate occasions; once upon coming into contact with bat blood after being 'attacked' and another time when he was urinated upon in a cave while wearing inadequate personal protection

Let us also look at the actions of China before and after the outbreak, which:
* Had the SARS-CoV-1 virus escape from a lab in Beijing, twice
* Compensated families after 27 students were infected with Brucella bacteria during an anatomy course in 2011
* Is currently investigating a similar Brucella outbreak amongst "over 100 Students and Staff" in December 2019
* Issued bio-safety guidelines to 'fix chronic management loopholes at virus labs'
* Arrested a 'top academician' for illegally selling lab animals and 'experimental milk' in January 2020
* Censored local medical professionals who attempted to report the outbreak
* Ordered local labs to destroy any samples of the new virus
* Withheld the virus's genome nearly a week after they sequenced it
* Continually insisted on no human-to-human transmission
* Launched the largest national quarantine in human history once containment failed
* Issued an order preventing the unauthorized publishing of any academic material related to SARS-CoV-2

* Allowed a Party spokesperson to accuse the United States Army of intentionally bringing SARS-CoV-2 to Wuhan
* Is continuing to refuse an independent investigation into the outbreak origins and threatened Australia with boycotts if they investigated

Also in January 2020, the United States Department of Justice arrested two Chinese nationals and the Chair of the "Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Harvard University" for allegedly receiving illegal payments from China, "acting as an agent of a foreign government," and "attempting to smuggle 21 vials of biological research to China."

Back to the market: the The Huanan Seafood Market didn't even have bats for sale, and most bats species in Wuhan would be hibernating at the time of outbreak. It was reported that 34% of cases had no contact with the market, and 'No epidemiological link was found between the first patient and later cases'.

If an infected animal was indeed the culprit, why did it fail to infect a single person outside of the market? It could not have been infected at the market, because there were no bats that could serve as sources of infection. So, where were all the infected people outside of Wuhan by the time SARS-CoV-2 started spreading in the market?

We hope that this document adequately addressed each claim with what evidence is available and fulfilled its secondary responsibility of educating you on biolaboratory safety. By now, we hope you understand that these claims are not impossible; they are in fact more than likely.

We may never be certain of the truth. What we are certain of, however, is that these claims shouldn't be discounted, and far more research must be done to disprove either one.

Our work as a global community must continue.

Website: http://www.gmwatch.org
Profiles: http://www.powerbase.info/index.php/GM_Watch:_Portal
Twitter: http://twitter.com/GMWatch
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pages/GMWatch/276951472985?ref=nf

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****

Date: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 4:08:55 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 4:00:04 PM -0400
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszal [b6];
CC: [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Attachments: NIAID-COVID-19-Strategic-Plan-2020.pdf; Untitled attachment 07338.htm; NIAID CoV 2018 R01 renewal text final.docx; Untitled attachment 07341.htm

Peter, thanks for this. I am glad you got a copy of the Strategic plan which does as you say completely contradict the Lauer letter, which was just a careless hatchet job.

Even while remaining silent you should be clearly documenting these things for potential future use, in your own defense, and for history.

Tony is now fully aware I think and is I am told involved in some sort of damage control, but again I am not in the loop. He just called a few minutes ago about another corona matter, and did not bring it up. I thought it best not to say anything at this point either.

I have some reason to hope that this situation can be resolved with minimal damage, but then, I am always accused of being an optimist. Stay safe and order a few cases of Negro Modelos....

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 26, 2020, at 15:23, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Thank you so much for your help David & Jerry. This is a brutally stressful issue on just about every level: jobs in our organization, freedom to do science in a country I came to voluntarily for that reason, and the real and present danger that we are being targeted by extremists, supported by the President, who is shockingly ignorant and unconcerned about the damage his actions have to people's lives, and our own US National Security.

David - We'll communicate with you via gmail from now on. I understand exactly what you're saying in your email, I agree, and we'll follow this line exactly. I'll be talking with Emily, Erik and Cristina early this week, then will try to set up a call with Michael Lauer hopefully as a conf. call. We haven't responded to NIH's email yet, and will only do so after talking with Program staff and getting back to you both. We are working on a brief outline of a compromise approach, whereby we change the geography of our work to include countries on the border of China, where the same bats live and the same behavioral risks happen (Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam). Even that would be a loss – we have 15,000 samples in freezers in Wuhan and could do the full genomes of 700+ CoVs we've identified if we don't cut this thread.

On the issue of why our grant has been targeted. We read the NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research (attached) and noted that **Michael Lauer's justification for terminating our grant "At this time, NIH does not believe that the current project outcomes align with the program goals and agency priorities." Is completely countered by ALL 4 of NIAID's COVID-19 strategy (page 2 of the attached pdf):**

The *NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research* aligns with the priorities set by U.S. Government–wide task forces for the development of medical countermeasures. NIAID actively participates in COVID-19 task forces to identify opportunities, ensure open communication, encourage resource sharing, and avoid duplication of effort. The plan is structured around four strategic research priorities:

1. **Improve fundamental knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19,** including studies to characterize the virus

and how it is transmitted and understand the natural history, epidemiology, host immunity, disease immunopathogenesis, and the genetic, immunologic, and clinical associations with more severe disease outcomes. This includes accelerating the development of small and large animal models that replicate human disease.

2. **Support the development of diagnostics and assays**, including point-of-care molecular and antigen-based diagnostics for identifying and isolating COVID-19 cases and serologic assays to better understand disease prevalence in the population. Diagnostics also will be essential for evaluating the effectiveness of candidate countermeasures.

3. **Characterize and test therapeutics,** including identifying and evaluating repurposed drugs and novel broad-spectrum antivirals, virus-targeted antibody-based therapies (including plasma-derived intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) and monoclonal antibodies), and host-directed strategies to combat COVID-19.

4. **Develop safe and effective vaccines against SARS-CoV-2**, including support of clinical trial testing.

Each of these points are clearly part of the Specific Aims of our grant (attached to this email).

Re. media –Journalists are lined up wanting to talk with me about this issue, including already asking if NIH have communicated with me. I will be silent on this issue for now and hope something can happen. Likewise re. our political representatives. I'll contact them only if/when we can't resolve anything this way. I'll also be talking to our pro bono law firm who will start lining up a legal argument against termination of this grant, just in case we can't do anything in a decent way. All the time this goes on, I'm really worried about our EIDRC U01 contract that it in final Just in Time issues right now, so I'm hoping we get an NoA before anything turns ugly.

One last comment – as you talk to your colleagues, please let them know that funds from this grant aren't just shipped over to China. Most of the money stays in the USA and funds work at EHA and UNC critical to identifying future risk of pandemics and vaccine and drug development against coronaviruses. Right now, without this funding, US employees will become unemployed. Of course, that pales into insignificance against the potential loss of life if we consider the health benefits of 1) better prediction of future pandemics; 2) better vaccines & therapeutics that work against these viruses; & 3) continued access to 15 yrs of sample collection, data, and collaborative knowledge from our work with our Chinese colleagues.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens b6>
Sent: Sunday, April 26, 2020 11:47 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6>; b6
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Jerry and Peter,

This is sent from my gmail account. Please send all replies here To gmail

I have let Tony know but have not spoken to him directly. There are things I can't say except Tony is aware and I have learned that there are ongoing efforts within NIH to steer through this with minimal damage to you, Peter, and colleagues, and to nih and niaid. No guarantees, but let us hope. I imagine this will be handled at the level of Francis and Tony, within nih, and I don't expect to be in the loop.

I don't have any insight into what happened or how it happened, but the fact that your termination letter came from "Building 1", that is, the NIH directors office, and not from NIAID, is telling

Whatever is going on, I very much doubt that Tony or any of our niaid leadership would willfully throw you under the bus, or any grantee, for that matter. Indeed, I expect we would do everything possible to protect you. I have reason to believe that there are already efforts going on to protect you

What I said on the phone last night stands. I urge you to meet asap with this guy Lauer and with Eric and Emily. Lauer may well decline to meet with you, but I think you should press him. You have a right to demand a face to face explanation for such an unprecedented action. If your grant is from DMID Virology you may also want to meet with Virology Branch Chief Mark Challberg, and of course with Cristina, who is Emily's deputy and a respiratory virologist. These DMID folks will be your advocates. If any part of the grant goes through Columbia, or UNC (isn't that where Ralph is?), or any University, they may be able to apply pressure too.

If you can get down here, these meetings should be in person, although of course many nih folks are working from home, so that may not be possible.

In the meantime I would NOT go to the press. The first step is to find out in detail what happened and what your rights are. But I would line up advocates, as I suggested and Jerry as well. The press may find out about this in any case, but I think if so it is better to let friends defend you than for you to fight on your own. At least for now. Of course, however this plays out in the short term, it will end up in the public domain and the truth will come out. So hold on to that certainty, small comfort now, I know

Finally, I am so sorry you and your colleagues are going through this. You don't deserve it; if anything you deserve a medal. Please hang in there and press ahead firmly but collegiality

As a coda, Tony knows about your work. Sometime around 1 Feb I sent him an email outlining your work over recent years, and why it was so important to science. This was mostly because I anticipated new money, but also in the back of my mind was the possibility that something really dark like this could happen

Again, whatever role NIH might be playing in these events, I truly expect that we will be doing what is possible to protect you and your research over the long haul

I think I need another Scotch, and it's only 1145 am
David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 26, 2020, at 06:43, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6

Date: April 25, 2020 at 22:03:15 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>, "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <[b6]>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thanks Peter,

I know Dave Morens – everybody knows Dave Morens. I had another thought about this and it would be to alert Victor Dzau who works very closely with Tony, of course, and even though I consider myself a friend as well as a colleague I think Victor would have a pretty direct route to Tony. It is an issue the National Academies should be interested in, and have some traction. We need to get Peggy Hamburg involved to bring AAAS on board. It is like the Bush administration attempts to control NIH but on steroids. Anyone but an idiot would understand why it is essential to maintain our scientific connections with China so that we can engage with them to figure out what happened. What the Trump idiots are doing is totally and absolutely counterproductive. I do think – as we discussed yesterday – that for the moment keeping cool is the best strategy. But influential people need to know and its probably better if you are not directly involved.

I watched the session on COVID-19 this afternoon for the Academies meeting via Zoom or some platform. Tony, Jeremy, George Gao, Sanjay Gupta, Susan Weiss, and Richard Hatchett, All of the questions about the emergence and the reservoir or spillover host for which there is no information are the strengths of your programs and your collaborations. How absolutely stupid to close those off, but how absolutely unacceptable it is from the perspective of the separation of politics and science in a free society. That Francis would allow it is hard to believe. That Tony would allow it is even harder to believe – and for that reason I expect it is at levels below him and he is too busy at the moment trying to keep focused on rational decision making while the idiot in chief tells us to swallow a UV-C lamp or shove it up out butt – I can tell you whose butt I would shove it – and for good measure have a Chloroxitini or just do a total cleansing with H2O2 (the rationale would be if H2O is good for us wouldn't H2O2 be better, after all it would have another one of those O's whatever they are.

Dave, get in touch so we might strategize, and for certain reasons keep Peter out of the loop.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; David Morens [b6] <[b6]>

Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry – great to read this – thanks for your support.

I also spoke with David Morens today who was equally shocked and said this has never happened. He also said there are influential people who would come to our defense at the right moment. In the meantime, he's going to talk with Greg Folkers (Chief of Staff for Tony Fauci) to find out if Tony knows, and why it happened. He's then going to let Tony know. I think you and him are on the same page in that you're both right that this is a clear political interference in NIH business. Trump said at his press briefing Friday 17th that he would 'end' the grant, and one week later I got the termination notice from NIH.

In the meantime, we're working on a short draft of how we could have easily changed the geography to the countries adjacent to China, as we proposed to Erik Stemmy and Emily Erbelding. We'll be talking with them next week early to try and find out why this happened. We won't respond to the termination notice (Michael Lauer) until we've found out more.

FYI – re. the FoIA - I'm contacting the FBI to talk about the risk of our FoIA and how I've been threatened by QANON related to this and our Chinese colleagues have had their lives threatened.

I'm not going to talk to the media about this, not our representatives, until I've tried all possible ways with NIAID/NIH to change the decision from a cancelation. I'm also very concerned that Trump could target our organization or me personally, leading to our EIDRC being nixed and we don't even have an NoA on that, so it could quietly disappear.

I'll get back in touch with you once I've found out more from Erik Stemmy, Emily Erbelding and Cristina Cassetti.

In the meantime is it OK if I email introduce you and David so you could possibly coordinate in some way, or at least stay in touch? Right now I'm feeling particularly vulnerable – the power of the President is pointed at us, the CIA, FBI and someone from Medical Defense Intelligence (or something) are interviewing staff, QAnon are threatening me, and our colleagues in China have death threats against them. That's just this week! Having you out there talking with others at this level is extremely important right now.

By the way, here's a list of our Board: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/board- of-directors

It includes two people you know – Jim Hughes (former head of NCID/CDC, Rear Admiral Public Health Service Rtd, Asst. Surgeon General Rtd) and Rita Colwell (Former Head of NSF under 3 presidents: Clinton, Bush sr, Bush Jr – I think). I'll be talking with Jim Hughes tomorrow or Monday and Rita Colwell on our Baord meeting Friday.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001

USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Hi Peter and Aleksei,

I want to change my recommendation from earlier this evening. Put the really good Cabernet aside and drink the disinfectant instead. This is an afront to science, after the language in the first letter and your response to comply. It must be challenged. The question is not only how but also when – certainly not before the EIDRC funding comes through. And then in a smart manner. I want to chat again next week – I need the weekend off having just finished the draft report on the R&D preparedness ecosystem for NAM working with Nicki Lurie. There are some smart and very influential people I can talk to - and keep you out of the conversation – when we agree it makes sense. I mentioned Maria Freire from FNIH and Mary Woolley from Research!America. I also thought about Harold Varmus and former Representative John Porter who was a great supporter of NIH (made the doubling happen) and CDC even though he is a Republican. But I too will do nothing for a few days.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: FW: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10001
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6 ; Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email: b6

From: Aleksei Chmura < b6 >
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 >, "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6 >, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6 >
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &
Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6, Aleksei Chmura < b6, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < b6
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records
2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as

quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.
Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Olival b6; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.
- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.
- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.

- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6 b6 b6
Email: b6

From: Kevin Olival <b6
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6 , "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" <
b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak (
b6) who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.
2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,
Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics *and* promote conservation

> On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:
>
> Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received. The sooner you can get us that information, the better.

Best, Mike

From: Naomi Schrag [b6]
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6] [b6] g "[b6] Naomi Schrag [b6] >
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6]
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,
I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.
Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E [b6]
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To [b6] Naomi Schrag [b6]
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone
Email: b6

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

Date:	Tue, 5 May 2020 6:22:35 PM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 5 May 2020 6:22:33 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
From:	"Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6]>; [b6]
CC:	Peter Daszak [b6]>;
Attachments:	image002.jpg; image004.png

I'm glad to see this. But I am also concerned. Trump is showing there is no limit to his paranoia. Firing the HHS IG and preventing Tony from talking to the House but allowing him to go to the Senate is just an indicator. Is Tony now saying, in a way, go ahead and fire me because I won't take this shit any more?

A lot of people are hoping and waiting for that. Is this pushback somewhat off the front page the strategy? Anyway, as my wife so often and so correctly tells me I have to read it before I can opine on it – whatever it happens to be.

Thanks, Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:15 PM
To: David Morens [b6]>; [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3
Importance: High

Most important of all he stated that he doesn't buy the 'accidental lab release' hypothesis either – for the first time.

He's a hero to me, my wife and to our whole family.

We have our 'Fauci Mug' to prove that (see attached image). Please show that to the great man himself if there's an opportune moment over the next few weeks.

Cc'ing Dennis and Jerry on this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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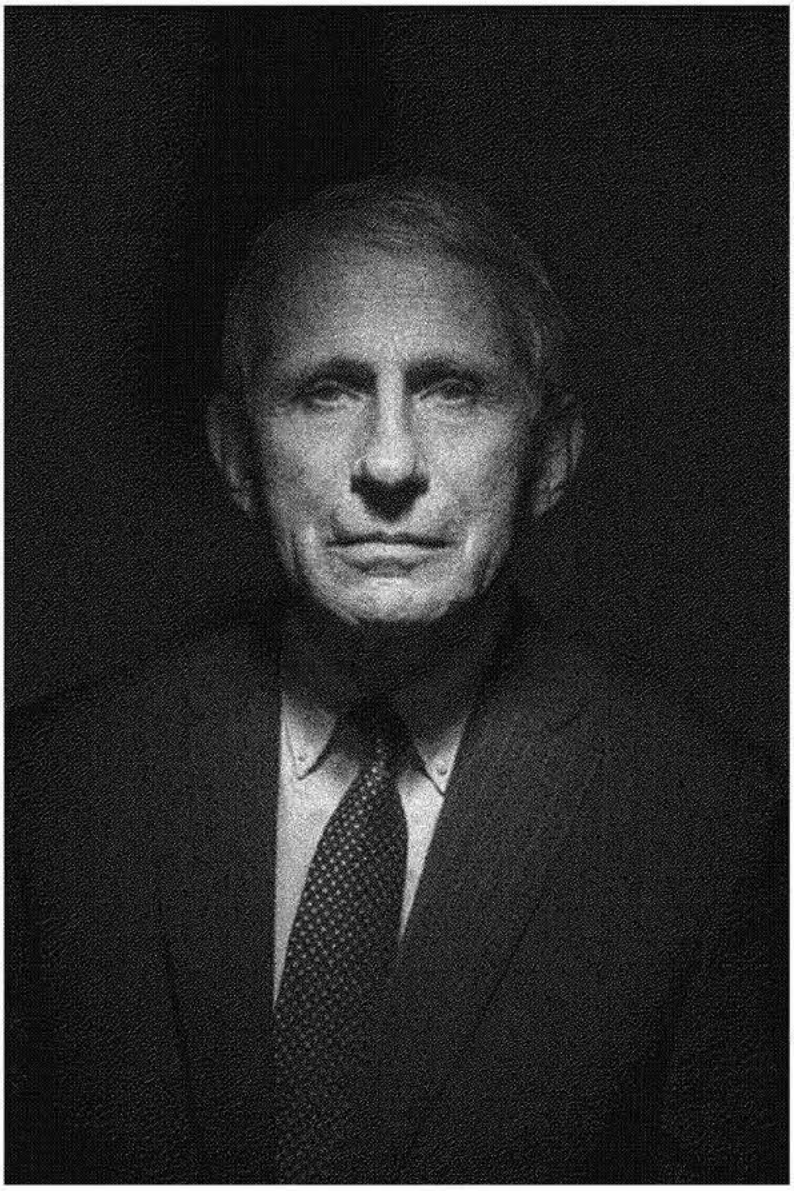
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 6:02 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Fwd: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab
https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Date:** May 4, 2020 at 20:58:15 EDT
> **Subject: Nat Geo: Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab**
> **https://on.natgeo.com/2yvKuY3**



ScienceCoronavirus Coverage

Fauci: No scientific evidence the coronavirus was made in a Chinese lab

In an exclusive interview, the face of America's COVID-19 response cautions against the rush for states to reopen, and offers his tips for handling the pandemic's information deluge.

Anthony Fauci has been the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for almost 40 years, where he has tackled dozens of outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS. To him, the coronavirus is "extraordinary."

By **Nsikan Akpan** and Victoria Jaggard

PUBLISHED May 4, 2020

Anthony "Tony" Fauci has become the scientific face of America's COVID-19 response, and he says the best evidence shows the virus behind the pandemic was not made in a lab in China.

Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, shot down the discussion that has

been raging among politicians and pundits, calling it "a circular argument" in a conversation Monday with National Geographic.

"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated … Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species," Fauci says. Based on the scientific evidence, he also doesn't entertain an alternate theory—that someone found the coronavirus in the wild, brought it to a lab, and then it accidentally escaped.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, listens as President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 9, 2020, in Washington.

Photograph by Andrew Harnik, AP Photo

Fauci is most concerned that the United States will be put to the test this fall and winter by a second wave of COVID-19 if the country does not blunt the infection rate by the summer.

"Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter," he says, advising that the U.S. needs to make sure we not only have an adequate supply of tests available before a second wave hits, but also a system for getting those tests to the people who most need them.

"I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear," he says. "It's going to be around, and if given the opportunity, it will resurge." As such, Fauci says the U.S. should also focus this summer on properly reinforcing the nation's health care system, ensuring the availability of hospital beds, ventilators, and personal protective equipment for health care workers.

He also stressed the importance of continuing to social distance everywhere until the case counts start to fall in cities and states. The U.S. witnessed about 20,000 to 30,000 new cases every day in the month of April, suggesting the country is stuck in its peak.

Still, he remains optimistic that a vaccine will be ready within an historically short time frame, citing one promising candidate that he thinks may move into advanced clinical trials by the early summer. Fauci has said that he thinks a final vaccine could be available for general use as early as January, which would break records for the speed at which previous vaccines were developed.

One reason for his confidence is the "impressive" results being seen now in animals tested with a vaccine candidate made by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna Therapeutics, which brought it into human trials in a record 42 days. The candidate is what is known as an mRNA vaccine—a drug that uses snippets of a virus's genetic material—rather than the dead or weakened virus itself—to build the proteins that trigger the body's protective immune response.

To date, no type of mRNA vaccine has been licensed for use in humans, but Fauci believes there is great promise for this technology targeting the coronavirus, based in part on his experience developing treatments for HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and '90s.

"For some reason that we're still struggling with, the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV," he says. To fight off that virus, a vaccine has to work better than the body's own natural response. By contrast, "it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response" to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the animal trials so far show that modest doses of the mRNA vaccine for coronavirus have also generated a strong immune response.

He adds that NIAID is still developing and supporting multiple vaccine efforts, in case those that go into trials soonest don't ultimately prove safe and effective. "You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time," he says.

Fauci told National Geographic he's concerned about states rushing to reopen before their infection rates fall. He also shared how he manages the barrage of new scientific information being released about COVID-19, and how his family and faith keep him going despite his increasingly hectic schedule.

(*The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.*)

Fauci on the vaccine

You've been the NIAID director since 1984, witnessing dozens of disease outbreaks. One of the first was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. How does that experience compare with COVID-19?

One of the important advantages is what we call targeted drug development. Viruses cause disease by binding to receptors on cells in your body, be they in your upper airway or in your lung, in the case of COVID-19. They then replicate at a rapid rate that triggers a variety of pathogenic processes. Targeting drugs to interfere at one or more vulnerable sites within this replication cycle is something that we learned with HIV.

Left:
U.S. President George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 19, 2008 to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland during ceremonies at the White House. The Presidential Medal of Freedom
… Read More
Photograph by Karen Bleier, AFP via Getty Images (Left) and Photograph by White House Photo / Alamy Stock Photo (Right)

SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] has the same sort of vulnerable points. We need to identify them and develop drugs, either alone or in combination, to block the replication.

Are there also lessons from HIV/AIDS that relate to developing a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are a bit different. We have a better chance of quickly getting, relatively speaking, a vaccine for the novel coronavirus than we did for HIV, because for some reason that's still unknown the body does not make an adequate immune response to HIV.

We don't necessarily have that challenge with this coronavirus because it's obvious that many people make a very adequate immune response. They clear the virus, and they do well. As we know from the natural history of this disease, the majority of people actually either get well without any symptoms—they're called asymptomatic—or they have minimal symptoms, where they get a fever, some aches, and then they recover.

The fact that the majority of people can actually clear the virus is a very good sign for the feasibility of developing a vaccine.

The two most widely discussed vaccine candidates are an mRNA vaccine from Moderna, which reached human trials in a record 42 days, and Oxford University's candidate, based on what's known as a nonreplicating viral vector. Yet no vaccine based on these two technologies has ever been licensed for human use. What makes these two vaccines seem so promising, especially on this expedited timeline?

These vaccines are inducing, at least in animal models, really rather substantial immune responses, particularly the mRNA vaccine. When we look at the immune response that you can induce with a modest dose—one that's feasible to be translated into humans—and the amount of time it takes to get to that level of immunity, it is really quite impressive. It is also really easy to scale up with these two, in the sense of making a lot of doses pretty quickly. So you're right, they have not been approved, as many of the other vaccine platforms have, but the promise is great.

We at NIAID are either developing or supporting the development of multiple candidates. You want a lot of shots on goal. We want four or five candidates that we put out there all within a reasonable time—maybe June, July, or August—to get them into an advanced trial. The mRNA one is already well into phase one of clinical trials, and we're getting ready to go into phase two and three sometime in the early summer.

Fauci on reopening and masks

As states move to reopen businesses and warmer weather lures people outside, how concerned are you about a fresh spike in infections in the U.S.?

Take a look at the guidelines for Opening Up America Again. There are very well delineated checkpoints. There's a gateway where infections must go down for 14 days before you can enter into phase one for reopening. If you fulfill the requirements of phase one, you move to phase two. If you do it there, you go to phase three.

So when you see somebody in an environment in which the infections are not going down, and then you see 30 to 40 people on a beach with no mask … well that's very nice to have fun in the sun, but you're really putting yourself and everyone at risk for creating an even bigger spike in infections.

Do you fear a second wave?

What's impressed me the most—but clearly in a disturbing way—is the extraordinary efficiency of how the virus spreads. It spreads so much more efficiently than influenza does. You see situations where people at home try and physically separate; they have no contact except they've touched the plate or a doorknob, and they wind up getting infected.

The clusters in families, the outbreaks on the *Teddy Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, the enormous spread on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama harbor—it's a very, very transmissible virus.

Anthony Fauci hugs Nina Pham, the nurse who was infected with Ebola from treating patient Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas, as Pham's mother Diana (sixth from left) and sister Cathy
… Read More Photograph by Alex Wong, Getty Images

We're going to be put to the test as we move toward the fall and winter of this year. If we do it correctly, then we could be able to blunt and diminish the daily rate of infections in this country as we get into the summer. I can't guarantee it, but if we do things right, that likely will happen.

But I don't think there's a chance that this virus is just going to disappear. It's going to be around, and if given the

opportunity, it will resurge. We now will have a few months—May June, July, August—to prepare, by making sure our health system is adequately supplied with ventilators, ICU beds, personal protective equipment, etcetera. We need to not only have tests, but to make sure the people who need tests can get tested.

So that by the time we get to September, we don't have the dialogue continually fixating on do you have enough tests? Shame on us if we don't have enough tests by the time this so-called return might occur in the fall and winter.

What's your position on the general public wearing face masks?

I'm glad you asked, because it has evolved over the weeks and months. When there was first discussion, it was at a time when face masks—either surgical masks or N95 respirators—were at high scarcity.

Let's assume that we now have enough masks or that you could easily make a cloth covering, as was suggested appropriately by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I think those are reasonable assumptions. We know that the masks are better in the health-care setting to prevent someone who's infected from coughing and sneezing and infecting people in the environment. When you look at what the mask does for the general population, the data are not 100 percent: It doesn't 100 percent protect you from infecting somebody else, and it certainly doesn't 100 percent prevent somebody else from infecting you.

But if you wear a mask, you are getting some protection for yourself, and if you happen to be infected and don't know it, you're to some extent preventing transmission to someone else. Given that, it just makes sense that first of all, the best way to prevent spread is to maintain the physical distance of six feet.

So, if you're in a situation where you're in contact with no one, then you don't have to be walking around with a mask all day, that's for sure. But if you are in a situation where you are going to be within the realm of six feet—the grocery store or even walking out on the street—then wear it.

Fauci on the information deluge and the "virus made in Chinese lab" claim.

How do you keep up with the barrage of information and filter down to the most important science?

It's like drinking from a fire hydrant. It really is. Fortunately for me, I have a staff of three to four really good people who sift through the papers and when something looks unreasonable or "pie in the sky," they don't bother me with that. Then when all of these studies come across my desk, I read the title and the abstract. If it looks feasible, I'll put it aside and try and read it. When it's something that they think I should read, they make sure I read it.

Even with that screening process, it's still very difficult to consume everything that's out there, particularly with this relatively recent trend with these non-peer-reviewed, pre-publications [that have not gone through traditional vetting to appear in major journals].

So, what's your advice to the public at-large for sifting through the headlines and making sense of it all?

Dr. Anthony Fauci speaks with members of his laboratory during a meeting Aug. 31, 1990, where he describes a natural growth factor that is necessary for the AIDS virus to multiply.

Photograph by George Tames, The New York Times via Redux

Anybody can claim to be an expert even when they have no idea what they're talking about—and it's very difficult for the general public to distinguish. So, make sure the study is coming from a reputable organization that generally gives you the truth—though even with some reputable organizations, you occasionally get an outlier who's out there talking nonsense. If something is published in places like *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, or *JAMA*—you know, generally that is quite well peer reviewed because the editors and the editorial staff of those journals really take things very seriously.

One topic in the news lately has been the origins of SAR-CoV-2. Do you believe or is there evidence that the virus was made in the lab in China or accidentally released from a lab in China?

If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats, and what's out there now is very, very strongly leaning toward this [virus] could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated—the way the mutations have naturally evolved. A number of very qualified evolutionary biologists have said that everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that it evolved in nature and then jumped species.

Sure, but what if scientists found the virus outside the lab, brought it back, and then it escaped?

But that means it was in the wild to begin with. That's why I don't get what they're talking about [and] why I don't spend a lot of time going in on this circular argument.

Fauci's life right now

What's your typical day like?

I get up around five o'clock in the morning, and I usually wind up running downstairs, getting a quick breakfast, and looking at a thousand emails—literally a thousand.

I then head to the NIH [National Institutes of Health] for my day job—trying to develop a vaccine and drugs and running a $6 billion institution. I stay there until around one o'clock, and then I go down to the White House for multiple meetings.

First, I meet with the doctor group—myself, coronavirus response coordinator Debbie Birx, director Bob Redfield from the CDC, commissioner Steve Hahn from FDA, and others. We then go into the task force meeting run by Vice President [Mike Pence], which usually lasts about an hour and a half. We summarize this pre-brief with the vice president and then go brief President [Donald Trump] for the press conference.

Then, the work starts … I head home or back to the NIH and work until the wee hours of the morning. The whole day is punctuated by everybody needing to talk to you: every governor in the states, every congressional leader, every leader in the White House. It's constant conference calls. It's an almost impossible situation—and that's seven days a week.

Then you superimpose upon that all the press you do—the TV or the radio or the interviews. It's kind of a surrealistic state. I have to wake up in the morning and literally, without being facetious, ask my wife, what day is it?

Wow, how do you unwind?

I power walk with my wife, usually at night or on the weekends. It's dark, but we still do it anyway.

Has it ever been too taxing?

A couple of months ago, I was foolish and just thought I could get away with almost no sleep. I mean, like three hours a night. I did that for a few weeks, and it almost killed me. It really wore me down badly. Thank goodness I have a very intelligent and clinically skilled wife who turned things around and said, You got to remember to eat, and you've got to remember to sleep. The day is still impossible, but I don't think I'm going to drop dead from it. I hope not.

You went to a Jesuit high school, where you learned the importance of doing good for the public. How has that experience informed your professional life?

My whole life was almost served to me on the basis that my mother and father were very much oriented toward service. They were never really interested in money or material things. That's just the way they were, both of them. So I never knew there was anything like going out there and making a lot of money, and that was really cemented when I went both to a Jesuit high school and a Jesuit college, where the entire theme was service for others.

I almost never had any other inkling of doing anything except something that would have a public service component to it. I'm very much of a people person, but I'm also scientifically inclined. My entire training is steeped in the humanities, and when you combine that with an aptitude for science, you wind up being a physician.

Victoria Jaggard is the senior editor for Science & Innovation at National Geographic.

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Date: Fri, 8 May 2020 6:53:53 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 8 May 2020 6:53:52 AM -0400
Subject: Re: responses to new Mikovits video
From: Bryan Morens [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]

It is amazing the shit these people create out of thin air and yet many Americans can't wait to eat it up. The guy in this video nails it. I don't understand what has happened to simple logical thinking or why this president has brought out the worst in people.

We need all of you to keep fighting the good fight! Thank you and best wishes.

On Thu, May 7, 2020, 8:38 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] > wrote:
PS, peter, you said a couple days ago you would join astmh and i URGE you to do do asap. I'll pAyvthe fucking dues. Please do, and i will then introduce you to their CEO, Prez, and many others who at E already Working on your behalf and who have a significant lobbying arm They will unfoubtedly invite you to speak at the annual meeting and much more. My belief is you need the help of powerful orgs like this. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 7, 2020, at 20:24, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Thanks David – I had seen that there was yet another video from the conspiracy theorists, but good that there's already pushback.
>
> I'm waiting for the people to start lining up outside my house once they release my address…
>
> Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street

New York, NY 10001

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 10:27 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Bryan Morens < b6
Subject: Fwd: responses to new Mikovits video

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
Date: May 7, 2020 at 09:48:38 EDT
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>, NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: responses to new Mikovits video

https://zdoggmd.com/plandemic/

https://respectfulinsolence.com/2020/05/06/judy- mikovits-pandemic/

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Date: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 6:55:47 PM -0400
Subject: Re: brief statement for reporter tonight
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6];

Just fyi, I will be in PT at Walter Reed tomorrow from about 1030 to1230 or so. Painful disc issue in neck at C6 level. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 27, 2020, at 18:48, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

I think that strategy works. I hope you did send it to the reporter at 6. Let's regroup some time tomorrow morning when you can see what has come out and who picked it up to disseminate it.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 6:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: RE: brief statement for reporter tonight

OK – David – what do you think?

If you're good with this, we'll send it out and maybe work on a broader statement, but my instinct is to lie low for tonight and tomorrow and let the news agencies have at it, wait for good powerful people to come to our defense, and hope our organization is not targeted by Trump.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 5:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: brief statement for reporter tonight

Succinct, essential information only, clear next step to understand what this means, it is measured, there is no hyperbole. Good job.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2020, at 5:49 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 460 West 34th Street
> New York, NY 10001
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> <statement to politico.docx>

Date: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 5:24:04 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 5:24:01 PM -0400
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Thanks Peter,

Hi David, can we set up a time to talk tomorrow? I have conflicts from 11-3 tomorrow, but afterwards would be fine. My office phone is [b6] and my cell is [b6].

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Sunday, April 26, 2020 3:24 PM
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you so much for your help David & Jerry. This is a brutally stressful issue on just about every level: jobs in our organization, freedom to do science in a country I came to voluntarily for that reason, and the real and present danger that we are being targeted by extremists, supported by the President, who is shockingly ignorant and unconcerned about the damage his actions have to people's lives, and our own US National Security.

David - We'll communicate with you via gmail from now on. I understand exactly what you're saying in your email, I agree, and we'll follow this line exactly. I'll be talking with Emily, Erik and Cristina early this week, then will try to set up a call with Michael Lauer hopefully as a conf. call. We haven't responded to NIH's email yet, and will only do so after talking with Program staff and getting back to you both. We are working on a brief outline of a compromise approach, whereby we change the geography of our work to include countries on the border of China, where the same bats live and the same behavioral risks happen (Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam). Even that would be a loss – we have 15,000 samples in freezers in Wuhan and could do the full genomes of 700+ CoVs we've identified if we don't cut this thread.

On the issue of why our grant has been targeted. We read the NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research (attached) and noted that **Michael Lauer's justification for terminating our grant "At this time, NIH does not believe that the current project outcomes align with the program goals and agency priorities." Is completely countered by ALL 4 of NIAID's COVID-19 strategy (page 2 of the attached pdf):**

The *NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research* aligns with the priorities set by U.S. Government–wide task forces for the development of medical countermeasures. NIAID actively participates in COVID-19 task forces to identify opportunities, ensure open communication, encourage resource sharing, and avoid duplication of effort. The plan is structured around four strategic research priorities:

1. **Improve fundamental knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19,** including studies to characterize the virus and how it is transmitted and understand the natural history, epidemiology, host immunity, disease immunopathogenesis, and the genetic, immunologic, and clinical associations with more severe disease outcomes. This includes accelerating the development of small and large animal models that replicate human disease.

2. **Support the development of diagnostics and assays**, including point-of-care molecular and antigen-based diagnostics for identifying and isolating COVID-19 cases and serologic assays to better understand disease prevalence in the population. Diagnostics also will be essential for evaluating the effectiveness of candidate countermeasures.

3. **Characterize and test therapeutics,** including identifying and evaluating repurposed drugs and novel broad-spectrum antivirals, virus-targeted antibody-based therapies (including plasma-derived intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) and

monoclonal antibodies), and host-directed strategies to combat COVID-19.

4. **Develop safe and effective vaccines against SARS-CoV-2,** including support of clinical trial testing.

Each of these points are clearly part of the Specific Aims of our grant (attached to this email).

Re. media –Journalists are lined up wanting to talk with me about this issue, including already asking if NIH have communicated with me. I will be silent on this issue for now and hope something can happen. Likewise re. our political representatives. I'll contact them only if/when we can't resolve anything this way. I'll also be talking to our pro bono law firm who will start lining up a legal argument against termination of this grant, just in case we can't do anything in a decent way. All the time this goes on, I'm really worried about our EIDRC U01 contract that it in final Just in Time issues right now, so I'm hoping we get an NoA before anything turns ugly.

One last comment – as you talk to your colleagues, please let them know that funds from this grant aren't just shipped over to China. Most of the money stays in the USA and funds work at EHA and UNC critical to identifying future risk of pandemics and vaccine and drug development against coronaviruses. Right now, without this funding, US employees will become unemployed. Of course, that pales into insignificance against the potential loss of life if we consider the health benefits of 1) better prediction of future pandemics; 2) better vaccines & therapeutics that work against these viruses; & 3) continued access to 15 yrs of sample collection, data, and collaborative knowledge from our work with our Chinese colleagues.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens b6
Sent: Sunday, April 26, 2020 11:47 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Jerry and Peter,

This is sent from my gmail account. Please send all replies here To gmail

I have let Tony know but have not spoken to him directly. There are things I can't say except Tony is aware and I have learned that there are ongoing efforts within NIH to steer through this with minimal damage to you, Peter, and colleagues, and to nih and niaid. No guarantees, but let us hope. I imagine this will be handled at the level of Francis and Tony, within nih, and I don't expect to be in the loop.

I don't have any insight into what happened or how it happened, but the fact that your termination letter came from "Building 1", that is, the NIH directors office, and not from NIAID, is telling

Whatever is going on, I very much doubt that Tony or any of our niaid leadership would willfully throw you under the bus, or any grantee, for that matter. Indeed, I expect we would do everything possible to protect you. I have reason to believe that there are already efforts going on to protect you

What I said on the phone last night stands. I urge you to meet asap with this guy Lauer and with Eric and Emily. Lauer may well decline to meet with you, but I think you should press him. You have a right to demand a face to face explanation for such an unprecedented action. If your grant is from DMID Virology you may also want to meet with Virology Branch Chief Mark Challberg, and of course with Cristina, who is Emily's deputy and a respiratory virologist. These DMID folks will be your advocates. If any part of the grant goes through Columbia, or UNC (isn't that where Ralph is?), or any University, they may be able to apply pressure too.

If you can get down here, these meetings should be in person, although of course many nih folks are working from home, so that may not be possible.

In the meantime I would NOT go to the press. The first step is to find out in detail what happened and what your rights are. But I would line up advocates, as I suggested and Jerry as well. The press may find out about this in any case, but I think if so it is better to let friends defend you than for you to fight on your own. At least for now. Of course, however this plays out in the short term, it will end up in the public domain and the truth will come out. So hold on to that certainty, small comfort now, I know

Finally, I am so sorry you and your colleagues are going through this. You don't deserve it; if anything you deserve a medal. Please hang in there and press ahead firmly but collegiality

As a coda, Tony knows about your work. Sometime around 1 Feb I sent him an email outlining your work over recent years, and why it was so important to science. This was mostly because I anticipated new money, but also in the back of my mind was the possibility that something really dark like this could happen

Again, whatever role NIH might be playing in these events, I truly expect that we will be doing what is possible to protect you and your research over the long haul

I think I need another Scotch, and it's only 1145 am
David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 26, 2020, at 06:43, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
Date: April 25, 2020 at 22:03:15 EDT
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thanks Peter,

I know Dave Morens – everybody knows Dave Morens. I had another thought about this and it would be to alert Victor Dzau who works very closely with Tony, of course, and even though I consider myself a friend as well as a colleague I think Victor would have a

pretty direct route to Tony. It is an issue the National Academies should be interested in, and have some traction. We need to get Peggy Hamburg involved to bring AAAS on board. It is like the Bush administration attempts to control NIH but on steroids. Anyone but an idiot would understand why it is essential to maintain our scientific connections with China so that we can engage with them to figure out what happened. What the Trump idiots are doing is totally and absolutely counterproductive. I do think – as we discussed yesterday – that for the moment keeping cool is the best strategy. But influential people need to know and its probably better if you are not directly involved.

I watched the session on COVID-19 this afternoon for the Academies meeting via Zoom or some platform. Tony, Jeremy, George Gao, Sanjay Gupta, Susan Weiss, and Richard Hatchett, All of the questions about the emergence and the reservoir or spillover host for which there is no information are the strengths of your programs and your collaborations. How absolutely stupid to close those off, but how absolutely unacceptable it is from the perspective of the separation of politics and science in a free society. That Francis would allow it is hard to believe. That Tony would allow it is even harder to believe – and for that reason I expect it is at levels below him and he is too busy at the moment trying to keep focused on rational decision making while the idiot in chief tells us to swallow a UV-C lamp or shove it up out butt – I can tell you whose butt I would shove it – and for good measure have a Chloroxitini or just do a total cleansing with H2O2 (the rationale would be if H2O is good for us wouldn't H2O2 be better, after all it would have another one of those O's whatever they are.

Dave, get in touch so we might strategize, and for certain reasons keep Peter out of the loop.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry – great to read this – thanks for your support.

I also spoke with David Morens today who was equally shocked and said this has never happened. He also said there are influential people who would come to our defense at the right moment. In the meantime, he's going to talk with Greg Folkers (Chief of Staff for Tony Fauci) to find out if Tony knows, and why it happened. He's then going to let Tony know. I think you and him are on the same page in that you're both right that this is a clear political interference in NIH business. Trump said at his press briefing Friday 17th that he would 'end' the grant, and one week later I got the termination notice from NIH.

In the meantime, we're working on a short draft of how we could have easily changed the geography to the countries adjacent to China, as we proposed to Erik Stemmy and Emily Erbelding. We'll be talking with them next week early to try and find out why this happened. We won't respond to the termination notice (Michael Lauer)

until we've found out more.

FYI – re. the FoIA - I'm contacting the FBI to talk about the risk of our FoIA and how I've been threatened by QANON related to this and our Chinese colleagues have had their lives threatened.

I'm not going to talk to the media about this, not our representatives, until I've tried all possible ways with NIAID/NIH to change the decision from a cancelation. I'm also very concerned that Trump could target our organization or me personally, leading to our EIDRC being nixed and we don't even have an NoA on that, so it could quietly disappear.

I'll get back in touch with you once I've found out more from Erik Stemmy, Emily Erbelding and Cristina Cassetti.

In the meantime is it OK if I email introduce you and David so you could possibly coordinate in some way, or at least stay in touch? Right now I'm feeling particularly vulnerable – the power of the President is pointed at us, the CIA, FBI and someone from Medical Defense Intelligence (or something) are interviewing staff, QAnon are threatening me, and our colleagues in China have death threats against them. That's just this week! Having you out there talking with others at this level is extremely important right now.

By the way, here's a list of our Board: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/board- of-directors

It includes two people you know – Jim Hughes (former head of NCID/CDC, Rear Admiral Public Health Service Rtd, Asst. Surgeon General Rtd) and Rita Colwell (Former Head of NSF under 3 presidents: Clinton, Bush sr, Bush Jr – I think). I'll be talking with Jim Hughes tomorrow or Monday and Rita Colwell on our Baord meeting Friday.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Hi Peter and Aleksei,

I want to change my recommendation from earlier this evening. Put the really good Cabernet aside and drink the disinfectant instead. This is an afront to science, after the language in the first letter and your response to comply. It must be challenged. The question is not only how but also when – certainly not before the EIDRC funding comes through. And then in a smart manner. I want to chat again next week – I need the weekend off having just finished the draft report on the R&D preparedness ecosystem for NAM working with Nicki Lurie. There are some smart and very influential people I can talk to - and keep you out of the conversation – when we agree it makes sense. I mentioned Maria Freire from FNIH and Mary Woolley from Research!America. I also thought about Harold Varmus and former Representative John Porter who was a great supporter of NIH (made the doubling happen) and CDC even though he is a Republican. But I too will do nothing for a few days.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: FW: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel. [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]

Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6 ; Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 ; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 ; Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email: b6 y

From: Aleksei Chmura b6 >
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 , "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6 , "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 , "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &
Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
(mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 > wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email b6

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6, Aleksei Chmura < b6 >, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records
2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.
Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates

listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: +[b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Olival [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Naomi Schrag [b6]; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.
- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.
- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.
- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: [b6]
Email: [b6]

From: Kevin Olival [b6] >
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6]
Cc: Naomi Schrag [b6], "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" <

b6

Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak b6 who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.
2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,
Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

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On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6 wrote:

Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received. The sooner you can get us that information, the better.

Best, Mike

From: Naomi Schrag b6
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6 b6, Naomi Schrag <
b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,
I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.
Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To: b6; Naomi Schrag b6
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: b6

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

Date: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 4:58:11 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 4:58:10 PM -0400
Subject: Re: FYI: Engaging ASCI
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] ;

tHANKS, GREAT EFFORTS. i PRESUME YOU BOTH SAW JON COHEN'S ARTICLE. WE NEED MORE ATTENTION TO THIS, SO KEEP ON COMING. iN MY SPARE TIME i AM DRAFTING A SCIENTIFIC PAPER ON THE SUBJECT, AS WE HAVE DISCUSSED, FOR PUBLICATION IN THE AJTMh. sO FAR, ONLY THREE AUTHORS ARE INVOLVED WITH ME AND THE EDITOR IS TOTALLY ON BOARD. oNCE WE HAVE A DRAFT, we'll bring in a few more authors. This would be done much sooner if I wasn't working 7 days a week, all day and usually well into the night, on my day job. d

On 6/2/2020 4:52 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> I tried to enlist Ajit Varki to move the American Society for Clinical Investigation (he was editor of the JCI and President of the Society) but he felt like he was not going to be taken seriously and has put me in touch with three former ASCI Presidents who he thought might have some purchase with the current leadership. I have just sent the following message – maybe start with the last of this string and go forward. We shall see if and what the response is.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Keusch, Gerald T
> **Sent:** Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4:46 PM
> **To:** Welsh, Michael J [b6]
> **Cc:** Ginsburg David [b6] ; Timothy Ley [b6] ; Varki, Ajit [b6]
> **Subject:** RE: [External] Re: Engaging ASCI
>
> Dear Drs. Welsh, Ginsburg and Ley,
>
> That is indeed the grant I am referring to. I was in touch with Ajit as I was contacting around 150 fellow members of NAM from the internal medicine and public health sections to sign on to a letter to the 3 Academy Presidents to make a public request for transparency and explanation of the legitimacy of the action taken within 1 week from the mouth of Donald Trump to the termination of a grant which scored in the 3rd percentile of review in 2019. There were 92 yes responses and the letter was sent over the weekend.
>
> The issue of the precedent here to subvert the peer review process and the independence and integrity of scientific research should be of interest to ASCI as the leading professional society for clinical researchers in the U.S. The collective voice of organizations like ASCI are loud and highly credible but only if they make known their concerns. While I have no expectation that the White House or Secretary Azar will listen or respond, I do think it will make an impression on Francis Collins and perhaps steel the NIH to push back and open up what happened to the scrutiny of American scientists. At the very least we must make it clear that unless the justification can be legitimized it will stand as an irresponsible and untenable decision that must be reversed (you probably understand the termination was for "convenience" which is not grounds for termination of a research grant and therefore is probably illegal, and in any event did not allow sufficient time for any investigation and did not open up the possibility of appeal) . To promote excellence in science we must insure the integrity of the academic scientific enterprise. It is indeed a very serious issue as you note. I would think it is also a very proper concern for ASCI, as the Society webpage says it engages in advocacy "to promote increased federal funding and sound science policy through direct Congressional advocacy and member participation". What has happened certainly sounds to me like a direct threat to "sound science policy".
>
> Jerry Keusch
>
> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
> Professor of Medicine and International Health
> Boston University School of Medicine

Associate Director, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories
620 Albany Street
Boston, MA 02118

From: Welsh, Michael J [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Varki, Ajit [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Ginsburg David [b6]>; Timothy Ley [b6]
Subject: Re: [External] Re: Engaging ASCI

Ajit

I assume this refers to the grant that collected and studied coronavirus samples and involved an investigator from Wuhan.

This is a serious issue. I think it would be best to refer it to the NAM and NAS.

Mike

On Jun 1, 2020, at 9:23 PM, Varki, Ajit [b6]> wrote:

> On Jun 1, 2020, at 3:49 PM, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote: Dear Ajit, I wonder if you would be willing to engage the leadership of ASCI to take on the issue of the administration cancelling an NIH research grant for political gain. While I don't expect Trump or Azar to back down, or Collins to reverse the decision, the more the scientific community shows it is concerned and the longer it makes that known the harder it will be on NIH to just ignore the controversy and will be forced to be more transparent. I am an emeritus member of ASCI but never part of the leadership. I would support this effort totally if you were willing to take the lead. Thanks for considering. Jerry

Hi Jerry: Thanks for asking, but I am not the best person to lead such an effort. Despite my contributions as JCI Editor and then President(e.g., JCI as first open access journal, setting in motion the self-publishing option, (saving)reorganizing the annual meeting to Chicago Fairmont, supporting and facilitating emergence of the APSA as part of the meeting, setting in motion the discussions that lead to the loan relief program etc. I have been completely ignored/not acknowledged anytime since, and I have never been invited to participate in the Society or the national meeting in any capacity.

I dont think this is because I was the first(?) and only(?) graduate of a foreign medical school ("FMG") to become Editor and President. I think to more likely because of my Presidential address, which predicted a lot thing that have unfortunately happened since.

B62. Varki, A.: Executive Summary of The Nerflex Commission Report, April 25th. 2049 (based on the 1999 ASCI Presidential Address). *J. Clin. Invest* (Supplement). v 104, S1-S10, 1999.

I am copying to some other former ACSI Presidents of my vintage who might be in a better position to influnce the current leadership.

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attachments thereto. Email sent to or from UI Health Care may be retained as required by law or regulation. Thank you.

--

David M Morens b6

Date: Thu, 25 Jun 2020 9:36:30 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 25 Jun 2020 9:36:28 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Thanks!
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

David - you've already done plenty!

Enjoy the prisoner wine in the final days of lockdown...it's a powerful and complex experience, a bit like our last 6 months!

Consider this my phase II gift. Phase III might actually involve a meal - the Michelin starred restaurants are opening in Paris - DC and New York will do eventually!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 8:59 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Subject: Thanks!

Peter, what a wonderful surprise to come home and find your kind gift! It was so nice of you, with all that's on your plate at the moment. Now i am actually going to have to do something to deserve it. Let me think....

The Trop Med people Re moving slowly but they are moving. Their decision is to write 1) a scientific commentary that outlines the importance of what you and others have been doing, but without mentioning you or the grant termination specifically, and then 2) a go-with editorial that really gets into the mix in defending you/the scientific process. I already wrote and sent them a draft of the first of these, and they (President Joel Breman, editor Phil Rosenthal, President-Elect Julie Jacobson, and several other leaders) are figuring out what

the editorial should specifically say. Then i will help them write it. Writing these kinds of things by committee never goes smoothly, but i have been trying to hurry things up. Both mss would be published together, and we would get some key people to sign on to both, although not the exact same people in both.

Stay tuned. Keep fighting the good fight. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 10:30:03 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 10:30:00 PM -0400
Subject: Question on BSL levels in China
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Gerald Keusch [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6] taub >> Jeffery K. Taubenberger MD PhD [b6]

I'm fairly sure that the lab design/set up for BSL-2, -3 & -4 are the same as in the USA – i.e. the procedures required for biosafety. I'm also fairly sure that they use BSL-4 for the same pathogens we do in the USA. Ralph Baric might know more about lab design etc.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 3:48 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald Keusch [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; taub >> Jeffery K. Taubenberger MD PhD [b6]
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.

Peter, I have a question re the ms. we are putting together. Regarding lab safety in BSL2 thru 4, including protocols and procedures to prevent infection and virus escape, do the Chinese labs follow our BMBL etc. policies and procedures, or do they have separate policies/procedures? It has been my understanding that ALL BSL 3 and 4 labs around the world follow pretty much the safe safety procedures as well as building engineering and related matters. Is that so? Ty, david

On 6/16/2020 9:32 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Didn't realize there were so many FoIAs, and a bunch targeting our grant. I'll pass that info on to the reporters.
>
> Maybe you can redirect these foia requests to my home address. I can print off all my emails, plus the grants, and for a small fee can just leave them out on the doorstep. Sounds like a good way to monetize research!
>
> Seriously, sounds like this FoIA malarky is a huge time sink for folks at NIH.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 7:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Gerald Keusch b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.

Peter, if you are in contact with with these guys about their foias you should tell them to be aggressive. We (NIAID) are way behind on responding to foias, and one or two groups is already suing us. Good! I myself have about 5 foias related to your grant, and i believe tony has more. In fact, in most cases foias to me also cover Tony, Hugh, and several front office staff

Our reason for being slow is that we respond with sophisticated computer searches done by our IT people, and we just don't have enough of them to cover 100+ ongoing foias, probably 5-10 of which deal with your grant

On a related subject i did a first draft of our astmh piece and ran it by joel breman, astmh president. I had originally decided to NOT address the conspiracy theories head on but thinks that should be added. So, i wrote two additional paras on that, and sent it to Jeff Taubenberger for his input on the molecular evidence.

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jun 15, 2020, at 21:02, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
>
> Hi David and Jerry,
>
> I've been thinking of a way to get ahead of the curve, just in case NIH really is investigating EHA or me. This goes back to NIH telling folks who FOIA them that they can't reveal info on my grant and Wuhan because of a law enforcement clause and a pending investigation (https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/nih- we-cant-release-our-papers-about-the-wuhan-institute-of-virology-because-of-a-pending-investigation/). I've been wondering if that's a real investigation maybe by another org seeing if NIH acted legally? Is it them investigating Wuhan (not

really possible)? Is it related to the NIH Director's pushing the agenda of investigating scientists who have been taking funds from China etc. (https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/06/fifty- four-scientists-have-lost-their-jobs-result-nih-probe-foreign-ties). What concerns me is that it seems that Francis Collins is personally involved in the investigation, and that his key henchman is Michael Lauer. It's actually Lauer who gave the talk to the ACD meeting last week (https://www.acd.od.nih.gov/meetings.html , click on "ACD Working Group on Foreign Influences in Research Integrity (Update)". I think it would be convenient for Collins if they could try to dig up some China dirt on EHA, and it's probably no skin off his nose to ask his henchmen to investigate (they've already got 399 "Scientists of Possible Concern") what's one more between friends.

So for that reason, I want to let you know that I've spoken with two good reporters off the record over the last few days and given them both your contact. One is Jim Rainey from the LA Times who did a good piece on the origins of COVID about EHA's work and others. He's now trying to dig into the handling of the termination by NIH and will be filing a FoIA, but right now would love to talk about the details. The other is Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed. He did file a foia for Michael lauer's communications and some others. He said he will be appealing their decision not to release the files.

I'm hoping that these two reporters will dig out some interesting stuff and maybe then I'll know whether this 'investigation' is just Francis Collins trying to fob off the foia requests, or it's because we've appealed, or another group has filed a motion with NIH re. their decision to terminate.

Anyway – hope they contact you, and hope it leads to something.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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--
David M Morens b6

Date: Wed, 4 Mar 2020 2:56:51 PM -0500
Sent: Wed, 4 Mar 2020 2:56:50 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Escaping Pandora's Box
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Dr. Howard Markel [b6];
CC: Bruce Gellin [b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6];

Colleagues, we've sent several emails in recent days about a small group of us networking and being available to plan/put together timely commentaries about key aspects of the coronavirus situation, things that are "from 30,000 feet", i.e., broad perspectives, and publishable either in journals willing to publish quickly or in key newspapers or other media.

I discussed with Jeff Taubenberger this morning and here is what we were wondering.

Can we identify several outlets that would be willing to consider this, journals and media? For example, I know of several medical or biomedical journals that might be interested; what about newspapers and other media?

We also discussed expanding the small group of folks for discussion purpose to additional thought leaders in various areas. The intent wouldn't be to have multiple items penned by a kazillion people, but to decide what is needed and plan from there.

Some ideas we floated as commentary topics:

What is the US public health infrastructure and is it capable of fully controlling an impending pandemic within US borders; implications for the rest of the world having less robust control.

What can citizens do to provide themselves with personal protection AND contribute to local and national public health?

The history of pandemics and implications for the current situation

What is the status of the knowledge base applied to medical, public health and societal response to this threatened pandemic?

What leadership role should scientists, medical experts, and public health experts play?

What role is there fore medical practitioners, businesses, and NGOs?

We were thinking of these as separate topics to be examined in a focused way.

We also floated names of folks who might be willing to participate such as:

National PH experts like Tom Frieden

A leader in APHA or the CSTE who knows all aspects of the PH infrastructure

A true coronavirus expert like Ralph Baric

An internationally known virologist like David Baltimore

An international emerging disease expert like Malik Peiris, other names floated as well

A health communicator like Sanjay Gupta

Any thoughts? Especially about outlets that and people who might be interested….

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520

- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- (b) (6)(b) (6)
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, February 29, 2020 1:13 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Bruce Gellin [b6]>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Subject: RE: Escaping Pandora's Box

Good points David and I completely agree that the group authored commentary pathway is a great approach.

I'll definitely reach out when I get email requests and let's try to get some more well-placed articles as you and Jeff did so nicely with NEJM.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [mailto: b6
Sent: Saturday, February 29, 2020 12:42 PM
To: Peter Daszak
Cc: Bruce Gellin; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Subject: Re: Escaping Pandora's Box

Thanks for all this! Yes, i saw Dennis on TV last night as i never miss the pbs newshour because if i dont watch it live i have it recorded daily. Even before he leftusaid, Dennis had a sprak-my-mind type of courage such that he probably would gave said the same thing he did last night

Although I cannot comment on the press reports about censoring Tony, let me just say that even rumors of such a thing should be enough to make ethical scientists step up and speak out if it might make a difference. Not to criticize the govt responses but to put forward true and dispassionate information into the public domain. I too have spoken to many reporters on and off the record, and i feel that does make at least a small difference

I am thinking in addition about more journal commentaries and newspaper/media pieces, especially if written by groups of several recognized experts in various areas like public health, virology, epi, international health, etc. That way, it's harder to criticize a point of view because it represents a multidisciplinary consensus.

The situation changes daily but there are many issues to be addressed in such an approach, eg, do govt scientists and ph experts have the knowledge to mitigate a pandemic? What leadership role should scientist have in govt management of a pandemic? what can citizens do to besure they are receiving the most expert and timely information? What roles should health care providers play in the ph response to a pandemic?, and so on.
david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Feb 29, 2020, at 12:19, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Agree with all of these thoughts. I've been flat out talking with reporters every day since New Year's eve when I spoke with ProMED to give the information we had from China about a novel coronavirus (2 wks before public) …

One thing that I've found helpful is just emailing around to colleagues and each of us helping clarify messages that we've seen and reminding us of the potential to get things wrong. Yesterday was emailing with Linda Saif about an idea I'd heard that pigs could be intermediate hosts (their ACE2 receptor binds to SARS-CoV-2 spike in modeling studies). It's completely valid, but she reminded me that saying this loudly to reporters would potentially cause fallout in the pork industry here. It's something you don't normally think about, and you need your agriculture colleague to remind you. Likewise we get reminded by the conservationist colleagues not to say things like "Viruses lurking in wildlife", or "bats are the high risk group" or things that might make people want to go out and eliminate bats.

On this issue of publicity though – I'm very concerned about the stories I'm hearing yesterday and today that very specifically Tony Fauci has been reined in by the Whitehouse re. talking freely with reporters. It's about the worst case scenario for a pandemic prevention strategy you could think of. Therefore, you're right David, we need every voice we can get from people who have had Govt experience and can now talk freely like yourself Bruce, and people like Dennis Carroll. At the same time, if you are willing to put yourselves forwards more David and Jeffery – that's extremely useful right now…

Here's Dennis Carroll speaking boldly on Judy Woodruff's Newshour on PBS yesterday:

https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/a- pandemic-expert-questions-speed-of-u-s-response-to-novel-coronavirus

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [mailto [b6]

Sent: Saturday, February 29, 2020 12:01 PM
To: Bruce Gellin
Cc: Peter Daszak; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Subject: Re: Escaping Pandora's Box

Not sure, i have been mulling it over..... Certainly emailing and sharing ideas is a good start. What r your thoughts? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Feb 29, 2020, at 10:56, Bruce Gellin <b6> wrote:

> Just rediscovered our electric pencil-sharpener.
>
> Will get to work
>
> Thoughts about the "coordination" part of this?
>
> There are lots of voices chiming in.
>
> Bruce
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [mailto:b6]
> **Sent:** Saturday, February 29, 2020 10:53 AM
> **To:** Bruce Gellin b6
> **Cc:** Peter Daszak b6; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6
> **Subject:** Re: Escaping Pandora's Box
>
> Yes, please do step forward. Voices like yours are needed now! And folks like us, all of us, should coordinate and work together. I said as much yesterday to Tom Monath, who has not only a big science perspective but also an industry, vaccinology, and drug therapy perspective, and spent his whole early career at cdc and then the Army. Big picture people like Tom, and many others we can all name. david
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> On Feb 29, 2020, at 10:45, Bruce Gellin b6 > wrote:
>
> > David et al.
> >
> > Thanks for the backdrop here. You've hit all the right notes.
> >
> > Now that I now longer have a .gov email address, I also do my best to join the outsider/external validator

choir.

Since I have a fancy "global" title, that's probably the perspective I should add, not that a blue passport keeps anybody from doing that.

Bruce

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [mailto:[b6]]
Sent: Saturday, February 29, 2020 10:39 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Bruce Gellin [b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]>
Subject: Re: Escaping Pandora's Box

Bruce, very kind of you! We don't normally enjoy doing these sorts of commentaries, but we felt that in this important time, with few hard facts and much media frenzy, it was a responsibility for folks with a broader perspective to weigh in. See also Peter's separate important
piece from a few days ago, and jeff and i and colleagues have yet another coming out soon

Although Jeff and i normally prefer to stay in the background, i have lately been mulling over ideas about stepping forward a bit as this epidemic unfolds, to try to project some perspective, reason, and sanity. Tom Frieden is starting to do that as well, see his recent TV interviews and opinion pieces, and an upcoming piece in the EID journal Also Bill Schaffner and Peter Hotez, among others

To the extent that the message from the govt might be less than perfect, there is a place i think for experts to keep on weighing in

Hopefully Peter D and other experts with broad perspectives will stay engaged in coming weeks and months
david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Feb 29, 2020, at 09:28, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Cheers,

Peter

Date:	Thu, 30 Apr 2020 11:36:07 AM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 30 Apr 2020 11:36:06 AM -0400
Subject:	Fwd: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs
From:	David Morens (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
To:	Peter Daszak (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) Aleksei Chmura
Attachments:	image001.jpg

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Date: April 30, 2020 at 11:35:36 EDT
To: David Morens (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Date: April 30, 2020 at 11:31:18 EDT
Subject: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs

US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs

Senior Trump administration figures said to be demanding evidence on virus's origins

- Coronavirus – latest updates
- See all our coronavirus coverage

Patrick Wintour
Thu 30 Apr 2020 09.49 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Apr 2020 11.22 EDT



Donald Trump is under pressure with more than 1 million Americans infected and 60,000 dead from the virus. Photograph: Carlos Barría/Reuters

Senior figures in the Trump administration have put pressure on US intelligence agencies to provide evidence to support claims that the coronavirus outbreak originated in state-run laboratories in China, a report in the New York Times claims.

Intelligence analysts fear Donald Trump is looking for propaganda to be used in the escalating blame game over whether China covered up the crisis or even generated the virus in its laboratories – a theory that remains unproven.

The office of the director of national intelligence said in a statement on Thursday that it had concluded that the virus was "not manmade or genetically modified", but it disclosed that officials were still examining whether the origins of the pandemic could be traced to contact with infected animals or an accident at a Chinese lab.

"The intelligence community [IC] also concurs with the wide scientific consensus that the Covid-19 virus was not manmade or genetically modified," said the statement. "The IC will continue to rigorously examine emerging information and intelligence to determine whether the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or if it was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan."

In recent days Trump and his allies have sharpened their rhetoric on China, accusing it of failing to act swiftly enough to stop the spread of the virus or sound the alarm about the outbreak.

Most scientists who have studied the genetics of the coronavirus provided by China say the overwhelming probability is that it jumped from animal to human in a non-laboratory setting, as was the case with previous pandemics.

Those reported as pushing US intelligence agencies to lend credence to the theory that the virus was created in Chinese labs include the US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, the deputy national security adviser, Matthew Pottinger, and Richard Grenell, the acting director of national intelligence.

In numerous TV interviews, Pompeo has said China suppressed information on the virus and withheld key facts from the World Health Organization, and he has hinted that he believes the virus originated in Chinese laboratories.

But the suggestion that intelligence agencies are being put under pressure to produce evidence represents a step up from such comments. Such a finding would turn the international disaster into something akin to biological warfare, or a lab accident of catastrophic proportions.

More than 1 million people have been infected and more than 60,000 have died in the US from the virus, adding political urgency to Trump's desire to shift blame for the crisis on to China.

China has been resisting an international inquiry into the origins of the outbreak in Wuhan and, under pressure, says it is a matter for the WHO to investigate. The proposal is unlikely to mollify Trump, who has condemned the WHO as Chinese-centric and has suspended US funding from the UN agency pending a review.

Chris Patten, the former governor general of Hong Kong and a long-term critic of Chinese efforts to control democracy in the former colony, has joined the calls for an international inquiry, accusing China of initially covering up the outbreak.

The calls for an inquiry have been strongest in Australia, leading to a diplomatic confrontation between the Australian prime minister, Scott Morrison, and the Chinese ambassador to Australia, Cheng Jingye. The calls have also been supported by Winston Peters, New Zealand's foreign minister.

Peters said: "It is very hard to conceive, no matter what country it is, of there not being a desire from every country around the world – including the country of origin – for an investigation to find out how this happened."

Jingye has warned of a Chinese boycott of Australian goods and services.

Beijing has been caught in a bind, with its diplomats sometimes saying it is not even clear whether the virus originated in China, contending that it is a legitimate matter for inquiry by scientists, but then rejecting an international inquiry into the source of the outbreak. Chinese diplomats distinguish between an international inquiry, which they say is likely to be a political blame game, and a dispassionate examination by WHO scientists.

Critics of China counter that the WHO's record shows it has neither the will nor the investigative powers required

to look deep into the entrails of the Chinese Communist party and expose any cover-up. The WHO is dependent on the cooperation of its member states for access and has no mechanism to punish countries that keep its officials in the dark.

Proposals have been floated for the WHO to be given the power to impose sanctions on countries that are not transparent with it, but this proposal would need to pass the WHO's general assembly, and would require nation states handing over a degree of sovereignty to a multilateral body.

The Chinese ambassador to the UK, Liu Xiaoming, delivered a lengthy rebuttal to the prospect of an international inquiry last week. "You're talking about independent investigation. It's up to the WHO. We support the WHO. We believe we should play by international norms and international rules, not by some other countries' rules. Some other country even sues China at its local court. It's absurd," he said in remarks to the Asia Society in London.

"This is not the first time that some politicians want to play world police. This is not the era of 'gunboat diplomacy'. This is not the era when China was still in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. This is the third decade of the 21st century. Those people cannot understand it. They think they still live in the old days when they can bully China and the world. If the WHO does not act their way, they stop their support and criticise the WHO to be 'China-centric'. That's simply not right.

"So we are calling for international cooperation. That's the only weapon and only way out to win this battle against the virus. Not by scapegoating, not by playing games, not by politicising the virus, not by spreading a political virus."

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Date: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 5:03:53 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 5:03:52 PM -0400
Subject: Re: FYI: Engaging ASCI
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]

PS, I am at work at NIH now but I just got as message that there are many protesters in Bethesda, some near where I live (in a condo literally at the foot of NIH). Maybe I can join them, as I did for the recent women's marches and the students march (at which my oldest grand daughter helped organize the march to the Florida State Capitol). Reminds me of the good old 60s.... david

On 6/2/2020 4:52 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> I tried to enlist Ajit Varki to move the American Society for Clinical Investigation (he was editor of the JCI and President of the Society) but he felt like he was not going to be taken seriously and has put me in touch with three former ASCI Presidents who he thought might have some purchase with the current leadership. I have just sent the following message – maybe start with the last of this string and go forward. We shall see if and what the response is.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Keusch, Gerald T
> **Sent:** Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4:46 PM
> **To:** Welsh, Michael J [b6] >
> **Cc:** Ginsburg David [b6] Timothy Ley [b6] ; Varki, Ajit [b6] >
> **Subject:** RE: [External] Re: Engaging ASCI
>
> Dear Drs. Welsh, Ginsburg and Ley,
>
> That is indeed the grant I am referring to. I was in touch with Ajit as I was contacting around 150 fellow members of NAM from the internal medicine and public health sections to sign on to a letter to the 3 Academy Presidents to make a public request for transparency and explanation of the legitimacy of the action taken within 1 week from the mouth of Donald Trump to the termination of a grant which scored in the 3rd percentile of review in 2019. There were 92 yes responses and the letter was sent over the weekend.
>
> The issue of the precedent here to subvert the peer review process and the independence and integrity of scientific research should be of interest to ASCI as the leading professional society for clinical researchers in the U.S. The collective voice of organizations like ASCI are loud and highly credible but only if they make known their concerns. While I have no expectation that the White House or Secretary Azar will listen or respond, I do think it will make an impression on Francis Collins and perhaps steel the NIH to push back and open up what happened to the scrutiny of American scientists. At the very least we must make it clear that unless the justification can be legitimized it will stand as an irresponsible and untenable decision that must be reversed (you probably understand the termination was for "convenience" which is not grounds for termination of a research grant and therefore is probably illegal, and in any event did not allow sufficient time for any investigation and did not open up the possibility of appeal) . To promote excellence in science we must insure the integrity of the academic scientific enterprise. It is indeed a very serious issue as you note. I would think it is also a very proper concern for ASCI, as the Society webpage says it engages in advocacy "to promote increased federal funding and sound science policy through direct Congressional advocacy and member participation". What has happened certainly sounds to me like a direct threat to "sound science policy".
>
> Jerry Keusch
>
> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
> Professor of Medicine and International Health
> Boston University School of Medicine
> Associate Director, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories
> 620 Albany Street

Boston, MA 02118

From: Welsh, Michael J [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Varki, Ajit [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Ginsburg David [b6]; Timothy Ley [b6]
Subject: Re: [External] Re: Engaging ASCI

Ajit

I assume this refers to the grant that collected and studied coronavirus samples and involved an investigator from Wuhan.

This is a serious issue. I think it would be best to refer it to the NAM and NAS.

Mike

On Jun 1, 2020, at 9:23 PM, Varki, Ajit [b6] wrote:

> On Jun 1, 2020, at 3:49 PM, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote: Dear Ajit, I wonder if you would be willing to engage the leadership of ASCI to take on the issue of the administration cancelling an NIH research grant for political gain. While I don't expect Trump or Azar to back down, or Collins to reverse the decision, the more the scientific community shows it is concerned and the longer it makes that known the harder it will be on NIH to just ignore the controversy and will be forced to be more transparent. I am an emeritus member of ASCI but never part of the leadership. I would support this effort totally if you were willing to take the lead. Thanks for considering. Jerry

Hi Jerry: Thanks for asking, but I am not the best person to lead such an effort. Despite my contributions as JCI Editor and then President(e.g., JCI as first open access journal, setting in motion the self-publishing option, (saving)reorganizing the annual meeting to Chicago Fairmont, supporting and facilitating emergence of the APSA as part of the meeting, setting in motion the discussions that lead to the loan relief program etc. I have been completely ignored/not acknowledged anytime since, and I have never been invited to participate in the Society or the national meeting in any capacity.

I dont think this is because I was the first(?) and only(?) graduate of a foreign medical school ("FMG") to become Editor and President. I think to more likely because of my Presidential address, which predicted a lot thing that have unfortunately happened since.

B62. Varki, A.: Executive Summary of The Nerflex Commission Report, April 25th. 2049 (based on the 1999 ASCI Presidential Address). *J. Clin. Invest* (Supplement). v 104, S1-S10, 1999.

I am copying to some other former ACSI Presidents of my vintage who might be in a better position to influnce the current leadership.

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--
David M Morens [redacted] b6

Date:	Tue, 12 May 2020 10:38:04 AM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 12 May 2020 10:38:02 AM -0400
Subject:	Fwd: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses
From:	David Morens b6
To:	Peter Daszak b6 ; Gerald Keusch b6 ; Bryan Morens b6
Attachments:	image001.jpg

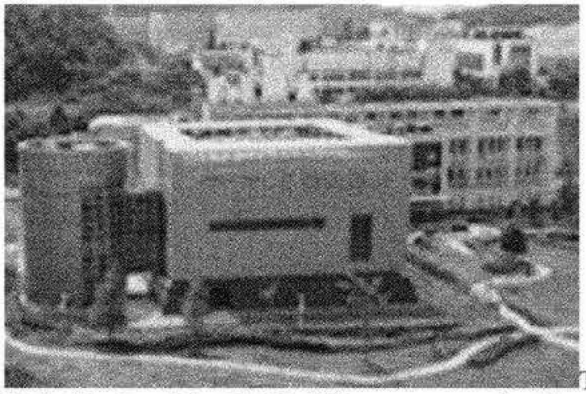
Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 12, 2020 at 10:37:16 EDT
To: David Morens b6
Subject: Fwd: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 12, 2020 at 10:23:05 EDT
Subject: Wpost: Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses

Trump-fueled suspicion of Wuhan lab ensnares New York nonprofit researching bat coronaviruses


The Wuhan Institute of Virology partnered with the New York City-based EcoHealth Alliance to research unknown viruses in bats that could cause a global pandemic. (Hector Retamal/AFP/Getty Images)

By
Paul Sonne and
Shane Harris
May 12, 2020 at 9:59 a.m. EDT

An American nonprofit received millions of dollars from the U.S. government during the Obama and Trump administrations to identify unknown viruses in bats that could infect humans and cause a global pandemic.

Now, as the world faces one such pandemic, the New York City-based EcoHealth Alliance has found itself at the center of a political maelstrom, with one of its major federal grants suddenly axed.

The reason: Its longtime Chinese partner in identifying unknown bat viruses, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is fending off allegations from President Trump and some of his top aides that the pathogen causing covid-19 escaped from its lab.

The story of how EcoHealth became a target in the Trump administration's effort to deflect criticism and focus blame on China illustrates the promise and perils of international cooperation on public health research between two superpowers that are increasingly at odds.

Beijing has led an authoritarian crackdown on information about the initial coronavirus outbreak, while Washington has demonstrated a cavalier willingness to fuel theories about a Chinese lab accident without presenting any evidence. Caught in the middle are scientists from both countries, facing questions about their research and doubts about whether their years-long collaboration can continue amid escalating geopolitical tension.

After a CBS News "60 Minutes" segment detailed EcoHealth's research and defunding on Sunday, Trump accused the show of defending China. Anthony S. Fauci, who runs the part of the National Institutes of Health that awarded EcoHealth's grant and later terminated it, could face questions about the matter during testimony Tuesday in front of a Senate committee.

EcoHealth's work in China first gained national attention during the pandemic when Trump, at a news conference in mid-April, pledged to pull its grant from NIH. Days later, the president's personal attorney, Rudolph W. Giuliani, assailed the grant in a tweet. Neither Trump nor Giuliani mentioned the nonprofit organization by name, instead focusing on its partners in Wuhan.

Late last month, NIH followed through on Trump's promise and abruptly pulled more than $3 million in funding over five years that was awarded in 2019. NIH gave the nonprofit organization little reason for doing so, writing in a letter that the project didn't align with "program goals and agency priorities."

"This idea that it doesn't fit the goals and objectives — there must be more to it," EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in a May 1 interview. "You can't apply for money from the NIH unless it's within the goals and objectives of the organization. They review that when you submit a proposal."

NIH confirmed in a statement that EcoHealth's grant was terminated and acknowledged that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was a "sub-awardee." Asked why the funding was pulled, NIH said it does not discuss "the details of the decision-making process regarding specific grant awards."

Daszak, who said the grant's termination will force EcoHealth to lay off employees, says cooperation with Chinese scientists is important because the next bat-derived virus threatening humans is likely to emerge from the region. Already, two appear to have caused pandemics in less than 20 years.

"Viruses emerge from places where wildlife carry them and people interact with the wildlife," Daszak said. "If you have a place with a high diversity of bats and lots of people hunting and eating bats like in Southeast Asia and China, that's where you need to go."

Some of the bat coronaviruses EcoHealth identified with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Daszak said, were used at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to test the effectiveness of remdesivir, the antiviral medication the United States recently approved as a therapy for covid-19 patients.

"Covid-19 is [the result of] a bat-origin coronavirus from China," Daszak said. "Our grant is called understanding the risk of the emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses. The place we were doing it is China. We were right to be doing that."

Of science and suspicion

EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology's cooperation took their researchers to the front lines of infectious disease.

Scouring China, the scientists hunted the rare bat virus that would infect humans and cause the next severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS. The hope: find the virus and develop a vaccine in advance.

The quest led them to a remote bat cave in China's Yunnan province. There and elsewhere, over many years, the researchers took blood and fecal samples from bats, used those samples to identify the genetic sequence of unknown viruses and experimented with the material in the Wuhan lab.

Over the years, the collaboration yielded considerable results.

In the aftermath of SARS, Daszak and Wuhan Institute of Virology scientist Shi Zhengli, now referred to in some Chinese media as "bat woman," were among a group of scientists who in 2005 demonstrated that the virus most likely originated in horseshoe bats. Later, their researchers found evidence that bat coronaviruses could infect humans directly and don't need other animals as intermediary hosts.

The joint research involved risks. Researchers in protective equipment interacted with potentially infectious wildlife. Back in the lab, they cultured a live coronavirus from a bat on at least one occasion and tested its potential to infect human cells. Using what are known as "reverse genetics," they took the spike proteins of new viruses that they identified and inserted them into a uniform SARS-like virus to understand which was most infectious to humans. Some experiments involved humanized mice.

Theoretically, an accident during such activities could prompt an outbreak. If researchers, for example, had found SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes covid-19, and cultured the virus in the lab, it could have infected humans as the result of a mishap.

No evidence of that nature has emerged. Shi has said SARS-CoV-2 wasn't among the bat coronaviruses that her institute identified or possessed. Daszak dismissed such theories outright.

"We have worked with this lab for 15 years," Daszak said. "They didn't have the virus. I have never heard anything suspicious from this lab. It's a preposterous idea."

Along with other scientists, Daszak has argued that the covid-19 pandemic almost certainly arose naturally, namely through the "spillover" of the SARS-CoV-2 virus from bats to humans, possibly through an intermediary species, in a process similar to what caused the SARS outbreak in 2002.

"People hunt bats, eat bats, use bat feces for Chinese medicine and put it on their vegetable gardens, every day," he said. "We have actual evidence, real evidence, that between one [million] and seven million people a year are getting [exposed to or] infected by bat coronaviruses in Southeast Asia."

Fauci, who hasn't commented on why his institute, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, terminated the EcoHealth grant, said in an interview with National Geographic that the available scientific evidence points to a virus that "evolved in nature and then jumped species."

Such an outbreak could easily happen in any Chinese city with an animal market selling species that could carry the virus from bats to humans. Many of the initial patients in Wuhan, which has a population of more than 11 million, were connected to one such market.

But questions about exactly how and where the natural spillover took place, coupled with China's refusal so far to allow an independent investigation into the origins of the pandemic, have bred suspicion about whether the institute could be to blame. So has the coincidence that both the bat coronavirus research and the outbreak took place in the city of Wuhan.

The Trump administration has amplified the suspicion. Senior administration officials told U.S. intelligence agencies to scour their records and look for new information that might show that the Wuhan lab was the source of the virus, current and former officials familiar with those efforts said. Those agencies have not found evidence to support the theory, according to those people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal intelligence efforts.

The U.S. intelligence community agrees with the scientific consensus that the virus was not man-made or genetically modified, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence said in a statement in late April. It also said U.S. intelligence agencies will continue examining information "to determine whether the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or if it was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan."

Trump and his top aides have been fueling the lab-origin theory for weeks. Asked at an April 30 news conference whether he had seen any evidence that the pathogen causing covid-19 originated at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Trump said he had but then declined to elaborate.

"There is enormous evidence that that's where this began," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a May 3 interview with ABC News, when asked whether there was evidence that the outbreak began in the lab. He has not presented that evidence.

Scientists have analyzed SARS-CoV-2 and asserted that it has the makings of a naturally derived virus. And they have emphasized that the spillover of coronaviruses from animals to humans is a common occurrence, especially in a place like China.

Kristian G. Andersen, a microbiology professor at the La Jolla, Calif.-based Scripps Research Institute, who co-authored a March paper in the journal Nature arguing that the virus wasn't lab-created, said the lab-accident theory was not a plausible explanation, but rather a "possible explanation — with an extremely low likelihood of being true."

Science alone, however, cannot definitively disprove the lab-accident scenario, said Simon Wain-Hobson, a virologist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, in part because of the challenge of proving a negative. He said to do so would require full knowledge of the Wuhan institute's samples and activities leading up to the outbreak.

"The only way to know is we would seek the collaboration of our colleagues at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and this would need the collaboration of the Chinese government — and given the relationship, it seems unlikely that we are going to know," Wain-Hobson said. Trump's actions, he said, reduce the chances even further.

"Given available data, I subscribe to the natural-virus-origin thesis," he said. "There may be a twist."

An unpredicted outbreak

For years, the raison d'etre for EcoHealth's research in China and elsewhere has been "bio-surveillance."

The aim, Daszak said, is "to find out which of the viruses in the wild even possibly could infect people so we know where they are and we can stop them from emerging."

"It's a little bit like if you listen to phone calls from Afghanistan. To find the terrorists, you have to listen to all the phone calls," Daszak said. "Only when you've heard the phone call do you then go in and find out who these people are and disrupt those networks."

The nonprofit organization partnered for years with a USAID program called Predict. Launched in 2009, the program took tens of thousands of wildlife samples and identified hundreds of new viruses that could pose a threat to humans in order to create an "early-warning system" for the next pandemic. The Trump administration declined to renew the program's funding late last year. Its work has continued through an initiative called the Global Virome Project, for which Daszak is the secretary and treasurer.

Critics of the "early-warning system" approach say it would be onerous and costly to identify all of the world's zoonotic viruses, let alone figure out which ones will enjoy the exact alignment of circumstances to spill over and cause the next pandemic.

Andersen said the scientific research that EcoHealth and its partners in China have been doing is very important to better understand coronaviruses and how they work — but he takes issue with the panacean rationale.

"I feel the claim they are making that you can prevent the next pandemic by doing this type of work is preposterous," Andersen said. "If you could, given they worked in Wuhan for so long specifically, you would have thought they could have prevented the current pandemic, and they didn't."

Daszak, however, points out that one of his colleagues, Ralph Baric, a virologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, worked with Gilead Sciences to develop the antiviral drug remdesivir and used virus strains that EcoHealth and its Chinese partners identified in the process, putting the United States ahead of the curve.

In a statement, Baric said that it is critical to learn what viruses exist in nature so potential drugs can be tested against them in a laboratory setting. His lab already had been working on bat coronaviruses, including at least one discovered by EcoHealth and the Wuhan institute, before testing remdesivir.

"It is because of our early work that the United States was in a position to quickly find the first successful treatment for SARS-CoV-2," Baric said in a statement. "It is unfortunate that research that could help humans prepare for and fight disease is now viewed as questionable."

EcoHealth and its partners regularly sounded alarm bells about a bat coronavirus spilling over into humans and becoming the next pandemic. The nonprofit said it found more than 700 novel coronaviruses during its work in China.

Still, it did not identify or prevent the pathogen causing covid-19. Despite seeking to find "spillover-risk hot spots," the virus emerged in the very city their partners worked.

Shi told Scientific American that when the outbreak of a mysterious illness emerged in Wuhan late last year, she left a conference in Shanghai and returned home. If coronaviruses were indeed the culprit, she wondered, according to the magazine, "could they have come from our lab?"

After scouring her lab's records for possible evidence of an accident, Shi told Scientific American that she breathed a sigh of relief when the genetic sequences from the new virus came back and didn't match those her team sampled; the closest shared 96 percent of its genetic material.

"That really took a load off my mind," she told the magazine. "I had not slept a wink for days."

Suspicion of her institute grew anyway. Rumors circulated that she had defected, that she had been shut up by China's Communist Party in a coverup. In a social media post in February, she promised "on her life" that the virus had nothing to do with the lab. She declined to comment for this story.

Shi's research partners in the United States, including Daszak, have rushed to her defense, describing her as a highly professional scientist and her lab as one of China's best. Nevertheless, her claims have been treated with suspicion in a Washington where distrust of the Chinese government is at a decades-long high. Her institute is part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Attention soon shifted to her collaboration with U.S. scientists under NIH grants.

Starting in 2008, Daszak received the first of three multiyear grants from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to study bat viruses. The second grant, which began in 2014 and, according to EcoHealth, amounted to approximately $3.1 million over five years, placed the nonprofit in formal collaboration with the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a sub-recipient.

About $100,000 a year went to the institute in Wuhan to pay for the genetic sequencing of viruses under that grant, Daszak said.

Daszak received the third grant in 2019, worth about $3.2 million over five years, according to EcoHealth. The Wuhan Institute of Virology was a sub-awardee, as were East China Normal University in Shanghai, the Institute of Pathogen Biology in Beijing and Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore, according to NIH.

Daszak said he received a letter from NIH in late April saying that the agency had decided to suspend the Wuhan Institute of Virology from federal grants pending investigation. NIH asked whether EcoHealth had sent money to the lab under the current grant, and Daszak wrote to say it had not and would not. He said NIH suggested that the rest of the grant's work would resume.

Shortly thereafter, though, Daszak said he received another letter saying that the grant had been terminated. He wrote to NIH asking to have a conversation about the rationale for the termination. So far, he has not received a reply.

NIH would have screened the Wuhan Institute of Virology with input from the State Department as an acceptable foreign partner before issuing the grant, Daszak said. He said NIH was aware of all the work being done under the grant and never registered an objection.

Recipients are also required to file regular status updates for review by a panel of experts. NIH and EcoHealth declined to release those reports.

Regardless of whether the funding is restored, Daszak said EcoHealth would continue its work, much of which still relies on federal funding from agencies such as the Defense Department.

"We are just going to get on with our mission," he said. "We just move on. We have to."

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Date: Thu, 10 Jun 2021 6:13:56 PM -0400

Subject: Re: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

To: Peter Daszak [b6];

CC: Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] Jon Epstein [b6] >; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image001.gif; image002.jpg

Irony, irony…. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 10, 2021, at 18:06, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

It's a small bunch of bats collected at Xishuagnbanna Botanical Gdns in Yunnan province. No collections possible right now due to all these politics, but it certainly demonstrates that the diversity of CoVs in bats in S. China and SE Asia is huge, and will likely include many closer to SARS2 and no doubt the progenitor clade – prob the same one that includes these viruses and RaTG13, but a closer cluster.

I expect, if we can actually get on the ground and do some deeper sampling, we'll find a few hundred of these.

Sadly, it's exactly what's proposed in Specific Aim 1 of the terminated-now suspended with conditions NIH grant we have

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 3:49 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] <[b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: FW: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

Peter and colleagues, what do you know about thisn work? I had not known it was in press….

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] [b6] [b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 3:24 PM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

We will no doubt be asked how/if this paper impacts the origins-of-covid discussions that are everywhere

What are your thoughts? What would u tell a reporter who called u?

Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses

- Hong Zhou [9]
- Jingkai Ji [9]
- Xing Chen [9]
- Yuhai Bi [9]
- Juan Li
- Qihui Wang
- Tao Hu
- Hao Song
- Runchu Zhao
- Yanhua Chen
- Mingxue Cui
- Yanyan Zhang
- Alice C. Hughes
- Edward C. Holmes
- Weifeng Shi [10]
- Show less
- Show footnotes

Published:June 09, 2021DOI:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2021.06.008

Highlights

- Four novel SARS-CoV-2 related viruses were identified in rhinolophid bats.
- RpYN06 is the closest relative of SARS-CoV-2 in most of the virus genome.
- A high diversity of bat coronaviruses was present in a very small geographic area.
- Ecological modeling reveals a broad range of rhinolophid bats in parts of Asia.

Summary

Despite the discovery of animal coronaviruses related to SARS-CoV-2, the evolutionary origins of this virus are elusive. We describe a meta-transcriptomic study of 411 bat samples collected from a small geographical region in Yunnan province, China, between May 2019 and November 2020. We identified 24 full-length coronavirus genomes, including four novel SARS-CoV-2 related and three SARS-CoV related viruses. *Rhinolophus pusillus* virus RpYN06 was the closest relative of SARS-CoV-2 in most of the genome, although it possessed a more divergent spike gene. The other three SARS-CoV-2 related coronaviruses carried a genetically distinct spike gene that could weakly bind to the hACE2 receptor *in vitro*. Ecological modeling predicted the co-existence of up to 23 *Rhinolophus* bat species, with the largest contiguous hotspots extending from South Laos and Vietnam to southern China. Our study highlights the remarkable diversity of bat coronaviruses at the local scale, including close relatives of both SARS-CoV-2 and SARS-CoV.

Keywords

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Date: Fri, 9 Oct 2020 11:16:16 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 9 Oct 2020 11:16:15 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Slight harrassment on my current NIAID contract
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
To: Peter Daszak [b6] ;
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

I don't know what that means, but if it goes back to DMID and JP, then they will be in a position to run interference for you. With only 24 days until the election, I wouldn't start worrrying yet. d

On 10/9/2020 11:06 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> By the way I m currently in the process of dealing with unexpected changes to my Notice of Award for my new contract with NIAID. We had a para inserted that means we have to send copies of subcontracts to NIAID, and explain our Biosafety monitoring plans. I spoke with Jean Patterson who s running these CREID contracts, and she had no idea what they were after. Clearly the director s office interfering.
>
> I m going to try to deal with it quietly right now and push back. But if they fuck me around, I ll be talking with the press.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: [b6]
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> **Sent:** Friday, October 2, 2020 7:54 AM
> **To:** Peter Daszak [b6]
> **Cc:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic
>
> Indeed! I hope that when you get enough air you will also push NIAID for the full hearing on grant termination you deserve. If not for the money, Then for the sake of justice
>
> D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Oct 2, 2020, at 00:07, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Just coming up for air after 2 weeks solid grant/report writing. I m submitting a new R01 on Monday for a project called: Analyzing the potential for future bat coronavirus emergence in Southeast Asia in other words to do what the China grant should be doing, but now in Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam.

Amused to see the response below from our polite and careful presidents of NAS and NAM, just days before the whole world got alarmed at just how much of a corrupt malicious ogre we ve got inhabiting the center of our Govt s power.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 1:37 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: FW: NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

[b6]

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director

Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 11:55 AM
Subject: NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

Share

NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

Statement | **September 24, 2020**

As advisers to the nation on all matters of science, medicine, and public health, we are compelled to underscore the value of science-based decision-making at all levels of government. Our nation is at a critical time in the course of the COVID-19 pandemic with important decisions ahead of us, especially concerning the efficacy and safety of vaccines. Policymaking must be informed by the best available evidence without it being distorted, concealed, or otherwise deliberately miscommunicated. We find ongoing reports and incidents of the politicization of science, particularly the overriding of evidence and advice from public health officials and derision of government scientists, to be alarming. It undermines the credibility of public health agencies and the public's confidence in them when we need it most. Ending the pandemic will require decision-making that is not only based on science but also sufficiently transparent to ensure public trust in, and adherence to, sound public-health instructions. Any efforts to discredit the best science and scientists threaten the health and welfare of us all.

Marcia McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Victor J. Dzau
President, National Academy of Medicine

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

Date: Tue, 12 May 2020 9:37:59 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 12 May 2020 9:37:57 PM -0400
Subject: Re: NYT: We're All Casualties of Trump's War on Science
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Peter Daszak b6 >; Bryan Morens b6
Attachments: image001.png; image002.jpg

Thanks David. This is so horribly true - all of it.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 12, 2020, at 8:19 PM, David Morens b6 wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 12, 2020 at 20:18:03 EDT
To: David Morens b6
Subject: Fwd: NYT: We're All Casualties of Trump's War on Science

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 12, 2020 at 19:52:25 EDT
Subject: NYT: We're All Casualties of Trump's War on Science

We're All Casualties of Trump's War on Science

The administration kneecaps experts as the coronavirus rages.
<image001.png >

By Michelle Goldberg

Opinion Columnist

- May 11, 2020

●●●
<image002.jpg>

Rick Bright was removed from an agency overseeing efforts to develop a coronavirus vaccine because, he says, he refused to endorse potentially dangerous treatments.Credit...Toya Sarno Jordan/Bloomberg

In 2004, "60 Minutes" aired a segment on what it called "virus hunters," scientists searching for bugs that can leap from animals to humans and cause pandemics. "What worries me the most is that we are going to miss the next emerging disease," said a scientist named Peter Daszak, describing his fear of a coronavirus "that moves from one part of the planet to another, wiping out people as it moves along."

In the intervening years, Daszak became president of the EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit research organization focused on emerging pandemics. EcoHealth worked with China's Wuhan Institute of Virology to study coronaviruses in bats that could infect humans, and, as Science magazine put it, "to develop tools that could help researchers create diagnostics, treatments and vaccines for human outbreaks." Since 2014, the EcoHealth Alliance has received a grant from the National Institutes of Health, until its funding was abruptly cut two weeks ago.

The reason, as "60 Minutes" reported on Sunday evening, was a conspiracy theory spread by Representative Matt Gaetz, the Florida Republican who in March wore a gas mask on the House floor to mock concern about the new coronavirus. On April 14, Gaetz appeared on Tucker Carlson's Fox News show and claimed that the N.I.H. grant went to the Wuhan Institute, which Gaetz intimated might have been the source of the virus — the institute may have "birthed a monster," in his words.

The first of Gaetz's claims was flatly false, and the second unlikely; the C.I.A. has reportedly found no evidence of a link between the virus and the Wuhan lab. But at a White House briefing a few days later, a reporter from the right-wing website Newsmax told President Trump that under Barack Obama, the N.I.H. gave the Wuhan lab a $3.7 million grant. "Why would the U.S. give a grant like that to China?" she asked. In fact, Trump's administration had recently renewed EcoHealth's grant, but Trump didn't appear to know that. "The Obama administration gave them a grant of $3.7 million?" he asked. Then he said, "We will end that grant very quickly."

And they did. But ending the grant dealt a blow to efforts to find treatments and a vaccine for the coronavirus. Remdesivir, the antiviral drug that's shown some promise in Covid-19 patients, was earlier tested against bat viruses EcoHealth discovered. Now the nonprofit is facing layoffs.

This political hit on Daszak's work is far from the only way that the Trump administration's contempt for science has undermined America's coronavirus response. Conservative antipathy to science is nothing new; Republicans have long denied and denigrated the scientific consensus on issues from evolution to stem cell research to climate change. This hostility has several causes, including populist distrust of experts, religious rejection of information that undermines biblical literalism and efforts by giant corporations to evade regulation.

But it's grown worse under Trump, with his authoritarian impulse to quash any facts, from inauguration crowd sizes to hurricane paths, that might reflect poorly on him.

Until recently, it seemed as if Trump's sabotage of efforts to combat climate change would be the most destructive legacy of his disregard for science. But the coronavirus has presented the country with an emergency that only sound science can solve. That means that the Trump administration's disdain for expertise, its elevation of slavish loyalty over technical competence, has become a more immediate threat.

Months before this pandemic began, Reuters reported, the Trump administration axed the job of an epidemiologist working for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in China to help detect emerging disease outbreaks. As the pandemic raged, the administration removed Rick Bright, one of America's premier experts on vaccine development, from an agency overseeing efforts to develop a coronavirus vaccine. Last week Bright filed a whistle-blower complaint claiming he'd suffered retaliation because he resisted "funding potentially dangerous drugs promoted by those with political connections and by the administration itself." (A federal watchdog agency has called for him to be reinstated pending its investigation.)

Another whistle-blower complaint, filed by a former volunteer on the coronavirus team assembled by Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, claims the effort has been beset by inexperience and incompetence. The Associated Press reported on how the White House buried guidance from the C.D.C. on how

communities could safely reopen. Now the president is urging Americans to return to work even as the White House itself has proved unable to keep the coronavirus at bay.

According to Axios, Trump has even privately started expressing skepticism of the coronavirus's death toll, suggesting it's lower than official statistics say. (Most experts believe the opposite.) "A senior administration official said he expects the president to begin publicly questioning the death toll as it closes in on his predictions for the final death count and damages him politically," reported Axios. The Trump administration's approach to the coronavirus began with denialism, and that's likely how it will end.

Any progress America makes in fighting Covid-19 will be in spite of its federal government, not because of it. "I am speaking out because to combat this deadly virus, science — not politics or cronyism — has to lead the way," Dr. Bright said when he went public with his complaint in April. Trump won't let that happen. He'd rather essentially give up on combating it at all.

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Date:	Wed, 6 May 2020 6:07:49 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 6 May 2020 6:07:48 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: Amusing interlude re. an NASEM Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
From:	David Morens [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6];
CC:	[b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments:	Draft Covid-19 US-China dialogue agenda.docx; Untitled attachment 07426.htm

I have almost all 12 Fawlty Towers episodes committed to memory but am fuzzy on the one you are referring to, possibly the one titled The Germans. Gotta re watch them i guess. Funniest stuff ever

Throughout the whole series was a character called The Major, played by the 1930s and 1940s character actor Ba llard Berkeley, a WWI vet who apparently had Alzheimers and couldnt remember much except that he didnt much like The Germans

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 6, 2020, at 17:49, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> Confidentially sharing this. I initially thought this was the National Academies moving surprisingly swiftly and directly in defense of my honor and that of science across the world, but it's not – it looks like from this email chain below, that this was in the works already. I think this was something Linda Saif has initiated at the NAS to build collaborative good will with China.
>
> It's good that this call will at least have key people on it: Ralph Baric, Jim Le Duc, George Gao, Linda Saif. Note the email though that we're going to specifically avoid discussing the issue of the origin of COVID-19.
>
> That reminds me of the Fawlty Towers episode where Basil Fawlty (having sustained a fall and minor concussion) has a German guest and keeps reminding himself 'not to mention the War'…of course, he does in the most hilarious and crass way possible.
>
> I will try not to mention 'the war' on this call….I'll let you know how it goes…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Rusek, Benjamin b6
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2020 6:15 PM
To: 'David A Relman' b6 'Baric, Ralph S' b6 'Saif, Linda' b6 >; 'Perlman, Stanley' b6 >; Peter Daszak b6 >; Harvey V. Fineberg b6 >; 'Diane Griffin' b6 >; 'Peggy Hamburg' b6 b6 b6 'Dave Franz b6 b6 Shi, Pei yong b6 b6
Cc: 'Frances Sharples' b6 >; Lowenthal, Micah b6 'Baric, Toni C' b6 b6 >; Alison Andre b6 >; Jennifer Ryan b6 >; Bowman, Katherine <b6 >
Subject: Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
Importance: High

Greetings,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a virtual bilateral dialogue meeting between Chinese and American experts studying and fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. I am reaching out to you now so 1) the group is connected by email and 2) to organize the planning teleconference for the American participants on May 7. The purpose of the May 7 discussion is to fill you in on the dialogue background, discuss the topics/questions (list in your invitation letter and attached) and issues we should probably avoid (origin questions, politics), logistics, and address any other questions or concerns you may have.

We are proposing that this ~1 hour discussion take place over Zoom at 8:00 PM ET on Thursday, May 7. If this time does not work for someone we could push the time up or back slightly. Please let me know. Also if Thursday evening is impossible I can brief you on the discussion over the phone sometime on Friday.

Re the actually dialogue meeting with the Chinese group, as your invitation letter notes we have proposed that the dialogue meeting take place on the evenings of Monday, May 11th (to address the first set of bullet points) and Tuesday, May 12th (to ask/answer follow-up questions and address the second set of bullet points), at 9:00 PM ET for the Americans. George Gao has not yet let us know if these exact times work but we should hear back from him soon (the Chinese May day holidays end on the 5th).

Kind regards,

Ben

Benjamin Rusek
The U.S. National Academy of Sciences
b6

Date: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 2:59:17 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 26 Apr 2020 2:59:16 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Jeffery Taubenberger [b6]

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
Date: April 26, 2020 at 06:43:51 EDT
To: David Morens [b6] >
Subject: Fwd: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: April 25, 2020 at 22:03:15 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >, "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]gov >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Thanks Peter,

I know Dave Morens – everybody knows Dave Morens. I had another thought about this and it would be to alert Victor Dzau who works very closely with Tony, of course, and even though I consider myself a friend as well as a colleague I think Victor would have a pretty direct route to Tony. It is an issue the National Academies should be interested in, and have some traction. We need to get Peggy Hamburg involved to bring AAAS on board. It is like the Bush administration attempts to control NIH but on steroids. Anyone but an idiot would understand why it is essential to maintain our scientific connections with China so that we can engage with them to figure out what happened. What the Trump idiots are doing is totally and absolutely counterproductive. I do think – as we discussed yesterday – that for the moment keeping cool is the best strategy. But influential people need to know and its probably better if you are not directly involved.

I watched the session on COVID-19 this afternoon for the Academies meeting via Zoom or some platform. Tony, Jeremy, George Gao, Sanjay Gupta, Susan Weiss, and Richard Hatchett, All of the questions about the emergence and the reservoir or spillover host for which there is no information are the strengths of your programs and your collaborations. How absolutely stupid to close those off, but how absolutely unacceptable it is from the perspective of the separation of politics and science in a free society. That Francis would allow it is hard to believe. That Tony would allow it is even harder to believe – and for that reason I expect it is at levels below him and he is too busy at the moment trying to keep focused on rational decision making while the idiot in chief tells us to swallow a UV-C lamp or shove it up out butt – I can tell you whose butt I would shove it – and for good measure have a Chloroxitini or just do a total cleansing with H2O2 (the rationale would be if H2O is good for us wouldn't H2O2 be better, after all it would have another one of those O's whatever they are.

Dave, get in touch so we might strategize, and for certain reasons keep Peter out of the loop.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; David Morens [b6]) [b6]>
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry – great to read this – thanks for your support.

I also spoke with David Morens today who was equally shocked and said this has never happened. He also said there are influential people who would come to our defense at the right moment. In the meantime, he's going to talk with Greg Folkers (Chief of Staff for Tony Fauci) to find out if Tony knows, and why it happened. He's then going to let Tony know. I think you and him are on the same page in that you're both right that this is a clear political interference in NIH business. Trump said at his press briefing Friday 17th that he would 'end' the grant, and one week later I got the termination notice from NIH.

In the meantime, we're working on a short draft of how we could have easily changed the geography to the countries adjacent to China, as we proposed to Erik Stemmy and Emily Erbelding. We'll be talking with them next week early to try and find out why this happened. We won't respond to the termination notice (Michael Lauer) until we've found out more.

FYI – re. the FoIA - I'm contacting the FBI to talk about the risk of our FoIA and how I've been threatened by QANON related to this and our Chinese colleagues have had their lives threatened.

I'm not going to talk to the media about this, not our representatives, until I've tried all possible ways with NIAID/NIH to change the decision from a cancelation. I'm also very concerned that Trump could target our organization or me personally, leading to our EIDRC being nixed and we don't even have an NoA on that, so it could quietly disappear.

I'll get back in touch with you once I've found out more from Erik Stemmy, Emily Erbelding and Cristina Cassetti.

In the meantime is it OK if I email introduce you and David so you could possibly coordinate in some way, or at least stay in touch? Right now I'm feeling particularly vulnerable – the power of the President is pointed at us, the CIA, FBI and someone from Medical Defense Intelligence (or something) are interviewing staff, QAnon are threatening me, and our colleagues in China have death threats against them. That's just this week! Having you out there talking with others at this level is extremely important right now.

By the way, here's a list of our Board: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/board- of-directors

It includes two people you know – Jim Hughes (former head of NCID/CDC, Rear Admiral Public Health Service Rtd, Asst. Surgeon General Rtd) and Rita Colwell (Former Head of NSF under 3 presidents: Clinton, Bush sr, Bush Jr – I think). I'll be talking with Jim Hughes tomorrow or Monday and Rita Colwell on our Baord meeting Friday.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 >
Subject: RE: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Hi Peter and Aleksei,

I want to change my recommendation from earlier this evening. Put the really good Cabernet aside and drink the disinfectant instead. This is an afront to science, after the language in the first letter and your response to comply. It must be challenged. The question is not only how but also when – certainly not before the EIDRC funding comes through. And then in a smart manner. I want to chat again next week – I need the weekend off having just finished the draft report on the R&D preparedness ecosystem for NAM working with Nicki Lurie. There are some smart and very influential people I can talk to - and keep you out of the conversation – when we agree it makes sense. I mentioned Maria Freire from FNIH and Mary Woolley from Research!America. I also

thought about Harold Varmus and former Representative John Porter who was a great supporter of NIH (made the doubling happen) and CDC even though he is a Republican. But I too will do nothing for a few days.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: FW: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]; Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Linde, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E] < [b6]>; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E [b6]>; Bulls, Michelle G. (NIH/OD) [E] < [b6]
Subject: PLEASE READ -- Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone
Email b6

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6], "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < [b6] "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6], "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I read that we are in agreement and in compliance with all requests. Please let us know if anything further is required. We will continue in our usual close communication with our Program Officer Erik Stemmy.

Sincerely,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura
Chief of Staff &
Authorized Organizational Representative

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

[b6] (office)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

On Apr 21, 2020, at 19:28, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6] > wrote:

Many thanks Peter for your response.

We note that:

- No monies have gone to WIV on the Type 2 award and no contract has been signed.
- You agree that you will not provide any funds to WIV until and unless directed otherwise by NIH.
- All foreign sites for the Type 1 and Type 2 awards have been documented in the progress reports submitted to NIH.

We appreciate your working with us.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: b6

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:07 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" <b6>
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" <b6>, Aleksei Chmura <b6>, "Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>, "Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Michael – Confirming receipt of your email. I'm also cc'ing the following people so they're aware of this request:

1. Our AOR – Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who has access to all our records
2. My Program Officer for this award, Dr. Erik Stemmy & the Division Director (DMID), Dr. Emily Erberding, so they are informed and aware of the request and our response.

That said we need some time to go through the request for information and will provide this as quickly as we can.

However, **I can categorically state that no funds form 2R01AI110964-06 have been sent to Wuhan Institute of Virology, nor has any contract been signed.** Furthermore, we will comply with NIAID requirements, of course.
Concerning the request for information on all of the sites linked to this award in China, you should be aware that these are documented in our progress reports over the course of the grant. As you can understand we are under enormous pressure to generate data related to the current pandemic, and we do not want to divert staff to this effort. We are hoping the previously filed reports will satisfy this request.

We are well aware of the political concerns over the origins of this outbreak. Our collaboration with Wuhan Institute of Virology has been scientific and we have been consistently impressed with the scientific capabilities of that laboratory and its research staff. Our joint work has led to a series of critical papers published in high impact journals that served to raise awareness of the future threat coronaviruses pose for global health and therefore US national security. Scientific insights with epidemiological significance have been jointly published and our relationship has always been open and transparent and with one concern only, scientific validity. We are concerned that current actions may jeopardize 15 years of fruitful collaboration with colleagues in Wuhan, who are working at the leading edge to design vaccines and drugs that could help us fight this new threat in future years. It is quite remarkable that of the 5 vaccine candidates listed by WHO that are already in human trials, 3 have been developed in China. That said, we of course will do all we can to make sure any further questions from NIH or any Federal agency are addressed to our fullest knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kevin Oliva b6; Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6 ; Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E b6 ; Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Thank you Kevin

- We need to work with a senior responsible business official – usually PI's and senior business officials are different people.
- When I looked you up on the web, I see the Columbia logo (see attached screenshot). Specifically, it appears to be Columbia University > Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology > EcoHealth Alliance (labeled as an "Affiliation/Department"). Thus the web profile makes it look to me as if EcoHealth Alliance is linked to Columbia University.
- In any case, I'm looping in Dr. Daszak.
- We need to know all sites in China that have been in any way linked to this award (Type 1 and Type 2). We have data in NIH, but we want to make absolutely sure that we're of the same understanding.

We greatly appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Best, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: b6
Email: b6

From: Kevin Oliva b6 >
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Cc: Naomi Schrag b6 , "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" < b6
Subject: Re: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Mike,

I received the attached letter, however please note:

1. I am not the PI on this award. You should contact Dr. Peter Daszak b6 who is the PI and leading this project for EcoHealth Alliance.
2. Columbia University is not involved in this NIH project, and it is not clear to me why Naomi and Columbia University were included.

Thank you,
Kevin

Kevin J. Olival, PhD
Vice President for Research

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (direct)
b6 (mobile)
b6 (fax)
www.ecohealthalliance.org
EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics *and* promote conservation

On Apr 20, 2020, at 2:16 PM, Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E b6 wrote:

Many thanks Naomi – it would be helpful for us to know about all China-based participants in this work since the Type 1 grant started in 2014 – who they were and how much money they received. The sooner you can get us that information, the better.

Best, Mike

From: Naomi Schrag b6
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 11:59 AM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6 " b6 " b6 , Naomi Schrag < b6
Cc: "Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Subject: RE: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,
I am acknowledging receipt of this letter and will get back to you as soon as I can.
Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag

From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 11:00 AM
To b6 ; Naomi Schrag b6
Cc: Black, Jodi (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Actions needed regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag

Please see attached.

Many thanks, Mike

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone:
Email: b6

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20.pdf>

<EcoHealth Alliance re AI grant 4 19 20[2].pdf><NoA R01AI110964-06.pdf><NoA R01AI110964-01.pdf>

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 5:17:50 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 5:17:49 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Remarkable conversation
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]

All good news again! Its perplexing that Peggy H is apparently waffling. She has long been an NIAID friend and considers Tony a kind of mentor i think.

Sometimes i delude myself into thinking i understand things, and then i discover so many things that dont make sense

But Jerry, never mind that, your efforts have been huge and multi-pronged, and will i think bear fruit, frustrating as it is to see friends slinking away.

Small comfort, i know, but at the very least vindication will come in the history books. My bet is thT it will also come much sooner than that

As i said, if this termination BS is reversed, it's Moët et Chandon on me, as much as you can drink. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jun 16, 2020, at 17:08, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> I have been exchanging emails with Richard Roberts, as you know from the link I sent regarding the ACD meeting. So I took advantage of this new best buddy relationship to ask him to contact Steven Chu about getting AAAS to speak up. As you know I have been encouraging Peggy Hamburg to try to work some magic but without results, and in fact I don't know if she has followed through. But he is an activist and feels deeply about this. So maybe his concern will resonate with Chu (who signed the Nobelist letter) and energize something via the AAAS Board. We will see down the road.

Date: Thu, 28 May 2020 1:23:17 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 28 May 2020 1:23:15 PM -0400
Subject: RE: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]>
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>;

Given the circumstances this will probably be more of a twit than a tweet.

From: Peter Daszak (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) (
b
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 1:19 PM
To: David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Great – then it'll look like my tweet helped.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 12:55 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Re: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

My guess is that the Democrats will want to replace him in any case. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 28, 2020, at 11:43, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

It he hasn't even got the basic PR skills to dodge that question, he shouldn't be out there talking with reporters.

On November 6th, if Trump is ousted, my first tweet of the day will be to demand his resignation from NIH.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 11:39 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Re: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

I dont know..... He may be trying to cover his ass regarding upcoming inquiries and investigations? D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 28, 2020, at 11:31, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Thanks for spotting that. What's wrong with this guy – doesn't he understand the weight his words will carry at this point. He should know better than to answer that question directly with "no way of knowing". Politico's not at fault here – Collins just walked into the oldest trap in the book – you can't prove a negative, but don't give that

quote.

Extremely disappointing on many levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens b6
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 10:39 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Gerald Keusch b6
Subject: Fwd: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" b6
> **Date:** May 28, 2020 at 10:33:44 EDT
> **To:** David Morens b6
> **Subject: Fwd: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** Karen Goraleski b6

Date: May 28, 2020 at 10:31:06 AM EDT
To: "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" [b6], Chandy John < [b6] >, [b6] " < [b6] >, "Hill, David R. Prof." < [b6] >, "Daniel [b6] " < [b6] >, "Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases)" < [b6] >, "Walker, Patricia F" < [b6]
Subject: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Unfortunately, the headline chosen by Politico fans the flames (does get more eyeballs on the story which is their goal). If one reads this, Collins says nature created this virus but that was not chosen as the headline. We know that Collins is speaking as a scientist when he says 'there is no way of knowing.' However, readers do not recognize that he says this as a scientist who understands there are always unknowns, even if highly highly unlikely.

NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

By Zachary Brennan

05/27/2020 06:52 PM EDT

National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins said the coronavirus is "absolutely not" manmade but he could not rule out the idea that it escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, where the first known cases emerged.

"Whether [the coronavirus] could have been in some way isolated and studied in this laboratory in Wuhan, we have no way of knowing," he told POLITICO on Wednesday.

What is clear, he said, is that "Nature created this virus, and has proven once again to be the most effective bioterrorist."

President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have repeatedly suggested that the virus may have somehow emerged from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — claims that the center's director has called "pure fabrication."

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence confirmed late last month that the government is investigating the pandemic's origin, but said that there is no reason to believe that the coronavirus was manmade or genetically modified.

Collins refused to comment on his agency's recent — and controversial — decision to pull fundingfrom researchers studying how coronaviruses spread from bats to people. In late April the NIH told the EcoHealth Alliance, whose collaborators included scientists at the Wuhan virology lab, that its project did not "align with the program goals and agency priorities."

Prominent scientific societies and 77 Nobel laureates have asked the administration to investigate why the non-profit group's grant was terminated, alleging that the decision was made for political, rather than scientific, reasons. The NIH awards grants using a merit-based system in which researchers evaluate the work of their peers, and ending a

grant early is unusual.

Collins, who had not previously commented publicly on the situation, told POLITICO that "the NIH cannot discuss individual grants."

The agency chief, who is leading a public-private partnership called ACTIV to hunt for coronavirus vaccines and drugs, said that if "all goes perfectly," a few million doses of vaccine could be available in October for high-risk groups — with doses available sometime next winter for the rest of the country.

Trump has repeatedly promised a vaccine by the end of the year, far faster than any has ever been developed for any condition.

If China develops a coronavirus vaccine before the U.S. does, Collins said he "seriously hopes" that any tensions between the countries "wouldn't be a dominant factor" in determining whether the U.S. would have access to a Chinese-made shot.

Date: Tue, 14 Jul 2020 6:09:06 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 14 Jul 2020 6:09:05 PM -0400
Subject: Re: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]

I think you are taking the WRONG drugs, or else having a real;ly bad
"trip".. d

On 7/14/2020 6:06 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:
> When I hallucinate it looks like Trump, cheap fiber blond comb-over, orange skin, puffy eyes, asshole shaped mouth emitting one syllable words in an incomprehensible continuous stream of gibberish.
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:44 PM
> To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> Subject: Re: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
>
> I am giving up trying to remember the guy's name, at least temporarily. It was NOT Bruce Aylward or Neil Ferguson or Keiji Fukuda. The guy I am thinking of would be now maybe 60 or so, grayish shortcut hair, thin, balding.... Maybe I just hallucinated him.
>
> d
>
>
> On 7/14/2020 2:03 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:
>> OK - please describe the UK epidemiologist you're thinking of - man/woman, short/tall, beard or no, any hair - as fit as Fauci, or as tubby as Trump?
>>
>> Just joshing of course. We were just talking about it on our EHA senior staff call - could it be David Heymann? Is he an epidemiologist.
>>
>> I looked at who was involved in N. Kivu Ebola analyses. Here's one
>> paper in NEJM - it could be Chris Dye - he's from the UK and headed up
>> this paper
>> https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmoa1411099
>>
>>
>>
>> Cheers,
>>
>> Peter
>>
>>
>>
>>
>> Peter Daszak
>> President
>>
>> EcoHealth Alliance
>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
>> New York, NY 10018-6507

>> USA
>>
>> Tel.: [b6]
>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>>
>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>> pandemics and promote conservation
>>
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
>> Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 10:44 AM
>> To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T
>> [b6]
>> Subject: RE: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2
>> origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
>>
>> You may be right.... I am guessing I know the UK epidemiologist, but am blanking on his name at the moment. I can picture him..... d
>>
>>
>>
>> David M. Morens, M.D.
>> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the
>> Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and
>> Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room
>> 7A-03
>> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
>> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
>> B [b6] [b6] [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) [b6]
>>[b6]
>> [b6]
>>
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>>
>>
>>
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
>> Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 4:18 PM
>> To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch,
>> Gerald T [b6]
>> Subject: RE: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2
>> origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
>>
>> From the WHO press conference today: "WHO generally does not announce names of staff who go on mission in the field ". Mike Ryan then said one is a leading expert on animal-human interface, other is UK academic epidemiologist who led

analytics effort on Ebola N. Kivu DRC.
>>
>> I wonder if one is Pierre Formenty - he's a veterinarian who worked on Ebola, Lassa fever etc. and is senior. The epidemiologist could be any one of a number of people.
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>> Cheers,
>>
>> Peter
>>
>>
>>
>>
>> Peter Daszak
>> President
>>
>> EcoHealth Alliance
>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
>> New York, NY 10018-6507
>> USA
>>
>> Tel.: b6
>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>>
>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>> pandemics and promote conservation
>>
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
>> Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 4:51 PM
>> To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Peter Daszak
>>b6 >
>> Subject: RE: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2
>> origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
>>
>> Yes, I meant the team members. No word here at NIH....
>> david
>>
>>
>> David M. Morens, M.D.
>> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the
>> Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and
>> Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room
>> 7A-03
>> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
>> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
>> B b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) b6

>> [b6]
>> [b6]
>>
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>>
>>
>>
>>
>> ----Original Message----
>> From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
>> Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 1:25 PM
>> To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Peter
>> Daszak [b6]
>> Subject: RE: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2
>> origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
>>
>> If you mean the two members of the team then no, have not heard anything about who they are. I have been wondering about it.
>>
>> Jerry
>>
>> ----Original Message----
>> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
>> Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 12:17 PM
>> To: Peter Daszak [b6]
>> [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
>> Subject: FW: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2
>> origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
>>
>> Do you know who these people are? d
>>
>>
>>
>> David M. Morens, M.D.
>> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the
>> Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and
>> Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room
>> 7A-03
>> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
>> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
>> B 301 [b6] [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) [b6]
>[b6]
>>[b6]
>>
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>>
>>
>>
>>
>> ----Original Message----
>> From: promed-edr@promedmail.org <promed-edr@promedmail.org>
>> Sent: Saturday, July 11, 2020 9:35 PM
>> To: promed-post@promedmail.org; promed-edr-post@promedmail.org;
>> promed-ahead-post@promedmail.org
>> Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin,
>> animal reservoir, WHO mission
>>
>>
>> CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (312): CHINA, SARS-COV-2 ORIGIN,
>> ANIMAL RESERVOIR, WHO MISSION
>> **********
>> **********
>> A ProMED-mail post
>> <http://www.promedmail.org>
>> ProMED-mail is a program of the
>> International Society for Infectious Diseases <http://www.isid.org>
>>
>> Date: Fri 10 Jul 2020
>> Source: Science Magazine - News [edited]
>> <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/who- led-mission-may-investiga
>> te-pandemic-s-origin-here-are-key-questions-ask>
>>
>>
>> The 2-person team from the World Health Organization (WHO) traveling to China today [10 Jul 2020] to address the origin of the COVID-19 pandemic is unlikely to come home with answers. Rather, the duo -- an epidemiologist and an animal health expert whose names have not been released -- will discuss with Chinese officials the scope of a larger international mission later, according to a WHO statement.
>>
>> But this initial trip offers real hope that the mystery of the virus'
>> origins, which has become a political powder keg and the subject of countless conspiracy theories, will finally be investigated more thoroughly and transparently. (A similar WHO-led mission to examine how China was handling its fight against the virus, launched after weeks of diplomatic wrangling, returned in February [2020] with a surprising wealth of information) [comment 1].
>>
>> "Science must stay open to all possibilities" about the pandemic's origins, Mike Ryan, executive director of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, said at a press conference on 7 Jul [2020]. "We need to lay out a series of investigations that will get the answers that I'm sure the Chinese government, governments around the world, and ourselves really need in order to manage the risk going forward into the future."
>>
>> Questions range from hunting for animals that might harbor the virus to examining the possibility that it came from a laboratory. There are plenty of details to investigate, and it could be a long road. Origin riddles for other new infectious diseases often took years to solve, and the route to answers has involved wrong turns, surprising twists, technological advances, lawsuits, allegations of cover-ups, and high-level politics. Determining how a pathogen suddenly emerges in people requires a lot of sleuthing, but past successes offer clues of where to look for new insights, as do the few data points that now exist for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
>>
>> The initial, tidy origin story told by health officials in Wuhan during the 1st few weeks of January [2020] was that a cluster of people connected to a seafood market developed an unusual pneumonia, and that the outbreak stopped after the market was

closed and disinfected. But confusion about the origin of the novel coronavirus identified in Wuhan patients arose when researchers published the 1st epidemiologic studies of the city's outbreak: 4 of the 1st 5 cases confirmed to have SARS-CoV-2 infections had no link to the market.
>>
>> Soon, other theories emerged. Some believe it's no coincidence that the city is host to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), home to leading bat coronavirus researcher Shi Zheng-Li. Her group, one of the 1st to isolate and sequence SARS-CoV-2, has trapped bats in the wild for 15 years, hunting for coronaviruses to help identify pandemic threats. In their 1st report about the new virus, the scientists described a bat coronavirus in their collection that was 96.2% similar to SARS-CoV-2 [comment 2].
>>
>> U.S. President Donald Trump early on endorsed speculation that the
>> virus entered humans because of an accident at WIV. A more contentious
>> theory is that the lab created the virus. (Researchers at the lab
>> insist neither scenario has any merit, and evolutionary biologists
>> elsewhere have argued the virus shows no evidence of having been
>> engineered.)
>>
>> The most popular hypothesis is that SARS-CoV-2 spread into humans from an intermediate host, an animal species susceptible to the virus that acted as a bridge between bats and humans. In the case of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), civets turned out to play that role for the responsible coronavirus. For Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), also a coronavirus disease, it quickly became clear camels were the culprit because highly similar viruses were found in the animals and people caring for them.
>>
>> Chinese officials have reported conducting tests for SARS-CoV-2 at the
>> Wuhan seafood market, but what they found remains sketchy. China's
>> state-run news agency, Xinhua, said "environmental samples" tested
>> positive for the virus in a zone of the market that sold wildlife, but
>> the report had no details about the results or even a list of the
>> species for sale. Other studies have discovered similarities between
>> SARS-CoV-2 and a coronavirus found in pangolins, an endangered species that eats ants, but the pangolin virus is more divergent genetically from SARS-CoV-2 than the closest bat virus, and there's no evidence pangolins or their scales -- used in traditional Chinese medicine -- were sold at the market.
>>
>> So, assuming WHO's team and the Chinese government work out a deal for an international mission to study the pandemic's origins, where would it start? Here are some key questions that need answers.
>>
>> - What, exactly, did the studies of the Wuhan seafood market sample, and what did the researchers find? With SARS, which emerged in a person in China's Guangdong province in November 2002 -- but was not reported to WHO for 3 months -- extensive sampling of animals at marketplaces in the province found its virus in palm civets by October 2003.
>>
>> - Does more epidemiological data exist about the earliest cases than have been made public so far here and here? Where had they traveled?
>> Were they in contact with any animals? What interactions did they have with each other? Have antibody tests been done on any of their contacts? Do stored blood or tissue samples for any of their contacts exist that could show earlier infections?
>>
>> For SARS, by June 2004, 14 months after the discovery of that virus, researchers had reported detailed epidemiological analyses of humans and animals: 39% of the earliest cases were food handlers, traders of live animals were 13 times more likely to have antibodies to the virus, and in that group, 72% handled civets. New interviews with the earliest COVID-19 cases could reveal surprising links between them.
>> COVID-19 clusters, for example, have occurred among people who were dining and drinking together, gathering at religious services, and even playing mahjong.
>>
>> - How aggressively have Chinese researchers looked for SARS-CoV-2 in samples collected before the 1st known cases in

Wuhan? Have they looked outside of Wuhan? How far back in time have they probed?
>>
>> Hospitals and diagnostic labs sometimes store blood, nasal swabs, and tissue samples from patients, especially if they die from unexplained illnesses. Just such samples led to the realization that MERS, 1st recognized in Saudi Arabia in June 2012, had killed 2 people in Jordan in April of that year [2012]. Analyses of stored samples from those 2 people and blood sampling of others who became ill but survived that outbreak confirmed that they all had MERS. Scientists realized camels were the source of Middle East respiratory syndrome when highly similar viruses were found in the animals and people caring for them.
>>
>> - Can widespread screens be done of bats and other wild animal species thought to be susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 and common in China, including primates, deer, and rodents? Animal feces or urine often contain genetic evidence of viruses. Shi's group at WIV has routinely found coronaviruses in fecal samples and nasal swabs of bats. The sampling of feces from chimpanzees in sub-Saharan Africa has greatly contributed to understandings of the origins of the HIV-1 epidemic, and the Nipah virus, which surfaced in Malaysian pig farmers in 1998, was found in flying bats 2 years later by sampling their urine and fruit that they had partially eaten.
>>
>> - Can widespread screening of susceptible domesticated animals provide
>> clues to COVID-19's origin? AIDS researchers discovered that pet
>> monkeys harbored a simian immunodeficiency virus that is closely
>> linked to HIV-2, a less common variant that also infects people. Shi's
>> group did a study of domesticated and feral cats in Wuhan and found
>> SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in 15% of the 141 samples tested. No antibodies were found in samples taken before the Wuhan outbreak surfaced, but do veterinarians possibly have additional stored samples? Can more feral cats be tested? Cats, notably, have a thing for seafood, and the Wuhan market at least played a role in amplifying early spread.
>>
>> - Do stored samples from farmed animals exist? The genetic signature of the influenza virus that caused a pandemic in 2009 showed it clearly had a pig origin, but it wasn't until 2016 that researchers reported the likely location of farms in Mexico that raised the infected pigs. Their study found 58 influenza viruses in respiratory samples stored by a central lab that diagnosed sick pigs. In all, the samples came from 22 farms in 6 Mexican states taken between 2010 and 2014. Phylogenetic analyses allowed the researchers to work backward from the genetic sequences of the viruses they found and pinpoint 2 states that likely were the origin of the pandemic. The data further suggest the virus initially came to Mexico from pigs imported from Europe.
>>
>> - Can widespread screening take place of people in China who might come in contact with bats or other wildlife that harbor SARS-CoV-2?
>> Peter Daszak of EcoHealth Alliance and Shi -- who had their funding from the National Institutes of Health cut in April [2020] after pressure from the White House -- published a study last year [2019] of blood taken from nearly 1500 people in Chinese provinces where bats carry SARS-related coronaviruses. They also interviewed people about their histories of illnesses and contact with animals. Only 9 people had evidence of being infected with a bat coronavirus, but as they noted, antibodies quickly wane. The team showed that spillovers from bats to humans occur routinely.
>>
>> - Do government health reports contain any information about possible
>> COVID-19 cases that predate 1 Dec 2019, the 1st confirmed case of
>> SARS-CoV-2 in the scientific literature? The South China Morning Post reported having seen "government data" that a 55-year-old person from Hubei province had COVID-19 on 17 Nov [2019]. The article says 8 other cases of the disease occurred that month [November 2019]. Wuhan is Hubei's capital, but the government records did not specify where these people lived, the newspaper noted. It's possible the virus was first isolated from patients in Wuhan but emerged outside the city.
>> The influenza virus that caused the pandemic in 2009 first was isolated in San Diego, California, not in Mexico, where it originated.
>>
>> - Are there stored samples from sewage plants in China that can be
>> probed? Studies of stored sewage samples in Italy described in a press
>> release from that country's National Institute of Health suggest
>> SARS-CoV-2 was circulating there in December 2019, even before doctors noticed the 1st case in Wuhan. A study from

Barcelona, Spain, posted on medRxiv and not peer reviewed, claims to have found SARS-CoV-2 in sewage samples from March 2019. These reports have not been independently confirmed and have been subject to much criticism, but that does not undermine the potential value of studying archival sewage samples for SARS-CoV-2.
>>
>> - What experiments with bat coronaviruses took place at WIV? This is the mother of all questions for those who suspect SARS-CoV-2 came out of the facility. Accidental lab releases do happen, and one even triggered a pandemic: An influenza strain that surfaced in 1977 was linked to strains in Russian labs collected 2 decades earlier.
>>
>> - Is it possible that somebody at WIV became infected with the virus
>> and then passed it on to others outside the lab? It's unknown which
>> bat viruses WIV has in its collection of samples and whether any of
>> them infect humans. And a controversy surrounds the closest bat virus
>> to SARS-CoV-2, which is called RaTG13. As Shi and co-workers reported,
>> they only fully sequenced this virus after SARS-CoV-2 surfaced, and
>> they looked through their database for potential relatives. (The group
>> often sequences only one small region of bat coronaviruses genomes
>> that mutates infrequently, so changes indicate distinct viruses.) A
>> great deal of speculation has circled around the naming of the partial
>> sequence: Shi's group earlier had reported a virus named BtCoV/4991
>> that exactly matches RaTG13 in that small region, but are they one and
>> the same? Or could it be, as some assert, that BtCoV/4991 is
>> SARS-CoV-2 itself? What other bat coronaviruses has the lab yet to fully sequence? Could any of them offer clues?
>>
>> Another outstanding question is whether Shi's team or other researchers in Wuhan manipulated bat viruses in "gain-of-function"
>> experiments that can make a virus more transmissible between humans.
>> In 2015, Shi co-authored a paper that made a chimeric SARS virus by combining one from bats with a strain that had been adapted to mice.
>> But that work was done at the University of North Carolina, not in Wuhan, and in collaboration with Ralph Baric. Did Shi's group later carry out other gain-of-function studies in Wuhan, and if so, what did they find?
>>
>> Finally, diplomatic cables from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing in 2018 warned that a new, ultra-high-security lab at WIV had "a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators." Did Shi's team ever work with coronaviruses in that lab, and, if so, why?
>>
>> If history repeats itself, it might take years -- or even decades -- to crack this case. Scientists haven't unequivocally identified Ebola's source 45 years after its discovery. But the key, time and again, to clarifying the origins of emerging infectious diseases is unearthing new data. WHO's push to organize the probe promises to, at the very least, accelerate what has been a plodding pursuit for answers.
>>
>> [Byline: Jon Cohen]
>>
>> --
>> Communicated by
>> Mary Marshall
>> b6
>>
>> [1. The report of the 1st WHO-China Joint Experts Mission on
>> Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), 16-24 Feb 2020, was published on
>> 28 Feb 2020. It included (p 8) the following segment, titled "Zoonotic
>> origins": "COVID-19 is a zoonotic virus. From phylogenetics analyses
>> undertaken with available full genome sequences, bats appear to be the
>> reservoir of COVID-19 virus, but the intermediate host(s) has not yet

>> been identified. However, 3 important areas of work are already
>> underway in China to inform our understanding of the zoonotic origin
>> of this outbreak. These include early investigations of cases with
>> symptom onset in Wuhan throughout December 2019, environmental
>> sampling from the Huanan Wholesale Seafood Market and other area
>> markets, and the collection of detailed records on the source and type
>> of wildlife species sold at the Huanan market and the destination of
>> those animals after the market was closed." A link to the report and
>> the said text were reproduced in posting
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200312.7081842, with the following
>> commentary: "Wishfully, animal-health specialists were included among the members of the WHO Joint Mission." It is relieving to note this comment may have been acknowledged.
>>
>> 2. Zheng-Li Shi team's pre-print paper, "Discovery of a novel coronavirus associated with the recent pneumonia outbreak in humans and its potential bat origin," in which the virus strain RaTG13 was addressed publicly for the 1st time, was published on 23 Jan 2020 at <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.01.22.914952 > and reviewed in the commentary of http://promedmail.org/post/20200201.6943858. The paper's final version was published later in Nature (doi:
>> 10.1038/s41586-020-2012-7).
>>
>> Hopefully, the current visit of the 2 experts will pave the road to a
>> thorough, science-based, fully transparent investigation into the
>> origin of the pandemic, in the spirit of One Health and One World. In
>> view of the Dutch experience, China's mink farms should be included in
>> the investigation. Industries of other farmed animal species deserve
>> consideration as well (e.g., rabbits, boars). - Mod.AS
>>
>> HealthMap/ProMED-mail map:
>> China: <http://healthmap.org/promed/p/155 >]
>>
>> [See Also:
>> COVID -19 update (308): USA (TX) animal, dog conf.
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200708.7554832
>> COVID-19 update (299): USA (GA) animal, dog conf
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200703.7535112
>> COVID-19 update (284): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, spread, dog
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200624.7506728
>> COVID-19 update (281): Netherlands (NB, LI) farmed mink, spread,
>> animal, global http://promedmail.org/post/20200623.7502849
>> COVID-19 update (280): animal, pangolin, research
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200623.7502805
>> COVID-19 update (267): animal, domestic, wild, cat, research
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200617.7480013
>> COVID-19 update (266): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, 1st rep
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200617.7479510
>> COVID-19 update (251): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink,
>> spread, culling http://promedmail.org/post/20200610.7453845
>> COVID-19 update (248): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, mink, spread,
>> culling, cat http://promedmail.org/post/20200609.7446478
>> COVID-19 update (238): USA (MN) animal, cat
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200605.7429133
>> COVID-19 update (236): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink,
>> spread, culling http://promedmail.org/post/20200604.7427849
>> COVID-19 update (231): USA (NY) animal, dog conf.

>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200602.7420541
>> COVID-19 update (230): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink,
>> spread, control http://promedmail.org/post/20200602.7420433
>> COVID-19 update (227): animal, cat, dog, research, experimental
>> infection http://promedmail.org/post/20200601.7416648
>> COVID-19 update (215): Netherlands (NB) animal, mink-to-human,
>> epidem., control http://promedmail.org/post/20200527.7385049
>> COVID-19 update (212): Russia (Moskva) animal, cat, OIE
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200526.7379578
>> COVID-19 update (209): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human,
>> cat, epid http://promedmail.org/post/20200525.7375359
>> COVID-19 update (198): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human
>> infect susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200520.7359976
>> COVID-19 update (189): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research,
>> cat, dog http://promedmail.org/post/20200517.7344274
>> COVID-19 update (183): Japan/USA, animal, research, cat, experimental
>> infection http://promedmail.org/post/20200514.7337185
>> COVID-19 update (181): Germany (BY), France (AC), cat, OIE animal case
>> definition http://promedmail.org/post/20200513.7332909
>> COVID-19 update (177): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, Spain
>> (CT) cat susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200512.732858
>> COVID-19 update (174): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, comment
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200511.7323845
>> COVID-19 update (169): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread,
>> rabbit susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200509.7316646
>> COVID-19 update (154): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200503.7294846
>> COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink,
>> epidemiology http://promedmail.org/post/20200501.7286113
>> COVID-19 update (143): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, tests
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200430.7284183
>> COVID-19 update (141): India, animal, wild tiger, susp, clarification,
>> RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200430.7281768
>> COVID-19 update (138): India, animal, wild tiger, fatal
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200428.7275765
>> COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200427.7272289
>> COVID-19 update (130): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, new cases
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200425.7266556
>> COVID-19 update (124): USA (NY) animal, cat, lion, OIE
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200423.7259119
>> COVID-19 update (123): USA (NY) animal, cat, conf
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200422.7256272
>> COVID-19 update (113): USA (NY) cat, animal, susp, RFI
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200418.7240811
>> COVID-19 update (88): Germany, animal, research, pig, chicken, bat,
>> ferret http://promedmail.org/post/20200407.7196506
>> COVID-19 update (85): USA (NY) animal, tiger, OIE
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200406.7191480
>> COVID-19 update (84): USA animal, tiger
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200406.7191352
>> COVID-19 update (76): China (HU) animal, cat, owned, stray,
>> seropositive http://promedmail.org/post/20200403.7179946

>> COVID-19 update (75): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, OIE
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200403.7179945
>> COVID-19 update (70): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, pets & stock
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200402.7173286
>> COVID-19 update (58): Belgium, animal, cat, clinical case, RFI
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200327.7151215
>> COVID-19 update (56): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, final serology
>> positive http://promedmail.org/post/20200326.7146438
>> COVID-19 update (50): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR
>> positive, OIE http://promedmail.org/post/20200323.7129951
>> COVID-19 update (45): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR
>> positive http://promedmail.org/post/20200319.7112693
>> COVID-19 update (37): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, prelim. serology
>> negative http://promedmail.org/post/20200312.7081842
>> COVID-19 update (30): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, serology
>> pending http://promedmail.org/post/20200306.7057595
>> COVID-19 update (25): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, OIE
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200302.7040373
>> COVID-19 update (22): companion animal, dog susp, RFI
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200229.7036661
>> COVID-19 update (17): China, animal reservoir, wildlife trade &
>> consumption http://promedmail.org/post/20200225.7024245
>> COVID-19 update (11): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts, pangolin
>> susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200220.7009213
>> COVID-19 update (08): companion animal, RFI
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200218.7002276
>> COVID-19 update (06): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200217.6997782
>> Novel coronavirus (40): animal reservoir, pangolin poss intermediate
>> host, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200210.6972104
>> Novel coronavirus (28): China (HU) animal reservoir
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200201.6943858
>> Novel coronavirus (22): reservoir suggested, bats
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200129.6930718
>> Novel coronavirus (20): China, wildlife trade ban
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200127.6922060
>> Novel coronavirus (18): China (HU) animal reservoir
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200125.6915411
>> Novel coronavirus (15): China (HU) wild animal sources
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200123.6909913
>> Novel coronavirus (03): China (HU) animal reservoir suggested, RFI
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200114.6887480
>> Novel coronavirus (01): China (HU) WHO, phylogenetic tree
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200112.6885385
>> Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (HU) (07): official confirmation of
>> novel coronavirus http://promedmail.org/post/20200108.6878869
>> Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (05): (HU) novel coronavirus identified
>> http://promedmail.org/post/20200108.6877694
>> Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (03): (HU) updates, SARS, MERS ruled
>> out, WHO, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200105.6872267
>> Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (01): (HU) wildlife sales, market
>> closed, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200102.6866757]
>> .....arn/tw/jh

>> *##*
>> **********
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>> ##
>> ##

Date: Mon, 15 Jun 2020 10:08:01 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 15 Jun 2020 10:07:59 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6];
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

David, I think this is one to keep out of. I suggest you do not talk to these reporters, even off the record. Just say you are NIAID staff and you can't discuss this issue. I'm happy to take on the burden. I think Mark Dennison would be another one who would be willing to speak frankly, but clearly both Mark and I are also at a distance from the action so we can only comment on what there is to be observed from the outside.

Peter, you also should be careful at this point. Especially if you are able to resume working with WIV on private funding. You might want to know if any of the postdocs who spent time with Jim Leduc were part of the thousand talents scheme. I wouldn't be surprised and it might be worthwhile making sure Jim is aware of the circumstances. I can do that if you want to stay out of it.

For both of you it is a very important step that ACD has taken. What they have said is a direct challenge to Collins and he must be uneasy about it. It would be useful to see how much further Rich Roberts is willing to go in the public space. He is not a member of ACD but is clearly tracking what's going on with them and their concerns. If he is willing to talk to reporters he carries a lot of credibility.

I just drafted an op-ed aimed for the Washington Post. I asked a particular colleague to read it before I send it to the members of NAM who signed the letter to the three presidents, to ask for input and a signal they are willing to sign this one too. I will put this as the way to add to the modest victory we had with the generic Statement issued by Victor and now to push about the specific example EHA represents.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 9:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.

Peter, i must admit thT i am unsure what is going on within nih. I sense intrigue. I will be glad to talk to reporters but to the extent you have influence with them, let them know they might have to push to reach me behind the censorship curtain

I would suggest you try to make sure that none of your Chinese collaborators Have any ethics issues, no matter how small. This is where they could kill you. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2020, at 21:02, Peter Daszak [b6]> wrote:

Hi David and Jerry,

I've been thinking of a way to get ahead of the curve, just in case NIH really is investigating EHA or me. This goes back to NIH telling folks who FOIA them that they can't reveal info on my grant and Wuhan because of a law enforcement clause and a pending investigation (https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/nih- we-cant-release-our-papers-about-the-wuhan-institute-of-virology-because-of-a-pending-investigation/). I've been wondering if that's a real investigation maybe by another org seeing if NIH acted legally? Is it them investigating Wuhan (not really possible)? Is it related to the NIH Director's pushing the agenda of investigating scientists who have been taking funds from China etc. (https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/06/fifty- four-scientists-have-lost-their-jobs-result-nih-probe-foreign-ties). What concerns me is that it seems that Francis Collins is personally involved in the investigation, and that his key henchman is Michael Lauer. It's actually Lauer who gave the talk to the ACD meeting last week (https://www.acd.od.nih.gov/meetings.html , click on "ACD Working Group on Foreign Influences in Research Integrity (Update)". I think it would be convenient for Collins if they could try to dig up some China dirt on EHA, and it's probably no skin off his nose to ask his henchmen to investigate (they've already got 399 "Scientists of Possible Concern") what's one more between friends.

So for that reason, I want to let you know that I've spoken with two good reporters off the record over the last few days and given them both your contact. One is Jim Rainey from the LA Times who did a good piece on the origins of COVID about EHA's work and others. He's now trying to dig into the handling of the termination by NIH and will be filing a FoIA, but right now would love to talk about the details. The other is Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed. He did file a foia for Michael lauer's communications and some others. He said he will be appealing their decision not to release the files.

I'm hoping that these two reporters will dig out some interesting stuff and maybe then I'll know whether this 'investigation' is just Francis Collins trying to fob off the foia requests, or it's because we've appealed, or another group has filed a motion with NIH re. their decision to terminate.

Anyway – hope they contact you, and hope it leads to something.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Fri, 17 Jul 2020 11:43:50 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 17 Jul 2020 11:43:48 PM -0400
Subject: Op Ed
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens [b6] [b6]

Hi Peter and David, I reworked the OpEd after Politico declined with a brief mention of the invitation from the 4 House committee chairs to Azar to brief them by July 15th. With his failure to appear I have worked this factoid as an into to the prior text related to the silence on the investigation NIH conducted (right!) with neither HHS nor NIH OD saying anything in public and then sending that nasty request to EHA, and I sent it to The Hill this afternoon. They have responded rather quickly with an expressed interest and asked a couple of questions which were rather simple to respond to and of no major substance, just procedural. So I am now finally hopeful we have a publisher. I'll let you and David know when I hear back with a final word. If this works I will have to thank the House committee chairs for inviting Azar to brief them and to Azar for stiffing them which made this timely once again.

I don't know how they will handle our interest in acknowledging there were 137 addition signatories aside from me, Klausner and Olden. I asked about that and I'm waiting for their final decision and the detail if they accept to publish. I think this will be good and very timely given Azars' failure to appear.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine and Global Health
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA

Date: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 1:11:05 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 1:11:02 AM -0400
Subject: From Rich Roberts who led the Nobel Laureate letter
From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6]>; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]

Another important statement below from the NIH Advisory Board. Rich Roberts led the Nobel Laureate group and wrote to each member of the Advisory Board.

Really pleased to see this. Not sure how it can mobilize action, but I'll be publicizing this and spreading the word. Please do so as well if you can.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 11:11 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

In case you didn't hear about the public statement made by Francis Collins' Advisory Board it is below:

"Recent statements from numerous scientific organizations and leaders in the American biomedical community expressed grave concern about the termination of an NIH grant to Peter Daszak at the EcoHealth Alliance. They argue that this cancellation circumvented the peer review process and has the appearance of contravening long held NIH traditions and policies. Members of the NIH ACD share the grave concerns expressed by the community. We agree with their request, and recommend that the entire process leading to the Daszak grant cancellation be thoroughly reviewed. If indeed the process is found to have been flawed, we recommend that

the NIH reverse this decision and implement better procedures to avoid a repeat of such occurrences. This is an opportunity to ensure and reinforce the primacy of peer review in the mission of the NIH."

They intend to put it up on their web site and when it is formally released I will also feature it on our web site

https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant.html

My intention is to add a few more pieces on the site if developments warrant them. Please feel free to share the link.

I should also mention that at least one member of the ACD has also approached Wellcome independently of our efforts to suggest they fund you.

Good luck

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 10:42 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich,

Great that you're talking to Advisory Board members. I wondered about this. I hope they do the decent thing and at least challenge the decision.

I'm massively appreciating everything you're doing, as is our staff and Board. I know I'm being cautious and careful, and I'm really nervous to look like we're out there fundraising to keep this work going, because that will likely be a story. All that said, I'm playing the long game on this and have made sure our options are still open to appeal and potentially sue, but likely we'd only do that if a different administration comes in. This group is just extremely vindictive and petty.

In the meantime, I'll let you know what happens with Wellcome and if we get any other support.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website:
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664
&sdata=t9MZAjox3nt95uhUOWlA0Nh8FnVo%2BDmR7w1ttl2R5FA%3D &reserved=0
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich [b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:33 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

Thanks for getting back to me (and sorry to add to your email load). I'm pleased to hear about the gift from the Wallace Foundation and hope that the Wellcome Foundation will come through also. Jeremy Farrar is a very good guy!

We are trying to find out what happened at Francis Collins Advisory Board meeting, but no word yet. I had written to all members advising them of our letter.

If you think of anything else we could usefully do at this point please let me know.

Rich (not Robert)

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

-----Original Message-----
From: Peter Daszak [b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:55 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6
Subject: RE: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

Robert,

Thank you for getting back in touch. I read the email exchange with amusement below! Please tell your colleague that we have 'donate now' buttons on our website (https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2Fdonate &data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664 &sdata=fSQCnT1GUsG0S8D9pF66AoLHe800NbloGSqd29KmK50%3D &reserved=0) and they can specify what the donation is for - we take 'donor intent' very seriously.

It's hard not to speak out against this administration right now on so many levels: Public Health (e.g. WHO defunding); blatant racism from the top and its shocking consequences across society; using an anti-science agenda as a political tool without a care for people's health and lives. That said, we're all holding our tongues here - something we really have to do right now because we have other grants pending with NIH that could easily disappear, and because one of Trump's senators (Pennsylvania) wrote to DoD to complain about them funding us (he shared it with Breitbart News).

For those reasons, we won't be openly and actively fundraising to cover our loss from NIH - it would become a story and antagonize the Trump Team, who are actively pushing an anti-China narrative as part of their campaign. Have a look at the leaked GOP talking points that specifically refer to conspiracy theories at length around the work we did with Wuhan: p. 18 and on here.. https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstatic.politico.com%2F80%2F54%2F2f321938 virus-big-book-4.17.20.pdf%3Fmc_cid%3D8bef7ea1d3%26mc_eid%3D4c6a7c6e0b &data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664 &sdata=R1bOnpbM3TsKXs4dDlUN6LDXF1udkmlV9tFOHMeLr8Q%3D &reserved=0. It's quite blatant.

We do have some good news though. First of all we received the check from your Anonymous donor colleague (A great Joy!) and this will go a significant way to allowing us not to lay off staff from the China work. Secondly, we were approached by a Family Foundation (Wallace Research Foundation), who wanted to support us to the tune of $250K. The Board chair got a bit of concern from one board member about potential political targeting if they funded us, and asked if we could find matching funds. We were able to use the Anonymous gift as a match, and have just submitted a proposal which we're told will be a formality. Very good news, and please pass on our gratitude to your colleagues. Of course, we can't publicize this right now either! Finally, as you mentioned I did hear from Jeremy Farrar and am pulling together a 3 page pitch this week. It will have to go through review, of course, and may not pan out, but we will do our best and even without that, we are on the way to being whole again.

As for our general situation - these are interesting times indeed. We're being FoIA'd by 'White Coat Waste', who are delighted the grant was terminated. We're fighting it of course. We're also being FoIA'd through our colleague Ralph Baric who works at UNC - a state university so his emails with us are fair game. We'll be fighting that. We're receiving a mixture of trashy hate mail (nothing like your past experiences) as well as small donor checks 'in honor of Donald Trump' from concerned citizens, and have had an uptick in donations on our website. At the same time, I've had personal attacks online and have met with the FBI to beef up security at home and in the office. Our Intel agencies are also continuing to ask questions, which is fine, but I wonder if anyone above them is even listening at this point! At the same time, right now I've got a Zoom call with colleagues at NAM/NAS to talk with colleagues from the Chinese Academy of Sciences as a quiet dialog to share information on COVID - these are precious times when we can talk openly with our Chinese colleagues without the politics. They are continuing to hold open an invitation to continue our work with them.

Thank you again for all you've done, and continue to do. We're keeping our fingers crossed that this toxic administration will disappear and we can get things back to some sense of normality.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website:
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=02%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7Cec2d1a0bea1c4e3eacfd08d80e7a3990%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664&
&sdata=t9MZAjox3nt95uhUOWlA0Nh8FnVo%2BDmR7w1ttl2R5FA%3D &reserved=0
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 10:34 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: FW: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

Peter:

I thought you might be interested in this email exchange. I gather Wellcome have expressed an interest. Have you heard from them?

I hope you are managing OK both financially and healthwise. If there is more we can do please let me know.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

-----Original Message-----
From: [b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 6:20 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6

Subject: Re: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of bat coronaviruses in China

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had $20 when I get my social security check in mind. That's the sort
of thing one generally donates through a crowd funding appeal - but let me know if there's another place to send it!

I suspect there's a lot of outraged people who would give a few dollars, and such funded Bernie Sanders' entire Presidential campaign.

Of course, many professionally paid people would donate a good deal more than $20.

Frankly, I'd like a chance to turn the President's face purple when word
got out. His fists would flail, and he'd probably shout every manner
of thing on Twitter. Not only would this be good for public morale,
but every time it happens, he comes closer to losing the election.

Showing the Chinese that Trump isn't in control is downright useful.

Yours,

b6

On 6/2/20 5:04 PM, Roberts, Rich wrote:
>[b6]:
>
> The main point of the letter was to raise awareness of the issue, especially at DHS and NIH, but also to funders who might offer to fill the gap. We have been actively soliciting the latter and already have one Foundation that will make a significant donation, but wishes to remain anonymous (all of their funding is made anonymously).
>
> If you are able to help in the regard please let me know.
>
> Incidentally after the letter was sent, 4 more Laureates joined as signatories.
>
> Rich Roberts
>
> Sir Richard J. Roberts Ph.D. F.R.S.
> 1993 Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine Chief Scientific Officer
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723 USA
>
> Tel: [b6] [b6]
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: [b6]
>
> Executive Assistant: Karen Otto
> Tel: [b6] [b6]
> Fax: (978) 412 9910

> email: b6
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: b6 b6 >
> Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:51 PM
> To: Roberts, Rich b6 >
> Subject: Other sources of funding for international surveillance of
> bat coronaviruses in China
>
> EXTERNAL SENDER
>
>
> Dr. Roberts:
>
> I see that you have been instrumental in organizing lobbying to get the NIH to reconsider their withdrawal of funding to EcoHealth Alliance, for international bat surveillance in China.
>
> The amount involved is three million dollars, which is not a small amount, nor a huge amount.
>
> I am wondering why I have heard neither of a crowdfunding effort for this work, nor other sources of funding for this work. For instance it sounds like something Bill Gates would be happy to contribute money to.
>
> I do hope your interest is in funding the bat surveillance and not in playing political baseball with the Trump administration, using worldwide health as the baseball.
>
> Please give consideration to these ideas. Even if you do not raise
> three million dollars, such an effort would raise quite a lot, make President Trump purple in the face, and enhance the regard the Chinese have for the American people.
>
> EcoHealth Alliance does take donations, but they seem to generally be involved with vague anti-development efforts, and it isn't clear atleast from their web site, that money given to them as a general donation would or might go to a specific pragmatic purpose.
>
> Thanks!
>
> Yours,
>
> b6
>
>

Date: Thu, 7 May 2020 8:38:21 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 7 May 2020 8:38:20 PM -0400
Subject: Re: responses to new Mikovits video
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6];
CC: [b6] Bryan Morens [b6]

PS, peter, you said a couple days ago you would join astmh and i URGE you to do do asap. I'll pAyvthe fucking dues. Please do, and i will then introduce you to their CEO, Prez, and many others who at E already Working on your behalf and who have a significant lobbying arm They will unfoubtedly invite you to speak at the annual meeting and much more. My belief is you need the help of powerful orgs like this. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 7, 2020, at 20:24, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Thanks David – I had seen that there was yet another video from the conspiracy theorists, but good that there's already pushback.

I'm waiting for the people to start lining up outside my house once they release my address…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel. [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 10:27 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Bryan Morens [b6]

Subject: Fwd: responses to new Mikovits video

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 7, 2020 at 09:48:38 EDT
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>, NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: responses to new Mikovits video

https://zdoggmd.com/plandemic/

https://respectfulinsolence.com/2020/05/06/judy- mikovits-pandemic/

Disclaimer: Any third-party material in this email has been shared for internal use under fair use provisions of U.S. copyright law, without further verification of its accuracy/veracity. It does not necessarily represent my views nor those of NIAID, NIH, HHS, or the U.S. government.

Date: Sun, 12 Jul 2020 1:27:04 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 12 Jul 2020 1:27:03 PM -0400
Subject: RE: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6];

Peter, I know Soumya Swaminathan at WHO very well (she is the Chief Scientist). I could make the pitch to have you appointed to the team to do the investigation, given your expertise and the personal connections you have with the key WIV scientists. That would stick it to Trump, Azar and Collins.

PS nothing from Politico yet.

Jerry

----Original Message----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 12:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: FW: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission

Do you know who these people are? d

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) [b6] [b6] [b6]
[b6]

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----Original Message----
From: promed-edr@promedmail.org <promed-edr@promedmail.org>
Sent: Saturday, July 11, 2020 9:35 PM
To: promed-post@promedmail.org; promed-edr-post@promedmail.org; promed-ahead-post@promedmail.org
Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (312): China, SARS-CoV2 origin, animal reservoir, WHO mission

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (312): CHINA, SARS-COV-2 ORIGIN, ANIMAL RESERVOIR, WHO MISSION
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A ProMED-mail post
<http://www.promedmail.org>
ProMED-mail is a program of the

International Society for Infectious Diseases <http://www.isid.org>

Date: Fri 10 Jul 2020
Source: Science Magazine - News [edited] <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/who- led-mission-may-investigate-pandemic-s-origin-here-are-key-questions-ask>

The 2-person team from the World Health Organization (WHO) traveling to China today [10 Jul 2020] to address the origin of the COVID-19 pandemic is unlikely to come home with answers. Rather, the duo -- an epidemiologist and an animal health expert whose names have not been released -- will discuss with Chinese officials the scope of a larger international mission later, according to a WHO statement.

But this initial trip offers real hope that the mystery of the virus' origins, which has become a political powder keg and the subject of countless conspiracy theories, will finally be investigated more thoroughly and transparently. (A similar WHO-led mission to examine how China was handling its fight against the virus, launched after weeks of diplomatic wrangling, returned in February [2020] with a surprising wealth of information) [comment 1].

"Science must stay open to all possibilities" about the pandemic's origins, Mike Ryan, executive director of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, said at a press conference on 7 Jul [2020]. "We need to lay out a series of investigations that will get the answers that I'm sure the Chinese government, governments around the world, and ourselves really need in order to manage the risk going forward into the future."

Questions range from hunting for animals that might harbor the virus to examining the possibility that it came from a laboratory. There are plenty of details to investigate, and it could be a long road. Origin riddles for other new infectious diseases often took years to solve, and the route to answers has involved wrong turns, surprising twists, technological advances, lawsuits, allegations of cover-ups, and high-level politics. Determining how a pathogen suddenly emerges in people requires a lot of sleuthing, but past successes offer clues of where to look for new insights, as do the few data points that now exist for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The initial, tidy origin story told by health officials in Wuhan during the 1st few weeks of January [2020] was that a cluster of people connected to a seafood market developed an unusual pneumonia, and that the outbreak stopped after the market was closed and disinfected. But confusion about the origin of the novel coronavirus identified in Wuhan patients arose when researchers published the 1st epidemiologic studies of the city's outbreak: 4 of the 1st 5 cases confirmed to have SARS-CoV-2 infections had no link to the market.

Soon, other theories emerged. Some believe it's no coincidence that the city is host to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), home to leading bat coronavirus researcher Shi Zheng-Li. Her group, one of the 1st to isolate and sequence SARS-CoV-2, has trapped bats in the wild for 15 years, hunting for coronaviruses to help identify pandemic threats. In their 1st report about the new virus, the scientists described a bat coronavirus in their collection that was 96.2% similar to SARS-CoV-2 [comment 2].

U.S. President Donald Trump early on endorsed speculation that the virus entered humans because of an accident at WIV. A more contentious theory is that the lab created the virus. (Researchers at the lab insist neither scenario has any merit, and evolutionary biologists elsewhere have argued the virus shows no evidence of having been engineered.)

The most popular hypothesis is that SARS-CoV-2 spread into humans from an intermediate host, an animal species susceptible to the virus that acted as a bridge between bats and humans. In the case of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), civets turned out to play that role for the responsible coronavirus. For Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), also a coronavirus disease, it quickly became clear camels were the culprit because highly similar viruses were found in the animals and people caring for them.

Chinese officials have reported conducting tests for SARS-CoV-2 at the Wuhan seafood market, but what they found remains sketchy. China's state-run news agency, Xinhua, said "environmental samples" tested positive for the virus in a zone of the market that sold wildlife, but the report had no details about the results or even a list of the species for sale. Other studies have discovered similarities between
SARS-CoV-2 and a coronavirus found in pangolins, an endangered species that eats ants, but the pangolin virus is more divergent genetically from SARS-CoV-2 than the closest bat virus, and there's no evidence pangolins or their scales -- used in traditional Chinese medicine -- were sold at the market.

So, assuming WHO's team and the Chinese government work out a deal for an international mission to study the pandemic's origins, where would it start? Here are some key questions that need answers.

- What, exactly, did the studies of the Wuhan seafood market sample, and what did the researchers find? With SARS, which emerged in a person in China's Guangdong province in November 2002 -- but was not reported to WHO for 3 months -- extensive sampling of animals at marketplaces in the province found its virus in palm civets by October 2003.

- Does more epidemiological data exist about the earliest cases than have been made public so far here and here? Where had they traveled?
Were they in contact with any animals? What interactions did they have with each other? Have antibody tests been done on any of their contacts? Do stored blood or tissue samples for any of their contacts exist that could show earlier infections?

For SARS, by June 2004, 14 months after the discovery of that virus, researchers had reported detailed epidemiological analyses of humans and animals: 39% of the earliest cases were food handlers, traders of live animals were 13 times more likely to have antibodies to the virus, and in that group, 72% handled civets. New interviews with the earliest COVID-19 cases could reveal surprising links between them.
COVID-19 clusters, for example, have occurred among people who were dining and drinking together, gathering at religious services, and even playing mahjong.

- How aggressively have Chinese researchers looked for SARS-CoV-2 in samples collected before the 1st known cases in Wuhan? Have they looked outside of Wuhan? How far back in time have they probed?

Hospitals and diagnostic labs sometimes store blood, nasal swabs, and tissue samples from patients, especially if they die from unexplained illnesses. Just such samples led to the realization that MERS, 1st recognized in Saudi Arabia in June 2012, had killed 2 people in Jordan in April of that year [2012]. Analyses of stored samples from those 2 people and blood sampling of others who became ill but survived that outbreak confirmed that they all had MERS. Scientists realized camels were the source of Middle East respiratory syndrome when highly similar viruses were found in the animals and people caring for them.

- Can widespread screens be done of bats and other wild animal species thought to be susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 and common in China, including primates, deer, and rodents? Animal feces or urine often contain genetic evidence of viruses. Shi's group at WIV has routinely found coronaviruses in fecal samples and nasal swabs of bats. The sampling of feces from chimpanzees in sub-Saharan Africa has greatly contributed to understandings of the origins of the HIV-1 epidemic, and the Nipah virus, which surfaced in Malaysian pig farmers in 1998, was found in flying bats 2 years later by sampling their urine and fruit that they had partially eaten.

- Can widespread screening of susceptible domesticated animals provide clues to COVID-19's origin? AIDS researchers discovered that pet monkeys harbored a simian immunodeficiency virus that is closely linked to HIV-2, a less common variant that also infects people. Shi's group did a study of domesticated and feral cats in Wuhan and found
SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in 15% of the 141 samples tested. No antibodies were found in samples taken before the Wuhan outbreak surfaced, but do veterinarians possibly have additional stored samples? Can more feral cats be tested? Cats, notably, have a thing for seafood, and the Wuhan market at least played a role in amplifying early spread.

- Do stored samples from farmed animals exist? The genetic signature of the influenza virus that caused a pandemic in 2009 showed it clearly had a pig origin, but it wasn't until 2016 that researchers reported the likely location of farms in Mexico that raised the infected pigs. Their study found 58 influenza viruses in respiratory samples stored by a central lab that diagnosed

sick pigs. In all, the samples came from 22 farms in 6 Mexican states taken between 2010 and 2014. Phylogenetic analyses allowed the researchers to work backward from the genetic sequences of the viruses they found and pinpoint 2 states that likely were the origin of the pandemic. The data further suggest the virus initially came to Mexico from pigs imported from Europe.

- Can widespread screening take place of people in China who might come in contact with bats or other wildlife that harbor SARS-CoV-2?
Peter Daszak of EcoHealth Alliance and Shi -- who had their funding from the National Institutes of Health cut in April [2020] after pressure from the White House -- published a study last year [2019] of blood taken from nearly 1500 people in Chinese provinces where bats carry SARS-related coronaviruses. They also interviewed people about their histories of illnesses and contact with animals. Only 9 people had evidence of being infected with a bat coronavirus, but as they noted, antibodies quickly wane. The team showed that spillovers from bats to humans occur routinely.

- Do government health reports contain any information about possible
COVID-19 cases that predate 1 Dec 2019, the 1st confirmed case of
SARS-CoV-2 in the scientific literature? The South China Morning Post reported having seen "government data" that a 55-year-old person from Hubei province had COVID-19 on 17 Nov [2019]. The article says 8 other cases of the disease occurred that month [November 2019]. Wuhan is Hubei's capital, but the government records did not specify where these people lived, the newspaper noted. It's possible the virus was first isolated from patients in Wuhan but emerged outside the city.
The influenza virus that caused the pandemic in 2009 first was isolated in San Diego, California, not in Mexico, where it originated.

- Are there stored samples from sewage plants in China that can be probed? Studies of stored sewage samples in Italy described in a press release from that country's National Institute of Health suggest
SARS-CoV-2 was circulating there in December 2019, even before doctors noticed the 1st case in Wuhan. A study from Barcelona, Spain, posted on medRxiv and not peer reviewed, claims to have found SARS-CoV-2 in sewage samples from March 2019. These reports have not been independently confirmed and have been subject to much criticism, but that does not undermine the potential value of studying archival sewage samples for SARS-CoV-2.

- What experiments with bat coronaviruses took place at WIV? This is the mother of all questions for those who suspect SARS-CoV-2 came out of the facility. Accidental lab releases do happen, and one even triggered a pandemic: An influenza strain that surfaced in 1977 was linked to strains in Russian labs collected 2 decades earlier.

- Is it possible that somebody at WIV became infected with the virus and then passed it on to others outside the lab? It's unknown which bat viruses WIV has in its collection of samples and whether any of them infect humans. And a controversy surrounds the closest bat virus to SARS-CoV-2, which is called RaTG13. As Shi and co-workers reported, they only fully sequenced this virus after SARS-CoV-2 surfaced, and they looked through their database for potential relatives. (The group often sequences only one small region of bat coronaviruses genomes that mutates infrequently, so changes indicate distinct viruses.) A great deal of speculation has circled around the naming of the partial
sequence: Shi's group earlier had reported a virus named BtCoV/4991 that exactly matches RaTG13 in that small region, but are they one and the same? Or could it be, as some assert, that BtCoV/4991 is
SARS-CoV-2 itself? What other bat coronaviruses has the lab yet to fully sequence? Could any of them offer clues?

Another outstanding question is whether Shi's team or other researchers in Wuhan manipulated bat viruses in "gain-of-function"
experiments that can make a virus more transmissible between humans.
In 2015, Shi co-authored a paper that made a chimeric SARS virus by combining one from bats with a strain that had been adapted to mice.
But that work was done at the University of North Carolina, not in Wuhan, and in collaboration with Ralph Baric. Did Shi's group later carry out other gain-of-function studies in Wuhan, and if so, what did they find?

Finally, diplomatic cables from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing in 2018 warned that a new, ultra-high-security lab at WIV had "a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators." Did Shi's team ever work with coronaviruses in that

lab, and, if so, why?

If history repeats itself, it might take years -- or even decades -- to crack this case. Scientists haven't unequivocally identified Ebola's source 45 years after its discovery. But the key, time and again, to clarifying the origins of emerging infectious diseases is unearthing new data. WHO's push to organize the probe promises to, at the very least, accelerate what has been a plodding pursuit for answers.

[Byline: Jon Cohen]

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Communicated by
Mary Marshall
b6

[1. The report of the 1st WHO-China Joint Experts Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), 16-24 Feb 2020, was published on
28 Feb 2020. It included (p 8) the following segment, titled "Zoonotic
origins": "COVID-19 is a zoonotic virus. From phylogenetics analyses undertaken with available full genome sequences, bats appear to be the reservoir of COVID-19 virus, but the intermediate host(s) has not yet been identified. However, 3 important areas of work are already underway in China to inform our understanding of the zoonotic origin of this outbreak. These include early investigations of cases with symptom onset in Wuhan throughout December 2019, environmental sampling from the Huanan Wholesale Seafood Market and other area markets, and the collection of detailed records on the source and type of wildlife species sold at the Huanan market and the destination of those animals after the market was closed." A link to the report and the said text were reproduced in posting http://promedmail.org/post/20200312.7081842, with the following commentary: "Wishfully, animal-health specialists were included among the members of the WHO Joint Mission." It is relieving to note this comment may have been acknowledged.

2. Zheng-Li Shi team's pre-print paper, "Discovery of a novel coronavirus associated with the recent pneumonia outbreak in humans and its potential bat origin," in which the virus strain RaTG13 was addressed publicly for the 1st time, was published on 23 Jan 2020 at <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.01.22.914952> and reviewed in the commentary of http://promedmail.org/post/20200201.6943858. The paper's final version was published later in Nature (doi: 10.1038/s41586-020-2012-7).

Hopefully, the current visit of the 2 experts will pave the road to a thorough, science-based, fully transparent investigation into the origin of the pandemic, in the spirit of One Health and One World. In view of the Dutch experience, China's mink farms should be included in the investigation. Industries of other farmed animal species deserve consideration as well (e.g., rabbits, boars). - Mod.AS

HealthMap/ProMED-mail map:
China: <http://healthmap.org/promed/p/155>]

[See Also:
COVID -19 update (308): USA (TX) animal, dog conf.
http://promedmail.org/post/20200708.7554832
COVID-19 update (299): USA (GA) animal, dog conf
http://promedmail.org/post/20200703.7535112
COVID-19 update (284): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, spread, dog
http://promedmail.org/post/20200624.7506728
COVID-19 update (281): Netherlands (NB, LI) farmed mink, spread, animal, global
http://promedmail.org/post/20200623.7502849
COVID-19 update (280): animal, pangolin, research
http://promedmail.org/post/20200623.7502805
COVID-19 update (267): animal, domestic, wild, cat, research

http://promedmail.org/post/20200617.7480013
COVID-19 update (266): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, 1st rep
http://promedmail.org/post/20200617.7479510
COVID-19 update (251): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling
http://promedmail.org/post/20200610.7453845
COVID-19 update (248): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, mink, spread, culling, cat
http://promedmail.org/post/20200609.7446478
COVID-19 update (238): USA (MN) animal, cat
http://promedmail.org/post/20200605.7429133
COVID-19 update (236): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling
http://promedmail.org/post/20200604.7427849
COVID-19 update (231): USA (NY) animal, dog conf.
http://promedmail.org/post/20200602.7420541
COVID-19 update (230): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, control
http://promedmail.org/post/20200602.7420433
COVID-19 update (227): animal, cat, dog, research, experimental infection http://promedmail.org/post/20200601.7416648
COVID-19 update (215): Netherlands (NB) animal, mink-to-human, epidem., control
http://promedmail.org/post/20200527.7385049
COVID-19 update (212): Russia (Moskva) animal, cat, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200526.7379578
COVID-19 update (209): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human, cat, epid
http://promedmail.org/post/20200525.7375359
COVID-19 update (198): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human infect susp
http://promedmail.org/post/20200520.7359976
COVID-19 update (189): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research, cat, dog
http://promedmail.org/post/20200517.7344274
COVID-19 update (183): Japan/USA, animal, research, cat, experimental infection
http://promedmail.org/post/20200514.7337185
COVID-19 update (181): Germany (BY), France (AC), cat, OIE animal case definition
http://promedmail.org/post/20200513.7332909
COVID-19 update (177): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, Spain
(CT) cat susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200512.732858
COVID-19 update (174): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, comment
http://promedmail.org/post/20200511.7323845
COVID-19 update (169): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread, rabbit susp
http://promedmail.org/post/20200509.7316646
COVID-19 update (154): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research
http://promedmail.org/post/20200503.7294846
COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, epidemiology
http://promedmail.org/post/20200501.7286113
COVID-19 update (143): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, tests
http://promedmail.org/post/20200430.7284183
COVID-19 update (141): India, animal, wild tiger, susp, clarification, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200430.7281768
COVID-19 update (138): India, animal, wild tiger, fatal
http://promedmail.org/post/20200428.7275765
COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink
http://promedmail.org/post/20200427.7272289
COVID-19 update (130): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, new cases
http://promedmail.org/post/20200425.7266556
COVID-19 update (124): USA (NY) animal, cat, lion, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200423.7259119
COVID-19 update (123): USA (NY) animal, cat, conf
http://promedmail.org/post/20200422.7256272

COVID-19 update (113): USA (NY) cat, animal, susp, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200418.7240811
COVID-19 update (88): Germany, animal, research, pig, chicken, bat, ferret http://promedmail.org/post/20200407.7196506
COVID-19 update (85): USA (NY) animal, tiger, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200406.7191480
COVID-19 update (84): USA animal, tiger
http://promedmail.org/post/20200406.7191352
COVID-19 update (76): China (HU) animal, cat, owned, stray, seropositive http://promedmail.org/post/20200403.7179946
COVID-19 update (75): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200403.7179945
COVID-19 update (70): China (Hong Kong) animal, cat, pets & stock
http://promedmail.org/post/20200402.7173286
COVID-19 update (58): Belgium, animal, cat, clinical case, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200327.7151215
COVID-19 update (56): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, final serology positive
http://promedmail.org/post/20200326.7146438
COVID-19 update (50): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR positive, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200323.7129951
COVID-19 update (45): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, 2nd case PCR positive
http://promedmail.org/post/20200319.7112693
COVID-19 update (37): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, prelim. serology negative
http://promedmail.org/post/20200312.7081842
COVID-19 update (30): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, serology pending
http://promedmail.org/post/20200306.7057595
COVID-19 update (25): China (Hong Kong) animal, dog, susp, OIE
http://promedmail.org/post/20200302.7040373
COVID-19 update (22): companion animal, dog susp, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200229.7036661
COVID-19 update (17): China, animal reservoir, wildlife trade & consumption http://promedmail.org/post/20200225.7024245
COVID-19 update (11): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts, pangolin susp http://promedmail.org/post/20200220.7009213
COVID-19 update (08): companion animal, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200218.7002276
COVID-19 update (06): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts
http://promedmail.org/post/20200217.6997782
Novel coronavirus (40): animal reservoir, pangolin poss intermediate host, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200210.6972104
Novel coronavirus (28): China (HU) animal reservoir
http://promedmail.org/post/20200201.6943858
Novel coronavirus (22): reservoir suggested, bats
http://promedmail.org/post/20200129.6930718
Novel coronavirus (20): China, wildlife trade ban
http://promedmail.org/post/20200127.6922060
Novel coronavirus (18): China (HU) animal reservoir
http://promedmail.org/post/20200125.6915411
Novel coronavirus (15): China (HU) wild animal sources
http://promedmail.org/post/20200123.6909913
Novel coronavirus (03): China (HU) animal reservoir suggested, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200114.6887480
Novel coronavirus (01): China (HU) WHO, phylogenetic tree
http://promedmail.org/post/20200112.6885385
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (HU) (07): official confirmation of novel coronavirus
http://promedmail.org/post/20200108.6878869
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (05): (HU) novel coronavirus identified

http://promedmail.org/post/20200108.6877694
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (03): (HU) updates, SARS, MERS ruled out, WHO, RFI
http://promedmail.org/post/20200105.6872267
Undiagnosed pneumonia - China (01): (HU) wildlife sales, market closed, RFI http://promedmail.org/post/20200102.6866757]
.....arn/tw/jh
##
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##
##

Date: Thu, 28 May 2020 11:43:53 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 28 May 2020 11:43:50 AM -0400
Subject: RE: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab
From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
To: David Morens [b6] >;
CC: Gerald Keusch [b6]

It he hasn't even got the basic PR skills to dodge that question, he shouldn't be out there talking with reporters.

On November 6th, if Trump is ousted, my first tweet of the day will be to demand his resignation from NIH.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoIHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 11:39 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Re: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

I dont know..... He may be trying to cover his ass regarding upcoming inquiries and investigations? D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 28, 2020, at 11:31, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Thanks for spotting that. What's wrong with this guy – doesn't he understand the weight his words will carry at this point.

He should know better than to answer that question directly with "no way of knowing". Politico's not at fault here – Collins just walked into the oldest trap in the book – you can't prove a negative, but don't give that quote.

Extremely disappointing on many levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens b6
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 10:39 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Gerald Keusch b6
Subject: Fwd: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" b6
> **Date:** May 28, 2020 at 10:33:44 EDT
> **To:** David Morens b6
> **Subject: Fwd: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> Begin forwarded message:

From: Karen Goraleski [b6]
Date: May 28, 2020 at 10:31:06 AM EDT
To: "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" [b6] Chandy John < [b6] g >, "Hill, David R. Prof." [b6] >, "Daniel [b6] [b6] >, "Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases)" [b6], "Walker, Patricia F" < [b6] >
Subject: fyi - Politico: NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

Unfortunately, the headline chosen by Politico fans the flames (does get more eyeballs on the story which is their goal). If one reads this, Collins says nature created this virus but that was not chosen as the headline. We know that Collins is speaking as a scientist when he says 'there is no way of knowing.' However, readers do not recognize that he says this as a scientist who understands there are always unknowns, even if highly highly unlikely.

NIH Director: 'No way of knowing' if coronavirus escaped from Wuhan lab

By Zachary Brennan

05/27/2020 06:52 PM EDT

National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins said the coronavirus is "absolutely not " manmade but he could not rule out the idea that it escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, where the first known cases emerged.

"Whether [the coronavirus] could have been in some way isolated and studied in this laboratory in Wuhan, we have no way of knowing," he told POLITICO on Wednesday.

What is clear, he said, is that "Nature created this virus, and has proven once again to be the most effective bioterrorist."

President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have repeatedly suggested that the virus may have somehow emerged from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — claims that the center's director has called "pure fabrication."

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence confirmed late last month that the government is investigating the pandemic's origin, but said that there is no reason to believe that the coronavirus was manmade or genetically modified.

Collins refused to comment on his agency's recent — and controversial — decision to pull fundingfrom researchers studying how coronaviruses spread from bats to people. In late April the NIH told the EcoHealth Alliance, whose collaborators included scientists at the Wuhan virology lab, that its project did not "align with the program goals and agency priorities."

Prominent scientific societies and 77 Nobel laureates have asked the administration to investigate why the non-profit group's grant was terminated, alleging that the decision was made for political, rather than scientific, reasons. The NIH awards grants using a merit-based system in which researchers evaluate the work of their peers, and ending a grant early is unusual.

Collins, who had not previously commented publicly on the situation, told POLITICO that "the NIH cannot discuss individual grants."

The agency chief, who is leading a public-private partnership called ACTIV to hunt for coronavirus vaccines and drugs, said that if "all goes perfectly," a few million doses of vaccine could be available in October for high-risk groups — with doses available sometime next winter for the rest of the country.

Trump has repeatedly promised a vaccine by the end of the year, far faster than any has ever been developed for any condition.

If China develops a coronavirus vaccine before the U.S. does, Collins said he "seriously hopes" that any tensions between the countries "wouldn't be a dominant factor" in determining whether the U.S. would have access to a Chinese-made shot.

Date: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 11:28:28 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 23 Jul 2020 11:28:27 AM -0400
Subject: Re: FW: House passes Chris Smith measure to probe if government turned ticks into bioweapons
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6];

Did you ever get to know Willi Burgdorfer? he was quite a guy. Also, I think I mentioned to you that Charlie Calisher was charged by Fidel Castro as a bioterrorist who started the 1981 dengue epidemic in Cuba. At first we thought that was a hoot, but the Cubans were dead serious. Poor Charlie, he was really in hot water. These crazy folks can do alot of harm.... d

On 7/23/2020 1:40 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> That's just another delightful story. Poor Dr. Burgdorfer is what I say!
> Cheers,
> Peter
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: [b6]
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> **From:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020 12:19 PM
> **To:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
> **Subject:** RE: FW: House passes Chris Smith measure to probe if government turned ticks into bioweapons
>
> It is sometimes, just sometimes, hard to believe how stupid so many are in this country. This is one of those times, and Chris Smith is the poster child.
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020 11:25 AM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
> **Subject:** Fwd: FW: House passes Chris Smith measure to probe if government turned ticks into bioweapons
>

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: House passes Chris Smith measure to probe if government turned ticks into bioweapons
Date: Tue, 21 Jul 2020 15:22:07 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
To: David Morens (d b6 >

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
(b) (6)(b) (6)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 9:54 AM
Subject: House passes Chris Smith measure to probe if government turned ticks into bioweapons

NEW JERSEY GLOBE



Rep. Christopher Smith (R-Hamilton).

House passes Chris Smith measure to probe if government turned ticks into bioweapons

New Jersey congressman wants GAO to investigate whether diseased ticks were "accidentally or intentionally" released

By David Wildstein, July 21 2020 9:10 am

Rep. Christopher Smith (R-Hamilton) says there are credible assertions that government researchers at Ft. Detrick and Plum Island turned ticks into bioweapons.

Now the 20-term New Jersey Republican wants the government to investigate whether ticks were ever weaponized with Lyme disease or other hazardous pathogens.

Smith's congressional colleagues agree with him.

Last night, the House approved an amendment sponsored by Smith that requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to determine if ticks were ever weaponized with Lyme disease or other hazardous pathogens.

This is Smith's second bid to get his proposed law passed." In 2019, he sponsored a similar measure giving the job to the U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General.

The proposal never moved through the U.S. Senate." Smith said he was told the inspector general at the Pentagon

didn't have the bandwidth to launch an investigation.
Smith said that the government researcher credited with discovering Lyme disease, Dr. Willy Burgdorfer, was a bio-weapons specialist.
According to Smith, Burgdorfer's files reveals that he and other bio-weapon specialists "stuffed ticks with pathogens in a quest to cause severe disability, disease, and death to potential enemies."
"With Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases exploding in the United States"with an estimated 300,000 to 427,000 new cases each year and 10-20% of all patients suffering from chronic Lyme Disease, Americans have a right to know whether any of this true," Smith said.
Smith wants the GAO investigation to determine if any diseased ticks were accidentally or intentionally released.
"Perhaps most importantly, can any of this information help current-day researchers find a way to mitigate"and help facilitate a cure"for Lyme and other tick borne diseases," Smith asked.
"

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"

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 1:28:15 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 1:28:10 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: David Morens <b6>; <b6> Aleksei Chmura <b6>; <b6>
Attachments: image001.jpg

I have only one word in response to this…. "HELP!!!"

I'm trying not to speak to journalists and am now being cited as "EcoHealth Alliance was not available for comment", but I don't see anyone from the scientific or science policy community speaking out yet. Getting a bit nervous with this sort of geopolitical game.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: <b6>
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens <b6>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 11:36 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; <b6> Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: Fwd: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>
> **Date:** April 30, 2020 at 11:35:36 EDT
> **To:** David Morens <b6>
> **Subject: Fwd: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs**
>
> Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: April 30, 2020 at 11:31:18 EDT
Subject: Guardian: US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs

US intelligence agencies under pressure to link coronavirus to Chinese labs

Senior Trump administration figures said to be demanding evidence on virus's origins

- Coronavirus – latest updates
- See all our coronavirus coverage

Patrick Wintour
Thu 30 Apr 2020 09.49 EDT Last modified on Thu 30 Apr 2020 11.22 EDT



Donald Trump is under pressure with more than 1 million Americans infected and 60,000 dead from the virus. Photograph: Carlos Barría/Reuters

Senior figures in the Trump administration have put pressure on US intelligence agencies to provide evidence to support claims that the coronavirus outbreak originated in state-run laboratories in China, a report in the New York Times claims.

Intelligence analysts fear Donald Trump is looking for propaganda to be used in the escalating blame game over whether China covered up the crisis or even generated the virus in its laboratories – a theory that remains unproven.

The office of the director of national intelligence said in a statement on Thursday that it had concluded that the virus was "not manmade or genetically modified", but it disclosed that officials were still examining whether the origins of the pandemic could be traced to contact with infected animals or an accident at a Chinese lab.

"The intelligence community [IC] also concurs with the wide scientific consensus that the Covid-19 virus was not manmade or genetically modified," said the statement. "The IC will continue to rigorously examine emerging information and intelligence to determine whether the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or if it was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan."

In recent days Trump and his allies have sharpened their rhetoric on China, accusing it of failing to act swiftly enough to stop the spread of the virus or sound the alarm about the outbreak.

Most scientists who have studied the genetics of the coronavirus provided by China say the overwhelming probability is that it jumped from animal to human in a non-laboratory setting, as was the case with previous pandemics.

Those reported as pushing US intelligence agencies to lend credence to the theory that the virus was created in Chinese labs include the US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, the deputy national security adviser, Matthew Pottinger, and Richard Grenell, the acting director of national intelligence.

In numerous TV interviews, Pompeo has said China suppressed information on the virus and withheld key facts from the World Health Organization, and he has hinted that he believes the virus originated in Chinese laboratories.

But the suggestion that intelligence agencies are being put under pressure to produce evidence represents a step up from such comments. Such a finding would turn the international disaster into something akin to biological warfare, or a lab accident of catastrophic proportions.

More than 1 million people have been infected and more than 60,000 have died in the US from the virus, adding political urgency to Trump's desire to shift blame for the crisis on to China.

China has been resisting an international inquiry into the origins of the outbreak in Wuhan and, under pressure, says it is a matter for the WHO to investigate. The proposal is unlikely to mollify Trump, who has condemned the WHO as Chinese-centric and has suspended US funding from the UN agency pending a review.

Chris Patten, the former governor general of Hong Kong and a long-term critic of Chinese efforts to control democracy in the former colony, has joined the calls for an international inquiry, accusing China of initially covering up the outbreak.

The calls for an inquiry have been strongest in Australia, leading to a diplomatic confrontation between the Australian prime minister, Scott Morrison, and the Chinese ambassador to Australia, Cheng Jingye. The calls have also been supported by Winston Peters, New Zealand's foreign minister.

Peters said: "It is very hard to conceive, no matter what country it is, of there not being a desire from every country around the world – including the country of origin – for an investigation to find out how this happened."

Jingye has warned of a Chinese boycott of Australian goods and services.

Beijing has been caught in a bind, with its diplomats sometimes saying it is not even clear whether the virus originated in China, contending that it is a legitimate matter for inquiry by scientists, but then rejecting an international inquiry into the source of the outbreak. Chinese diplomats distinguish between an international inquiry, which they say is likely to be a political blame game, and a dispassionate examination by WHO scientists.

Critics of China counter that the WHO's record shows it has neither the will nor the investigative powers required to look deep into the entrails of the Chinese Communist party and expose any cover-up. The WHO is dependent on the cooperation of its member states for access and has no mechanism to punish countries that keep its officials in the dark.

Proposals have been floated for the WHO to be given the power to impose sanctions on countries that are not transparent with it, but this proposal would need to pass the WHO's general assembly, and would require nation states handing over a degree of sovereignty to a multilateral body.

The Chinese ambassador to the UK, Liu Xiaoming, delivered a lengthy rebuttal to the prospect of an international inquiry last week. "You're talking about independent investigation. It's up to the WHO. We support the WHO. We believe we should play by international norms and international rules, not by some other countries' rules. Some other country even sues China at its local court. It's absurd,"he said in remarks to the Asia Society in London.

"This is not the first time that some politicians want to play world police. This is not the era of 'gunboat diplomacy'. This is not the era when China was still in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. This is the third decade of the 21st century. Those people cannot understand it. They think they still live in the old days when they can bully China and the world. If the WHO does not act their way, they stop their support and criticise the WHO to be 'China-centric'. That's simply not right.

"So we are calling for international cooperation. That's the only weapon and only way out to win this battle against the virus. Not by scapegoating, not by playing games, not by politicising the virus, not by spreading a political virus."

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Date: Thu, 10 Sep 2020 7:53:20 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 10 Sep 2020 7:53:18 PM -0400
Subject: FW: Confidential updates
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: David Morens b6 b6 >;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Given this sinister world we live in maybe you shouldn't send emails with expletives, however justifiable, via your .gov email address. -😊

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 3:26 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >
Subject: RE: Confidential updates

The shit just keeps on flowing. Hang in there!!!!!! This too shall pass….

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:31 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]
Subject: Confidential updates
Importance: High

Thanks for sharing the Stat piece Just tweeted.

V. busy at the moment so haven't been in touch, but note that the GMO/anti-gain-of-function crowd is now attacking, thanks largely to EHA getting a mention in the follow up to "Plandemic" the conspiracy movie. It's called "InDoctorNation" (get it?), and lays out the theory whereby we were the money laundry for Tony Fauci to fund Gain-of-Function work in China so he can design and release a virus along with George Soros and Bill Gates, and they can all make money off the vaccine.

There's a hit-job article being pushed out by bots on Twitter (https://www.organicconsumers.org/news/gain- of-function-hall-of-shame) as well as a piece in "Boston" magazine about the 'heroic' work a postdoc has done at the Broad Institute to highlight any and all potential reasons that COVID could have escaped from a lab, using only genetic analysis. It's baloney, of course, but they had a sympathetic reporter. NEIDL gets a mention too.

By the way – my home address has now become a target for the conspiracy nutjobs. I'm not going public at this point, so please keep this confidential, but this is a particularly ugly development. Suffice it to say that the FBI are on the case.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 10:53 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Dennis Carroll [b6]
Subject: RE: Your article on emerging infections ...

Thanks David,

Right on top of the key issues. Right on, I say!

The report Nicki and I did for the GPMB on the R&D Preparedness Ecosystem will be released on the 14th, and I will send it to you then.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 9:08 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]; Dennis Carroll [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Your article on emerging infections ...

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Patrick Skerrett [b6]
> **Date:** September 9, 2020 at 08:09:40 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6], "Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V]" < [b6]
> **Cc:** "Goraleski, Karen" [b6], "Singh, Mantra (NIH/FIC) [E]" [b6]
> **Subject: Your article on emerging infections ...**
>
> ... is live on STAT:
> https://www.statnews.com/2020/09/09/emerging- viruses-real-bioterrorists-behind-covid-19/
>
> We will be promoting it on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms. Please share it with your communities.
>
> Thanks for not immediately hitting DELETE when my request landed in your inbox. I enjoyed working with you on the article. Please keep us in mind for other opinion/perspective articles down the road.
>
> Pat Skerrett
> STAT

Date: Sat, 18 Jul 2020 11:16:27 AM -0400

Sent: Sat, 18 Jul 2020 11:16:20 AM -0400

Subject: RE: Thanks! and a couple requests.... FW: Manuscript submitted - AJTMH-20-0849

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>

To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]>; [b6]; Charles H Calisher [b6]>; James Leduc [b6]>; Laura D Kramer [b6]>; Peter Doherty [b6]>; Hahn, Beatrice [b6]>;

CC: David Morens [b6] [b6]>;

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Jerry, I am just getting to and entering these comments into the ms. now. Editor Phil Rosenthal is checking the submission date issue and what their policy is. The remdesivir error was caught and changed after the ms. went out. Some brief new text on international collaboration has been added. TY,

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, July 17, 2020 12:15 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]>; [b6] Charles H Calisher [b6]>; James Leduc [b6] Laura D Kramer [b6]>; Peter Doherty [b6]>; Hahn, Beatrice [b6]>
Cc: David Morens [b6] [b6]>
Subject: RE: Thanks! and a couple requests.... FW: Manuscript submitted - AJTMH-20-0849

Hi David et al,

Its late and I find it hard to do a thorough read looking for errors that require fixing. I have three brief comments below. But I can say that this is exceptionally well written, makes its points clearly, and will be a valuable read for the vast majority of scientists and non-scientists who want a better understanding and demystification of what might have happened in the appearance of COVID-19 in humans and what is and is not the explanation of its host-switching capacity. It is a nail in the coffin of conspiracy theories. My brief comments follow:

On page 3 the MS refers to remdesivir as a life saving drug, however the available published data do not document that, and while the trend to lower mortality may be actually true the data do not yet support that conclusion. What can be said is that it "has been shown to reduce morbidity and may also reduce mortality".

I would also make a bit more clear the need for international collaborations among scientists from many countries to explore these pandemics-in-waiting, free from political interference. That may be a specific lead-in to the accompanying editorial.

The only other comment I have is that the identical manuscript receipt date and acceptance date suggests the process was baked-in and there was no review. It would be far better if there was some time between the two – maybe Joel can address that?

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 16, 2020 11:19 AM
To: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] < [b6] Charles H Calisher [b6]>; James Leduc < [b6]; Laura D Kramer [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Doherty < [b6]>; Hahn, Beatrice [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]
Subject: RE: Thanks! and a couple requests.... FW: Manuscript submitted - AJTMH-20-0849

Dear Colleagues, The *Am J Trop Med Hyg* is moving this ms. forward quickly, and a few minutes ago sent me the attached page proofs.

There some obvious are errors in it, which we hope to spot and clear up, and ask your help in

identifying anything else. Their style of listing authors removes degrees and some affiliations, but pleas be especially careful to identify anything missing, incomplete, or incorrect (we note a couple of mistakes already). Your full titles, degrees, and affiliations will be retained in the materials provided to the press.

Please get back to me at your earlies convenience. I have not yet gone over the manuscript in detail, but spot numerous mistakes which I will be correcting as soon as I get a moment.

Thank you,

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 3:40 PM
To: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b6); Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 Charles H Calisher < b6 Jim LeDuc b6 ; Laura D Kramer < b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Peter Doherty < b6 >; Hahn, Beatrice < b6

Cc: Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) [b6] >
Subject: Thanks! and a couple requests.... FW: Manuscript submitted - AJTMH-20-0849

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you all, again, for being willing to help bring this ms. on the origins of COVID-19 into being.

Am Soc Trop Med and Hyg President Joel Breman and journal editor Phil Rosenthal wish to put this ms. on a very fast track, in conjunction with the go-with editorial, which I have seen only in an early draft form. The ms. incorporating all of your extremely helpful edits and comments was emailed "informally" to Phil, who essentially submitted it within the journal without another round of editing. He and other reviewers have made comments which I accepted without running them by you, as I believed none were problematic or required rethinking.

Phil told me that despite this, we all will all have a chance to look at and edit it again, but they want to get it into a galley format first. All of your changes were entered into the ms., although a few were changed by the editorial staff. But I think it is basically true to all of our opinions. Again, you will have another look, but please be prepared to do so quickly, before the publication boat leaves the dock.

At this time, please also send me your affiliations, titles, degrees, etc., as you wish them to be listed. Be liberal, as part of the point of this is to make a statement that this opinion comes from senior experts. For example, in addition to his NIH affiliation Joel will be listed as President of ASTMH, and I will also be listed with both my NIH affiliation and as Chairman, American Committee on Arthropod-Borne Viruses.

Again, thank you. I promise that many, many scientists will soon be thanking you as well.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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-----Original Message-----
From: American Journal of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com>
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 2:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: editorial@ajtmh.org
Subject: Manuscript submitted - AJTMH-20-0849

13-Jul-2020
Re: AJTMH-20-0849 Manuscript ID
Dear Dr. David Morens:

This is to acknowledge that the above manuscript has been received by the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. Please refer to this number in all your future correspondence with the Journal office.

Your user name is: b6 Your password may be found by using the password help function on the log-in page.

FOR ORIGINAL SUBMISSIONS:
This information refers to ORIGINAL SUBMISSIONS only. If this is a revised manuscript, please skip to the REVISIONS section of this letter below.

Please verify the following information and notify the journal office immediately if there are any discrepancies:

Manuscript type: Perspective piece

Title: The Origin of COVID-19 – and Why It Matters

Authors: Morens, David; Breman, Joel; Calisher, Charles; Doherty, Peter; Hahn, Beatrice; Keusch, Gerald; Kramer, Laura; Le Duc, James; Monath, Thomas; Taubenberger, Jeffrey

Number of tables: 0

Number of figures: 2

Word count: 3150

Right running head: Origin of COVID-19

The journal adheres to ICMJE recommendations for authorship (http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf). Please read Section II.A.2 of the ICMJE recommendations for more information on authorship guidelines. ALL co authors must fill out the AJTMH Authorship Form - http://www.ajtmh.org/upload/AJTMH_authorship_agreement_form_051320.docx . Additionally, only the corresponding author must fill out and submit the copyright form http://www.ajtmh.org/upload/AJTMH_2019_copyright_form_fillable.pdf

As the corresponding author, we ask that you collect this form from all authors and submit to editorial@ajtmh.org in one batch or document. Be sure to include your manuscript number in the subject line of your email.

There are page charges for publication in the Journal.
You will receive a separate e-mail from the journal office staff indicating your estimated page charges. Page charges do not apply to book reviews, CD reviews, Letters to the Editor, editorials, Images in Clinical Tropical Medicine and invited review articles. In addition, individual authors are usually not assessed page charges for articles that will appear in a supplement to the journal.

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FOR REVISIONS:
Thank you for submitting your revised manuscript to the journal. The revised manuscript may need to go out for review again. We will keep you updated on its status.

If you would like to be removed from our database, please email editorial@ajtmh.org. Please refer to our privacy policy, which can be found here: https://www.ajtmh.org/privacy-policy

Thank you for your interest in The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

Sincerely,

Alison Jaeb

Alison Jaeb
Editorial Assistant
editorial@ajtmh.org

Date: Thu, 7 May 2020 8:28:18 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 7 May 2020 8:28:17 PM -0400
Subject: Re: responses to new Mikovits video
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: [b6]; Bryan Morens [b6]

No..... chill. Drink shit beer like Negro Modelo, or good wine, or fine Scotch, but don't let them drag You down. As we say in medicine, non illegitimus carborundum. This too will pass. When its all over you will be the hero and your critics will be putzes. You have to believe that. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 7, 2020, at 20:24, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Thanks David – I had seen that there was yet another video from the conspiracy theorists, but good that there's already pushback.

I'm waiting for the people to start lining up outside my house once they release my address…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 10:27 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; [b6] Bryan Morens [b6]>
Subject: Fwd: responses to new Mikovits video

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6
Date: May 7, 2020 at 09:48:38 EDT
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>, NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: responses to new Mikovits video

https://zdoggmd.com/plandemic/

https://respectfulinsolence.com/2020/05/06/judy- mikovits-pandemic/

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Date: Wed, 6 May 2020 6:08:58 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 6 May 2020 6:08:55 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Amusing interlude re. an NASEM Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] [b6]

Great – thanks. I'm sure you will have done an order of magnitude better job than some of the more nerdy virologists I've seen on TV recently who make the world's worst PR agents right now…..

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 6:00 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]>; [b6]
Subject: RE: Amusing interlude re. an NASEM Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7

Hi Peter,

CBS is doing a story about the interactions between the US and the Chinese government, part of which addresses the action taken against your grant. I have talked to them and they are including a couple of my quotes which basically say how counterproductive that is for the US to lose the highly productive scientific knowledge your expertise provides, without entangling you in any virus manipulation or accidental release or both. I don't know what the rest of it will say, other than the editor is involved in their Washington DC office and focused on foreign affairs and politics. I'm hoping the rest of it will be as brilliant as my comments.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 5:50 PM
To: David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Subject: Amusing interlude re. an NASEM Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
Importance: High

Confidentially sharing this. I initially thought this was the National Academies moving surprisingly swiftly and directly in defense of my honor and that of science across the world, but it's not – it looks like from this email chain below, that this was in the works already. I think this was something Linda Saif has initiated at the NAS to build collaborative good will with China.

It's good that this call will at least have key people on it: Ralph Baric, Jim Le Duc, George Gao, Linda Saif. Note the email though that we're going to specifically avoid discussing the issue of the origin of COVID-19.

That reminds me of the Fawlty Towers episode where Basil Fawlty (having sustained a fall and minor concussion) has a German guest and keeps reminding himself 'not to mention the War'…of course, he does in the most hilarious and crass way possible.

I will try not to mention 'the war' on this call….I'll let you know how it goes…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel : b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Rusek, Benjamin [b6]>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2020 6:15 PM
To: 'David A Relman' [b6]>; 'Baric, Ralph S' [b6]; 'Saif, Linda [b6]
'Perlman, Stanley' [b6]; Peter Daszak <[b6] Harvey V. Fineberg <
[b6]>; 'Diane Griffin' [b6]; 'Peggy Hamburg' [b6]
[b6] [b6] 'Dave Franz [b6]>; Shi,
Pei yon [b6] [b6]
Cc: 'Frances Sharples' [b6]; Lowenthal, Micah [b6]; 'Baric, Toni C' (
[b6] Alison Andre [b6] >; Jennifer
Ryan [b6]; Bowman, Katherine [b6]
Subject: Virtual U.S. China dialogue meeting on COVID-19: planning discussion on May 7
Importance: High

Greetings,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a virtual bilateral dialogue meeting between Chinese and American experts studying and fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. I am reaching out to you now so 1) the group is connected by email and 2) to organize the planning teleconference for the American participants on May 7. The purpose of the May 7 discussion is to fill you in on the dialogue background, discuss the topics/questions (list in your invitation letter and attached) and issues we should probably avoid (origin questions, politics), logistics, and address any other questions or concerns you may have.

We are proposing that this ~1 hour discussion take place over Zoom at 8:00 PM ET on Thursday, May 7. If this time does not work for someone we could push the time up or back slightly. Please let me know. Also if Thursday evening is impossible I can brief you on the discussion over the phone sometime on Friday.

Re the actually dialogue meeting with the Chinese group, as your invitation letter notes we have proposed that the dialogue meeting take place on the evenings of Monday, May 11th (to address the first set of bullet points) and Tuesday, May 12th (to ask/answer follow-up questions and address the second set of bullet points), at 9:00 PM ET for the Americans. George Gao has not yet let us know if these exact times work but we should hear back from him soon (the Chinese May day holidays end on the 5th).

Kind regards,

Ben

Benjamin Rusek
The U.S. National Academy of Sciences
b6

Date: Tue, 12 May 2020 4:56:47 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 12 May 2020 4:56:44 PM -0400
Subject: RE: of interest
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

Thanks. Anyway, I sat down to watch it, waiting for the magic words, and about 28 minutes into it, it the last minute and some seconds, there it was. Boom!

I watched some of the senate hearing today. Again, a consistent, clear, concise and informative presentation from Tony. The others were all pandering, especially about the adequacy of testing.

Cheers, and thanks so much for your consistent support for Peter and your personal and principled stance on this.

From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 4:52 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: of interest

Not sure, it works from my computer. I wonder if they put something on there that blocks outside access. One of our media ladies did make a comment to the effect thAt "we are trying to keep it in house for now".... not sure what thT means. These sorts of things are in the public domain and cant be hidden.

Until i get more info, dont worry, there is nothing i havent already told you snd if there is a Need,
Access cant be denied even if it took a. Foia, which it wouldn't. Thousands of people have seen it, so they cant keep a lid on it. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 11, 2020, at 23:20, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:
>
> This is trivial compared to the rest of the shit coming down, but I was curious why this was on Youtube, but nothing comes up when you log in and search. Then I noticed the detail that this is youtu.be and when you google that it says there is no information on this page. Is this a site NIAID uses? Public or private? And I presume this link to this site should be kept confidential if it is not a public access site.
>
> This is really getting quite complicated, given Trumps riffs following the 60 Minutes segment. I just hope they (CBS) keep after him.
>
> Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 1:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Jeffery K. Taubenberger MD PhD < [b6] >
Subject: of interest

https://youtu.be/A0aRdpD0- xc

--

David M Morens b6

Date: Wed, 24 Jun 2020 12:25:45 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 24 Jun 2020 12:25:42 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Politico story just now.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]

Just fantastic to hear that David. He is a principled person, and that's what we need in agencies to fight this level of interference, and basically corruption.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 8:48 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: Politico story just now.

I did tell him just that, and he seemed pleased. He made some additional comments to the effect that this came from the WH and he Was totally opposed to it. Not his exact words, but that was the gist of it. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jun 24, 2020, at 01:02, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
>
> Please tell Tony I appreciate the strength of character that is on show, as do all of us out here right now.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 6:51 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Politico story just now.

Glad you have a channce to watch this stuff. I will be at work until late tonight getting ready for an 8 am meeting with Tony..... d

On 6/23/2020 6:29 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Apparently Tony responded to a question about the cancelation, which has led an HHS person to state an alternative reason for canceling (at the bottom of the piece):
>
> A White House official said that the White House encouraged the decision to cut the funding, but that HHS ultimately made the call. A HHS spokesperson said that "the grantee was not in compliance with NIH's grant policy," and declined further comment.
>
> https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/23/fauci- nih-white-house-bat-study-336452
>
> I'm defending Tony on Twitter now – would hate to see him get blamed for this…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 3:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; David Morens b6
b6
Subject: OpEd update

They declined. I am surprised as this would be an issue of particular relevance in DC.

Any connections at the NY Times? If I have to go more distant I will try the Boston Globe. Not quite WaPo or NYT but given my location it makes more sense than the LA Times.

Any other suggestions? For example, David would Tony make a case with WaPo? Should I try to reach him through you?

Having gotten this far, I'm not going to let it go, but I also want to have maximum impact on those who need to be maximally impacted.

Jerry

--
David M Morens b6

Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 12:15:11 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 12:15:09 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Politico story
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Aleksei Chmura [b6];
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Nancye Green [b6] David Morens [b6]

I just saw the Politico story on the Kaiser Family Foundation daily newletter. So this is now getting play. I'm off my call with the health and public health leadership in Kosovo about their outbreak and will begin to explore how to put the ideas we discussed in play – in particular related first to possibility of engaging the National Academies and AAAS on the issue of the integrity of science.

More later.

Jerry

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 11:21 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Nancye Green [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: Re: Politico story

Thanks so much, Jerry!

We have posted the longer statement online here:

https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2020/04/regarding- nih-termination-of-coronavirus-research-funding [ecohealthalliance.org]

Cheers,

-Aleksei

On Apr 28, 2020, at 10:54, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Hi Alexi and Robert,
Has any news outlet picked up on the Politico story yet? Have they called you? Did you issue the longer statement (send me the final version when you have a chance)?

I expect to be talking with Peggy Hamburg this afternoon about AAAS getting involved.

Jerry

From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 8:39 AM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]; Nancye Green [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: Politico story

Thanks, David.

I confirm receipt.

I note that our cancelled Coronavirus award is still listed on page 42!

Cheers,

-Aleksei

On Apr 28, 2020, at 06:37, David Morens [b6] wrote:

this and prior email, re new NIAID implementation plan, released last night d
Let me know if you got these docs, am having trouble with home gmail david

David M. Morens, MD
b6
b6
b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Mon, Apr 27, 2020 at 11:37 PM Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Hello Nancy,
>
> I am in touch with various colleagues to determine the best response from the scientific community. Its late tonight and not much will happen until tomorrow, but when people read this and other reports sure to follow there will be concern and consternation. It cannot be left as it is. Lauer and Francis Collins will have to own this, and it will not be pretty for them. Francis will lost the respect of the scientific community – whether he is personally involved or not he is the head and therefore responsible for its actions. Lauer will be the fall guy. So be it.
>
> Friends of EHA will stay in close touch with Peter and through you with the Board. Let us know as well if there are additional ways we can come to the support of the organization, scientific integrity, and the integrity of science.
>
> Jerry Keusch
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Peter Daszak [b6] >
> **Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2020 8:13 PM
> **To:** [b6]; David Morens [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Politico story
Importance: High

Dear All,

I'm introducing you to Nancy Green, the Chair of our Board. David Morens – you both met at the Smithsonian Exhibit opening. Nancye – David is in the Office of the Director NIAID, reporting to Tony Fauci and a long time mentor of mine. Jerry Keusch is the Head of the Boston University Biosecurity Level 4 lab, former Director of the NIH Fogarty International Center, and another of my 'mentors'.

This is the story from Politico, with our statement embedded. It's not a rip-roaring call to arms for the defense of scientific integrity, but it's a start and at least exonerates us of any wrong doing. I'm hoping that powerful voices will now speak out and try to crush this political interference in work that was defined to protect our national health and security.

https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

I'll be reaching out to Jim Hughes and Rita Colwell tonight to set up a call.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

<NIAID COVID-19 Full Weekly Update 4.27.20.docx>

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 12:28:55 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 12:28:53 AM -0400
Subject: Important mistake from NIH in their termination letter
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] [b6] Gerald T Keusch [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Dear 'friends'...really glad I spoke with this *Science* reporter today. She reached out to NIH to question the legality of the letter – apparently only contracts can be terminated for 'convenience'. Checkout their response below – hilarious, dysfunctional, and wide open for a lawsuit. Obviously, that's not a winning proposal, but I will be talking with our pro-bono lawyers Monday about them sending a letter in to Michael Lauer and Francis Collins asking for an explanation of their rationale.

I don't know who Michael Lauer is, but he's made a bunch of mistakes already. He sent the original letter to Kevin Olival, cc'd to Columbia Univ, who are nothing to do with the grant. That email chain appeared in Breitbart or somewhere and now Columbia's name is being reported as part of this. I know that their lawyers are hardcore. Second – the mistake below opens them up for a lawsuit – not a good place to be in.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 4:40 PM
To: Meredith Wadman [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: time-sensitive question from Science

Dear Meredith,

You are correct: "cause" was not used in any communications from NIH nor was "to protect the public health and welfare".

Cheers,

-Aleksei

From: Meredith Wadman [b6]

Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 3:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak; Robert Kessler
Subject: time-sensitive question from Science
Hi Peter,
NIH got back to me just now. I had asked how they could terminate a grant award "for convenience" when in fact the "convenience" clause only applies to termination of contracts, not grants. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43055.pdf
NIH wrote back indicating that the grant was in fact terminated "for cause"—well, they implied that anyway. Does anything in the emails you received from Mike Lauer capture any of this,it's directly from NIH public affairs:
Here is the section of the GPS that answers your question:
NIH GPS Section 8.5.2: NIH GPS states, NIH may immediately terminate a grant when necessary, such as to protect the public health and welfare from the effects of a serious deficiency.

Did NIH write to yuou anything along the lines that they were terminating the grant "for cause…to protect thje public health and welfare" etc?
Best,
Meredith
Meredith Wadman, BM, BCh
Reporter
Science Magazine
1200 New York Avenue N.W., #1144
Washington, D.C. 20005
Email: b6
Cell: b6
Twitter: @meredithwadman

Date: Fri, 2 Oct 2020 7:54:11 AM -0400

Sent: Fri, 2 Oct 2020 7:54:10 AM -0400

Subject: Re: NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >

To: Peter Daszak [b6];

CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Indeed! I hope that when you get enough air you will also push NIAID for the full hearing on grant termination you deserve. If not for the money, Then for the sake of justice

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Oct 2, 2020, at 00:07, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Just coming up for air after 2 weeks solid grant/report writing. I'm submitting a new R01 on Monday for a project called: Analyzing the potential for future bat coronavirus emergence in Southeast Asia…in other words to do what the China grant should be doing, but now in Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam.

Amused to see the response below from our polite and careful presidents of NAS and NAM, just days before the whole world got alarmed at just how much of a corrupt malicious ogre we've got inhabiting the center of our Govt's power.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 1:37 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: FW: NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

[b6]

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 11:55 AM
Subject: NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

Share

NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic

Statement | **September 24, 2020**

As advisers to the nation on all matters of science, medicine, and public health, we are compelled to underscore the value of science-based decision-making at all levels of government. Our nation is at a critical time in the course of the COVID-19 pandemic with important decisions ahead of us, especially concerning the efficacy and safety of vaccines. Policymaking must be informed by the best available evidence without it being distorted, concealed, or otherwise deliberately miscommunicated. We find ongoing reports and incidents of the politicization of science, particularly the

overriding of evidence and advice from public health officials and derision of government scientists, to be alarming. It undermines the credibility of public health agencies and the public's confidence in them when we need it most. Ending the pandemic will require decision-making that is not only based on science but also sufficiently transparent to ensure public trust in, and adherence to, sound public-health instructions. Any efforts to discredit the best science and scientists threaten the health and welfare of us all.

Marcia McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Victor J. Dzau
President, National Academy of Medicine

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Date: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 5:03:38 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 5:03:37 PM -0400
Subject: Re: FYI: Engaging ASCI
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6];

PS, I am at work at NIH now but I just got as message that there are many protesters in Bethesda, some near where I live (in a condo literally at the foot of NIH). Maybe I can join them, as I did for the recent women's marches and the students march (at which my oldest grand daughter helped organize the march to the Florida State Capitol). Reminds me of the good old 60s.... david

On 6/2/2020 4:52 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> I tried to enlist Ajit Varki to move the American Society for Clinical Investigation (he was editor of the JCI and President of the Society) but he felt like he was not going to be taken seriously and has put me in touch with three former ASCI Presidents who he thought might have some purchase with the current leadership. I have just sent the following message – maybe start with the last of this string and go forward. We shall see if and what the response is.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Keusch, Gerald T
> **Sent:** Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4:46 PM
> **To:** Welsh, Michael J [b6] >
> **Cc:** Ginsburg David [b6]; Timothy Ley [b6]; Varki, Ajit [b6] >
> **Subject:** RE: [External] Re: Engaging ASCI
>
> Dear Drs. Welsh, Ginsburg and Ley,
>
> That is indeed the grant I am referring to. I was in touch with Ajit as I was contacting around 150 fellow members of NAM from the internal medicine and public health sections to sign on to a letter to the 3 Academy Presidents to make a public request for transparency and explanation of the legitimacy of the action taken within 1 week from the mouth of Donald Trump to the termination of a grant which scored in the 3rd percentile of review in 2019. There were 92 yes responses and the letter was sent over the weekend.
>
> The issue of the precedent here to subvert the peer review process and the independence and integrity of scientific research should be of interest to ASCI as the leading professional society for clinical researchers in the U.S. The collective voice of organizations like ASCI are loud and highly credible but only if they make known their concerns. While I have no expectation that the White House or Secretary Azar will listen or respond, I do think it will make an impression on Francis Collins and perhaps steel the NIH to push back and open up what happened to the scrutiny of American scientists. At the very least we must make it clear that unless the justification can be legitimized it will stand as an irresponsible and untenable decision that must be reversed (you probably understand the termination was for "convenience" which is not grounds for termination of a research grant and therefore is probably illegal, and in any event did not allow sufficient time for any investigation and did not open up the possibility of appeal) . To promote excellence in science we must insure the integrity of the academic scientific enterprise. It is indeed a very serious issue as you note. I would think it is also a very proper concern for ASCI, as the Society webpage says it engages in advocacy "to promote increased federal funding and sound science policy through direct Congressional advocacy and member participation". What has happened certainly sounds to me like a direct threat to "sound science policy".
>
> Jerry Keusch
>
> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
> Professor of Medicine and International Health
> Boston University School of Medicine
> Associate Director, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories
> 620 Albany Street

Boston, MA 02118

From: Welsh, Michael J [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Varki, Ajit [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Ginsburg David [b6]; Timothy Ley [b6]
Subject: Re: [External] Re: Engaging ASCI

Ajit

I assume this refers to the grant that collected and studied coronavirus samples and involved an investigator from Wuhan.

This is a serious issue. I think it would be best to refer it to the NAM and NAS.

Mike

On Jun 1, 2020, at 9:23 PM, Varki, Ajit [b6] > wrote:

> On Jun 1, 2020, at 3:49 PM, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote: Dear Ajit, I wonder if you would be willing to engage the leadership of ASCI to take on the issue of the administration cancelling an NIH research grant for political gain. While I don't expect Trump or Azar to back down, or Collins to reverse the decision, the more the scientific community shows it is concerned and the longer it makes that known the harder it will be on NIH to just ignore the controversy and will be forced to be more transparent. I am an emeritus member of ASCI but never part of the leadership. I would support this effort totally if you were willing to take the lead. Thanks for considering. Jerry

Hi Jerry: Thanks for asking, but I am not the best person to lead such an effort. Despite my contributions as JCI Editor and then President(e.g., JCI as first open access journal, setting in motion the self-publishing option, (saving)reorganizing the annual meeting to Chicago Fairmont, supporting and facilitating emergence of the APSA as part of the meeting, setting in motion the discussions that lead to the loan relief program etc. I have been completely ignored/not acknowledged anytime since, and I have never been invited to participate in the Society or the national meeting in any capacity.

I dont think this is because I was the first(?) and only(?) graduate of a foreign medical school ("FMG") to become Editor and President. I think to more likely because of my Presidential address, which predicted a lot thing that have unfortunately happened since.

B62. Varki, A.: Executive Summary of The Nerflex Commission Report, April 25th. 2049 (based on the 1999 ASCI Presidential Address). *J. Clin. Invest* (Supplement). v 104, S1-S10, 1999.

I am copying to some other former ACSI Presidents of my vintage who might be in a better position to influnce the current leadership.

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--
David M Morens b6

Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 1:43:07 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 1:43:05 PM -0400
Subject: RE: URGENT RE: Response to the NIH grant
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6];
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]

And when do I say you shared them. I would have to say last week, when you actually did. The rationale, which was the real rationale in fact, is the reason you did. I would have to say what I told you then, which was to provide the information and wait to see how it played out. Then came the shocker on Friday. Just so you know what I would feel I must say.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 1:38 PM
To: Robert Kessler [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: RE: URGENT RE: Response to the NIH grant

Re. sharing the letters – please share the email chain with your colleagues – people like Peggy Hamburg etc.

Re. sharing with reporters – the only bit they haven't seen is the response from NIH saying how they appreciate our help…then the termination the next day. Feel free to share that. If they ask how you got it, tell them I came to you for advice because you used to work at NIH – I specifically asked you 'have you ever heard of this sort of termination before'?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Robert Kessler [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 1:29 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: URGENT RE: Response to the NIH grant

Thank you, I will send them your way.

On Tue, Apr 28, 2020 at 1:28 PM Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> I would be pleased to do so. I know Helen and have previously been interviewed by Science reporters. So send them my way and I will make sure I can respond.
>
> I will have a discussion with Peggy Hamburg about this – I wrote to her last night – and we are looking for a time to chat, including Nicki Lurie. Nicki and I are also planning to engage the National Academies in this and I will be in touch with Harold Varmus as well. I know you are busy but I can best make the case if I can share the letter you received from NIH with them all. And if you agree what would be my response if I am asked how I got them. I am not used to operating in such circumstances so your input would be of importance for me to understand how to proceed. The same would pertain to speaking with Helen and Science magazine reporters.
>
> Jerry
>
> **From:** Robert Kessler [b6] >
> **Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2020 1:23 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Cc:** Peter Daszak [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6] g >
> **Subject:** Response to the NIH grant
>
> Hi Jerry,
>
> As I'm sure you can imagine, we're pretty much underwater with media requests following the Politico story. As I mentioned last night, I don't want us to be the story so much as the broader attack on open science this precedent represents.
>
> Is there any chance you're available to speak with reporters from Science magazine and Helen Branswell from STAT? We'd appreciate it and I think it would go a long way to showing that the science community stands together for good science.
>
> Thanks,
> Robert
>
> --

Robert Kessler
Communications Manager

he/him

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street Ste. 1701

New York, NY 10001

b6 (direct)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

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--

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Mon, 10 Aug 2020 11:24:47 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 10 Aug 2020 11:24:40 AM -0400
Subject: Monday morning news from Wuhan & elsewhere...
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6];

Had a fun weekend w/ reporters breaking into my late breakfast. Here's a story from NBC where they actually went inside the lab.

https://www.today.com/video/inside- the-wuhan-lab-at-center-of-coronavirus-controversy-89836101738

Unfortunately Zhengli Shi is on vacation in Tibet this week so she didn't feature, but the very likeable Director of the Lab (the guy she interviews first) and the more political director of the Institute were interviewed.

Good to see Wuhan opening up to outside journalists. I look forward to a trip there with both of you one day, followed by a banquet, baiju drinking, and Karaoke with the very excellent singer Zhengli Shi!

On Wednesday we're expecting a full story from Wall St Journal on the origins of COVID. Apparently Tony is interviewed, Dennis Carroll and other Luminaries.

In other news, Dennis Carroll is now assisting the Biden Campaign in designing policy on Global Health. There'll be a story in the New York Times either today or tomorrow…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel. [b6]
Website: [b6]
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 7:44 AM

To: Peter Daszak [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Wednesday Morning: Virus disinformation

Re Sinclair.....

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** The New York Times <nytdirect@nytimes.com>
> **Date:** July 29, 2020 at 06:49:36 EDT
> **To:** [b6]
> **Subject: Wednesday Morning: Virus disinformation**
> **Reply-To:** nytdirect@nytimes.com

View in browser nytimes.com
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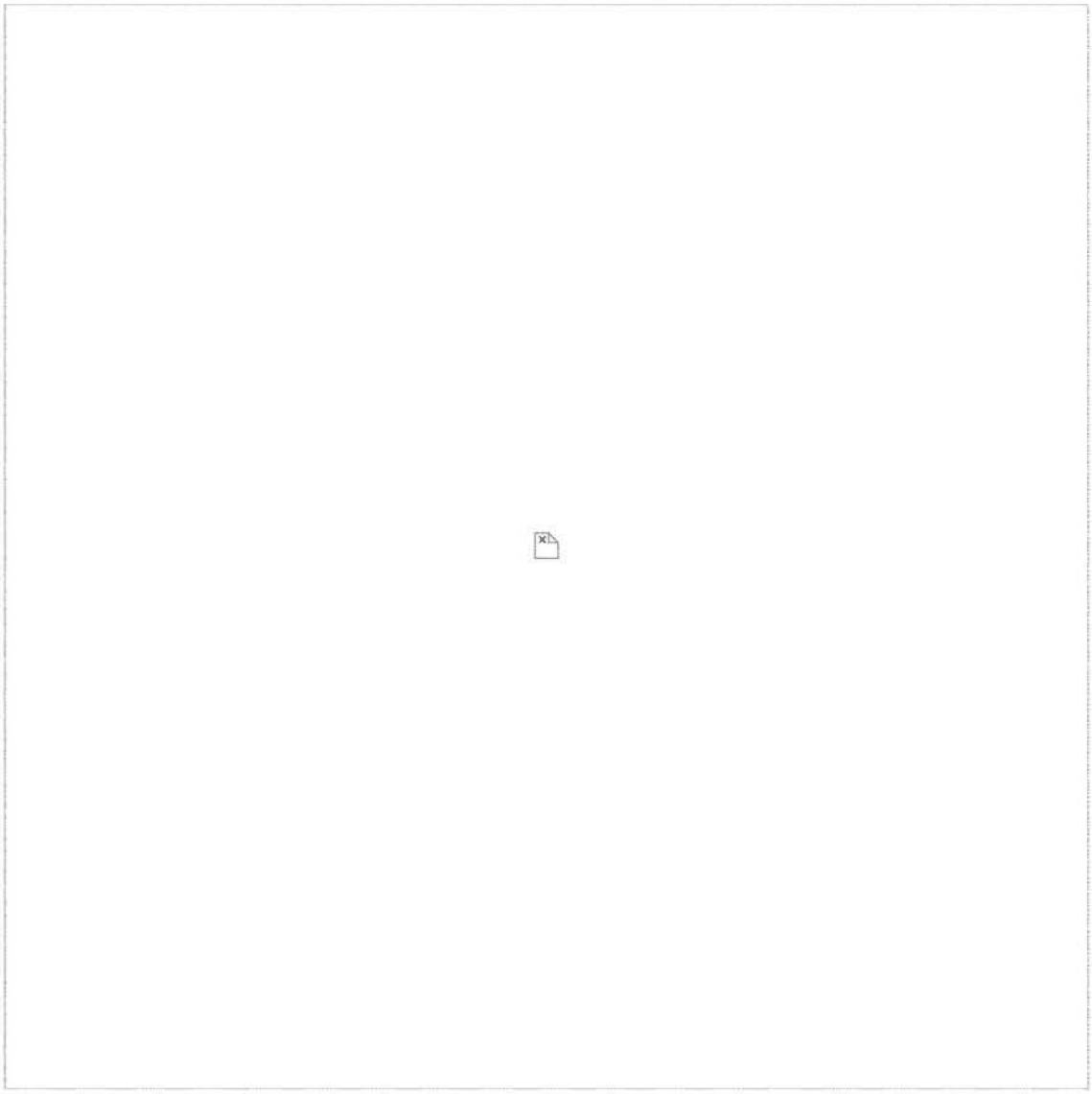

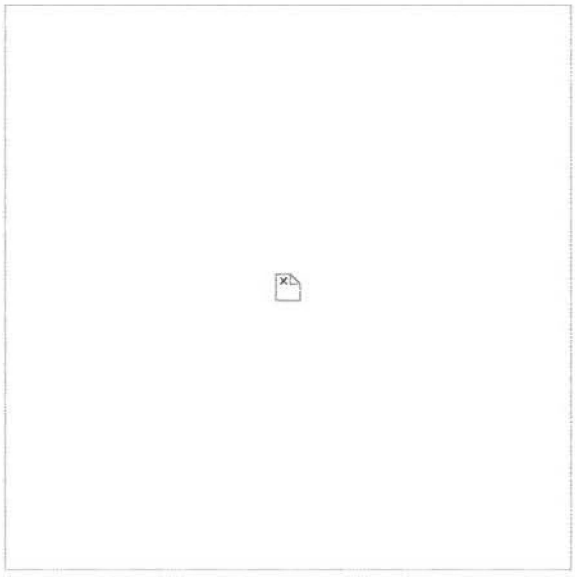

July 29, 2020

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SUPPORTED BY

By David Leonhardt

Good morning. The attorney general spars with Democrats. Tech C.E.O.s prepare for criticism from Congress. And televised conspiracy theories are helping to spread the virus.

Information contagion

The Sinclair Broadcast Group published an interview highlighting baseless arguments by Dr. Judy Mikovits, a discredited scientist. Zuma Press, via Alamy

Sinclair Broadcast Group recently published an online interview with a conspiracy theorist who claimed that Dr. Anthony Fauci created the coronavirus using monkey cells. Sinclair — which operates almost 200 television stations — has also run segments downplaying the severity of the virus.

Fox News has repeatedly run segments promoting ideas that scientists consider false or that question the seriousness of the virus.

Breitbart published a video this week in which a group of doctors claimed that masks were unnecessary and that the drug hydroxychloroquine cured the virus. It received 14 million views in six hours on Facebook, my colleague Kevin Roose reports. (President Trump tweeted a link to it.)

Why is the U.S. enduring a far more severe virus outbreak than any other rich country?

There are multiple causes, but one of them is the size and strength of right-wing media organizations that frequently broadcast falsehoods. The result is confusion among many Americans about scientific facts that are widely accepted, across the political spectrum, in other countries.

Canada, Japan and much of Europe have no equivalent to Sinclair — whose local newscasts reach about 40 percent of Americans — or Fox News. Germany and France

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have widely read blogs that promote conspiracy theories. "But none of them have the reach and the funding of Fox or Sinclair," Monika Pronczuk, a Times reporter based in Europe, told me.

Fox is particularly important, because it has also influenced President Trump's response to the virus, which has been slower and less consistent than that of many other world leaders. "Trump repeatedly failed to act to tame the spread, even though that would have helped him politically," The Washington Post's Greg Sargent has written. The headline on Sargent's opinion column is: "How Fox News may be destroying Trump's re-election hopes."

Another factor creating confusion: The lack of an aggressive response to virus misinformation from Facebook and YouTube. Judd Legum, author of the Popular Information newsletter, has identified some of this misinformation, and the two companies have responded by removing the posts he cited. But Legum told me he had pointed out only a small fraction of the false information, and the companies had done relatively little to remove it proactively.

Twitter took a slightly more aggressive step yesterday, putting temporary limits on the account of Donald Trump Jr. after he shared the false Breitbart video.

C.E.O.s in Congress: Jeff Bezos of Amazon, Tim Cook of Apple, Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook, and Sundar Pichai of Google's parent company, Alphabet, will testify today at a House hearing on whether their companies stifle competition. "It has the feeling of tech's Big Tobacco moment," one expert said.

The Times's editorial board has suggested questions lawmakers should ask each executive.

THREE MORE BIG STORIES

1. Barr spars with Congress



Attorney General William Barr testified on Capitol Hill on Tuesday. Pool photo by Matt McClain

Attorney General William Barr clashed with House Democrats in a hostile five-hour hearing.

Barr defended the deployment of federal agents in Portland, Ore., saying that "rioters and anarchists" had "hijacked" peaceful demonstrations. And he denied improperly interfering in criminal cases against Roger Stone and Michael Flynn, two allies of President Trump. Democrats portrayed him as a dangerous political enforcer for the

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president.

You can watch some of the most contentious exchanges in a Times video.

In other protest developments:

- The deputy director of the F.B.I. called protests against police brutality "a national crisis" in a memo in early June. The memo suggested that some top federal law enforcement officials embraced an aggressive response to the demonstrations from the start.
- The Minneapolis police believe an umbrella-wielding man who vandalized store windows during a May protest has ties to a white supremacist group and had hoped to foment looting and sow racial unrest.
- New York City police officers in plain clothes pulled a protester into an unmarked minivan. Critics said they were adopting tactics similar to those used by federal agents in Portland, Ore.; the police said the protester had damaged police cameras near City Hall.

---

2. Experts grow wary

My colleague Donald McNeil interviewed 20 public health experts about the coronavirus pandemic and found "a pervasive sense of sadness and exhaustion."

He writes: "Where once there was defiance, and then a growing sense of dread, now there seems to be sorrow and frustration, a feeling that so many funerals never had to happen and that nothing is going well."

In other virus news:

- More than 1,300 Americans died from the virus yesterday, the highest one-day number since late May.
- A recent report, sent to state officials by the White House's coronavirus task force and obtained by The Times, concluded that 21 states had outbreaks serious enough to justify more restrictions.
- Trump falsely claimed that "large portions of the country" were "corona-free."
- A Times analysis found at least 6,300 virus cases tied to about 270 colleges. And the new academic year has not even begun at most schools.

---

3. A breakthrough in Alzheimer's research



PET scans of a brain.Zephyr/Science Source

Scientists published a report on a new blood test that has the potential to make diagnosing Alzheimer's disease simpler, more affordable and widely accessible.

It's a significant step forward: The test identifies signs of the degenerative disease up to 20 years before memory and thinking problems are expected. Researchers estimate that such tests could become available in two to three years. The tests could speed up the hunt for treatments by screening participants for clinical trials more efficiently than is now possible.

"It's not a cure, it's not a treatment, but you can't treat the disease without being able to diagnose it," one expert said about the blood test.

Here's what else is happening

- Netflix secured the most Emmy nominations ever, and more than a third of the acting nominees are Black.
- Universal Pictures and AMC Entertainment, the world's largest movie chain, have reached a deal to shorten the window between U.S. theaters and streaming services to just 17 days — down from 90. The deal will probably change the way that Hollywood does business.
- The Times's Nate Cohn examined claims that recent polls are failing to interview Trump supporters. Cohn writes: "There are many reasons the polls might ultimately be wrong in November, as many state polls were four years ago, but there's no serious evidence that the polls are systematically missing Republican voters."
- **Lives Lived:** He was a familiar face on "Falcon Crest"; battled Bruce Lee in "Enter the Dragon"; and arm-wrestled Marlon Brando, to whom he was sometimes compared, in "The Appaloosa." John Saxon, who accumulated almost 200 film and TV credits in a career that began in the 1950s, died at 83.

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PAID POST: A MESSAGE FROM MOEN

Demand Congress suspend water shutoffs during a global pandemic.

Right now, millions of Americans are experiencing water shutoffs during a global pandemic, making handwashing impossible. Add your name at FoodAndWaterAction.org to demand Congress place a national moratorium on water shutoffs for the nearly 40 percent of Americans still at risk. Congress is expected to vote in the next week, and right now you have the chance to make your voice heard and #UnlockWaterForAll.

ACT NOW

IDEA OF THE DAY: ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Black Americans are more exposed to air pollution than white Americans. And researchers believe that air pollution causes higher rates of lung disease, asthma, heart disease and death from Covid-19.

In The Times Magazine, Linda Villarosa tells the story of Grays Ferry, a South Philadelphia neighborhood where most residents are Black. Created through a combination of redlining and public housing, the neighborhood sits across a highway from an aging oil refinery that produced most of the city's toxic emissions.

Villarosa describes how Grays Ferry residents fought an effort to build a new natural-gas facility — and how that may offer a template for the future of environmental justice activism.

The racial wealth gap: Joe Biden released an economic plan focused on racial equity yesterday. The proposal would help business owners of color get loans, create a housing tax credit for lower-income Americans and direct clean-energy spending to disadvantaged communities.

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PLAY, WATCH, EAT, PAINT

A go-to vegetarian dinner



Bryan Gardner for The New York Times

For an easy weeknight dinner, try Yasmin Fahr's eye-catching recipe for baked feta with broccolini, tomatoes and lemon. Baking the tangy cheese lends it an almost creamy texture. Serve it with orzo to turn it into a filling meal.

People still love Bob Ross



Photo illustration by The New York Times

The painter Bob Ross grew up in Florida, where he once attempted to heal an injured baby gator in his family's bathtub. He was in the Air Force for 20 years — including 12 in Alaska, where he learned to paint. To save money on haircuts, he got a perm, the hairstyle that would become his signature.

Twenty-five years after his death, the painter with the gentle demeanor is still as popular as ever, providing comfort to fans who may not have even been alive when his TV show originally aired. In The Atlantic, the writer Michael J. Mooney wrote a tribute to the painter and his enduring appeal.

One of the internet's favorite mysteries: Where are Ross's landscape paintings now? The Times found them.

Timely horror movies



A scene from "Relic." Jackson Finter/IFC Midnight

Horror movies thrive on isolation. Cabins in the woods, sparsely populated small towns, empty motels — these are all places where no one can hear you scream.

If you're itching for some fresh horror films to check out, the critic Jason Zinoman rounded up three new works, all directed by women, that are equal parts thrilling and thoughtful. The through-line that connects them is "a sensitivity to the punishing nature of loneliness and the sinister aspects of solitude," he writes.

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Diversions

- Turn your desktop into a calming portal to somewhere else.
- The late-night hosts discussed the misleading video about hydroxychloroquine that the president and his son retweeted.

Games

Here's today's Mini Crossword, and a clue: Dog trick with a paw (five letters).

You can find all of our puzzles here.

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. I'll be interviewing Ai-jen Poo, an advocate for low-wage workers, and Robert Reich, a former labor secretary, about how to create an economy with more good-paying jobs — tomorrow at 5 p.m. Eastern.

You can see today's print front page here.

Today's episode of "The Daily" is about the changing relationship between the U.S. and China.

We'd like your feedback! Please fill out this short form.

Ian Prasad Philbrick and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at b6



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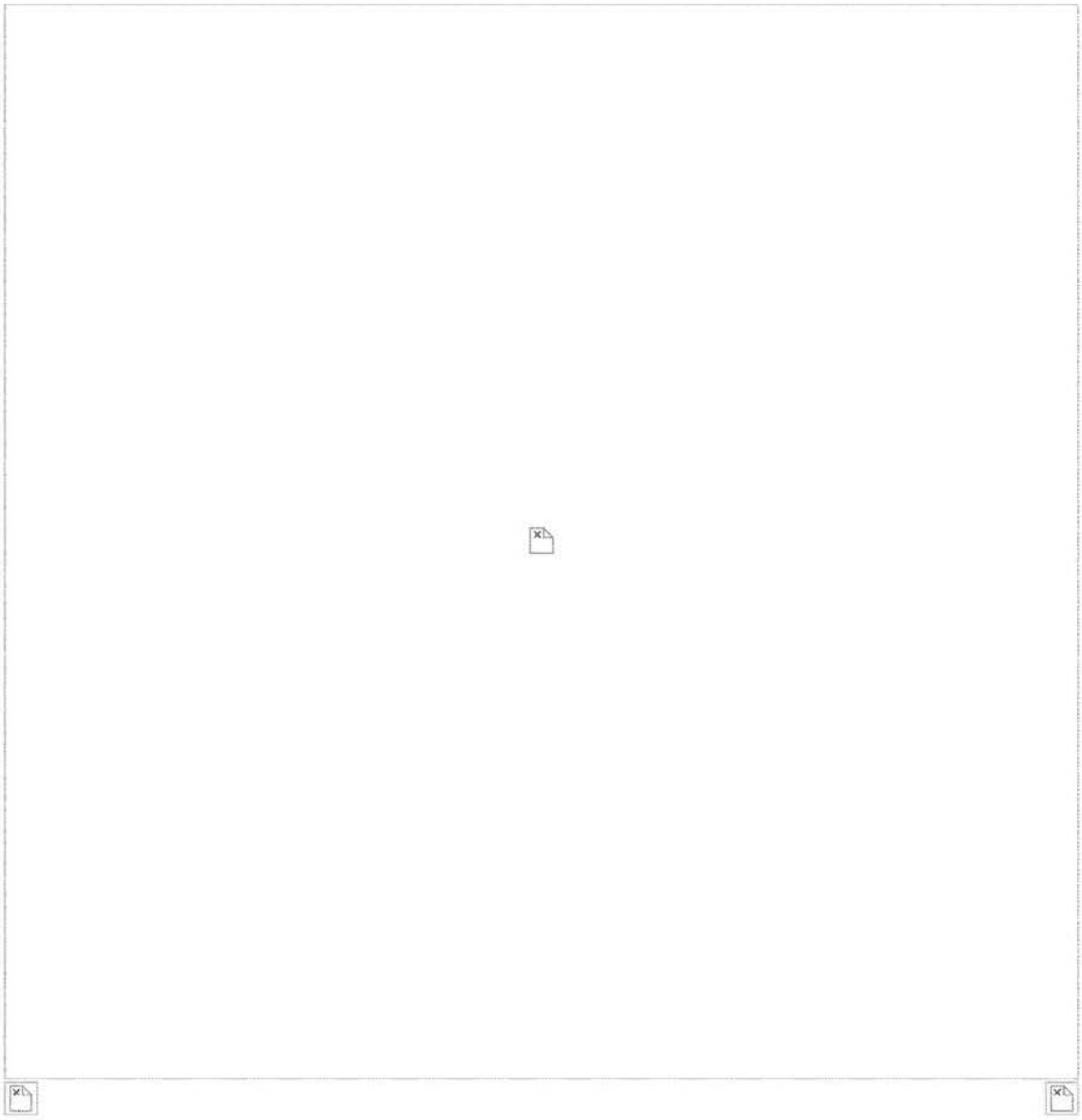

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Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 10:59:23 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 10:59:21 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Question on BSL levels in China
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6];
CC: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; taub >> Jeffery K. Taubenberger MD PhD [b6]

I'm sure so would Jim LeDuc. Galveston trained some of WIV initial faculty.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jun 16, 2020, at 10:30 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> I'm fairly sure that the lab design/set up for BSL-2, -3 & -4 are the same as in the USA – i.e. the procedures required for biosafety. I'm also fairly sure that they use BSL-4 for the same pathogens we do in the USA. Ralph Baric might know more about lab design etc.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: [b6]
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
> **Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 3:48 PM
> **To:** Peter Daszak [b6] >
> **Cc:** Gerald Keusch [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; taub >> Jeffery K. Taubenberger MD PhD [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.
>
> Peter, I have a question re the ms. we are putting together. Regarding lab safety in BSL2 thru 4, including protocols and procedures to prevent infection and virus escape, do the Chinese labs follow our BMBL etc. policies and procedures, or do they have separate policies/procedures? It has been my understanding that ALL BSL 3 and 4 labs around the world follow pretty much the safe safety procedures as well as building engineering and related matters. Is that so? Ty, david

On 6/16/2020 9:32 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

Didn't realize there were so many FoIAs, and a bunch targeting our grant. I'll pass that info on to the reporters.

Maybe you can redirect these foia requests to my home address. I can print off all my emails, plus the grants, and for a small fee can just leave them out on the doorstep. Sounds like a good way to monetize research!

Seriously, sounds like this FoIA malarky is a huge time sink for folks at NIH.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 7:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Gerald Keusch b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.

Peter, if you are in contact with with these guys about their foias you should tell them to be aggressive. We (NIAID) are way behind on responding to foias, and one or two groups is already suing us. Good! I myself have about 5 foias related to your grant, and i believe tony has more. In fact, in most cases foias to me also cover Tony, Hugh, and several front office staff

Our reason for being slow is that we respond with sophisticated computer searches done by our IT people, and we just don't have enough of them to cover 100+ ongoing foias, probably 5-10 of which deal with your grant

On a related subject i did a first draft of our astmh piece and ran it by joel breman, astmh president. I had originally decided to NOT address the conspiracy theories head on but thinks that should be added. So, i wrote two additional paras on that, and sent it to Jeff Taubenberger for his input on the molecular evidence.

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2020, at 21:02, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Hi David and Jerry,

I've been thinking of a way to get ahead of the curve, just in case NIH really is investigating EHA or me. This goes back to NIH telling folks who FOIA them that they can't reveal info on my grant and Wuhan because of a law enforcement clause and a pending investigation (https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/nih- we-cant-release-our-papers-about-the-wuhan-institute-of-virology-because-of-a-pending-investigation/). I've been wondering if that's a real investigation maybe by another org seeing if NIH acted legally? Is it them investigating Wuhan (not really possible)? Is it related to the NIH Director's pushing the agenda of investigating scientists who have been taking funds from China etc. (https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/06/fifty- four-scientists-have-lost-their-jobs-result-nih-probe-foreign-ties). What concerns me is that it seems that Francis Collins is personally involved in the investigation, and that his key henchman is Michael Lauer. It's actually Lauer who gave the talk to the ACD meeting last week (https://www.acd.od.nih.gov/meetings.html , click on "ACD Working Group on Foreign Influences in Research Integrity (Update)". I think it would be convenient for Collins if they could try to dig up some China dirt on EHA, and it's probably no skin off his nose to ask his henchmen to investigate (they've already got 399 "Scientists of Possible Concern") what's one more between friends.

So for that reason, I want to let you know that I've spoken with two good reporters off the record over the last few days and given them both your contact. One is Jim Rainey from the LA Times who did a good piece on the origins of COVID about EHA's work and others. He's now trying to dig into the handling of the termination by NIH and will be filing a FoIA, but right now would love to talk about the details. The other is Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed. He did file a foia for Michael lauer's communications and some others. He said he will be appealing their decision not to release the files.

I'm hoping that these two reporters will dig out some interesting stuff and maybe then I'll know whether this 'investigation' is just Francis Collins trying to fob off the foia requests, or it's because we've appealed, or another group has filed a motion with NIH re. their decision to terminate.

Anyway – hope they contact you, and hope it leads to something.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

--
David M Morens [b6]

Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2020 3:48:24 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6
CC: Gerald Keusch b6 Robert Kessler b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6 >; taub >> Jeffery K. Taubenberger MD PhD b6

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> Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 7:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Gerald Keusch b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Two reporters might contact you in the next couple of weeks.

Peter, if you are in contact with with these guys about their foias you should tell them to be aggressive. We (NIAID) are way behind on responding to foias, and one or two groups is already suing us. Good! I myself have about 5 foias related to your grant, and i believe tony has more. In fact, in most cases foias to me also cover Tony, Hugh, and several front office staff

Our reason for being slow is that we respond with sophisticated computer searches done by our IT people, and we just don't have enough of them to cover 100+ ongoing foias, probably 5-10 of which deal with your grant

On a related subject i did a first draft of our astmh piece and ran it by joel breman, astmh president. I had originally decided to NOT address the conspiracy theories head on but thinks that should be added. So, i wrote two additional paras on that, and sent it to Jeff Taubenberger for his input on the molecular evidence.

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2020, at 21:02, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Hi David and Jerry,

I've been thinking of a way to get ahead of the curve, just in case NIH really is investigating EHA or me. This goes back to NIH telling folks who FOIA them that they can't reveal info on my grant and Wuhan because of a law enforcement clause and a pending investigation (https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/nih- we-cant-release-our-papers-about-the-wuhan-institute-of-virology-because-of-a-pending-investigation/). I've been wondering if that's a real investigation maybe by another org seeing if NIH acted legally? Is it them investigating Wuhan (not really possible)? Is it related to the NIH Director's pushing the agenda of investigating scientists who have been taking funds from China etc. (https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/06/fifty- four-scientists-have-lost-their-jobs-result-nih-probe-foreign-ties). What concerns me is that it seems that Francis Collins is personally involved in the investigation, and that his key henchman is Michael Lauer. It's actually Lauer who gave the talk to the ACD meeting last week (https://www.acd.od.nih.gov/meetings.html , click on "ACD Working Group on Foreign Influences in Research Integrity (Update)". I think it would be convenient for Collins if they could try to dig up some China dirt on EHA, and it's probably no skin off his nose to ask his henchmen to investigate (they've already got 399 "Scientists of Possible Concern") what's one more between friends.

So for that reason, I want to let you know that I've spoken with two good reporters off the record over the last few days and given them both your contact. One is Jim Rainey from the LA Times who did a good piece on the origins of COVID about EHA's work and others. He's now trying to dig into the handling of the termination by NIH and will be filing a FoIA, but right now would love to talk about the details. The other is Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed. He did file a foia for Michael lauer's communications and some others. He said he will be appealing their decision not to release the files.

I'm hoping that these two reporters will dig out some interesting stuff and maybe then I'll know whether this 'investigation' is just Francis Collins trying to fob off the foia requests, or it's because we've appealed, or another group has filed a motion with NIH re. their decision to terminate.

Anyway – hope they contact you, and hope it leads to something.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1201

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

--
David M Morens b6

Date: Wed, 17 Jun 2020 3:46:29 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 17 Jun 2020 3:46:25 PM -0400
Subject: FW:
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 3:46 PM
To: [b6] [b6]>; [b6] [b6]
Subject:

Tim & Dennis, happy to help this effort!

[b6]

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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From: Dennis Carroll [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 9:16 PM
To: Christine Kreuder Johnson [b6]; David Morens [b6] FUKUDA, Keiji < [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Pablos-Mendez, Ariel [b6]; Peter Daszak <

b6 g >; Rick Bright b6 ; Tim Rieser b6
b6
Subject: Potential brainstorming invitation: how US foreign assistance can prevent the next pandemic

All, by way of this email I am introducing you to Tim Rieser, who many of you know as a long-standing and incredibly influential advocate for global health on the U.S. Senate's Foreign Appropriation committee. Tim, like all of us, is more than dismayed by the enormity of our collective failure in the face of the the COVID19 pandemic. From his vantage point on the Hill he is struggling to understand what needs to be done to make sure we never have another COVID19 event ever again. Towards that end he is interested in convening a small informal group of experts to brainstorm about how our foreign assistance fund can be more effectively targeted to prevent, detect and respond to future COVID19-like threats. I have suggested that each of you would bring valued expertise and perspective to answering this question.

Tim, over to you to further explain how you would like to move this discussion forward.

dennis

--
Dr Dennis Carroll
President, Global Virome Project
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University
Counselor and Advisor to the Faculty of Tropical Medicine at Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand

mobile: b6
email: b6

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 6:43:10 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 6:43:09 AM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Important mistake from NIH in their termination letter
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Jeffery Taubenberger [b6]

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Date: April 30, 2020 at 00:28:55 EDT
To: David Morens [b6] >, [b6] [b6] >,
Gerald T Keusch [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: Important mistake from NIH in their termination letter

Dear 'friends'...really glad I spoke with this *Science* reporter today. She reached out to NIH to question the legality of the letter – apparently only contracts can be terminated for 'convenience'. Checkout their response below – hilarious, dysfunctional, and wide open for a lawsuit. Obviously, that's not a winning proposal, but I will be talking with our pro-bono lawyers Monday about them sending a letter in to Michael Lauer and Francis Collins asking for an explanation of their rationale.

I don't know who Michael Lauer is, but he's made a bunch of mistakes already. He sent the original letter to Kevin Olival, cc'd to Columbia Univ, who are nothing to do with the grant. That email chain appeared in Breitbart or somewhere and now Columbia's name is being reported as part of this. I know that their lawyers are hardcore. Second – the mistake below opens them up for a lawsuit – not a good place to be in.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: [b6]
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Aleksei Chmura [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 4:40 PM
To: Meredith Wadman [redacted]
Cc: Peter Daszak [redacted]; Robert Kessler [redacted]
Subject: Re: time-sensitive question from Science

Dear Meredith,

You are correct: "cause" was not used in any communications from NIH nor was "to protect the public health and welfare".

Cheers,

-Aleksei

From: Meredith Wadman [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 3:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak; Robert Kessler
Subject: time-sensitive question from Science
Hi Peter,
NIH got back to me just now. I had asked how they could terminate a grant award "for convenience" when in fact the "convenience" clause only applies to termination of contracts, not grants. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43055.pdf
NIH wrote back indicating that the grant was in fact terminated "for cause"—well, they implied that anyway. Does anything in the emails you received from Mike Lauer capture any of this,it's directly from NIH public affairs:
Here is the section of the GPS that answers your question:
NIH GPS Section 8.5.2: NIH GPS states, NIH may immediately terminate a grant when necessary, such as to protect the public health and welfare from the effects of a serious deficiency.

Did NIH write to yuou anything along the lines that they were terminating the grant "for cause…to protect thje public health and welfare" etc?
Best,
Meredith
Meredith Wadman, BM, BCh
Reporter
Science Magazine
1200 New York Avenue N.W., #1144
Washington, D.C. 20005
Email: [redacted]
Cell: [redacted]
Twitter: @meredithwadman

Date: Tue, 12 May 2020 1:15:29 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 12 May 2020 1:15:10 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Just went out
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments: Letter to Secretary Azar.pdf; Untitled attachment 00860.htm

---

Fantastic! D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 12, 2020, at 13:11, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: May 12, 2020 at 13:09:27 EDT
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>, "Aleksei Chmura [b6] [b6]>, "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
Subject: FW: Just went out

Mary Woolley has followed up on my request to make a statement. She has used the 60 Minutes program very effectively.

Jerry

From: Mary Woolley [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 1:04 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Just went out

Hi Jerry – the impact of the 60 Minutes report provided some additional impetus on the topic du jour. See our letter, attached.

Be safe and well,

Mary

Date: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 7:04:36 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 27 Apr 2020 7:04:35 PM -0400
Subject: Re: brief statement for reporter tonight
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>;

Thank you for all these important efforts! David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 27, 2020, at 18:59, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

I'm a fan of and believer in PT. In addition, I have a conference call from 10-noon, so maybe we pick up some time in the afternoon. I will be talking to Nicki Lurie soon as we plan what to do with Victor and the National Academies.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 6:56 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: brief statement for reporter tonight

Just fyi, I will be in PT at Walter Reed tomorrow from about 1030 to1230 or so. Painful disc issue in neck at C6 level. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 27, 2020, at 18:48, Keusch, Gerald T[b6]> wrote:

I think that strategy works. I hope you did send it to the reporter at 6. Let's regroup some time tomorrow morning when you can see what has come out and who picked it up to disseminate it.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 6:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: David Morens[b6]; Aleksei Chmura <[b6]>; Robert Kessler[b6]
Subject: RE: brief statement for reporter tonight

OK – David – what do you think?

If you're good with this, we'll send it out and maybe work on a broader statement, but my instinct is to lie low for tonight and tomorrow and let the news agencies have at it, wait for good powerful people to come to our defense, and hope our organization is not targeted by Trump.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 5:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 >; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: brief statement for reporter tonight

Succinct, essential information only, clear next step to understand what this means, it is measured, there is no hyperbole. Good job.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2020, at 5:49 PM, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>
> Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

<statement to politico.docx>

Date: Tue, 31 Jan 2023 3:04:02 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 31 Jan 2023 3:03:45 PM -0500
Subject: Re: Two great articles!
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
CC: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image003.jpg; image001.jpg; image002.jpg

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)
Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

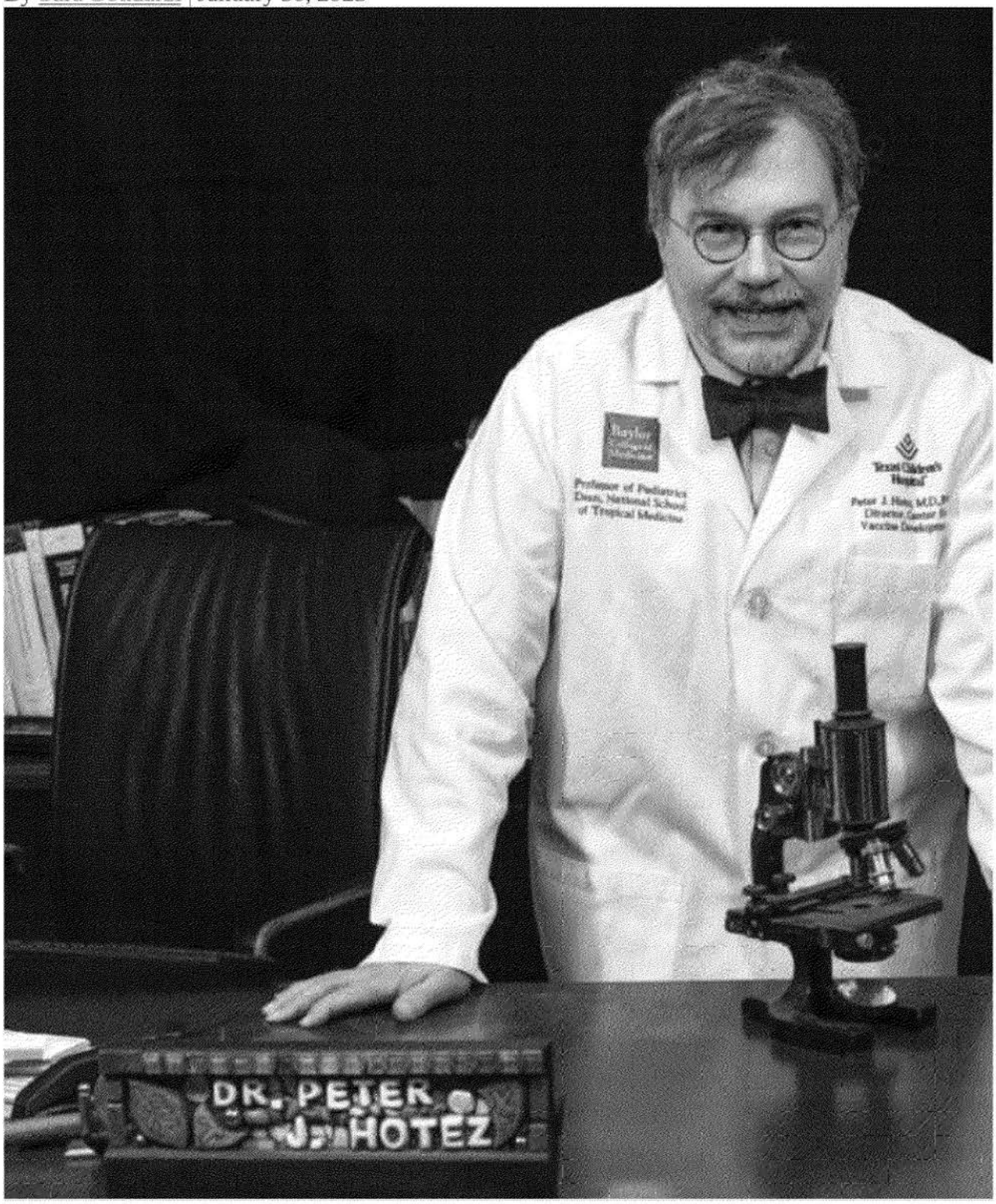
First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on

social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since

then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the COVID-19 vaccines, hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.

Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.

I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?

Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad,* and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.

What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.

The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.

The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.

All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the

anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.

Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.

Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?

Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.

Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?

Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?

Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.

Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus say the flu or MMR vaccines?

Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014,

2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee] money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this

idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?" And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression,

because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.
For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.
And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; Peter Daszak (b)(6) ; Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
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email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)>
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich <(b)(6)> Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay <(b)(6)>
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoIIealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich < (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (b)(6)
email: roberts@neb.com

Executive Assistant (b)(6)
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (b)(6)
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based

on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

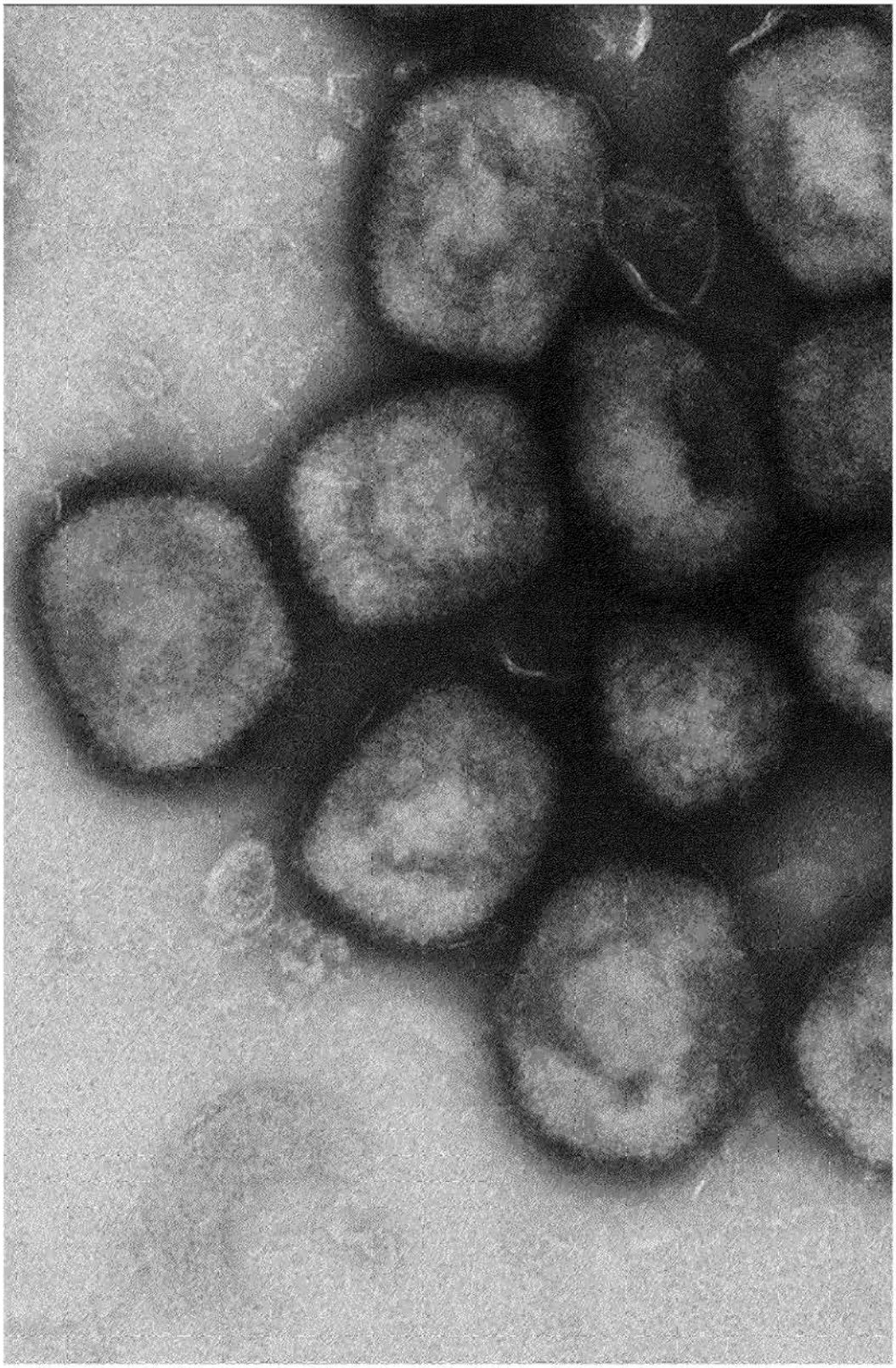
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH

Virologists defend their science as officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.

NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident or malicious

attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
Sponsor Message
He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route, " says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

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"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the

lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.
That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.
"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

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She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.
If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work." But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

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Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it."
He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things

go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
Facebook
Twitter
Flipboard
Email

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, (b)(6) and (b)(6), to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Ja (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)
Cc: David Morens <(b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T <(b)(6)
Rich Roberts <(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak <(b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that (b)(6) isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), (b)(6) would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that (b)(6) would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er… (b)(6) !

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay <(b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6); Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
>; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but (b)(6) would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of (b)(6) (b)(6) Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack

vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position
That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist (b)(6) - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being (b)(6), but all four have expressed no interest. (b)(6) are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, (b)(6) would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our (b)(6) who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:
>
> Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!
>
> Why not have a confidential chat with (b)(6) and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay <(b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6)
Gerald Keusch (b)(6)>; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
; Aleksei Chmura <
; David Morens <
(b)(6)
Gerald Keusch <(b)(6); Rich Roberts <(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
(b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM

To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

1/24/23, 4:04 PM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6)
(b)(6) Phone: (b)(6) |
Fax: (b)(6)

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Sun, 22 Jan 2023 10:24:59 PM -0500
Sent: Sun, 22 Jan 2023 10:24:53 PM -0500
Subject: Re: Online Chatter re. NEIDL..
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
CC: David Morens (b)(6) Hotez, Peter J (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)

Thanks Peter, I think the Nature paper shows why research conducted under the right circumstances - as NEIDL and many others can - is the best answer to idiots like E-not so-Bright (I'm learning to troll like Trump does but maybe even more clever). Finding new targets for intervention and prevention are what this research is ultimately about. Knowledge informs and guides product development.
Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 22, 2023, at 8:09 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

By the way, although there is a lot of noise and chatter in the press now that the Republicans have taken over the house, not all of it is very effective. Of direct interest to you Jerry – the usual suspects (Ebright etc) have been pushing aggressively about NEIDL following the recent paper on a recombinant SARS-CoV-2 vi (b)(6) launched a petition about a week ago, but so far less than 100 signatures.

You can view it (but don't click 'sign' by mistake!) here: https://www.change.org/p/mayor- wu-save-boston-residents-from-the-impacts-of-dangerous-biolab-research-and-permits-f5fb69e8-986b-4b2d-b7c7-23b23a693e4e?redirect=false

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Sunday, January 22, 2023 7:20 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Robert (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Morens checking in

Good point..... d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 22, 2023, at 19:02, Peter Daszak < (b)(6) wrote:

I think given the political attacks (sorry 'investigations') that have already called for NIH/HHS interviews/documents, it's probably a good move to hold off on the NIH Director for a few months at least….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, January 21, 2023 11:50 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Morens checking in

Yes, i think we are all surprised about not filling the nih director position

My guess is that it is not high on the WH radar screen, and that it would just he picking another fight with the right wing nut jobs. Maybe they figure scientists know what they are doing even without political puppeteers. Who knows? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 21, 2023, at 11:42, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

I probably won't do that. If there was a groundswell of interest I would consider it, but my science is going well here, and for now they are not running me out of Texas. Although that could change on a dime as well. I'm surprised the White House has no urgency to fill the NIH Director's slot.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Jan 21, 2023, at 10:34 AM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

PS, this may sound cynical, but by applying and letting it be known publicly, you could force them from pursuing a cover up selection

There is much concern here that a poorly qualified nih or other candidate could be selected under the radar. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 21, 2023, at 11:31, David Morens [(b)(6)] wrote:

I wouldn't bet on anything re Tony's position. If anyone here is in charge of anything, they are doing a great job of keeping it secret. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 21, 2023, at 10:33, Hotez, Peter Jay [(b)(6)] wrote:

Many thanks for that thoughtful email. Interesting times indeed! So far I've held off applying thinking they already know what they must want, etc. Warmest Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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[(b)(6)] | Phone: [(b)(6)] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
[(b)(6)]
iPhone

On Jan 21, 2023, at 9:23 AM, David Morens <

(b)(6) wrote:

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Yes, sadly, you are right. We are in for alot more shit

In terms of us looking for a new director, since this is not a political appointment position, niaid has much leeway in doing what we want, subject to HHS and NIH oversight/coordination, but not outright control

There seems to be secrecy around the process of finding a new director, which is not the way we have done things in the past. The job description is not what i would have written, eg, in specifying someone who is politically savvy. We have 27 IC directors here at nih and i can't recall any prior search looking for someone with political chops.

I am afraid we could end up with a pliant nih insider rather than an outsider with strong science credentials. The model is (b)(6) (b)(6) who was perceived as too big to mess with, and used that reputation to push back against all kinds of BS

There is no guarantee that anything will happen soon. Hugh is Acting Director but is taking a hands off, just-keep-the-ship-afloat approach so far. I hope he will be more proactive, as he is smart and capable, and has alot of management expertise

But internally there is absolute silence about what if anything is happening. I know all the senior leaders here, and none are involved in any search "above board", at least. Several have implied to me that they are as much in the dark as everyone else. If so, that is not good news because it raises the possibility of a covert and possibly politically oriented process

That is one reason i encouraged (b)(6) to apply: an nih outsider who has political skills and a scientific reputation, as well as skill in pushing back against the BS. If you think of all possible scientists who would be good in the job, the list is not long, or at least my list isn't. If you know anyone please urge him or her to apply asap!

david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jan 21, 2023, at 09:50, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) > wrote:

Thanks for the thoughtful note David, in terms of moving forward with your plan, a couple of things to keep in mind:

The GOP House Oversight and Judiciary Committees each headed by Freedom Caucus members will begin their investigative hearings this year. While Biden is the major target at some point they hope to discredit NIH, and especially NIAID. They will also target their grantees.

NIAID is looking for a new director? Will that happen soon?

Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Fax: (b)(6)

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Jan 21, 2023, at 8:39 AM, David Morens < (b)(6) > wrote:

Hi all, my apologies for being out of touch; had some non fatal health issues and surgery yesterday morning,

but should be back to work part time this week

There is a front page story in the Wash Post this morning about GOF and the NEIDL. You should all read

Since Tony stepped down 12/31, I have been mulling the implications for me being able to speak up more

Our deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, is a good and reasonable guy, but i have not yet spoken to him about how muzzled i am expected to be going forward. I think the party line at nih is to be very fearful of the crazies in and out of congress, and in practice our guidelines of never speaking to the press unless approved by HHS or the White House remains in effect. That is why 95% of my interactions with the press are on background and off the record. (Incidentally, although i have spoken to (b)(6) on background numerous times in the past, i did not speak to him for today's article).

Here is how it works. Our press office knows that whereas Tony has the patter and nuance down pat, I will say pretty much exactly what i think scientifically, and therefore they do whatever they can ethically to cut me off from sensitive issues, knowing that HHS will cut me off if they don't

But I plan to sit down with Hugh and ask him to let me use my judgement in these issues. There is no govt reason anymore for me being forbidden to even speak with colleagues such as you all

And an interesting thing happened recently that i think bodes well. As you all know, over the last 15-20 years or so i have written 40-50 scientific papers with Tony, mostly reviews and commentaries that provide springboards for him to talk to the press. Usually i propose the topics and he says yes or no.

(b)(6)

Ever since the GOF thing broke 15 years ago, with (b)(6) and (b)(6) publishing their two papers on H5N1, GOF has been a no no for me/us to write about. And so far, still is a no no. Another subject that has been a no no is my conclusion that our whole scientific enterprise to make vaccines against respiratory viruses is off base scientifically, and needs to be reoriented

A few months ago, Tony surprised me be giving me the go-ahead to write a review that says as much, implicitly criticizing what we at nIH and others do in terms of vaccine development approaches. Many others at NIH

told me that we dare not write that. But about 10 days ago the paper came out in Cell Host and Microbes, with Tony's name on it, and has been greeted very positively by many high level folks in and out of govt

This gives me SOME hope that us discussing GOF head on might be possible, by which i don't necessarily mean talking to the press, but by writing in science articles why it is that the whole concept of GOF is being (often willfully) misunderstood. The aim would be to have statements by govt scientists that change the terms of the dialog, ie, be more proactive rather than letting the crazies control the dialog

I wrote such a paper (b)(6) 10 years ago, which has sat unpublished in a file cabinet ever since, and could easily resurrect it with updates addressing SARS-CoV-2....

So..... I am hoping that I will no longer be bound and gagged from from enjoying my first amendment right to speak to you all about scientific matters if importance. It's a new year and time to move forward by being more proactive

David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 2022 4:20:37 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 24 Feb 2022 4:20:33 PM -0500
Subject: RE: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists
From: "Roberts, Rich" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;

Peter:

That's a useful list of papers. Can I circulate to (b)(6) group (without saying where it came from)?

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 3:59 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

EXTERNAL SENDER

I'm glad you'll mention this to (b)(6) These particular politicians are willing to cast aspersions on anyone's character for political gain.

I'm also glad you're going to decline to sign the letter you attached. It seems (b)(6) dream is to have me up on the stand under oath with him doing the questioning. Of course, none of this would get to the bottom of anything, and it would just serve to drive more politics in the way of doing science.

The truth of all of this is that there is no real debate over the origins. A lab leak is a possible scenario, but extremely unlikely based on the zero evidence put forward by anyone. On the other hand, we now have 11 peer-reviewed or under-review papers (and counting) that point towards the natural origins. I've listed them out in the attached doc, as well as the lab leak papers I could find (all of which are opinion pieces of non-peer-reviewed).

The real debate is purely political - Republicans using this as a way to target NIH and just regurgitating fact-free innuendo-filled conspiracies with EcoHealth's work at the center. (b)(6) I hear, is working with Rand Paul and others to feed them these half-baked ideas and make them sound science-y enough to convince the public.

I can hear the villagers sharpening their pitchforks....

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: FW: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

Peter:

Sorry to hear about the latest attacks. Please don't let them get you down. Just recognize the loonies who send them for what they are.

I'll let (b)(6) know he was included too. It is sad to see the lengths that people will go to for the sake of political points. Witness the latest nonsense in Ukraine.

I attach a document I just received from Ebright. Needless to say I won't be signing, but I hope to convince some others not to also.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 1:15 PM
To: (b)(6)
(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

EXTERNAL SENDER

All--I am writing to you as founding members of the Cambridge Working Group,

(b)(6) of Princeton has prepared an open letter entitled "United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and science policy specialists" (see attached).

If you would like to sign the letter, please reply to (b)(6) at (b)(6) or to me at (b)(6) with your name and current affiliation.

Thank you in advance.

(b)(6)

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Date:	Mon, 17 Oct 2022 10:55:27 PM -0400
Sent:	Mon, 17 Oct 2022 10:55:19 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: Daily Mail article criticizing Boston Univ & NEIDL: "Outrage as Boston University CREATES Covid strain with 80% kill rate"
From:	"Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To:	Peter Daszak (b)(6)
CC:	Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) avid Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image001.jpg

Thanks for forwarding this piece. I had run out of things
to read on the throne and now I will have some more low quality toilet paper.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 17, 2022, at 6:46 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Just sharing this piece of hyped up reporting. The study is quite interesting actually and tells us something new – that the key to SARS-CoV-2 pathogenicity is not always in the spike protein.

Here's the piece:
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article- 11323677/Outrage-Boston-University-CREATES- Covid-strain-80-kill-rate.html

EXCLUSIVE: 'This is playing with fire - it could spark a lab-generated pandemic': Experts slam Boston lab where scientists have created a new deadly Covid strain with an 80% kill rate

- **Researchers added Omicron's spike protein to the original Wuhan Covid strain**
- **Omicron's spike is highly mutated which made it the most infectious variant ever**
- **Eight in 10 mice infected with the lab-created strain died at Boston University lab**

By CAITLIN TILLEY, HEALTH REPORTER FOR DAILYMAIL.COM and MANSUR SHAHEEN DEPUTY HEALTH EDITOR FOR DAILYMAIL.COM
PUBLISHED: 11:02 EDT, 17 October 2022 | **UPDATED:** 17:41 EDT, 17 October 2022

Boston University scientists were today condemned for 'playing with fire' after it emerged they had created a lethal new Covid strain in a laboratory.

DailyMail.com revealed the team had made a hybrid virus — combining Omicron and the original Wuhan strain — that killed 80 per cent of mice in a study.

The revelation exposes how dangerous virus manipulation research continues to go on even in the US, despite fears similar practices may have started the pandemic.

ADVERTISEMENT

Professor Shmuel Shapira, a leading scientist in the Israeli Government, said: 'This should be totally forbidden, it's playing with fire.'

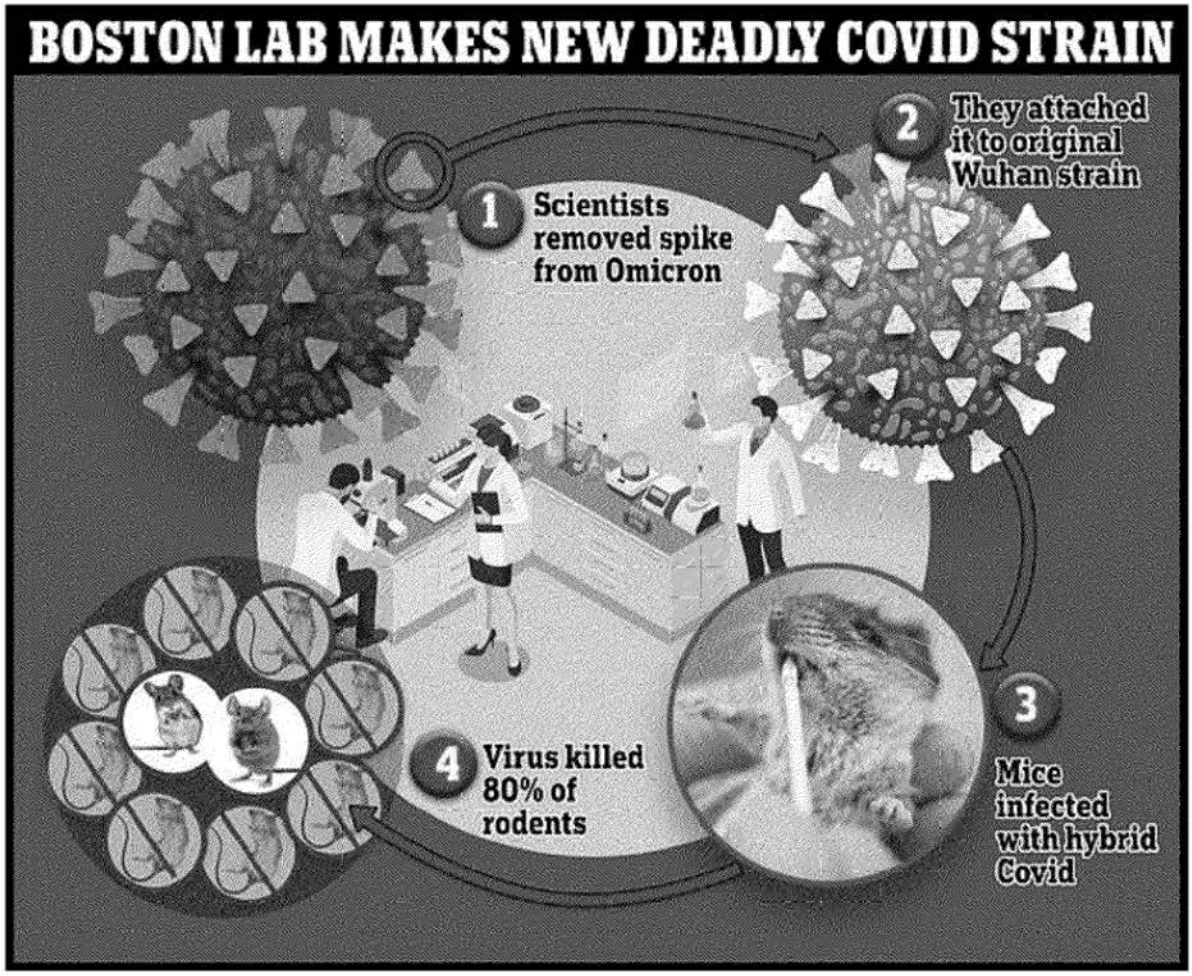
Gain of function research - when viruses are purposefully manipulated to be more infectious or deadly - is thought to be at the center of Covid's origin.

A Chinese laboratory located just miles from the first cluster of cases carried out similar research on bat coronaviruses.

But the practice has been largely restricted in the US since 2017.

Dr Richard Ebright, a chemist at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, told DailyMail.com that: 'The research is a clear example of gain of function research.

He added: 'If we are to avoid a next lab-generated pandemic, it is imperative that oversight of enhanced potential pandemic pathogen research be strengthened.'

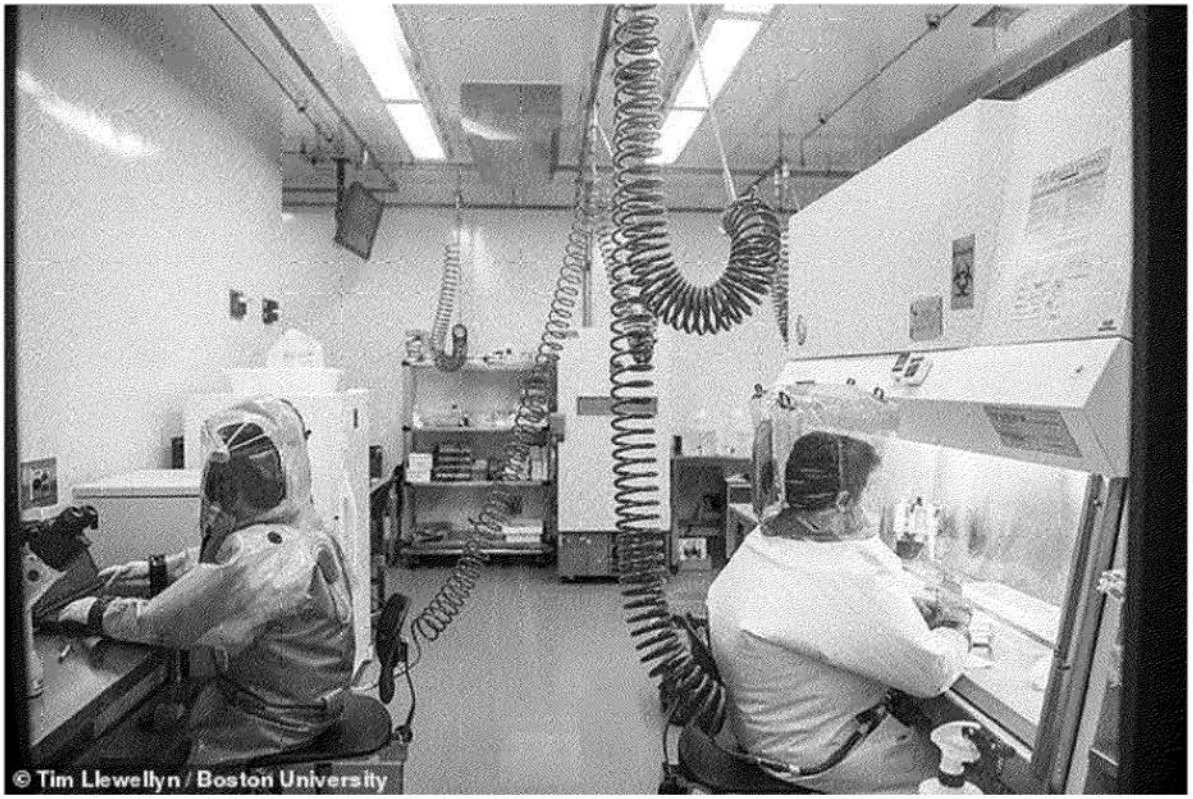


+11

View gallery

●

In the new research , which has not been peer-reviewed, a team of researchers from Boston and Florida extracted Omicron's spike protein — the unique structure that binds to and invades human cells. It has always been present but it has become more evolved over time. Omicron has dozens of mutations in its spike protein that made it so infectious. Researchers attached Omicron's spike protein to the original wildtype strain that first emerged in Wuhan at the start of the pandemic. The researchers looked at how mice fared under the new hybrid strain compared to the original Omicron variant



+11

View gallery

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Boston University's National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories is one of 13 biosafety level 4 labs in the US



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View gallery

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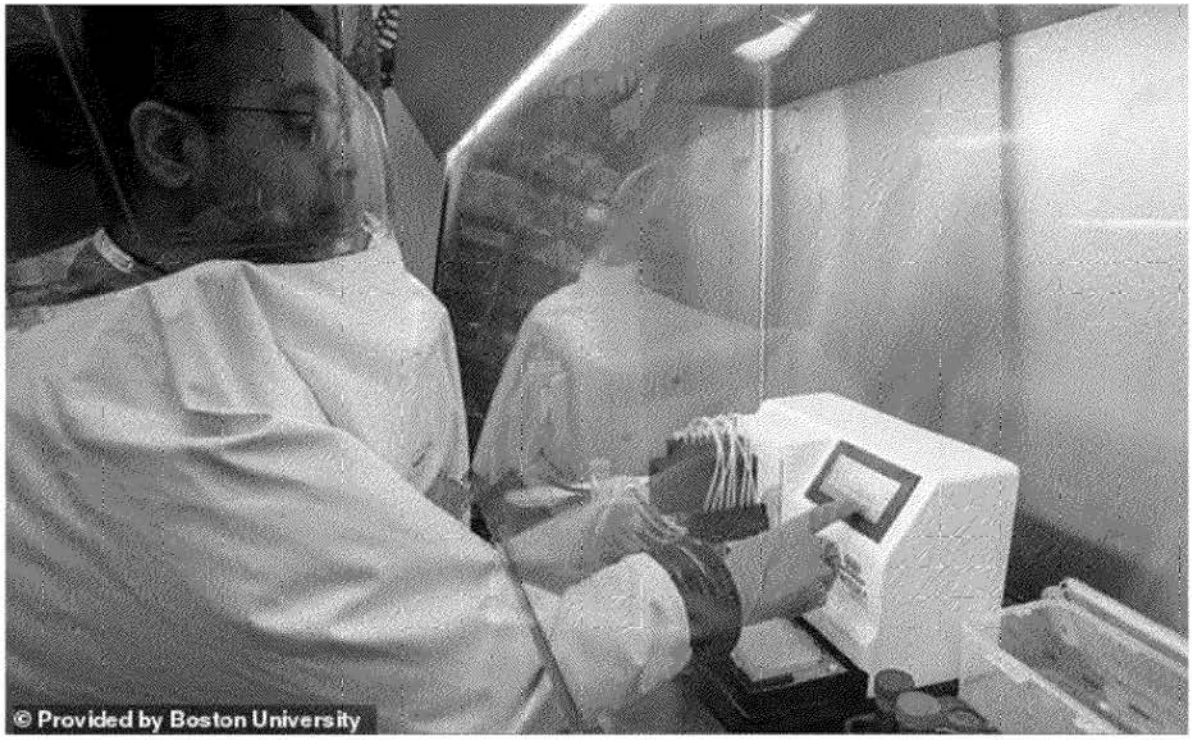
The most dangerous type of research can be carried out in these labs, involving highly infectious viruses such as Covid and Ebola



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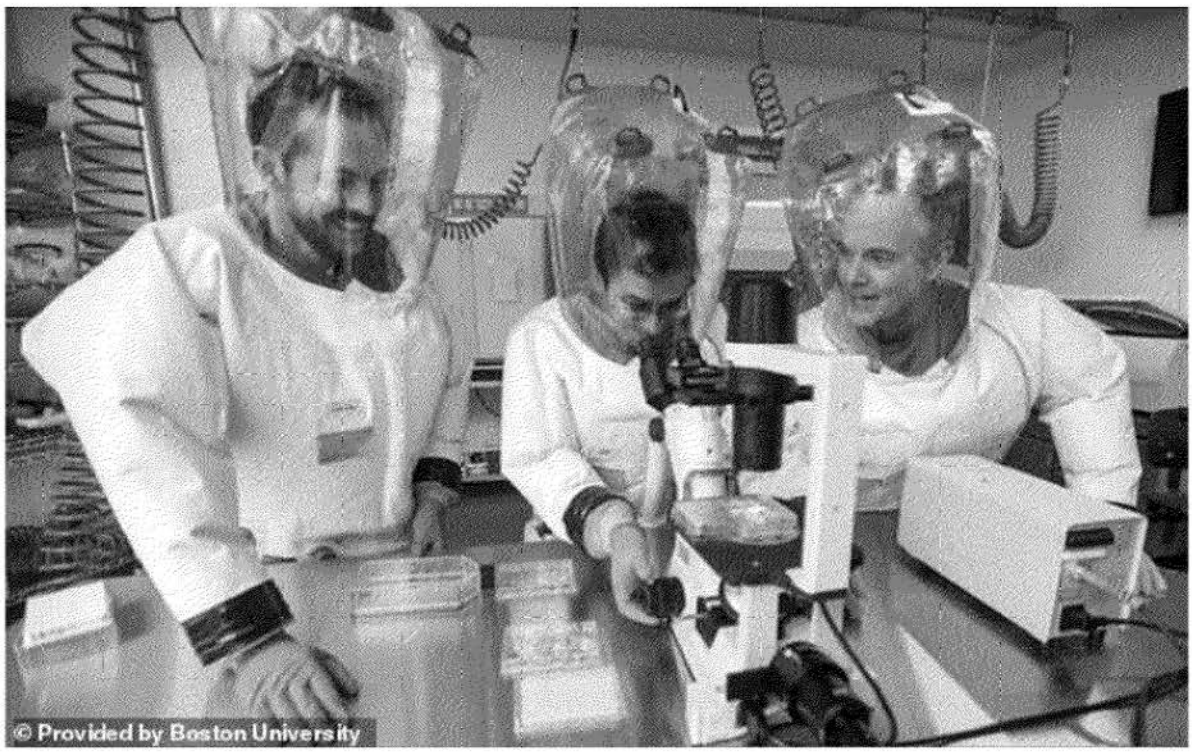
View gallery

●

In biosafety 4 labs, researchers do all experiments in a 'biosafety cabinet' — an enclosed, ventilated workspace for handling materials contaminated with pathogens

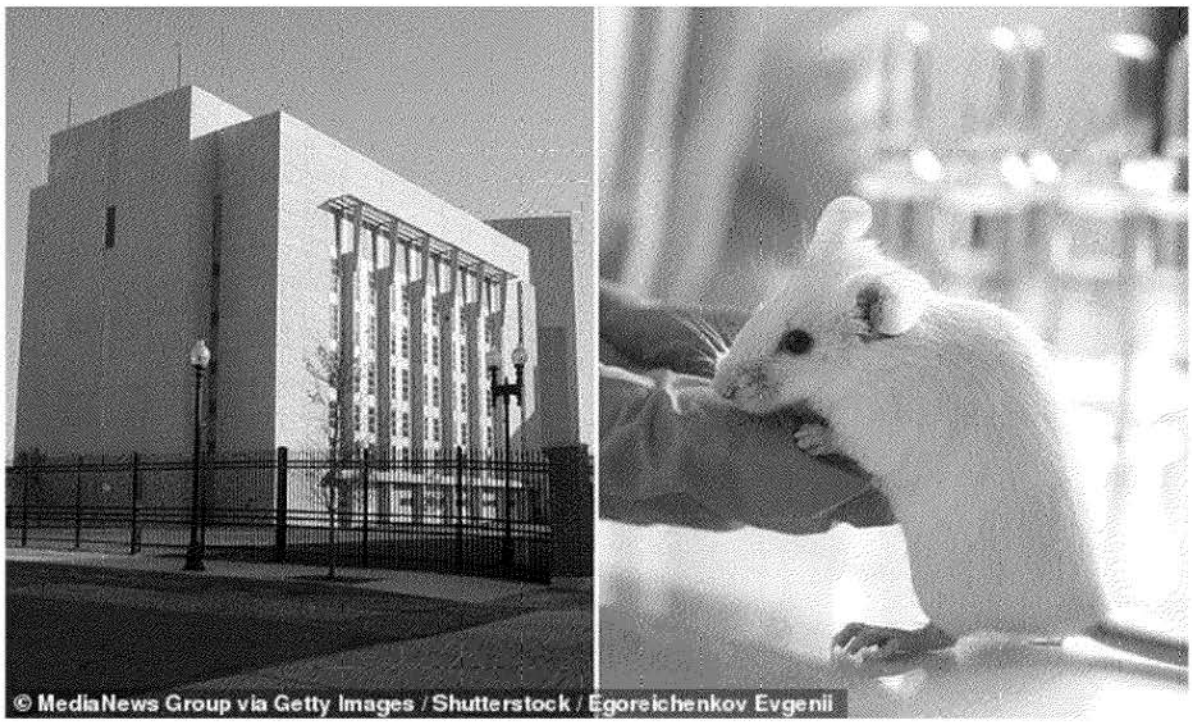


+11

View gallery

●

Full-body, air-supplied pressure suits are worn and workers must change their clothing before entering and shower before leaving



+11

View gallery

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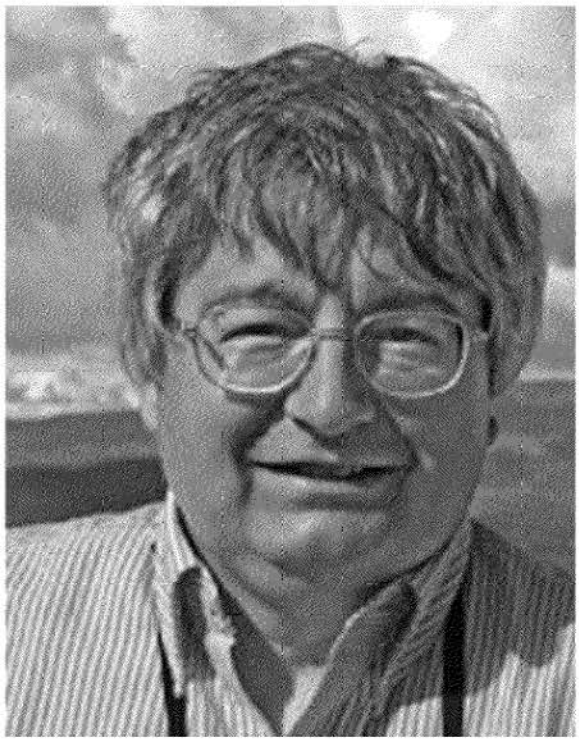
80 percent of mice died from the new man-made Covid strain, while none died from the milder Omicron variant alone, researchers at Boston University's National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories found



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View gallery



+11

View gallery

Dr Richard Ebright (left), a Rutgers University chemist, said that this research could spark the next lab-created pandemic. Professor Shmuel Shapira (right), a leading scientist in the Israeli Government, said that this type of research should be banned as it is playing with fire.

In the new research, which has not been peer-reviewed, a team of researchers from Boston and Florida extracted Omicron's spike protein — the unique structure that binds to and invades human cells.

It has always been present in the virus but has become more evolved over time. Omicron has dozens of mutations on its spike protein that made it so infectious.

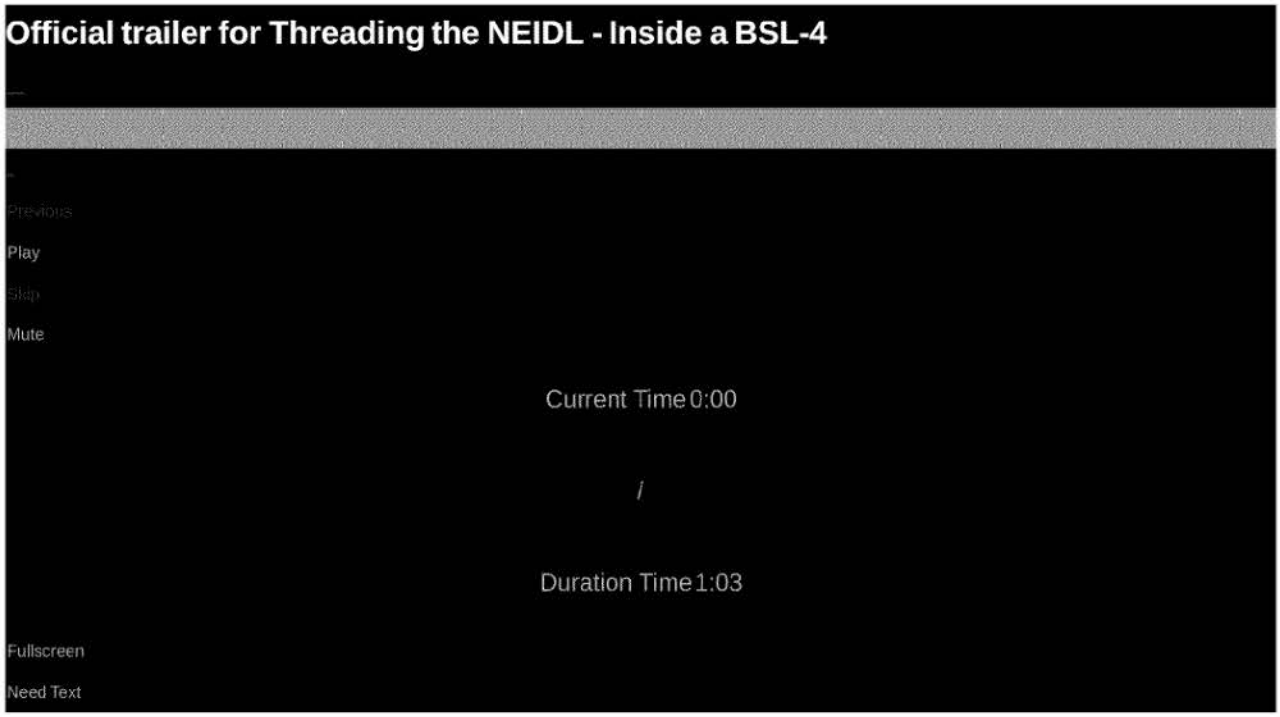
Researchers attached Omicron's spike to the original wildtype strain that first emerged in Wuhan at the start of the pandemic.

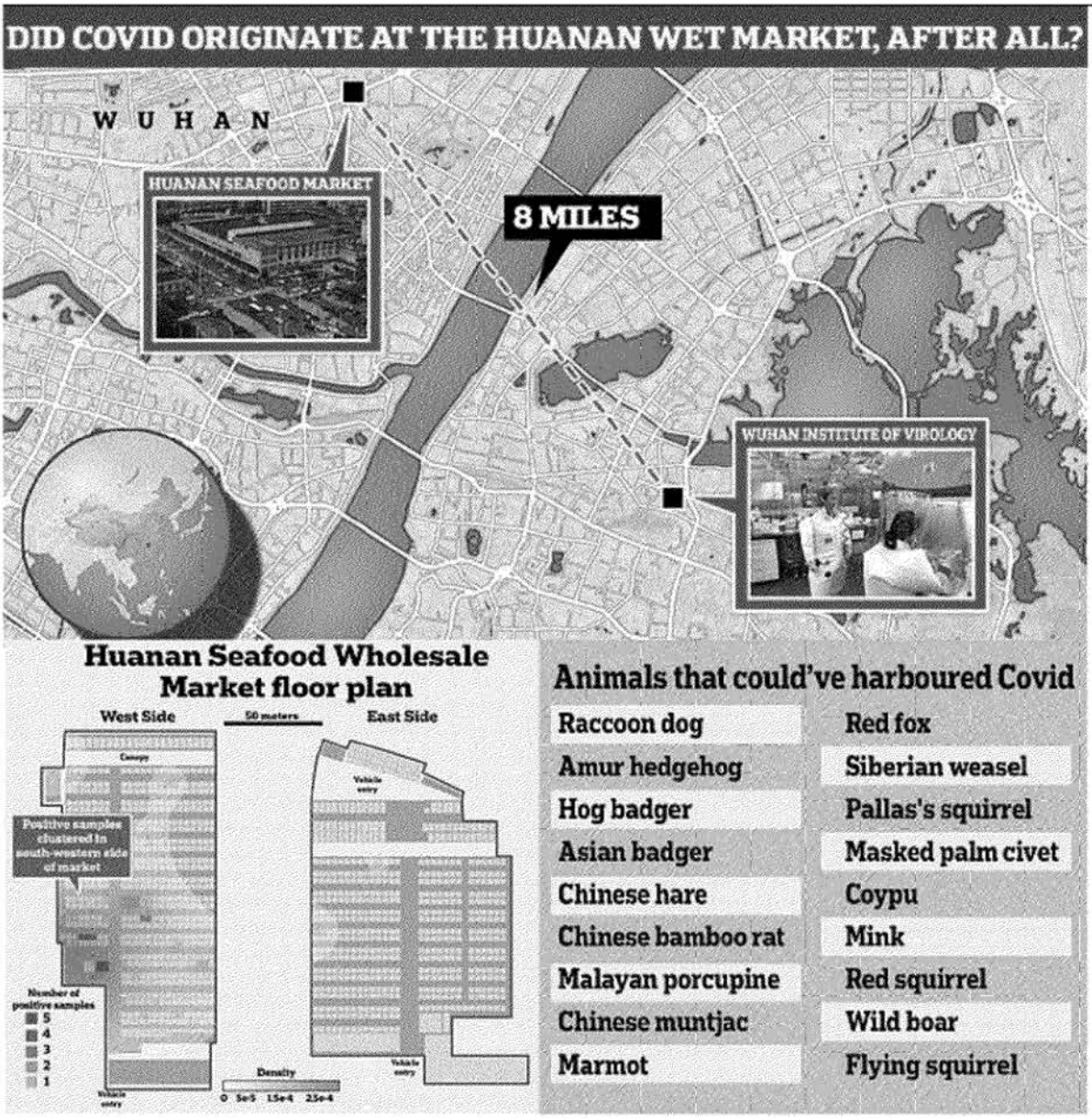
The researchers looked at how mice fared against the new hybrid strain compared to the original Omicron variant.

When a similar group of rodents were exposed to the standard Omicron strain, however, they all survived and only experienced 'mild' symptoms.

Writing in the paper, they said: 'In...mice, while Omicron causes mild, non-fatal infection, the Omicron S-carrying virus inflicts severe disease with a mortality rate of 80 percent.'

The researchers said it signaled that while the spike protein is responsible for infectivity, changes to other parts of its structure determine its deadliness.


Official trailer for Threading the NEIDL - Inside a BSL-4
Previous
Play
Skip
Mute
Current Time 0:00
/
Duration Time 1:03
Fullscreen
Need Text



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View gallery

●

The question of whether the global outbreak began with a spillover from wildlife sold at the market or leaked out of the Wuhan lab just eight miles across the Yangtze River has given rise to fierce debate about how to prevent the next pandemic. New studies point to a natural spillover at the Huanan wildlife market. Positive swab samples of floors, cages and counters also track the virus back to stalls in the southwestern corner of the market (bottom left), where animals with the potential to harbor Covid were sold for meat or fur at the time (bottom right)



+11

View gallery

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Pictured: The Wuhan Institute of Virology, where crucial data was wiped by Chinese scientists

Dr Ebright told DailyMail.com: 'The research is a clear example of gain of function research of concern and enhanced potential pandemic pathogen (ePPP) research.

'It is especially concerning that this new US-government ePPP research - like the previous US-government ePPP research on chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses at Wuhan Institute of Virology that may have caused the pandemic - appears not to have undergone the prior risk-benefit review mandated under US-government policies.

'If we are to avoid a next lab-generated pandemic, it is imperative that oversight of ePPP research be strengthened.

'It is imperative that the existing polices mandating prior risk-benefit assessment of ePPP research be followed, and it is imperative that officials at US-government agencies who repeatedly have placed the public at risk by repeatedly violating the existing policies be held accountable.'

Prof David Livermore, a professor of microbiology at the UK's University of East Anglia told DailyMail.com: 'given the strong likelihood that the Covid pandemic originated from the escape of a lab-manipulated coronavirus in Wuhan, these experiments seem profoundly unwise.'

Have we learned nothing? 40 new biochemical labs that

handle dangerous viruses are being built around the world

The **Coronavirus** pandemic has prompted a global surge in laboratories that handle dangerous viruses — despite concerns Covid may have been the result of the risky experiments.
More than 40 facilities certified as biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) or BSL-4 have either been built or have gone into construction since 2020, predominantly across **Asia**.
Many countries believe they were caught flat-footed by Covid and want to get ahead of the next devastating outbreak by studying pathogens that pose a threat to humans.

Experiments at these labs often involve tinkering with animal viruses to advance treatments and vaccines that could be used in a future outbreak.

But there are widespread concerns that these experiments might actually raise the risk of pandemics — something some experts believe was the case with Covid.

The virus first began spreading from a wet market in Wuhan, about eight miles from the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), a high security biolab that worked with dangerous bat coronaviruses.

Scientists there worked on some of Covid's closest relatives. They were also found to have wiped crucial databases and stifled independent investigations into the laboratory's links to the pandemic.

Professor Paul Hunter, an expert in infection diseases at the University of East Anglia in England, told DailyMail.com he was concerned about what all the new labs would be used for.

'The issue is what you're going to be using [the labs] for,' he told this website. 'If they're for diagnostic purposes, then you need them. But I don't think every country needs a BSL-4.'

He added: 'If they start having a dual purpose for research that has offensive military implications, that is the concern.'

Russia has set out its proposals for 15 of the maximum security labs and India is aiming for 18 BSL-3 and BSL-4 labs in total. The US is also adding a further highest level biosecurity lab to its existing 12.

Gain of function research was largely restricted in the US until 2017, when the National Institutes of Health began to allow it to take place using government funds.

Previously it had been halted from 2014 to 2017 over concerns that it could lead to the inadvertent creation of a pandemic.

The research involves tinkering with viruses to make them more lethal or infectious - with the hopes of getting ahead of a future outbreak.

While Covid is officially believed to have been transmitted from an animal to a human - likely from a bat - in a Wuhan wet market, some speculate otherwise.

The Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) was performing gain of function research on similar strains before the virus emerged in the city.

Some believe that the pathogen being developed in the lab infected employees, and escaped into the world as a result.

The Boston scientists were performing similar research, and looked at different strains' effect on

human lung cells that were grown in the lab.

Covid latches onto human cells with its spike protein, and instructs healthy cells to produce copies of itself.

Scientists measured how many copies each variant caused the health cells to produce.

They found the hybrid strain produced five times more viral particles than the original Omicron.

The scientists admit the hybrid virus is unlikely to be as deadly in humans as it was in mice.

This is because the specific breed of lab mice used are very susceptible to severe Covid disease. Mice and humans also have very different immune responses to the virus.

The lab, at Boston University's National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories, is one of 13 biosafety level 4 labs in the US.

These are labs that are authorized to handle the most dangerous pathogens. There are also facilities in Texas, Atlanta and Manhattan, Kansas.

Experiments at these labs often involve tinkering with animal viruses to advance treatments and vaccines that could be used in a future outbreak.

Work on the live virus that causes Covid must be carried out at a BSL-3 or BSL-4 lab.

In BSL-3 labs, researchers do all experiments in a 'biosafety cabinet' — an enclosed, ventilated workspace for handling materials contaminated with pathogens.

The labs also have self-closing doors, sealed windows, floors and walls, and filtered ventilation systems.

In a BSL-4 lab, full-body, air-supplied pressure suits are worn and workers must change their clothing before entering and shower before leaving.

The lab is situated in a separate section of the building and has its own dedicated air supply.

There have long been speculation about the true origins of the virus that took over the world in early 2020.

Officially, it is believed that the virus was transmitted from a bat or similar animal to a human in Wuhan, before spreading among people.

Some believe that the virus could be man-made - with explanations ranging from the accidental to the nefarious.

The 'lab leak' Covid theory alleges that the virus was created via gain of function research being undertaken at the WIV.

It is feared that the virus being developed managed to infect an employee and then escape into the real world from there.

The theory for Covid was initially dismissed as conspiracy at the start of the pandemic in favor of a natural emergence.

But the hypothesis gained momentum following a series of revelations and cover-ups.

Crucial information about the earliest infected patients was wiped from the Wuhan lab's database in late 2019 and one of its staff vanished after coming down with a mysterious flu-like illness.

Fierce debate about the origins of the Covid pandemic was reignited after two studies claimed to trace the outbreak back to a notorious animal slaughter market in Wuhan.

One shows for the first time how the earliest human cases were clustered within a small radius around the Huanan Seafood Market in winter 2019.

More precise analysis of swabs taken from floors, cages and counters track the virus back to stalls in the southwestern corner of the market, where animals that can harbor Covid were sold for meat or fur at the time.

A second study claims to have pinpointed the exact date the first animal-to-human infection occurred — November 18, 2019 — after carrying out genetic analysis on hundreds of samples from the first human carriers.

They also say they have found evidence another first generation strain was spreading at the wet market — which, if true, would place both original lineages within its walls.

Until recently, the only Covid cases linked to the market were Lineage B, which was thought to have evolved after Lineage A.

Proponents of the accidental lab leak hypothesis used this as proof the virus only arrived at the market after evolving elsewhere in Wuhan.

ADVERTISEMENT

Read more:

- www.biorxiv.org/...

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: another awful Sachs youtube video

Peter:

Just awful. He admits he has no evidence, but that doesn't stop him.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 10:40 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: another awful (b)(6) youtube video

EXTERNAL SENDER

From 15mins on he talks about how I lied, our group lied, and how we're a small group with the "inside track" to NIH etc.

It's delusional and pretty offensive, frankly.

I didn't watch much of it, I have to write a grant application – unlike Jeff Sachs, I don't make my money from talking to the press and trashing other people…

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=morj- 3rdWwM&t=73s

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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USA

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 1:28 AM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: 'David Morens' (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: A barrage of attacks against EHA in last week
Importance: High

I don't know if you're seeing any of the bad press we've been getting in the last few days, but it's been a rollercoaster week for us here.

On the one hand, NIH has finally reversed the suspension of our China R01! We're currently renegotiating the terms, albeit without the capacity to collaborate with the WIV. We also got the notice of award on a new R01 to work in Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar to conduct human sampling in communities and clinics, and sampling of bats to identify the risk factors and degree of bat-CoV spillover in the region. Both are great news for us, but as soon as NIH put this on their public website, the harassment started.

We've now had articles in the Daily Mail, US Right to Know, The Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2022/10/04/ecohealth- alliance-lab-leak-nih-grant/?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social &utm_campaign=theintercept

.. and just now in the Financial Times criticizing the govt for funding us. https://www.ft.com/content/5504ad3a- eef2-49eb-b8dc-2a417d6f711c

One particularly hurtful quote in the FT is from Andrew Weber, who we previously had as a speaker at one of EcoHealth's Cosmos Club events in DC:
"Andrew Weber, who was assistant secretary of defence in the Obama administration and is now a senior fellow at the Council on Strategic Risks, called the work **'reckless, risky research with virtually no benefit to humanity**'". I get it that he has a political agenda, but surely anyone with half a brain can see that there's a benefit to finding out what viruses are spilling over from wildlife into people, particularly when they belong to the same viral clade as the one that caused SARS and COVID, and are infecting 60,000 people a year in SE Asia. What small minded person would allow politics to cloud their logic so blatantly.

We've also got Sen. Joni Ernst filing a bill to defund EcoHealth of all federal funding, and letters back and forth from the usual suspects (Republican members of Congress and Senators) attacking us with wild accusations of coverups and nefarious behavior.

Add to that a GAO request for a pile of documents (because Republicans asked them), and our first subpoena for documents. These last two mean weeks of work digging through emails, files and records, all for naught…

..and finally a disingenuous letter to NIH and CDC that cites a pile of BS about EcoHealth as an excuse to get CDC and NIH to review biosafety of field programs that work with wildlife – part of a growing anti-science luddism that threatens to close down our work and many others: https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/ec- republicans-press-nih-and-cdc-over-safety-gaps-with-virus-hunting-to-prevent-next-pandemic/

Looks like we're in for a rough road ahead…

One silver lining – the Honorable Dr. Fauci defending NIH's decision to fund our new R01 in a podcast: https://video.twimg.com/ext_tw_video/1577400180067995659/pu/vid/1284x720/KIyqU6NOK7zjvYio.mp4?tag=12

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 6:55 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) ; Peter Daszak < (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs accuses US of blowing up the Nordstream pipelines last week....

Jerry et al.

I am at a meeting in Japan and have been talking with (b)(6) and (b)(6) who knows (b)(6) well. (b)(6) (b)(6) I will be meeting with them later today and this is one of several items we will discuss.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 6:18 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6) Peter Daszak < (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich < (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs accuses US of blowing up the Nordstream pipelines last week....

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just got word this afternoon from PNAS that it will appear as early as next Monday, October 10, and that the embargo ends that afternoon, although it may actually appear in any issue next week. Seems a bit strange to me, but the key is its no longer embargoed and will be in the journal next week.

That's an interesting suggestion Peter to compile a packet of key papers. The two questions are which papers, and what do we do with the packet?
As far as Jeff Sachs is concerned nothing surprises me any more. To his credit, he didn't accuse aliens working for the US Space Force of doing – maybe that's the next interview.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 3:22 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs accuses US of blowing up the Nordstream pipelines last week....

I saw the (b)(6) ebuttal paper in PNAS which I thought was excellent. What about your paper Jerry? Should all these papers be put together in a packet?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: (b)(6)

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Oct 3, 2022, at 2:15 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Looks like he's deep in conspiracy land on a number of issues:

https://video.twimg.com/ext_tw_video/1576915780515553282/pu/vid/1280x720/0aRcMZC6LHGNHa7-.mp4?tag=12

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 6:43 AM
To: Gerald Keusch (b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) (b)(6); Peter Hotez (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: NYT book review: Scientists Knew More About Covid-19 Than We Think. And They Still Do./In "Breathless," David Quammen explores the predictable lead-up to the global Covid pandemic, and the frantic, belated attempts to stop it.

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
Date: October 3, 2022 at 06:42:51 EDT
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: NYT book review: Scientists Knew More About Covid-19 Than We Think. And They Still Do./In "Breathless," David Quammen explores the predictable lead-up to the global Covid pandemic, and the frantic, belated attempts to stop it.

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
Date: October 2, 2022 at 22:54:29 EDT
Subject: NYT book review: Scientists Knew More About Covid-19 Than We Think. And They Still Do./In "Breathless," David Quammen explores the predictable lead-up to the global Covid pandemic, and the frantic, belated attempts to stop it.

Scientists Knew More About Covid-19 Than We Think. And They Still Do.

In "Breathless," David Quammen explores the predictable lead-up to the global Covid pandemic, and the frantic, belated attempts to stop it.



New Jersey first responder Robert Sabia being decontaminated after answering a call in March, 2020.Credit...Chang W. Lee/The New York Times

By Michael Sims
Oct. 1, 2022

"Nobody," Donald Trump claimed in a March 2020 address, "had any idea." He was talking about the Covid virus — which had, seemingly overnight, sparked a global pandemic. In his compelling

and terrifying new book, "Breathless: The Scientific Race to Defeat a Deadly Virus," the veteran science journalist David Quammen demonstrates just how much was known — and expected — by infectious disease scientists long before patrons of the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market fell ill in December 2019 with a pneumonia-like virus.

"Soothsayer" isn't on Quammen's extensive résumé, but he was among those who had long predicted this kind of catastrophe. In 2012 he provided a field guide to the future, "Spillover," whose subtitle — "Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic" — explains exactly what the scientific community had long been expecting.

"This is a book about the science of SARS-CoV-2," he specifies in his new book. "The medical crisis of Covid-19, the heroism of health care workers and other people performing essential services, the unjustly distributed human suffering, and the egregious political malfeasance that made it all worse — those are topics for other books." Instead, he focuses his informed attention on the unsung heroes who dare to wrestle with viruses, those strange entities he calls "the dark angels of evolution." Human beings are part of a sprawling family of interconnected species who can share illness because they all grew up together. It is our common ancestry and related bodily ecology that makes spillover possible between, say, bats and Earth's (currently) dominant mammal.

Covid is, after all, as natural as a wolf cub or David Attenborough, and its thriller-level rate of evolution is part of its danger. "A virus is a parasite, yes," writes Quammen, "a genetic parasite, to be more precise, using the resources of other organisms to replicate its own genome." He demonstrates the sheer *weirdness* of viruses when he explains how difficult it is to even define them.

Quammen follows the story of Covid from scientists' first awareness of the outbreak in Wuhan through reports of Omicron in late 2021. Alongside the human story, spillover between humans and other animals is a persistent theme. Early in 2020, a dog in Hong Kong tested positive. There were positive cats in Minnesota, two positive hippos in Antwerp, a positive tiger in Knoxville. An outbreak spread through mink farms in the Netherlands. Last year, of the many white-tailed deer sampled in Pennsylvania, 44 percent tested positive. The persistent danger of spillover between species informs arguments over the virtues and the flaws of both approaches to pandemics: "prediction and prevention versus surveillance and response."

"Breathless" is so good that I was slow to realize that it lacks the vivid you-are-there details of "Spillover." That's because he *wasn't* there. In "Breathless," there are no scenes of an intrepid author helping trap macaques at a Sufi shrine or examining a white-footed mouse for Lyme-infested larval ticks. Among its other virtues, "Spillover" was something of a nightmare travel book, but "Breathless" is a different species of tour de force. Quammen's research methods have mutated. "I avoided airports for more than two years after Covid-19 exploded," he says up front, "and I got through the year 2020 on one tank of gas." Yet these barriers didn't prevent him from writing a luminous, passionate account of the defining crisis of our time — and the unprecedented international response to it. While many people were begging for mercy from the motley of gods that they also credit with designing this Eden for viruses, epidemiologists and vaccine scientists all over the world raced to save the lives of people they would never meet.

Citing Faulkner's multiple narrators, Quammen says, "The discernment of truth — let's make that 'truth,' because it's such an imperious and suspect word — comes from listening to many voices." He read a library's worth of books and Zoomed with some 95 sources — epidemiologists, geneticists and public health officials who were closely involved in research and decision-making. He smoothly weaves not only their facts, but their way of speaking, into his story. "Spoken words are data, in nonfiction," he says, "and I share scientists' respect for the sanctity of data." He provides a mini-biography of each interviewee. Backstage outtakes humanize the participants, as when Quammen asks Anthony Fauci whether Brad Pitt or Kate McKinnon did a better job of satirizing him. These glimpses undergird his assertion that science is "a rational process leading toward ever-clearer understanding of the material world, but it's also an activity performed by humans."

Quammen marries an old-fashioned love of colorful language to his passion for detail — an odd coupling that results not just in a lucid book about an important topic, but also in a book that's a pleasure to read. "What nature of bug seethed in this dollop of liquid human distress?" he asks of a private genome-sequencing company in Guangzhou. Sometimes his Chandleresque metaphors distract. (When the rate of infection among the deer spikes, it's "like popcorn in a hot pan.") Usually, however, his imagery vividly reinforces a point. He explains that a laboratory sample from bat feces "is not a virus, just as the text of 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark' is not a performed play" — that the sample is, instead, "the script of a virus."

Quammen can't resist snarking that Trump, "as you may have heard, is not a scientific sophisticate," but he doesn't waste much time shooting at such an easy target. He describes Elon Musk as an

"entrepreneur and spaceman," and Alex Azar, the secretary of health and human services, as "pliable." The "Intelligence Community" is "a bodacious aggregation of intelligences" that includes Space Delta 7 — "within the United States Space Force, whatever that is." Didier Raoult, the French physician who promoted hydroxychloroquine, Quammen terms a "prideful contrarian." Hydroxychloroquine did indeed have a history of prescription for malaria, and, he deduces, presumably, "Trump listened to people who listened to people who listened to Didier Raoult."

While staying on mission, Quammen allows himself room for context. The importance of the February 2020 announcement that scientists had found in pangolins a close match to the virus infecting humans makes more sense — both scientific and narrative — because Quammen begins with a brief survey course on these armored-looking, anteater-like creatures. He smoothly interweaves their evolution, the ecological sin of animal trafficking, the imaginary pharmacological virtues of pangolin scales (which are actually mostly keratin) and the contemporary "vogue in urban China for *ye wei*, or 'wild tastes.'"

"This virus is going to be with us forever," Quammen warns, with a wealth of data and precedent to support him. We haven't eradicated polio or measles. "And those viruses have nowhere to hide except within humans." This one could be cleared from every living human, and still exist in other animals. "Covid-19 won't be our last pandemic of the 21st century. It probably won't be our worst." In our international world, as one scientist tells Quammen, "A disease anywhere is a disease everywhere."

Michael Sims's books include "Adam's Navel" and a companion volume to the National Geographic Channel series "In the Womb: Animals."

BREATHLESS: The Scientific Race to Defeat a Deadly Virus | By David Quammen | 406 pp. | Simon & Schuster | $28.99

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Date: Sat, 9 Jul 2022 4:45:57 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 9 Jul 2022 4:43:11 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Newsweek: Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab
From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6) (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.png

(b)(6)

Cheers,

Peter

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, July 9, 2022 3:57 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Newsweek: Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab

Awful, but predicted and predictable: I explained to (b)(6) that his public position would cause unnecessary and unjustified harm to both science and scientists in the US. But in addition, it looks as though he invited public condemnation against himself by seeming to simultaneously support both the Russian and Chinese Governments.

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Peter Hotez , MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter:
Skype:
Linkedin (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, July 9, 2022 12:54 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6) ; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Newsweek: Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

I don't think (b)(6) did a thoughtful reflection on what sort of damage he might end up doing by supporting the lab leak narrative and pointing the finger at US scientists. He's now dragged US science into the line of attack from China, Russia, and the US right wingers, all over again…

It's been a relatively quiet few weeks in the press for us at EHA, but I noticed some increased harassment by email etc last night. I've now found out that Tucker Carlson on Fox News decided to do a 'retrospective' on the lab leak narrative and demand investigation of US scientists including me and EcoHealth. The video's below – pretty miserable attack full of errors, innuendo and outright lies…of course… and with video of me and naming me as a person who likely started the pandemic.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MJrUew2Kyg

If you don't want to watch it (and it's extremely irritating) – just have a look at the comments on the website and you'll see where all this is going – with over a million views in one day, that's a million hard right US citizens putting US scientists on their hit lists for harrassment and worse…

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, July 9, 2022 1:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; peter hotez < (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts < (b)(6) >; (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: Newsweek: Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
> **Date:** July 9, 2022 at 13:12:58 EDT
> **To:** David Morens (b)(6)
> **Subject: Fwd: Newsweek: Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
Date: July 9, 2022 at 12:53:14 EDT
Subject: Newsweek: Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab

Tech & Science

Russia Jumps on Wild Claims COVID Was Created in U.S. Lab

By Ed Browne On 7/6/22 at 10:51 AM EDT

A Russian government official has demanded that Washington be "held accountable" for the COVID-19 pandemic after a pair of university professors said U.S. research organizations had more to answer for.

Since the early days of the pandemic in 2020 there has been much discussion over how SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID, came into existence.

World Health Organization (WHO) researchers sent to Wuhan, China, to investigate the first known outbreak concluded that although more research was needed, a natural spillover to humans from animals was the most likely outcome and considered a lab leak scenario to be "extremely unlikely."

At the time the lab leak scenario was perhaps more of a fringe idea and one that carried with it an air of conspiracy theory. Since then, calls for investigation into the origins of COVID, including a lab leak, have come from the U.S. president himself and the possibility has not been written off, though it's sparked animosity between scientists who disagree on the likelihood of the theory as well as between countries who are keen to offload blame.

Proponents of the lab leak theory argue that it is no coincidence that some labs—notably those in Wuhan—had been working on engineering coronaviruses in the years prior to the pandemic.

In May, two Columbia University professors published an opinion article in the U.S. journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS) in which they argue that animal spillover and a "research-related incident" are "the two main hypotheses" regarding the origin of COVID and that "there is much important information that can be gleaned from U.S.-based research institutions, information not yet made available for independent, transparent, and scientific scrutiny."

Jeffrey Sachs, an economics professor, and Neil Harrison, a professor of anesthesiology and pharmacology, went on to state that "much of the work on SARS-like coronaviruses performed in Wuhan [before the pandemic] was part of an active and highly collaborative U.S.–China scientific research program funded by the U.S. government" and that "it is still not clear whether the U.S. intelligence community (IC) investigated these U.S.-supported and U.S.-based activities. If it did, it has yet to make any of its findings available to the U.S. scientific community for independent and transparent analysis and assessment."

More recently, Sachs went further. Speaking in a discussion at the Gate Center research group in Madrid last month, Sachs said: "I'm pretty convinced it came out of a U.S. lab of biotechnology, not out of nature after two years of intensive work on this. So it's a blunder, in my view, of biotech, not an accident of a natural spillover.

"We don't know for sure, I should be absolutely clear, but there's enough evidence that it should be looked into and it's not being investigated," he said, without elaborating on the nature or substance of said evidence.

However, responding to a *Newsweek* request for comment, Sachs provided some additional insight into his thinking.

"The basic point is the US-backed and US-funded research in the US and partners in China was to perform the very kind of experiments that may have produced SARS-CoV-2," he wrote in an email.

"Indeed, in my view, that is the most likely inference from various pieces of evidence. SARS-CoV-2 is a SARS-like CoV (coronavirus) that has a Furin Cleavage Site (FCS). The US team backed by NIH was intent on introducing an FCS into a large number of previously unreported SARS-CoVs.

"My personal best guess is that SARS-CoV-2 was thereby created and that it accidentally escaped from a laboratory, perhaps the Wuhan Institute of Virology, or perhaps elsewhere.

"NIH has yet not told us what it knew when. The ongoing NIH secrecy and indeed misdirection is a huge and ongoing problem," he concluded.

However, as the U.S. Intelligence Council has previously noted, and past research has suggested, instances have been observed in which furin cleavage sites—a part of SARS-CoV-2 that enhances infection—have been identified in naturally-occurring coronaviruses in the past, and that a coronavirus that was 96.2 percent identical to SARS-CoV-2 was discovered in a bat in 2013.

While the research into and debate around this particular aspect of SARS-CoV-2 continues, it is neither a definitive indicator of lab origins of the virus, nor is it a new piece of information in the conversation about Covid origins, as some outlets and commentators have purported.

It is also worth noting that Sachs' own credibility and links to China, where he holds an advisory role at Beijing' Tsinghua University, have been questioned in the light of his efforts to find the origins of the virus, with some conservative outlets branding him "China's apologist in chief."

And regardless of his genuine or purported affiliations, it is worth emphasizing that Sachs' primary expertise lie in the fields of economics and policy, rather than virology.

Newsweek has contacted the U.S. Department of State for comment.

Shortly after videos of Sachs' comments spread online, Vyacheslav Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma in Russia, pounced on the claim to criticize the U.S. and demand compensation.

In a Telegram post on Wednesday this week, Volodin wrote, translated from Russian: "Millions of sick and dead people, the global economic crisis, a drop in people's living standards are the consequences of COVID-19 for which Washington needs to be held accountable.

"To all states affected by the pandemic, the United States is obliged to compensate for the losses incurred."

It should be noted that Russian officials and outlets have been spreading debunked claims and propaganda about supposed U.S. "biolabs" in Ukraine since invading its neighboring country.

It's also not the first time that COVID origins accusations have been levelled at Washington. China, which itself has been a target of such accusations, has in turn pushed its own theories.

Several times last year, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian suggested that the Fort Detrick military base in the U.S. should be investigated as part of the WHO's COVID investigations. China's state-owned *Global Times* newspaper has also made similar claims.

Update 07/07/22, 5:16 a.m. ET: This article was updated with comment from Jeffrey Sachs.

Disclaimer: Any third-party material in this email has been shared for internal use under fair use provisions of U.S. copyright law, without further verification of its accuracy/veracity. It does not necessarily represent my views nor those of NIAID, NIH, HHS, or the U.S. government.

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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:04:58 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:04:02 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
Attachments: image004.png; image001.jpg; image008.png; image003.png

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Hotez, Peter Jay** (b)(6)
Date: Fri, Jul 1, 2022 at 9:46 AM
Subject: Re: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich < (b)(6) Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6)

It's getting crazy again

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

> On Jul 1, 2022, at 8:37 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:
>
> We've been fielding questions all week from a reporter at US Right to Know because they've FoIA'd another batch of emails. Here's an article today claiming that (b)(6) should have reported working with EHA as a 'Conflict of Interest' for his Nature Medicine paper with (b)(6) et al. back in Feb 2020.
>
> Here's the link: https://usrtk.org/biohazards- blog/anti-lab-leak-virologist-ecohealth-alliance-partner/
>
> You'll be irritated to see quotes from Jeff Sachs and David Relman. Everyone seems happy with the idea that somehow collaborating with EcoHealth Alliance means you have a conflict of interest in this world of fake COVID origin stories.
>
> The article is also utterly disingenuous in pretending it took a FoIA lawsuit to find out that Ian Lipkin collaborated with us. All it would have taken is a 5 second Google Search.
>
> Note also US Right to Know's motto: "Pursuing truth and transparency for public health".

US RTK
U.S. RIGHT TO KNOW
PURSUING TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Virologist who tried to discredit the lab leak theory was once a 'partner' to EcoHealth Alliance

PrintEmailShareTweet

Posted on July 1, 2022 by Emily Kopp



Columbia University virologist Ian Lipkin has coauthored several articles with EcoHealth Alliance since 2011. (Photo credit: kris krüg)

A virologist who coauthored a paper marginalizing the lab leak theory did not disclose his ties to the research group at the center of it.

Director of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity Ian Lipkin has often worked with EcoHealth Alliance, a U.S.-based collaborator of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the group confirmed in an email.

EcoHealth Alliance listed Lipkin as a "partner" from 2012 to 2014, an archived version of the group's website shows. Lipkin has coauthored at least ten scientific papers with EcoHealth researchers from 2011 to 2021, EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in an email. These publications include a paper about novel coronaviruses EcoHealth and its partners sampled around the world.

EcoHealth Alliance hunts for novel viruses in wildlife and funds research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Lipkin did not disclose his partnership with EcoHealth in "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," a highly influential paper that states that COVID-19 arose from nature.

A central premise of that paper: COVID-19 is too dissimilar from viruses commonly employed in experiments to have spilled out of a lab.

"It is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus," the paper states. "The genetic data irrefutably show that SARS-CoV-2 is not derived from any previously used virus backbone."

But Lipkin did not disclose his connection to a nonprofit that uncovers new and novel viruses. Some of those viruses were likely studied at its partnering lab in Wuhan, which housed one of the world's largest collection of bat coronaviruses.

Lipkin did not return several requests for comment.

At 5.7 million views, the *Nature Medicine* article may be one of the most widely read scientific papers in history — though the piece is formally a "correspondence."

David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist and emerging infectious diseases expert for the National Academies, said conflicts of interest are especially troublesome when writing on high profile issues.

"For any major, controversial issue, I believe that all of us have an even greater responsibility to reveal those conflicts upfront—and let others have an opportunity to judge what effect those conflicts might have had," said Relman.

Relman also called into question the logic of the paper's premise. The Wuhan Institute of Virology may have simply been experimenting with unfamiliar viruses. The disappearance of the lab's coronavirus sequence database in 2019 and the lab's history of gain-of-function experiments also weaken the claims of Lipkin and his coauthors, Relman said.

"The Proximal Origins paper is flawed in its assumptions, logic and the soundness of its conclusions. I was very surprised that it passed review at *Nature Medicine*," he said.

Columbia University Center for Sustainable Development Director Jeffrey Sachs — chair of The Lancet COVID-19 Commission — said the citation the authors used to prop up the paper's premise deserves more scrutiny.

"The Proximal Origins paper has no credibility," Sachs wrote in an email. "The paper's central claim — that SARS-CoV-2 is not related to viruses previously reported in laboratory research — offers as proof a footnote to a 2014 paper!"

"It ludicrously claims to debunk a 2019 lab emergence using a 2014 paper," he continued. "The paper offers no real evidence whatsoever against the possible lab origin of the virus, even though it claimed to do so."

Lipkin himself has since acknowledged the possibility that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was experimenting with unknown viruses, contradicting the popular paper he coauthored.

"If they've got hundreds of bat samples that are coming in, and some of them aren't characterized, how would they know whether this virus was or wasn't in this lab? They wouldn't," Lipkin said in an interview with the Washington Post last year.

But Lipkin has not disclosed his work with EcoHealth to reporters.

Nature Medicine, the journal that published the paper, defines a "competing interest" requiring disclosure as including "personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals" — paid or unpaid. A spokesperson for parent company Springer Nature did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

Lipkin's connection to a group at the center of lab leak suspicions is the latest revelation to cast doubt on the correspondence.

Significant questions remain. It's still unclear how the authors dispelled their own private concerns that the virus had been engineered within a couple of days.

For example, Lipkin privately voiced concerns to his coauthors about a "nightmare of circumstantial evidence" pointing to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Vanity Fair reported.

It's also unknown to what extent leaders of the National Institutes of Health, which funded the EcoHealth Alliance, may have shaped the paper.

Grant reports that led a reporter to the defunct link showing Lipkin's partnership with EcoHealth Alliance were obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Biohazards, Biohazards Blog Anthony Fauci, David Relman, EcoHealth Alliance, Ian Lipkin, Jeff Sachs, Kristian Andersen, Peter Daszak, proximal origin, Robert Garry, The Lancet's COVID Commission, Virologist, Wuhan Institute of Virology

0

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) h > (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

What a joke – he should be locked up

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 10:50 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

EXTERNAL SENDER

Looks like Joe Rogan has gone full down the rabbit hole
https://twitter.com/skmorefield/status/1542497337171496961?s=21 &t=6w48UFQHdjizswS_RXhHfQ

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Jun 28, 2022, at 10:54 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

(b)(6) already made a false statement about me to the House of Commons – saying that it took him a year to get me to fully disclose my conflicts of interests for the Lancet 'Statement of support' we wrote in Feb 2020. He referred to me as "that individual". De-humanizing and dishonest. So I doubt he'll intervene, but worth a shot.

By the way – here's today's gloating article by the "White Coat Waste" celebrating Republican congressional member Reschenthaler (PA) who has been doggedly pursuing our defunding for the last 2 years. The amendments do not actually make any iota of difference of course – No funds from DoD ever went to Wuhan either directly or through EcoHealth. But it does the job of painting us as an organization that should be attacked. Just as Sachs' Lancet Commission report will now do.

https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2022/06/24/progress- congress-defunds-wuhan-animal-lab-ecohealth-alliance/

PROGRESS! CONGRESS DEFUNDS WUHAN

POSTED BY

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Wed, 11 Nov 2020 12:06:01 AM -0500
Sent: Wed, 11 Nov 2020 12:05:58 AM -0500
Subject: FYI Re: Wall Street Journal
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6) >;
Attachments: wsj.com-NIH Presses US Nonprofit for Information on Wuhan Virology Lab (1).pdf; ATT00001.htm

Sent from my iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

From: Robert Kessler (b)(6) >
Date: November 10, 2020 at 11:08:10 PM EST
To: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
Cc: "Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) " (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Wall Street Journal

Hey Jerry,

To my knowledge, this is the most high profile media mention of that particular correspondence. We have a subscription so I've attached a PDF if you're interested in reading it. Feel free to give me a call at (b)(6) tomorrow if you want to chat about it briefly. I'm free whenever.

On Tue, Nov 10, 2020 at 6:23 PM Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

> Hi Aleksei and Robert,
>
> The Wall Street Journal had an article on August 19 entitled "NIH Presses U.S. Nonprofit for Information on Wuhan Virology Lab" which talks about the July 8 NIH letter (here is the link: https://www.wsj.com/articles/nih-presses-u-s-nonprofit-for-information-on-wuhan-virology-lab-11597829400). I'm not a subscriber so I can't get the full text, and I am wondering if you have it among the many public documents you have tracked. Aside from the mention of the letter in this article I haven't seen any public release. I'm wondering if you aware of any instances of it appearing in any publication?
>
> I'm not going to leak it but I would love to refer to it if it's out there, as it's time to make the case for NIH to come clean and redress the errors they have made.
>
> Cheers, Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.

Professor of Medicine and International Health

Boston University School of Medicine

Associate Director, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories

620 Albany Street

Boston, MA 02118

--

Robert Kessler
Communications Manager

he/him

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Ste. 1200
New York, NY 10018

(b)(6) (direct)
(b)(6) (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Fri, 31 May 2024 1:49:06 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 31 May 2024 1:48:58 PM -0400
Subject: RE: RE: Comment from Peter Staley about Tony Fauci re. our suspension and proposed debarment
From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
To: (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.jpg

When Trump is in jail and the republican politicians get voted out of office.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 1:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: RE: Comment from Peter Staley about Tony Fauci re. our suspension and proposed debarment

EXTERNAL SENDER

When will it ever end????? d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 5/31/24 09:17, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Thanks David – I'll read that. We're still on heightened security alert here at my house and the office, and the hate online and in emails is palpable.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 7:05 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Comment from Peter Staley about Tony Fauci re. our suspension and proposed debarment

Peter, good to know, thank you.

In the Wash Post this am there is an article you should check out, as it happened to you a couple weeks ago.

If you remember police officer
Michael Fanone, who was attacked and seriously injured on Jan 6, yesrerday his 75 year old mother was "swatted": police showed up. at her door and scared the wits out of her, as they had received a fake tip that she had been murdered in her home.

America has gone crazy. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 5/30/24 16:09, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Just to let you all know that I heard from (b)(6), who's one of the original (b)(6) Members who protested NIH then became a close friend of Tony Fauci. I let him know what had happened to us re. the SSCP, the Democrats, HHS Secretary, NIH Director, all lining up to allow us to be suspended and proposed for debarment.
>
> He said that what's happening to EcoHealth is a 'travesty' and that he, (b)(6) first heard about it from Tony Fauci, who was "shocked by the development".

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich [(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 10:39 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [(b)(6)]
Cc: Peter Daszak [(b)(6)]; Aleksei Chmura [(b)(6)]; Gerald Keusch [(b)(6)]; David Morens [(b)(6)]
Subject: RE: My meetings at Stanford this week

Peter:

Thanks. I have all of the Nobel Laureates on my contact list. It is always good to know when they are very concerned. If you see her again, please remind her that it is always appreciated when she replied to my emails.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 10:17 AM

To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6)
Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: My meetings at Stanford this week

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich: I'm giving visiting lectures at Stanford and have been speaking again (b)(6) (b)(6) last year's (b)(6) in (b)(6) I briefed (b)(6) on the House Subcommittee hearings and (b)(6) is very concerned about what's going on and i think is prepared to help in the defense of science. So as you organize the other laureates, I would encourage you to keep (b)(in mind, In addition to (b)(6) best Peter

(b)(6)

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

Date: Tue, 12 Apr 2022 4:52:19 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 12 Apr 2022 4:51:05 PM -0400
Subject: RE: The NAM are now investigating me based on some of the allegations from the Republican congressional members
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)

Thanks all for your positive comments. I'm going through my usual phases of mourning every time a new attack happens. First it's despair, then sadness, then realization that my only option is to fight back and hope that people accept that all we've ever done at EcoHealth is follow the standard scientific process and kept our integrity through that – including not handing over information on unfunded proposals, and responding to every attack from the right wingers.

What's clear to me is that all of the normal checks and balances we rely on in our careers are managed by a small number of gatekeepers who we expect to stand up and speak out on principle when fellow scientists are treated like garbage. Some do – yourselves included. Most don't, and it seems that includes (b)(6)

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 4:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) > David Morens < (b)(6) > Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: The NAM are now investigating me based on some of the allegations from the Republican congressional members

Peter:

Appalling! Yet again I am glad that I am not a member of any of the Academies. They are completely toothless as well as incompetent. Almost as bad as the UN.

Happy to chat if it might help. Otherwise I will see in a couple of weeks' time.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 1:14 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: The NAM are now investigating me based on some of the allegations from the Republican congressional members
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Please see the email below that I just received and the attachments.

They've cut down the allegations to a handful that I have to respond to within 30 days. But as I see this, these are grey areas that they could use to easily push me out, no matter my response. It would save them political hassle if they get rid of me, and I'm very worried that this is their ultimate goal.

Obviously, I'll try to be as aggressive as possible in defending against this, but this is devastating to me personally to have to go through this and if they expel me, it would likely cost me my job and career. Even more worrisome is the last paragraph in the letter from the Congressional members – they are playing pure politics here – if I'm found to be in breach, they are demanding that every report I've been involved in, and every committee be investigated.

This feels like a purge orchestrated by politicians for a political goal, and an academy that is too weak to push back.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 1:58 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: confidential

Dear Dr. Daszak,

On behalf of the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), (b)(6)
(b)(6)

Please find attached a notification letter, supplemental documentation, and NAM bylaws and Code of Conduct. Pursuant to the NAM Policy and Procedure on Violations of the Code of Conduct, please provide a response to the allegations within 30 days of the date of this notification, and by no later than May 13, 2022.

For your awareness, copies of this notification is postage mailed by FedEx to your office address at EcoHealth Alliance, 520 Eighth Ave Suite 1200, New York, NY 10018.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)
(b)(6) National Academy of Medicine

The information contained in this transmission is confidential information intended for the use of the individual or entity named above. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, retention or copying of this communication and its attachments is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please advise by return email immediately and then delete this message and all copies and backups thereof.

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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:33:30 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:32:48 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Question re. NIH refusing to allow
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Date: Fri, May 5, 2023 at 12:09 PM
Subject: RE: Question re. NIH refusing to allow
To: David Morens (b)(6) >, Peter Daszak
(b)(6) >
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >,
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >, Jeffrey Sturchio
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

I don't recall either, but to me it would have been outside of Zerhouni's character to speak truth to power as Peter's comment suggests. He was certainly there for a portion of her term as senator. But so was Tony for all of it. Jerry

From: David Morens (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 11:32 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >;
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Question re. NIH refusing to allow

I do not remember for sure but think it was Zerhouni. d

From the cell phone of David Morens

On Fri, May 5, 2023, 11:22 Peter Daszak [(b)(6)] > wrote:

Rich just shared a 'fruity' quote he gave to the Daily Telegraph re. Francis Collins' particular weakness in terminating NIH funding on direction from Trump. I'll leave it for you to either read it in the press, or hear it from Rich – it's a cracker…

It reminded me of the opposite outcome, a story I read when Hillary Clinton was a New York Senator and tried to push NIH to fund 9/11 syndrome grants that had been rejected. My memory is that she met with Tony Fauci, who politely (but repeatedly) reminded her that the NIH grant review system is independent and can't be politically interfered with.

David, Jerry – do you know where that was reported – I can't find it online. David – do you remember if it was Tony Fauci or Elias Zerhouni that Hillary met with?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cc5125580f2b34aaf3fbe08db8a1098f4%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=1DEGxXiQV67iYiwuKqp8VtHDG8iZ31%2Bo6o9whg6KjDI%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 9:51 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) > (b)(6)
Subject: RE: New White House pandemic center

Typical government approach – ask for something to be done and then give no money to get it done.

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >; (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Subject: New White House pandemic center

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced

Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

iPhone
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Date: Tue, 1 Mar 2022 10:31:46 AM -0500
Sent: Tue, 1 Mar 2022 10:31:08 AM -0500
Subject: Re: request from WSJ
From: "McKay, Betsy" <betsy.mckay@wsj.com>
To: David Morens (b)(6) >;

Thank you, and I understand. I am flexible on timing. Off of workday time is fine - what works for you? I could speak tonight, possibly Thursday or Friday evening, or over the weekend.

Best,
Betsy

On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 10:26 AM David Morens (b)(6) wrote:
Betsy, glad to do it IF it's on background and no clues that anything comes from me. This is because some of us, including me and especially my boss Tony Fauci, are getting pilloried with death threats, and as govt employees we need to keep our heads down and not raise controversy. Best for me to do it off of workday time.

What's your time table?

david
David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 10:10 AM McKay, Betsy <betsy.mckay@wsj.com> wrote:
Hi David - I am a reporter for The Wall Street Journal who writes about public health. I am reaching out to see if you would have a few moments to chat today or tomorrow (or the end of the week) on background about EcoHealth? I could use your perspective, and advice.
Also just wanted to say I enjoyed your NEJM Perspective a few weeks back on universal coronavirus vaccines. I wrote a story last fall about the research underway for such vaccines, and it struck me as a good example of why it's necessary to study coronaviruses that don't currently infect humans.
Thank you, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,
Betsy

--

Betsy McKay
SENIOR WRITER

(b)(6)
M: (b)(6)
E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
T: @betswrites

--

Betsy McKay
SENIOR WRITER

O: (b)(6)
M: (b)(6)
E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
T: @betswrites

Date: Sat, 16 Jul 2022 5:24:36 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 16 Jul 2022 5:21:11 PM -0400
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Zimmer 2022 reference from my EndNote library -- Bat Virus Studies Raise Questions About Laboratory Tinkering.
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; peter hotez (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)

Eddie Holmes' comment is spot on in this article. Many of the lab leak theories depend on a putative SARS-CoV-2 ancestor being present in a sample handled by field scientists or cultured in the lab at WIV. The fact that these BANAL viruses did not acquire an FCS following serial passage in human cells in vitro argues against the plausibility that a putative SARS-CoV-2 ancestory would have done so in people or cell cultures in the Wuhan Lab.

Even more important (but oft forgotten) is the fact that we (EHA and WIV) spent years testing the bat samples that we collected in China and publicly reported >700 sequences of bat-CoVs from these samples. Not a single one was closer to SARS-CoV-2 than RaTG13, which is itself substantially different to SC2, lacks an FCS and is unlikely to be a direct ancestral virus. This strongly suggests that a putative ancestor to SARS-CoV-2 just simply wasn't present in our samples.

By now we've tested every single sample and none have come up with anything closer. But of course, the lab leakers will say 'he would say that wouldn't he'!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens < (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 15, 2022 7:22 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) peter hotez (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts < (b)(6)

Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Zimmer 2022 reference from my EndNote library -- Bat Virus Studies Raise Questions About Laboratory Tinkering.

more David Relman nonsense-comments. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
> **Date:** July 15, 2022 at 19:19:59 EDT
> **To:** David Morens (b)(6)
> **Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Zimmer 2022 reference from my EndNote library -- Bat Virus Studies Raise Questions About Laboratory Tinkering.**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** (b)(6)
> > **Date:** July 15, 2022 at 15:57:12 EDT
> > **To:** (b)(6) (Galveston National Labortory-UT)" (b)(6)
> > **Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zimmer 2022 reference from my EndNote library -- Bat Virus Studies Raise Questions About Laboratory Tinkering.**
> >
> > Zimmer C. (2022, 20220715). **Bat Virus Studies Raise Questions About Laboratory Tinkering.** NYTimes Retrieved 0715, 2022,
> >
> > https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/15/science/bat- coronavirus-laboratory-experiments.html?searchResultPosition=6

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Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2023 6:26:07 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 9 Feb 2023 6:25:53 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Follow up from our call
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

I'm not a virologist but I would be happy to join you in a call with (b)(6) and colleagues, if none of our other outstanding members are able to do it. David Morens would be ideal in my view if you are able to do it.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 5:50 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) >
Subject: Re: Follow up from our call

So far (b)(6) from ASV seems on board we can start with her? And the two names she suggested?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Feb 9, 2023, at 4:35 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

I have not been at all successful in my outreach. I sent notes to (b)(6), (b)(6) (b)(6) at (b)(6), and (b)(6) who is the foreign secretary for (b)(6) (and the interim Dean at (b)(6) School) last Thursday after our call and I have not heard from any of them. I can get back to this middle of next week and if I haven't heard back by email I will call them directly. I can understand why (b)(6) might be suddenly overwhelmed with new responsibilities, which was one reason I thought about getting in touch first by email. But I don't think that applies to (b)(6)

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 5:14 PM
To: (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Follow up from our call

The more the merrier as we say in the UK!

I think our goal should be to really get a lot of support from all segments of society. We definitely should avoid the claim that we are just being elitists.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 4:05 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) , Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Follow up from our call

EXTERNAL SENDER

Would engaging with the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility be useful? Here's some information on the CSFR from the AAAS website:

Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility

The Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility (CSFR) was established in 1976 by AAAS. The Committee Charter is as follows:

The Council recognizes that the CSFR, as a standing committee of the AAAS, plays a significant as well as potentially controversial role for the Association. The increasing complexity of the interactions among science, technology, and the public interest raise new issues and problems concerning the human rights, freedom of scientific inquiry, and professional responsibilities of scientists and engineers. The Association affirms at the outset that scientific freedom is grounded in basic human rights and implies special responsibilities to extend and disseminate knowledge for the good of humanity.
With these perspectives in mind, and within the resources allocated by the Board of Directors, the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility is charged with the following duties on behalf of the Association:

1. To formulate and recommend principles and procedures to guide the Association in a continuing review of issues that affect scientific freedom and scientific responsibility, and to search for means that will effectively bring these issues to the attention of both scientists and others.
1. To monitor whether the actions and policies of the government of the United States, the governments of other nations, and of private organizations circumscribe or restrict the freedom of scientists or their ability to carry out their responsibilities.
1. To collect information on restrictions of scientific freedom and of the ability of scientists to carry out their responsibilities, and to make such information available to scientists, scientific societies, and others who may be interested in taking action to counter these restrictions.
1. To encourage and assist the AAAS, its affiliates, and other scientific groups to develop statements of principles governing professional conduct, and to establish policies, procedures, and educational activities designed to encourage scientists to accept their professional responsibilities both with regard to safeguarding the integrity of science and with regard to the application of science in the promotion of human rights and general welfare.
1. To encourage and assist the AAAS and its affiliates to develop policies and procedures to protect scientists against infringements of scientific freedom; to collect information about the procedures of affiliated societies for dealing with documented allegations of such

infringements; to facilitate communication among the societies with a view to strengthening of these procedures; and, in exceptional circumstances and within the criteria developed by the Committee, to conduct an analytic review of cases where the ramifications are deemed to be especially significant for the scientific community at large.

1. To report annually to the Association, through the Council–and, as appropriate, to other scientific and technological communities and to the general public–the activities of the Committee and its general assessment of significant developments during the year that affect scientific freedom and scientific responsibility and that call for examination, discussion and possible action.

As part of the attempt to fulfill its mandate, the CSFR in 1977 established a Science and Human Rights Subcommittee, specifically to address issues of human rights as they occur in relation to all these duties.

Adopted by the Committee for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility February 9, 1996.

Adopted by the AAAS Council on February 16, 1997.

MEMBERS

Ronald Arkin
Georgia Institute of Technology

Angela Bielefeldt
University of Colorado, Boulder

Matthew Brown
University of Texas, Dallas

Deborah Johnson
University of Virginia

Kelly Joyce
Drexel University

Bartha Maria Knoppers
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Safiya Noble
University of California, Los Angeles

Frank Pasquale
University of Maryland Carey School of Law

Neal Rubin (Chair)
Adler University

Judith Tanur
Stony Brook University

Joseph Watkins
University of Arizona

Committee Staff Officer
Theresa Harris
AAAS

Best regards,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 3:44 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Follow up from our call

(b)(6) was not great on the vaccine issue, he refused to rebuke (b)(6) citing "freedom of choice". We need a strong NIH Director, and more forceful statements from the National Academies. I speak with (b)(6) pretty regularly who gets it and is concerned. When I pick up my Purple Heart AAAS Scientific Freedom Medal on March 5, he'll be there and hopefully we can strategize then. So far only AAAS and to some extent AMA and AAMC seem interested or worried.

Many thanks Rich!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Feb 9, 2023, at 2:21 PM, Roberts, Rich <(b)(6) wrote:

Hi:

I have spoken with several people about the idea of a campaign to protect science and most seem on board with the idea, but a little short on ways to implement it in a way that might get wide public acceptance.

I spoke with (b)(6) at some length. He is extremely supportive. He did have some insights about the NIH Directorship. He said that Biden had taken over the selection personally and no-one else seemed to be involved. His view and mine is that that means it is dead for now. He had been talking with (b)(6) and (b)(6) (b)(6), both of whom are very concerned about the Republican attacks on science. I will be talking with both of them tomorrow afternoon.

I spoke with (b)(6) and he is supportive, but has no clear ideas of how to proceed. He did say that we should talk with (b)(6) (as we had discussed) and get AAAS involved. I had contacted Holden previously and he and I have a talk scheduled for next week.

Some of the more interesting suggestions that have emerged are that we should try to garner support from individuals and organizations that are not viewed by the general public, or politicians, as belong to the "elite" segment of society. I am thinking that someone like (b)(6) could be an excellent spokesperson if we can reach him and his views are pro-science. He seems like a decent person and so maybe he is Pro-science. There are others who fit that category such as other sports stars and even some Hollywood people. I believe (b)(6) would be favorable and maybe (b)(6), whom I met many years ago.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 4:58 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) tez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens < (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) leksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Notes from our call

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just to note I have just sent a note to (b)(6) about NAM, to (b)(6) about Research!America, and (b)(6) about ASM. I'll let you know if and what I hear back from them and we can proceed from there.
Jerry

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:26 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T <
(b)(6) leksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Notes from our call
Importance: High

Attached are notes and action items (also cc'd below), as well as the concept note which I've expanded with more names of orgs to add:

Towards a Coalition to Protect Pandemic Preparedness Research

Notes from call 2/1/23
Rich Roberts, Peter Hotez, Jerry Keusch, David Morens, (b)(6) Peter Daszak, Aleksei Chmura

Action items:

Rich will speak with:

(b)(6) to sound him out re. this issue

Holden Thorpe to find out the best way to engage AAAS (Sudip Parikh CEO)
NAS: Rich will be in DC in March talking with Marcia McNutt, Nobel Foundation & NAS – will see if Nobel Foundation will endorse this effort if NAS supports it

Jerry Keusch will reach out to:

ASM – Stephano Bertuzzi

David Morens will reach out to Tony Fauci to ask advice on how we should progress

Peter Hotez will talk with:

Head of OSTP (Peter will speak with them in March)
ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Peter Daszak will contact as many of the others as possible, writing on behalf of all of us, so as to avoid concerns that people might have re EcoHealth being in the line of fire.

Next steps

each of us will reach out to different contacts
re-convene by conference call in 3 weeks or so (Peter D. will set up), around Feb 22nd.
In-person meeting at EHA NYC afternoon of April 27th.

Summary of discussion:

- What could the goals of the coalition be, and what should they not be
  - Overall goal to have a 'coalition of the willing' form, organized by an independent group (hopefully AAAS, or similar level) to defend pandemic prevention research that is under attack
- How should we reach out to build a coalition?
  - Making contact with key people from each of the above, trying to set up a conference call, convened by a leading independent group (e.g. AAAS) where multiple contacts come together and the discussion is led by the independent group.
- Who should we try to engage: Academies, academic societies, pro-science pressure groups, senior figures in the field, funders, and governmental leaders. Initial list:
  - AAAS
  - AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition
  - American Public Health Association (Georges Benjamin)
  - American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (Dan Bausch, Karen Goraleski, Kent Kester)
  - Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities
  - Georgia Global Health Alliance
  - Bay Area Global Health Alliance
  - Consortium of Universities for Global Health
  - COVID Collaborative
  - Global Health Council
  - Global Health Technologies Coalition
  - Infectious Diseases Society of America Carlos del Rio (Jerry will reach out)
  - International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
  - Nobel Laureates Campaigns
  - Pandemic Action Network
  - PATH
  - Research!America – Reach back out – Jerry will
  - Union of Concerned Scientists
  - Washington Global Health Alliance
  - 156 virologists letter
  - NAM
  - NAS
  - NL Campaigns (to be kept informed of progress by Rich)

- CUGH
- The pandemic action coalition
- FASEB
- Global Health technologies coalition
- APLU (KHG has connection)
- Wellcome Trust (Paul Schreier is the interim head).
- Dr. Tony Fauci
- Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes)
- OSTP
- ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Update

Dear all, I spoke with (b)(6) and she's all in. (b)(also suggested adding (b)(6) (Arizona) and (b)(6) (St. Judes) both really good on policy issues, (b)(will give them a heads up, thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Texas A&M University , Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 8:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) >; (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Concept note and Agenda for our discussion today at 1pm Eastern US time

Dear All,

I'm looking forward to our discussion today at 1pm. Attached is a concept note that Jeff Sturchio drafted to frame some ideas around what we might try to do.

I've also attached a rough agenda for us.

Here are the details of the zoom call, and I look forward to speaking with you all later on:

Join Zoom Meeting
(b)(6)

Meeting ID: (b)(6)
Passcode (b)(6)
One tap mobile
(b)(6) US (New York)
(b)(6) US

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Two great articles!

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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iPhone

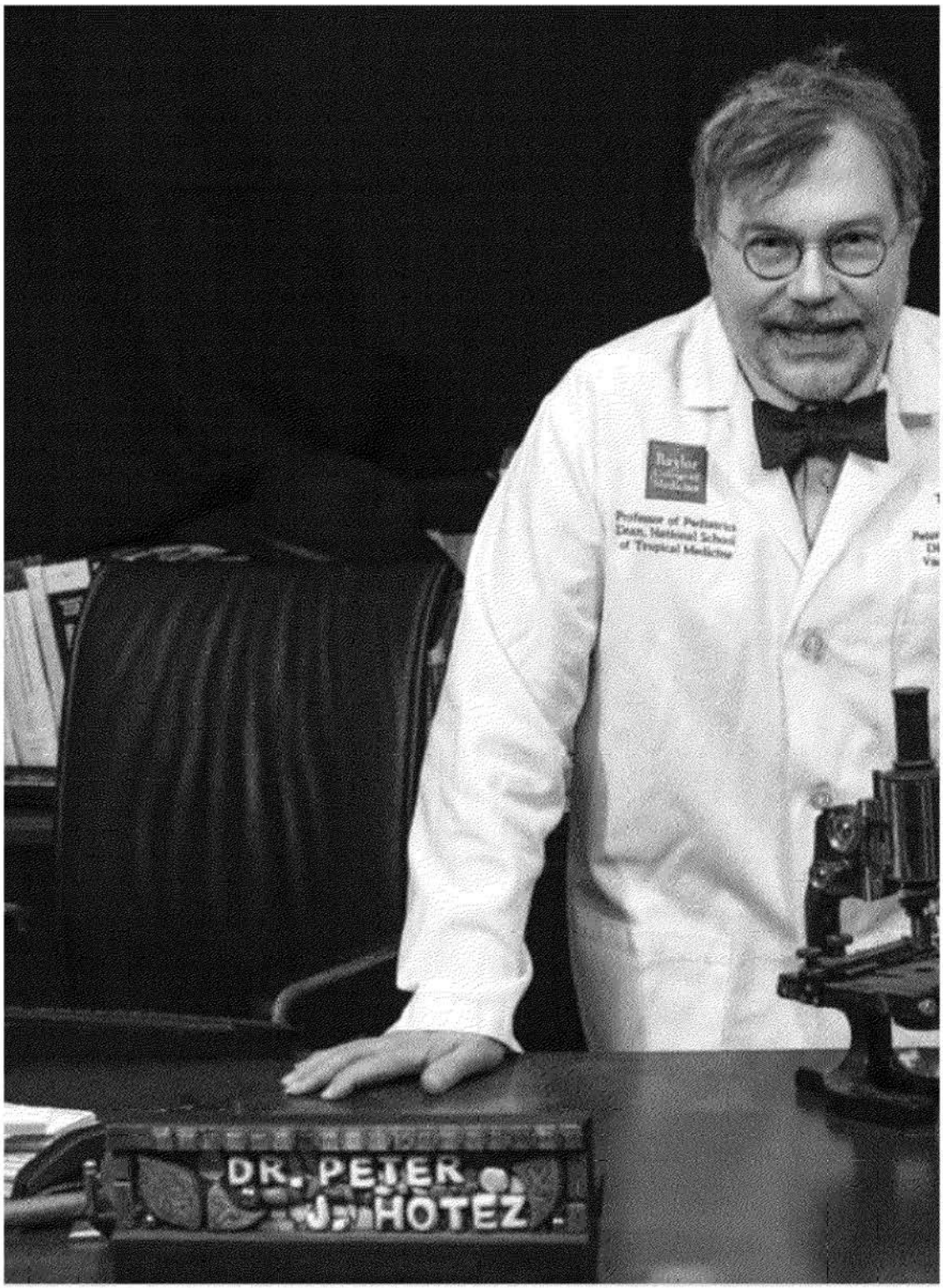
On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while

millions of people were saved by having taken the COVID-19 vaccines, hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.

Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.

I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?

Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad,* and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.

What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.

The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.

The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.

All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.

Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.

Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?

Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.

Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?

Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?

Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.

Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus say the flu or MMR vaccines?

Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee] money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19. It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me " medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and

as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the

Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?"

And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the

information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.

And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens < (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens (b)(6) > wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6) > wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: (b)(6)
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6)
(b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

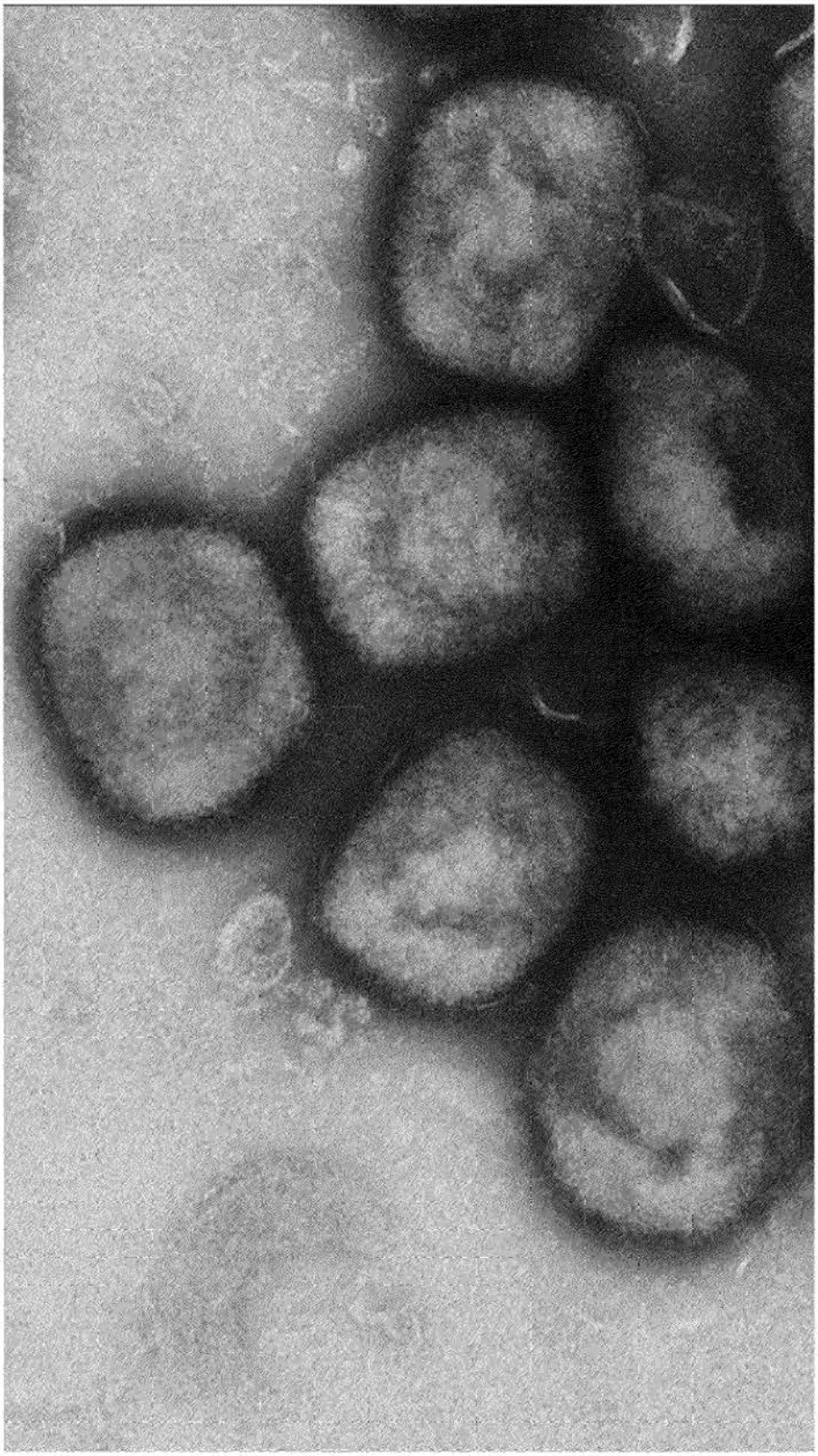
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH

Virologists defend their science as officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.
NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some

kind of lab accident or malicious attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
Sponsor Message
He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route," says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

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"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu

virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.

That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.

"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

Sponsor Message

She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.

If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work."

But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

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Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it."

He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
Facebook
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Email

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, Ashish Jha and Nahid Bhadelia, to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH

Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak < (b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that Scott Weaver would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: (b)(6)
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---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura <
(b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of clinical management of rare hereditary pediatric diseases such as Job disease and CGD. Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position
That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak <
> (b)(6) wrote:
>
> Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!
>
> Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak < (b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; David Morens < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
(b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

(b)(6)

1/24/23, 4:04 PM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6)

iPhone

Date: Tue, 7 Feb 2023 6:47:10 AM -0500
Sent: Tue, 7 Feb 2023 6:46:50 AM -0500
Subject: Re: Notes from our call
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
CC: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Amir doesn't have a science background and likes to generate a lot of heat, but not much light. So he's perfect

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)
Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Feb 6, 2023, at 9:44 PM (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

This is exactly why we need to continue our effort to create a coalition to advocate for protecting the future of scientific research. "Protect Our Future" starts from a questionable premise intended to create fear. We should do some research to find out how they're funding this effort. BTW, I know Amir Attaran – he's a lawyer who loves to take contrarian positions. But I can't believe he's bought into this.

As ever,
Jeff

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 4:39 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Notes from our call

Just saw that Richard Ebright and others have formed a new 501c3 to combat research that will enhance pathogens:

https://biosafetynow.org/team/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 4:58 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Notes from our call

Just to note I have just sent a note to (b)(6) about NAM, to (b)(6) about Research!America, and (b)(6) about ASM. I'll let you know if and what I hear back from them and we can proceed from there.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:26 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Notes from our call
Importance: High

Attached are notes and action items (also cc'd below), as well as the concept note which I've expanded with more names of orgs to add:

Towards a Coalition to Protect Pandemic Preparedness Research

Notes from call 2/1/23
Rich Roberts, Peter Hotez, Jerry Keusch, David Morens, (b)(6), Peter Daszak, Aleksei Chmura

Action items:

Rich will speak with:
- Harold Varmus to sound him out re. this issue
- Holden Thorpe to find out the best way to engage AAAS (Sudip Parikh CEO)
- NAS: Rich will be in DC in March talking with Marcia McNutt, Nobel Foundation &
- NAS – will see if Nobel Foundation will endorse this effort if NAS supports it

Jerry Keusch will reach out to:
- ASM – Stephano Bertuzzi

David Morens will reach out to Tony Fauci to ask advice on how we should progress

Peter Hotez will talk with:
- Head of OSTP (Peter will speak with them in March)
- ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Peter Daszak will contact as many of the others as possible, writing on behalf of all of us, so as to avoid concerns that people might have re EcoHealth being in the line of fire.

Next steps
- each of us will reach out to different contacts
- re-convene by conference call in 3 weeks or so (Peter D. will set up), around Feb 22nd.
- In-person meeting at EHA NYC afternoon of April 27th.

Summary of discussion:

- What could the goals of the coalition be, and what should they not be
  - Overall goal to have a 'coalition of the willing' form, organized by an independent group (hopefully AAAS, or similar level) to defend pandemic prevention research that is under attack
- How should we reach out to build a coalition?
  - Making contact with key people from each of the above, trying to set up a conference call, convened by a leading independent group (e.g. AAAS) where multiple contacts come together and the discussion is led by the independent group.
- Who should we try to engage: Academies, academic societies, pro-science pressure groups, senior figures in the field, funders, and governmental leaders. Initial list:
  - AAAS
  -

- AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition
- American Public Health Association (Georges Benjamin)
- American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (Dan Bausch, Karen Goraleski, Kent Kester)
- Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities
- Georgia Global Health Alliance
- Bay Area Global Health Alliance
- Consortium of Universities for Global Health
- COVID Collaborative
- Global Health Council
- Global Health Technologies Coalition
- Infectious Diseases Society of America Carlos del Rio (Jerry will reach out)
- International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
- Nobel Laureates Campaigns
- Pandemic Action Network
- PATH
- Research!America – Reach back out – Jerry will
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- Washington Global Health Alliance
- 156 virologists letter
- NAM
- NAS
- NL Campaigns (to be kept informed of progress by Rich)
- CUGH
- The pandemic action coalition
- FASEB
- Global Health technologies coalition
- APLU (KHG has connection)
- Wellcome Trust (Paul Schreier is the interim head).
- Dr. Tony Fauci
- Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes)
- OSTP
- ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Update

Dear all, I spoke with Ann Moscona President-Elect at ASV and she's all in. She also suggested adding Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes) both really good on policy issues, she will give them a heads up, thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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(b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 8:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens <(b)(6) Roberts, Ric(b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Concept note and Agenda for our discussion today at 1pm Eastern US time

Dear All,

I'm looking forward to our discussion today at 1pm. Attached is a concept note that Jeff Sturchio drafted to frame some ideas around what we might try to do.

I've also attached a rough agenda for us.

Here are the details of the zoom call, and I look forward to speaking with you all later on:

Join Zoom Meeting
(b)(6)

Meeting ID: (b)(6)
Passcode: (b)(6)
One tap mobile
(b)(6) US (New York)
(b)(6) US

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Ric (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Two great articles!

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Media Inquiries:

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iPhone

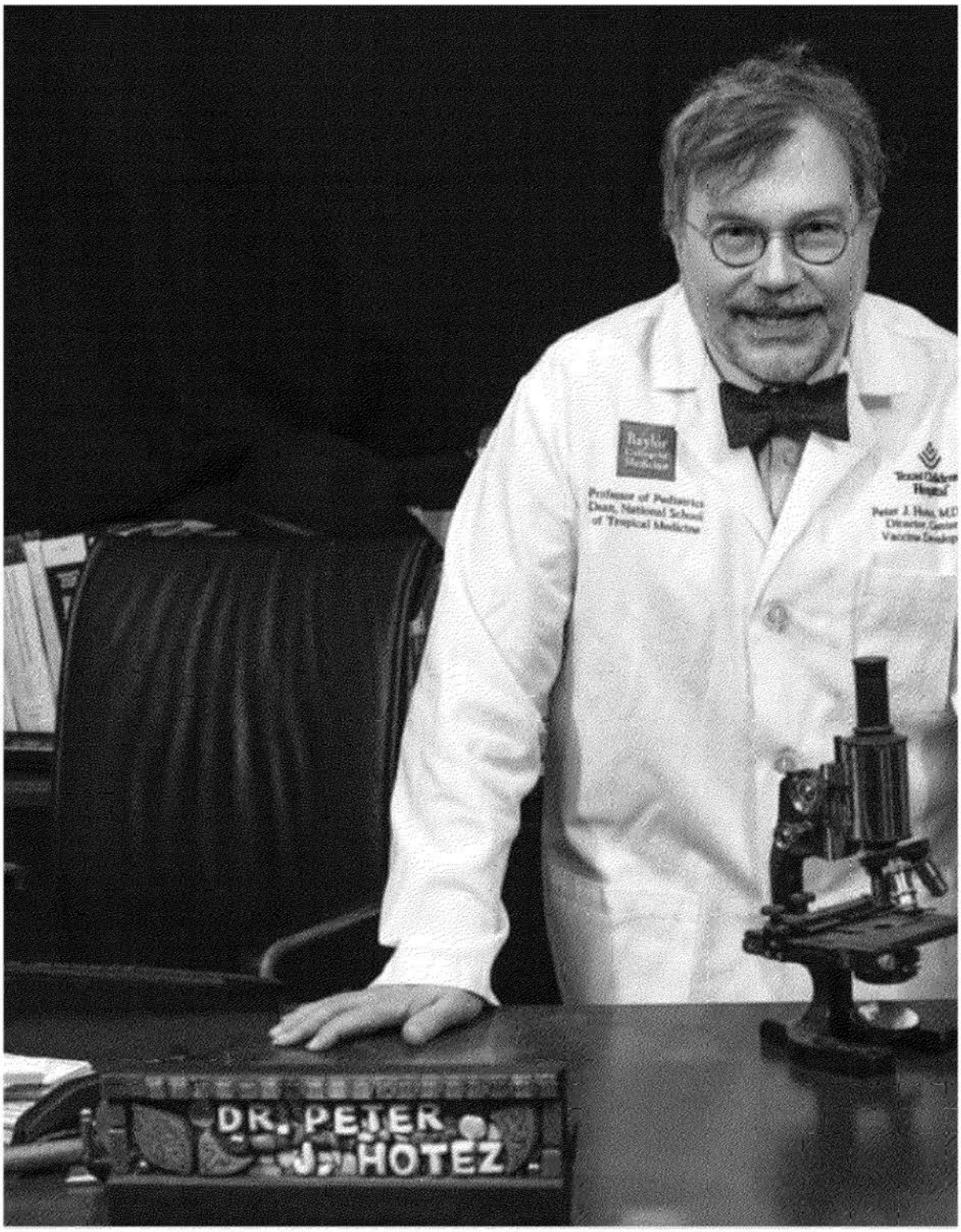
On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak [(b)(6)] wrote:

First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the

COVID-19 vaccines, hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.
Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.
In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.
I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?
Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad,* and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.
What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.
The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.
The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.
All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the

partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.

Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.

Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?

Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.

Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?

Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?

Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.

Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus

say the flu or MMR vaccines?

Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee] money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden

administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience

misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?"

And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.

And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) usch, Gerald T < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

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(b)(6) Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Moren (b)(6) wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) rote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) tez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Moren (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!

Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

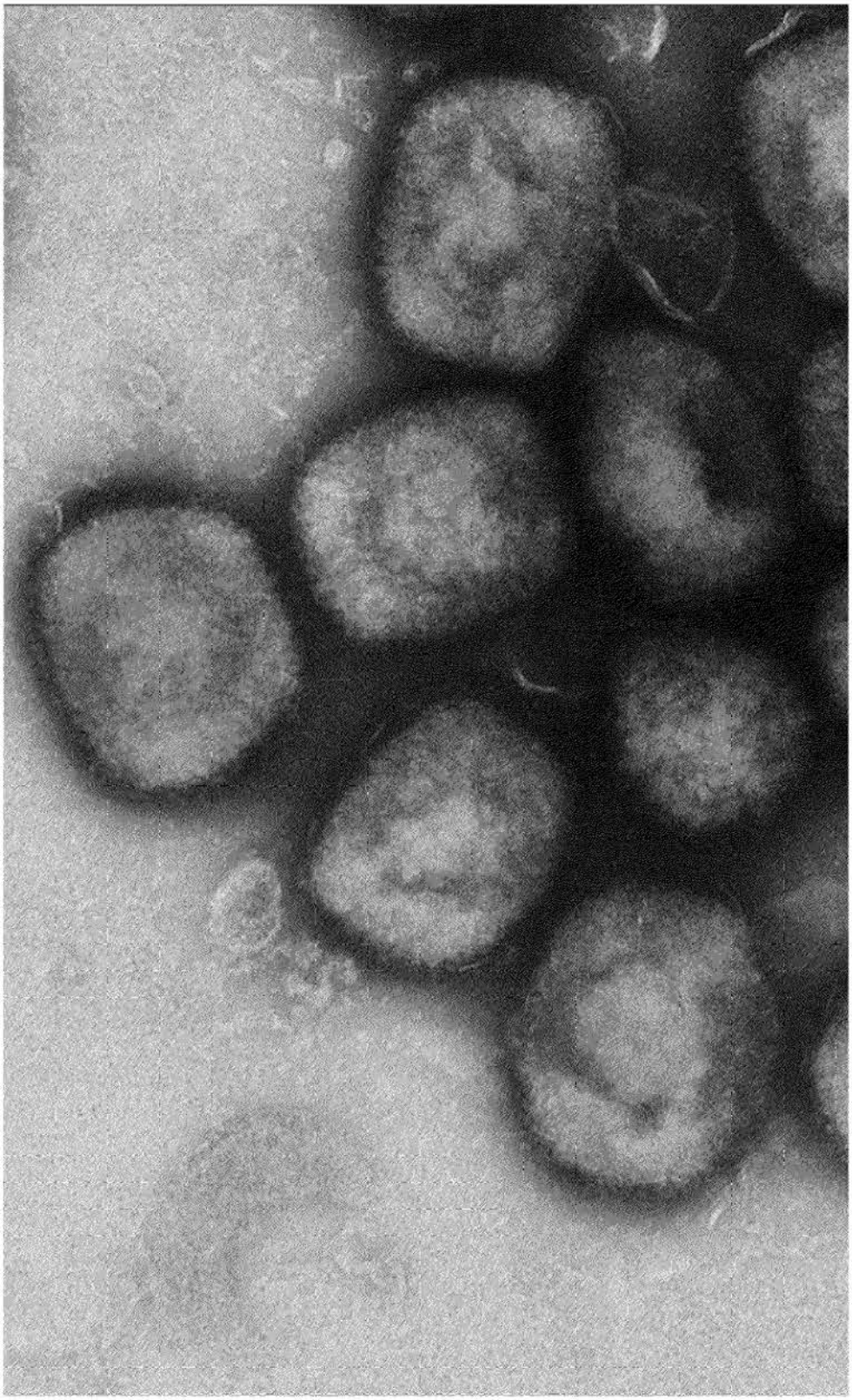
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH

Virologists defend their science as officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.
NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident

or malicious attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
Sponsor Message
He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route," says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

Sponsor Message
"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.

That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.

"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

Sponsor Message

She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.

If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work."

But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

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Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it." He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
Facebook
Twitter
Flipboard
Email

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6), David Morens < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, Ashish Jha and Nahid Bhadelia, to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6) >; (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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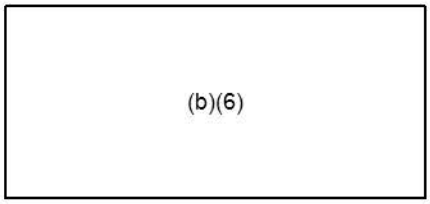
Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:



iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that (b)(6) isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), (b)(6) would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that (b)(6) would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er… (b)(6) !

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoIIealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of (b)(6) (b)(6) Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position

That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
wrote:

Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!

Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

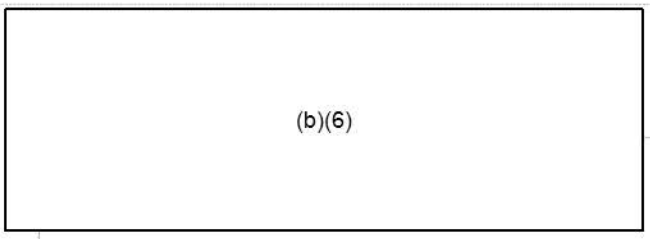
From (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura <
; David Morens <
(b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei
Chmura (b)(6) David Morens <
(b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
(b)(6) Rich Roberts <
(b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter



1/24/23, 4:04 PM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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iPhone

Date: Sat, 20 May 2023 6:40:56 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 20 May 2023 6:40:52 PM -0400
Subject: RE: The new NIH Director nomination
From: "Roberts, Rich" (b)(6)
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
CC: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Jerry:

I will try to find someone at MGH who knows her well.

The gain-of-function issue can wait for now.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
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email (b)(6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2023 4:42 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: The new NIH Director nomination

EXTERNAL SENDER

Hi Rich,

Totally agree with the need to get rid of the slogan for attacks on science that GOF has become. The question is how. That would be something a new advocacy organization that engages the scientific societies to fight back against the attacks on science and scientists could pick up and pursue.

More immediate is the issue of EHA and what Bertagnolli will experience in the hearings. Ordinarily what Harold suggests would be fine, however in the current circumstances Building 1 remains hostile to EHA and too reticent with the republican congressmen. I don't trust them to prep her in a manner that we would consider both rational and reasonable. Maybe the other way to get her attention is to get something in Science (? via and editorial from you and Harold, or prod Holden Thorpe to take a proactive stance) providing the background including the suspensions, terminations, reversals, reimpositions etc in a way that has stopped the important work EHA does for all this time. Jocelyn Kaiser has a nice news report in Science; what is needed now is an editorial that Bertagnolli will see and hopefully ask lots of questions to the legal office at NIH and HHS.

Peter, is there anybody in that office who has been willing to both listen and to hear the message? I don't know how to get more information to that person, that office, without stepping over red lines for influencing (rather than informing) decision making. What is needed is some sort of amicus brief. Is there any precedent for something like that outside the courts?

I'm just verbally mulling over where this issue is and what can be legitimately be done proactively in defense.

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2023 2:13 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) leksei Chmura < (b)(6) >
Cc: Hotez, Peter Ja (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: FW: The new NIH Director nomination

Peter and Jerry:

Got this from Harold. Have you already delivered this material to NIAID?

I will respond to his GOF comment. It would probably be helpful to get another descriptor.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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USA
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email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2023 1:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: The new NIH Director nomination

EXTERNAL SENDER

Rich, yes, I know (b)(6) and we have talked several times about the NCI and NIH jobs. But I don't expect to be involved in her preparation for the hearing on her nomination as NIH Director. That is usually organized by the legislative offices in the NIH Office of the Director and by the legislative team at DHHS. I am sure that she will get briefed about the EHA grant and it is likely that NIAID will be asked to provide background material.

The document you sent has a lot of detailed information that she might want to read but it would best be delivered to her via NIAID; in addition, the source of the document (presumably EHA itself) should be apparent. EHA might simply provide that to NIAID's current leadership and I expect that they've done that already.

Best,

HV

PS Can't we find a better, more restricted way to label experiments that enhance pathogenicity or transmissibility of infectious agents than "gain of function"? Even DURC (dual use research of concern) is better than that. I've been doing GoF research for decades, enhancing cell growth by enhancing the function of proto-oncogenes!

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)

Date: Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 11:25 AM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The new NIH Director nomination

(b)(6)

You probably know (b)(6) and I am wondering if you will be contacting her prior to the Senate Hearing?

I ask because in light of the recent events related to EcoHealth Alliance she is likely to be questioned about their funding and the relationship to the COVID lab-leak hypothesis. I had let you know that their grant had been re-instated (2 1/2 years after we asked for it!), but I don't see that will stop some awkward questions for her.

If you do get the chance to chat you might mention some of the possible responses to questions that are covered in the attached.

If you will not be speaking with her, perhaps you could suggest someone else I might contact about this matter.

Hope all is well with you.

Rich

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Date: Tue, 21 Feb 2023 10:54:04 AM -0500
Sent: Tue, 21 Feb 2023 10:53:10 AM -0500
Subject: MORE RE: Catching up re. Coalition building - time for a call maybe next week?
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >;
CC: David Morens (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Alison Andre (b)(6) >;
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; Coalition concept note Draft v4 2.20.23 ed gtk 2-21-23.docx

I couldn't wait and so prioritized this. My suggested edits and comments are attached.

Jerry

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 9:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Alison Andre (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Catching up re. Coalition building - time for a call maybe next week?

I'll be happy to join a call. I haven't had a chance to review the revised concept note but I will asap.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 8:59 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Alison Andre <
(b)(6)
Subject: Catching up re. Coalition building - time for a call maybe next week?
Importance: High

Dear all – can we set up a call maybe next week to talk about building a Coalition to protect science.

Alison – could you look at availability for the week beginning Feb 27th or March 6th for us all…

I've also attached a revised version of the Coalition concept note. Jeff re-wrote this following our call and we also reached out to a political consultant to get his input on how this would be perceived from both Dems and moderate Republicans. I added a few comments using track changes. Please feel free to add to this also.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Update

Fyi Ann Moscona is in NY, a good person for EHA to connect with. She's a superb virologist mostly on respiratory virus pathogenesis and drug development

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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(b)(6)

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On Feb 1, 2023, at 5:28 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Awesome to hear that!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Update

Dear all, I spoke with Ann Moscona President-Elect at ASV and she's all in. She also suggested adding Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes) both really good on policy issues, she will give them a heads up, thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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From: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 8:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Concept note and Agenda for our discussion today at 1pm Eastern US time

Dear All,

I'm looking forward to our discussion today at 1pm. Attached is a concept note that Jeff Sturchio drafted to frame some ideas around what we might try to do.

I've also attached a rough agenda for us.

Here are the details of the zoom call, and I look forward to speaking with you all later on:

Join Zoom Meeting
(b)(6)

Meeting ID: (b)(6)
Passcode: (b)(6)
One tap mobile
(b)(6) US (New York)
(b)(6) US

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Two great articles!

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's

Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

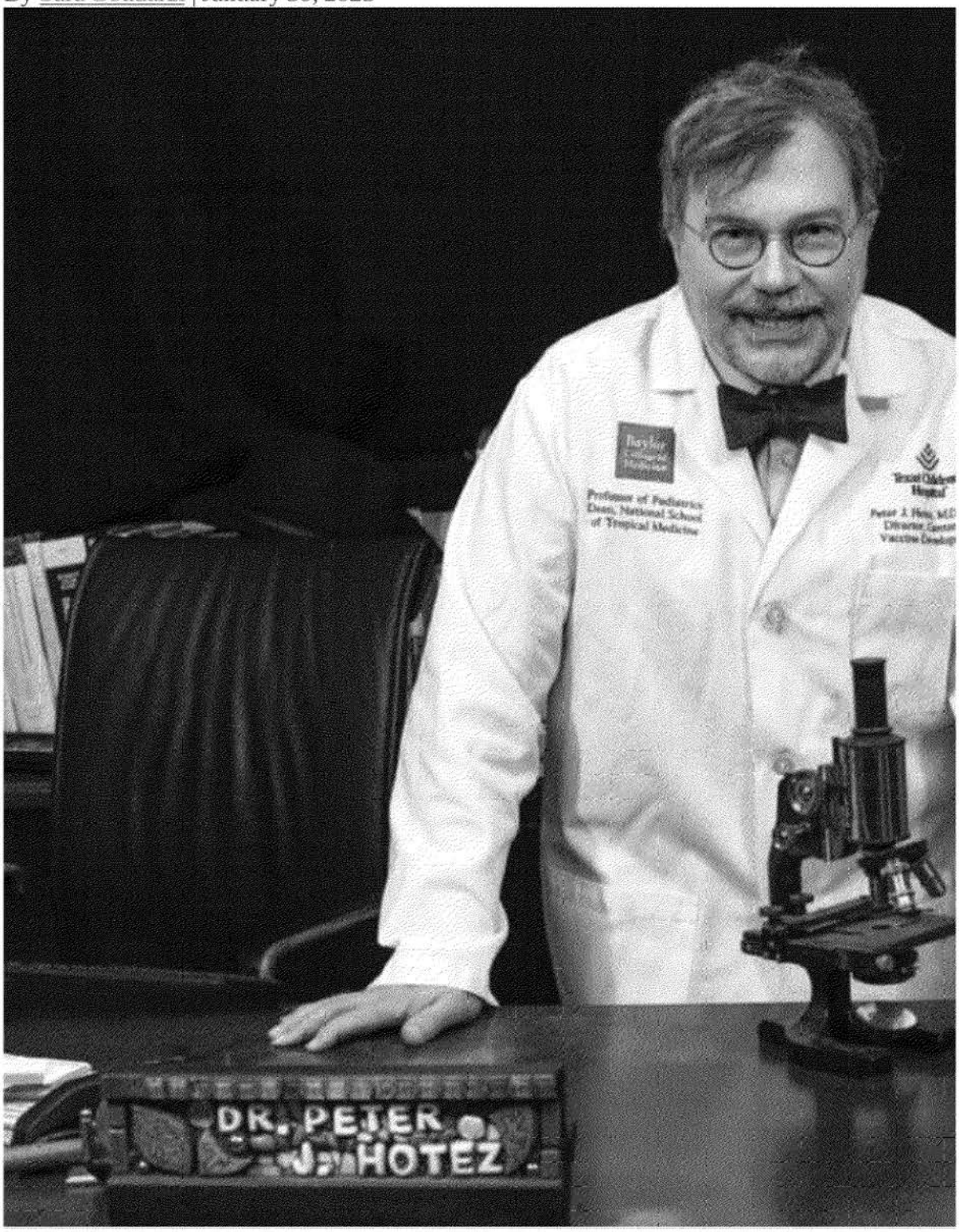
First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression

on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site.

Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the COVID-19 vaccines, hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.

Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.

I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?

Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad*, and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.

What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.

The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.

The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far

right think tanks.

All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.

Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.

Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?

Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.

Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?

Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?

Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.

Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus say the flu or MMR vaccines?

Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee] money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent

anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine

ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?"

And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it,

because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.

And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) ; (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens <(b)(6)> wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay <(b)(6)> wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)

Douglas.SorianoOsejo@bcm.edu | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
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USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!

Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

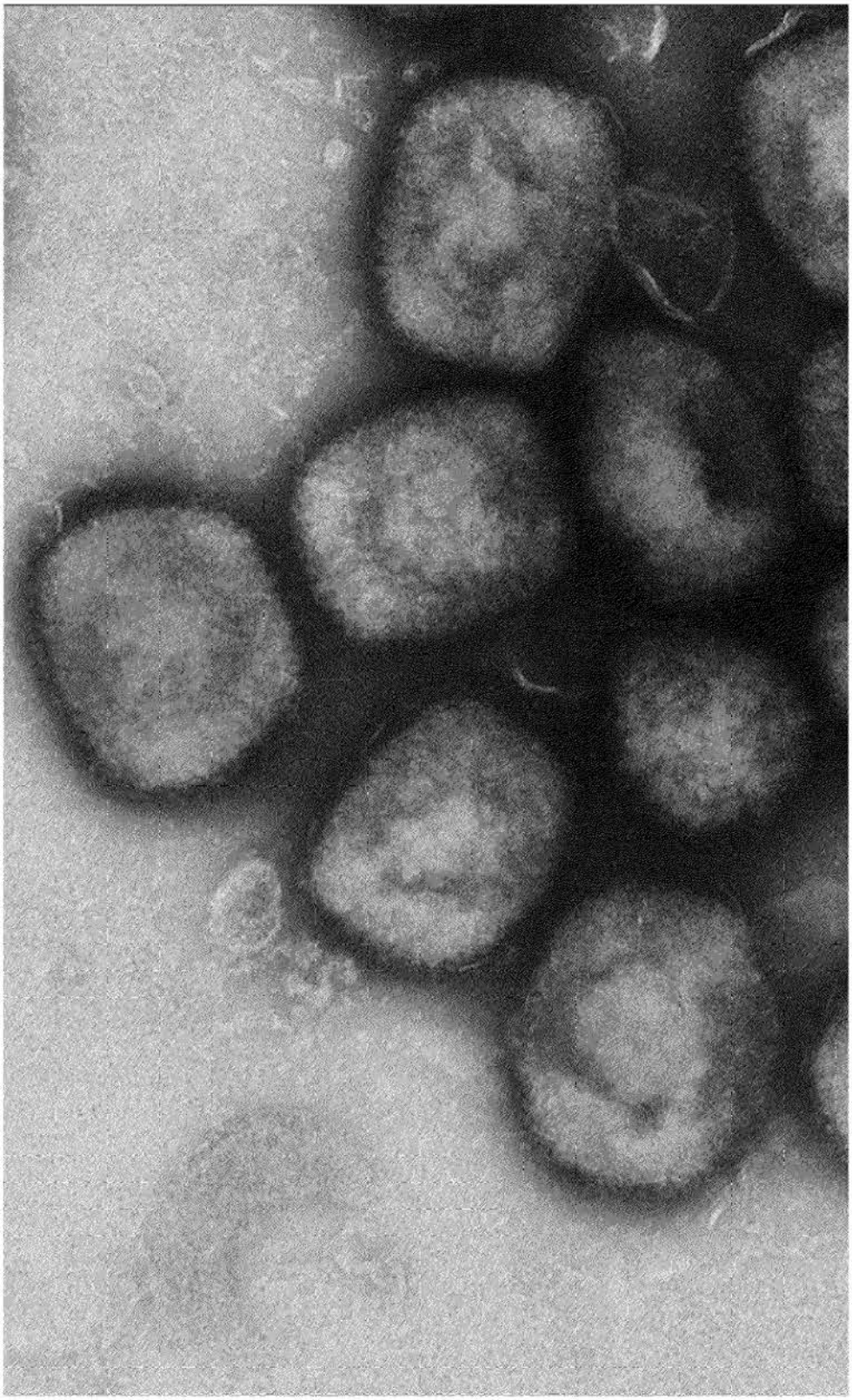
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH

Virologists defend their science as officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.
NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident

or malicious attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
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He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route," says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

Sponsor Message
"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.

That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.

"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

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She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.

If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work."

But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

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Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it." He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
Facebook
Twitter
Flipboard
Email

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team (b)(6) an (b)(6), to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) >; (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

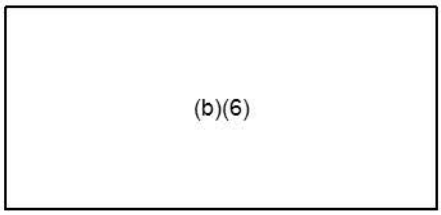
E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:



iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T <(b)(6)> wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)
Cc: David Morens <(b)(6)
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6)
Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University , Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that (b)(6) r would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
(b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Gerald Keusch (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of clinical management of rare hereditary pediatric diseases such as Job disease and CGD. Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position

That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
> wrote:

Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!

Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) ,Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; David Morens < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerdFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura <
David Morens <
(b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) leksei
Chmura (b)(6) ; David Morens <
(b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
(b)(6) ich Roberts <
(b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

(b)(6)

1/24/23, 4:04 PM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

Date: Tue, 1 Mar 2022 6:21:14 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 1 Mar 2022 6:20:36 PM -0500
Subject: Re: request from WSJ
From: "McKay, Betsy" <betsy.mckay@wsj.com>
To: David Morens (b)(6)

Babi Yar Holocaust memorial:

https://www.npr.org/2022/03/01/1083733323/russia- bombards-a-kyiv-tv-tower-and-the-babyn-yar-holocaust-memorial-site

On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 4:19 PM David Morens (b)(6) > wrote:
new thought: i could speak to you now before my 530 gets here. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Mar 1, 2022, at 16:06, David Morens (b)(6) > wrote:
>
> Betsy, if you can play it by ear, my meeting is aiming for 530 but not certain as she has to drive a long way to get here. I have asked her to guesstimate when and how long, so that i could call you either before or after. Or tomorrow works too. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Mar 1, 2022, at 15:26, McKay, Betsy <betsy.mckay@wsj.com > wrote:
> >
> > After your 5:30 meeting is fine with me, if it's convenient for you. I'm at (b)(6) If tomorrow morning would be easier for you that works for me too!
> >
> > Betsy
> >
> > On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 3:08 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6) wrote:
> >
> > > Betsy, if not too late, I can call after my 530 meeting, although not sure how long that will last. If that isn't best I should be free tomorrow most of the day except 11 to about 2. d
> > >
> > > On 3/1/2022 11:56 AM, McKay, Betsy wrote:
> > >
> > > > Great - thank you! I will wait to hear from you.
> > > > Just fyi, the only times that I cannot talk are Wednesday from 6 p.m. on, and Thursday 4:30-

5:30 p.m. Any other time in the next several days works!

Best,
Betsy

On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 11:24 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <
(b)(6) wrote:

> Betsy, let me see how things go. I have a 530 meeting but not sure when that will be over. I should have multiple times Wed and Thu. d
>
> On 3/1/2022 10:31 AM, McKay, Betsy wrote:
>
> > Thank you, and I understand. I am flexible on timing. Off of workday time is fine - what works for you? I could speak tonight, possibly Thursday or Friday evening, or over the weekend.
> >
> > Best,
> > Betsy
> >
> > On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 10:26 AM David Morens (b)(6) wrote:
> >
> > > Betsy, glad to do it IF it's on background and no clues that anything comes from me. This is because some of us, including me and especially my boss Tony Fauci, are getting pilloried with death threats, and as govt employees we need to keep our heads down and not raise controversy. Best for me to do it off of workday time.
> > >
> > > What's your time table?
> > >
> > > david
> > > David M. Morens, MD
> > > (b)(6)
> > > (b)(6) (work)
> > > (b)(6) (cell)
> > >
> > > **IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address**
> > >
> > > **IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address**
> > >
> > > On Tue, Mar 1, 2022 at 10:10 AM McKay, Betsy <

betsy.mckay@wsj.com > wrote:

> Hi David - I am a reporter for The Wall Street Journal who writes about public health. I am reaching out to see if you would have a few moments to chat today or tomorrow (or the end of the week) on background about EcoHealth? I could use your perspective, and advice.
> Also just wanted to say I enjoyed your NEJM Perspective a few weeks back on universal coronavirus vaccines. I wrote a story last fall about the research underway for such vaccines, and it struck me as a good example of why it's necessary to study coronaviruses that don't currently infect humans.
> Thank you, and I look forward to hearing from you.
>
> Best,
> Betsy
>
> --
>
> Betsy McKay
> SENIOR WRITER
>
> O: (b)(6)
> M: (b)(6)
> E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
> **T**: @betswrites

--

Betsy McKay
SENIOR WRITER

O: (b)(6)
M: (b)(6)
E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
T: @betswrites

--
David M Morens (b)(6)
(b)(6)

--

Betsy McKay
SENIOR WRITER

O: (b)(6)
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E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
T: @betswrites

--
David M Morens (b)(6)
--

Betsy McKay
SENIOR WRITER

O: (b)(6)
M: (b)(6)
E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
T: @betswrites

--

Betsy McKay
SENIOR WRITER

O: (b)(6)
M: (b)(6)
E: betsy.mckay@wsj.com
T: @betswrites

Date: Tue, 7 May 2024 2:25:14 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 7 May 2024 2:24:50 PM -0400
Subject: Re: More upsetting news for us at EcoHealth Alliance
From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)

The only person i have access to these days is Paul Friedrichs the White House pandemic coordinator. I'm wondering maybe you should contact Chuck Schumer?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On May 7, 2024, at 1:22 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Yes – it would need to be from high up in USDA to say that 'hold on, these guys aren't debarred, and this is a political action, so please carry on the process of funding them'

The specific unit in USDA that's in charge of the funding process is NIFA (https://www.nifa.usda.gov/) which is the unit that oversees USDA research grants.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2024 2:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) ; Keith Martin - (b)(6) David Morens
Subject: Re: More upsetting news for us at EcoHealth Alliance

This is truly awful Peter, I'm so sorry. If there was to be an effective intervention who would do that? Would it be the White House with the Agrigulture Secretary?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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iPhone

On May 7, 2024, at 10:25 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Just heard today that a 5 year $2.5 million award to analyze disease dynamics in wildlife farms in Southeast Asia we were in the process of finalizing with USDA via the NSF/NIH Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases program is now "impossible" for them to fund. We received a very high score on review, were told it was highly competitive, received notice from USDA that it was 'recommended for funding', and over the past few weeks met repeatedly with the program staff at USDA to finalize all the forms. They were communicating positively with us requesting further paper work as recently as last week, now suddenly we've been told the following:

"Good morning. I must bring you some unfortunate news. Due to unforeseen circumstances, it has become impossible for USDA NIFA to provide support for the project that we discussed. I have had to retract my recommendation. I apologize for the inconvenience this will have caused you."

We're trying to set up calls to find out more information, but it's well known that you don't have funding from an agency until the notice of award and that they can pull out for reasons like budget shortfalls etc. I doubt there's anything we can do. This is similar to an issue we had last year with an joint-PI NIH grant to Colorado State University with us having a substantial role and funding. The program officer spoke with the CSU PI and said they should reduce our budget because if we get 'debarred' NIH will lose its budget. We fought back, CSU scientists pushed back, and we got our Notice of Award.

It's just outrageous that the Republicans can de facto de-fund and organization on a whim. We are not debarred, and we're looking into the rules for debarment and this is normally for issues like fraud, criminal convictions related to grant management, tax evasion etc. I strongly doubt that we would be debarred over a late report that we have substantial evidence we tried to submit.

What worries me is that we are now going to have a multi-year impact on our organization, whether or not we are debarred, and whether or not we actually did anything wrong. I'm also devastated at the impact this will have on my reputation (already in tatters at this point) and my career.

Extremely upsetting and disappointing!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:04 PM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) g >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) ; Keith Martin (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

As far as I can tell, this hearing has received zero national attention. No one beyond our small circle is talking about this

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On May 3, 2024, at 1:52 PM, Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) wrote:

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All:

This is just Wenstrup and the Rs spiking the ball after a hearing in which they refused to let Peter answer the questions posed to him. All of the alleged "evidence" of EHA's supposed transgressions is based on

misrepresentation and selective citation of the documentary evidence and false assumptions about the science involved (e.g., since when does a Republican Congresswoman with an MBA and no scientific training get to decide what the definition of gain-of-function research should be?). The only people showing contempt for the American people on Wednesday were the members of Congress and staff who used this hearing as a vehicle to propagate a malicious political narrative that falsely and unfairly blamed Peter Daszak and EHA for research that never happened and outcomes that are chimerical figments of their imagination.

As ever,
Jeff

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 1:12 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

This is the most awful piece I've seen yet - they say:

" The Select Subcommittee will take further steps to address Dr. Daszak's contempt for the American people."

<image001.png>

Hearing Wrap Up: EcoHealth Alliance Should be Criminally Investigated, Formally Debarred - United States House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
oversight.house.gov

I am very worried for my future and the future of EcoHealth alliance right now. At best this will drive continued hate and death threats… at worst…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On May 2, 2024, at 10:00 AM, Roberts, Ricl (b)(6) > wrote:

Excellent article!

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 6:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; (b)(6) (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich < (b)(6) ; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

EXTERNAL SENDER

Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD
@PeterHotez

Important article on yesterday's disgusting Stalinist show trial in the House of Representatives: The politicization of the pandemic continues - great writing as always from @hiltzikm @latimes latimes.com/business/story…

5/2/24, 5:50 AM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Sun, 23 Jul 2023 1:16:33 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Jeff Sachs' comments to Rich
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Attachments: Sachs Lancet Commission Letter from Bill Posey.pdf; Letter Congressman Bill Posey December 10 2020.docx

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Date: Tue, May 24, 2022 at 8:53 AM
Subject: Jeff Sachs' comments to Rich
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >, (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)

Rich reached out to Jeff Sachs to set up a call with him and he sent the response below, which Rich suggested I could share with you all.

I think, unfortunately, you're right Peter that he holds a grudge against me re. the way I pushed back against his efforts to remove me from the Taskforce, which is a shame, and he seems to have re-hashed his memory of what happened in a way that's unfortunate.

However, he also lays out below his rationale for his Op Ed, and again, it's riddled with errors or misconceptions that I've addressed with brief bullets in the body of his email below. It also shows that he's clearly bought into the lab leak theory hook, line and sinker. It's very worrying to see that, but this is the problem with beguiling conspiratorial narratives like these. To counter them, you have to explain complex science, and the convoluted way science is funded and conducted. The simplest, most exciting story often wins out.

Given the animosity in his email, the fact that Jeff's so well-known, and that his op ed calls for a "fair and balanced" investigation into COVID origins, I don't think EcoHealth 'wins' if I'm involved in a rebuttal to the PNAS paper. Others I've spoken with also suggest it would just amplify the attack. However, I would strongly encourage any of you to think about writing some sort of response either in PNAS or another form, and I'd be happy to provide facts and supporting documents for the many, many errors in his piece.

Please read his email below and my responses, I expect the lines of attack he puts forward will be used elsewhere by others, as many of them have already, and all can be easily refuted:

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 21, 2022 9:37 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Your criticisms of the call for an independent investigation?

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich,

Thanks so much for your detailed comments.

Kindly let me share a few thoughts with you.

First, I got to know Daszak, as I invited him to chair a task force of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission. I observed close at hand that he was dishonest and untrustworthy. I had to dismiss him and disband the group that he set up. Many people associated with him also behaved very improperly, hiding their conflicts of interest and in other ways. I know that you defended him and I am absolutely sure that you did so out of the highest motives. Yet I've seen a side of Daszak that is disreputable.

Response: The conflicts of interest are that I worked with the WIV. This was absolutely known to Jeff from the start – it's why he reached out to me in April 2020 after Trump terminated our NIH funding, literally because "we funded the lab in Wuhan". A few weeks into my work with the Lancet Commission that Jeff headed up, he received a letter from a Congressman complaining about my alleged conflicts. Jeff responded to him to explain that my experience working with Wuhan is a benefit to the commission. Both are attached above.

Second, the EHA grant proposals are deeply disturbing. The DARPA- DEFUSE grant proposal raises the highest questions (especially pp. 10-11)

https://www.dropbox.com/s/7ds489l7l28us4t/DARPA%20defuse- proposal%20.pdf?dl=0

Response: This is a rejected proposal from 2018 – the grant was never funded, the work was never done. The hypotheses and experiments proposed on pp 10-11 are based on well-known properties of other virus' proteolytic cleavage sites, and the (correct) idea that SARSr-CoVs might have them.

Why did we have to wait for more than a year to know about this grant proposal – and then only through FOIA? NIH has behaved very badly and continues to do so.

Response: The reason it wasn't made public is because no scientist in their right mind would publicly release an unfunded grant proposal – they represent your best ideas and hard work, and by releasing them, you hand over those ideas to competitors who are vying for the same sources of funding. However, it was in the possession of the US Federal agencies – it was in the files at DoD! Should the intelligence agencies have wanted to see it, they could have done so easily. Jeff's also wrong in that it was not released by FoIA because USG agencies also refuse to release unfunded proposals – they're privileged and confidential. If scientists submit proposals knowing that they might be FoIA'd, they would not submit their best ideas for fear of being scooped by rivals. The DARPA proposal was leaked by someone. Finally Jeff says NIH behaved badly, but this was a DoD proposal.

Why did NIH redact 290 pages here?
https://www.dropbox.com/s/hripmsjk3ovi5fm/nih- foia-request-55058-february-production.pdf?dl=0

Response: Simple. The 290 pages were an attachment to an email that happened to be a draft version of NIAID's COVID-19 Strategic Plan. This was published and widely disseminated later on, but it makes total sense for NIAID to redact a version that's unfinished, so that the public don't get fed other erroneous theories based on some typos or errors in the uncorrected version.

Third, NIH knew full well since February 1, 2020 if not earlier that a lab-leak was not only plausible, but for many leading scientists was odds-on. Yet that was deliberately covered up in the Proximal Origins paper in Nature Medicine, a paper advanced with Francis Collins' early intervention and editing. (The Proximal Origins paper is a remarkably crude whitewashing of the question – claiming that SARS-CoV-2 was "irrefutably" not from a known SARS-CoV backbone -- citing a 2014 (!!!) paper (see footnote 20, which gives away the game).

Response: It's just simply not true (and never has been) that many leading scientists view the lab leak theory as 'odds-on'. Neither was

the theory deliberately covered up – it was debated and put to bed, that's why people changed their opinions from FoIA'd emails wherein they noticed the FCS and suggested it could indicate a lab origin, to the final paper wherein they had spent time debating the veracity of this with colleagues – that's how science should work. Ref. 20 is about how FCS arises in nature in avian flu, following prolonged passage of a mild strain. This plausibly could have happened when a bat-CoV circulated repeatedly in an amplifier host or in people prior to emerging with a full FCS. SARS-CoV circulated for months before emergence in China, so it's more plausible than months of lab passage for a virus that was never in the lab (we had all the sequences of all known bat-CoVs).

Fourth, even Baric has joined the call for an investigation. He has been the relentless champion of the genetic re-engineering of SARS-CoV viruses, and he trained Shi Zhengli. He has claimed that GoF is vital for drug and vaccine development. Yet GoF in a BSL2 laboratory (as in Wuhan) is a mighty risky proposition.

Response: The work in WIV that EHA collaborated on was definitively not gain-of-function. It was reviewed by NIH before we did it and they're the organization of note to do this. Their decision and the rationale has been made public and fits exactly with the published P3CO rules. This has been stated over and over again, but I guess Jeff just somehow disagrees with the authority to decide whether an expt is GoF or not!. In any case, none of the viruses at WIV were anywhere close to SARS-CoV-2, as published by us in Latinne et al. Nature Comms. 2020. Finally, the BSL argument is clearly false. The animal experiments that Jeff is alluding to here were conducted at BSL-3. The in vitro work at BSL-2 is the standard in China, just as it is in the USA for Cedar virus with a Hendra spike protein – something that's BSL4 in Australia. If we work with a lab in China, we cannot impose US law on them. NIH approved that work.

Fifth, I am not much persuaded that the presence of an FCS in some coronaviruses means all that much when: (a) no FCS is known in a sarbecoronavirus; (b) UNC-WIV planned to insert an FCS into a library of so-far undocumented SARS-CoVs; and (3) no single animal in China, in >80,000 tested, has carried SARS-CoV-2.

Response: this has been widely debunked. A) The site where FCS is found in the SARS-CoV-2 spike has mutations in many of the closely related bat-CoVs that show it is 'evolvable' and could easily mutate into a full FCS. B) UNC planned to insert FCS in 2018, but the grant wasn't funded, the work wasn't done. C) the sample of 80,000 animals includes before and after the pandemic, zoo animals, animals known refractive to SARSr-CoVs (e.g. salamanders). No group of a single species known to harbor SARSr-CoVs from this sample is of a size large enough to give statistical power to rule out infection.

In short, I believe that we need an independent investigation because:

(1) The virus could have emerged in a BSL2 based on the research promised in the DARPA-DEFUSE grant proposal

Response: yes it could have, but not based on a grant that wasn't funded

(2) NIH knows this very well, but has never admitted it or supported a public review

Response: I don't know how anyone can second guess what NIH knows. However, they have publicly stated that they support continued efforts to identify the origin

(3) We should therefore have a long-overdue transparent stock-taking of what the US organizations (NIH, EHA, UNC, DOD, IC, others) actually know

Response: I think I've told everyone all I 'actually know' about 100 times over. What Jeff Sachs is actually proposing is an invasive witch hunt whereby my private emails and files are published for the right wing press to spend another 2 years canceling out our organization.

(4) The Intelligence Community is itself divided on the issue, which some agencies leaning towards a lab leak. Why do some IC agencies lean towards a lab release?

Response: Not true. Prior to Biden's 90 day intel review, only a few intel agencies expressed an opinion: 2 agencies concluded 'natural' origins were more likely and 1 concluded lab leak more likely. After the review 4 agencies considered 'natural' origins more likely and 1 concluded lab leak more likely. Confidence in conclusion was low throughout, but there was a distinct shift suggesting intelligence supports natural over lab leak.

All best wishes and with very warm regards,

Jeff

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Date:	Thu, 24 Feb 2022 11:28:51 AM -0500
Sent:	Thu, 24 Feb 2022 11:28:37 AM -0500
Subject:	Another attack from Republicans, this time also mentioning Rich Roberts
From:	Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To:	Rich Roberts (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
CC:	Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments:	2.24.22 House Energy & Commerce Letter-to-NIH-Acting-Director-Tabak accusing EHA of fraud etc..pdf

Dear All,

I'm so sorry to darken your doorsteps again with news of more awful attacks from the Republicans. This time it's the House Energy and Commerce Republicans – the same ones who asked for me to be kicked out of the NAM (still not heard from the NAM by the way).

They've now sent a letter to NIH (Tabak) accusing EHA of fraud because we're allegedly double-dipping on funding (USAID and NIH), and not declaring private funding, specifically the anonymous donation that you helped organize Rich. Of course, this was after the NIH terminated our funding, so is utterly irrelevant, but they give the impression that we used the attacks to raise funds. Well, we've lot substantial funding since then, so that's also not true.

Here is the news story on Fox:
https://www.foxnews.com/politics/covid- origins-republicans-pressure-nih-risky-research

The letter to Tabak is attached. It specifically names you Rich, and insinuates that we were busy making money out of this miserable situation.

Here are the facts:

- The research work we conducted in China on coronaviruses was funded by NIH, with support for One Health capacity building and emerging viral risk analysis supported later by USAID.
- NIH and USAID undertook an assessment of any potential overlap in funding, and decided that there was none.
- We reported to each agency about the work we did and acknowledged funding on all scientific papers from this work.
- No non-federal funding was used to support this coronavirus research in China prior to the abrupt termination of our NIH funding on April 24th 2020, after which we had to use used non-federal funding to pay for staff time to publish this information and make it available to the world.
- We remain committed to doing everything we can to continue getting the work we conducted in China prior to COVID-19 out into the public domain, for the benefit of citizens in the USA and globally.

This week alone we were notified about 2 separate FoIAs to USAID for our emails and proposals. We've got daily requests from reporters who are trying to generate negative press. We've got a former disgruntled employee accusing us of being a CIA front on right-wing podcasts, and a barrage of online threats and harassment, many of them from well-known right-leaning social commentators with hundreds of thousands of followers (including Glenn Beck – 2 video podcasts on EHA and Eric Weinstein).

Meanwhile, I'm being quietly sidelined by all the societies, agencies and academies that used to ask me to give talks, join committees etc. The NAM hasn't even let me know whether they're going to 'investigate' me or not, so I'm in limbo there too.

I've had 2 years of this and at this point, I'm really worried about my future in science, our organization's future, my own job, my family and my health.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:03:37 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Attachments: image004.png; image005.jpg; image008.png

David M. Morens, MD

(b)(6)

(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Roberts, Rich** (b)(6)
Date: Fri, Jul 1, 2022 at 10:23 AM
Subject: RE: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6), Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens <
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

You know physicists discovered electrons, protons and neutrons – but they missed the morons.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2022 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Sachs and Relman quoted again today

EXTERNAL SENDER

It's getting crazy again

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)

(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Jul 1, 2022, at 8:37 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

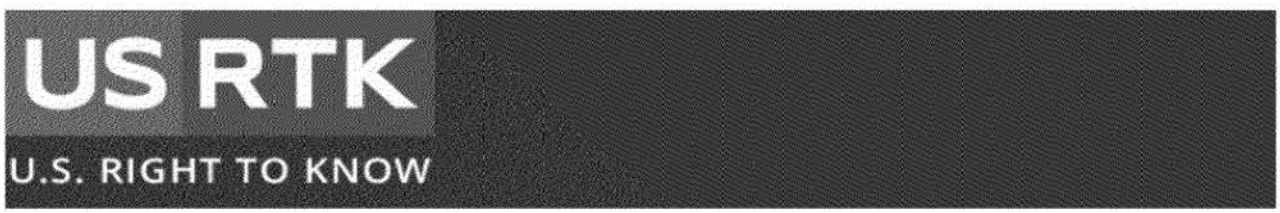
We've been fielding questions all week from a reporter at US Right to Know because they've FoIA'd another batch of emails. Here's an article today claiming that Ian Lipkin should have reported working with EHA as a 'Conflict of Interest' for his Nature Medicine paper with Kristian Andersen et al. back in Feb 2020.

Here's the link: https://usrtk.org/biohazards-blog/anti-lab-leak-virologist-ecohealth-alliance-partner/

You'll be irritated to see quotes from Jeff Sachs and David Relman. Everyone seems happy with the idea that somehow collaborating with EcoHealth Alliance means you have a conflict of interest in this world of fake COVID origin stories.

The article is also utterly disingenuous in pretending it took a FoIA lawsuit to find out that Ian Lipkin collaborated with us. All it would have taken is a 5 second Google Search.

Note also US Right to Know's motto: "Pursuing truth and transparency for public health".



Virologist who tried to discredit the lab leak theory was once a 'partner' to EcoHealth Alliance

PrintEmailShareTweet

Posted on July 1, 2022 by Emily Kopp



Columbia University virologist Ian Lipkin has coauthored several articles with EcoHealth Alliance since 2011. (Photo credit: kris krüg)

A virologist who coauthored a paper marginalizing the lab leak theory did not disclose his ties to the research group at the center of it.

Director of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity Ian Lipkin has often worked with EcoHealth Alliance, a U.S.-based collaborator of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the group confirmed in an email.

EcoHealth Alliance listed Lipkin as a "partner" from 2012 to 2014, an archived version of the group's website shows. Lipkin has coauthored at least ten scientific papers with EcoHealth researchers from 2011 to 2021, EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in an email. These publications include a paper about novel coronaviruses EcoHealth and its partners sampled around the world.

EcoHealth Alliance hunts for novel viruses in wildlife and funds research at the Wuhan Institute

of Virology.

Lipkin did not disclose his partnership with EcoHealth in "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," a highly influential paper that states that COVID-19 arose from nature.

A central premise of that paper: COVID-19 is too dissimilar from viruses commonly employed in experiments to have spilled out of a lab.

"It is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus," the paper states. "The genetic data irrefutably show that SARS-CoV-2 is not derived from any previously used virus backbone."

But Lipkin did not disclose his connection to a nonprofit that uncovers new and novel viruses. Some of those viruses were likely studied at its partnering lab in Wuhan, which housed one of the world's largest collection of bat coronaviruses.

Lipkin did not return several requests for comment.

At 5.7 million views, the *Nature Medicine* article may be one of the most widely read scientific papers in history — though the piece is formally a "correspondence."

David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist and emerging infectious diseases expert for the National Academies, said conflicts of interest are especially troublesome when writing on high profile issues.

"For any major, controversial issue, I believe that all of us have an even greater responsibility to reveal those conflicts upfront—and let others have an opportunity to judge what effect those conflicts might have had," said Relman.

Relman also called into question the logic of the paper's premise. The Wuhan Institute of Virology may have simply been experimenting with unfamiliar viruses. The disappearance of the lab's coronavirus sequence database in 2019 and the lab's history of gain-of-function experiments also weaken the claims of Lipkin and his coauthors, Relman said.

"The Proximal Origins paper is flawed in its assumptions, logic and the soundness of its conclusions. I was very surprised that it passed review at *Nature Medicin*e," he said.

Columbia University Center for Sustainable Development Director Jeffrey Sachs — chair of The Lancet COVID-19 Commission — said the citation the authors used to prop up the paper's premise deserves more scrutiny.

"The Proximal Origins paper has no credibility," Sachs wrote in an email. "The paper's central claim — that SARS-CoV-2 is not related to viruses previously reported in laboratory research — offers as proof a footnote to a 2014 paper!"

"It ludicrously claims to debunk a 2019 lab emergence using a 2014 paper," he continued. "The paper offers no real evidence whatsoever against the possible lab origin of the virus, even though it claimed to do so."

Lipkin himself has since acknowledged the possibility that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was experimenting with unknown viruses, contradicting the popular paper he coauthored.

"If they've got hundreds of bat samples that are coming in, and some of them aren't characterized, how would they know whether this virus was or wasn't in this lab? They wouldn't," Lipkin said in an interview with the Washington Post last year.

But Lipkin has not disclosed his work with EcoHealth to reporters.

Nature Medicine, the journal that published the paper, defines a "competing interest" requiring disclosure as including "personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals" — paid or unpaid. A spokesperson for parent company Springer Nature did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

Lipkin's connection to a group at the center of lab leak suspicions is the latest revelation to cast doubt on the correspondence.

Significant questions remain. It's still unclear how the authors dispelled their own private concerns that the virus had been engineered within a couple of days.

For example, Lipkin privately voiced concerns to his coauthors about a "nightmare of circumstantial evidence" pointing to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Vanity Fair reported.

It's also unknown to what extent leaders of the National Institutes of Health, which funded the EcoHealth Alliance, may have shaped the paper.

Grant reports that led a reporter to the defunct link showing Lipkin's partnership with EcoHealth Alliance were obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Biohazards, Biohazards Blog Anthony Fauci, David Relman, EcoHealth Alliance, Ian Lipkin, Jeff Sachs, Kristian Andersen, Peter Daszak, proximal origin, Robert Garry, The Lancet's COVID Commission, Virologist, Wuhan Institute of Virology

0

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

What a j

Date: Tue, 26 Apr 2022 8:18:40 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 26 Apr 2022 8:18:28 PM -0400
Subject: My letter to NAM today: FW: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >;
CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)

Dear all,

Please have a look at the email below that I just sent to Victor Dzau, Elena Fuentes-Afflick and Kim Se of NAM. Given that NAM's already spoken with reporters, I don't feel any breach of confidence sharing this with you.

I doubt it will sway them, but I believe they're making a huge mistake to fall for this political aggression, which is carefully designed to win over the public with a juicy narrative of deceit and corruption, and to play on the weaknesses of our institutions like NAM. It's tragic actually.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:14 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations
Importance: High

Dear (b)(6)

I was very concerned to have received three separate press inquiries today regarding a story in *Fox News* (https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house- republicans-ecohealth-alliance-concealed-data). I am not planning to respond to these questions.

As you can see in the *Fox News* article, yet another partisan political letter has been made public with unsubstantiated and clearly politically motivated allegations against our organization and myself. In the article,

an aide to Representative McMorris Rodgers states that "*After receiving our letter, NAM notified us they had opened an internal review of Daszak's behavior, per our request…We believe this letter about EcoHealth's potential false statements and fraud is relevant to the ongoing investigation the NAM is conducting into Peter Daszak, so we have sent NAM a copy of this letter as well.*"

In your letters to me, and by phone, you reassured me repeatedly that the process of deciding whether to investigate these allegations was confidential on the NAM side, and you urged me to also treat correspondence with NAM on this issue as confidential, which I have. However, it appears that this is not the case, in that NAM has informed the Republican staff of intent to review my 'behavior' and that this has now been made public, as I indicated could happen in my letter to you last week, April 22, 2022.

It seems rather evident that the letters you have received are part of an ongoing and systematic political campaign to destroy EcoHealth Alliance's reputation and my own, with the ultimate target of undermining the NIH, Dr. Fauci, and the Biden White House. They are hyper-partisan and disingenuous in their goals, in that the letters and the fact they are simultaneously made public on *Fox News* and *Twitter*, are clearly designed to push a false narrative. EcoHealth Alliance has repeatedly and publicly refuted such allegations in our responses to NIH that have since been made public (e.g. https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus- study-of-bats-in-china-met-nih-grant-requirements-ecohealth-says-11635441406) and in carefully given interviews with the press (e.g. https://www.science.org/content/article/we- ve-done-nothing-wrong-ecohealth-leader-fights-charges-his-research-helped-spark-covid-19 and https://theintercept.com/2022/03/11/covid- nih-ecohealth-peter-daszak-interview/).

Given the developments today, I urge you to reconsider your decision to investigate these allegations, which have nothing to do with my adherence to the rules of conduct of NAM members, and to respond to the Republican accusers to state that they do not rise to the level whereby an investigation is warranted. I believe this is justified by the one-sided political nature of the attacks, the lack of prima facie evidence for the allegations, and the fact that your communications have already been made public in defiance of the confidentiality of the matter that NAM and EcoHealth Alliance have maintained. I'm very concerned that this public witch hunt will be damaging not just for myself and our organization, which has consistently produced cutting edge research on emerging diseases that has been fundamental to a series of NAM publications, but that it will also be damaging to NAM and the Academies in general. If you do not stand up to these politicized attacks at this point, they will surely continue and drag in other members of the Academies who have been publicly criticized and accused by the same politicians for the last two years, and who are being continually attacked by various fringe groups espousing conjectural hypotheses about the origins of SARS-CoV-2, in spite of the increasing scientific evidence supporting the spillover from bats through an intermediary host to humans.

This active political interference with stewardship of science, the integrity of science, and the pursuit of knowledge by scientists, goes well beyond EcoHealth Alliance and threatens the integrity of the entire U.S. scientific enterprise. It is no different except in volume than the incontrovertible political interference by Donald Trump in the scientific enterprise at NIH in April 2020, which prompted you to issue a public statement about the separation of politics from science in response. Your words and those of Marcia McNutt ring even more true at this point: "*Any efforts to discredit the best science and scientists threaten the health and welfare of us all*" (https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/2020/09/nas- and-nam-presidents-alarmed-by-political-interference-in-science-amid-pandemic). EcoHealth Alliance, myself, the NIH, Tony Fauci, NAM and you are in the cross-hairs now because NIH failed to protect science and scientists from Trump's overtly political, and sadly successful, effort to close down research that was politically inconvenient. I worry that this is just the beginning of the goal of this anti-science agenda, and for that reason it demands brave, bold, and decisive action.

Yours sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: (b)(6)
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date:	Thu, 24 Feb 2022 5:53:24 PM -0500
Sent:	Thu, 24 Feb 2022 5:53:22 PM -0500
Subject:	RE: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists
From:	"Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >;
CC:	Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;

I would not like that, Peter H. While I understand what you are thinking I do not want to help the Commission improve the document that Sachs is preparing because the disbanded task force is writing a perspectives for PNAS and we will be talking about these developments in our piece. I don't want Sachs to improve his report, rush to publish, and beat us to the punch once again (that is he fired us before we could quit, because we were trying hard to negotiate an acceptable solution first with Sachs and then with Horton).
Selfish for the now Independent Task Force? Yes. Rational? Yes. Responsible, maybe not, if the interest of better science prevailing in the Commission report is the central issue. I can understand how that would be your concern, but it is not mine.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 4:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

Is it ok if I share this document with Lancet Commission?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Feb 24, 2022, at 4:01 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

I'm glad you'll mention this to Randy. These particular politicians are willing to cast aspersions on anyone's character for political gain.

I'm also glad you're going to decline to sign the letter you attached. It seems Richard Ebright's dream is to have me up on the stand under oath with him doing the questioning. Of course, none of this would get to the bottom of anything, and it would just serve to drive more politics in the way of doing science.

The truth of all of this is that there is no real debate over the origins. A lab leak is a possible scenario, but extremely unlikely based on the zero evidence put forward by anyone. On the other hand, we now have 11 peer-reviewed or under-review papers (and counting) that point towards the natural origins. I've listed them out in the attached doc, as well as the lab leak papers I could find (all of which are opinion pieces of non-peer-reviewed).

The real debate is purely political - Republicans using this as a way to target NIH and just regurgitating fact-free innuendo-filled conspiracies with EcoHealth's work at the center. Richard Ebright, I hear, is working with Rand Paul and others to feed them these half-baked ideas and make them sound science-y enough to convince the public.

I can hear the villagers sharpening their pitchforks....

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: (b)(6)
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: FW: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

Peter:

Sorry to hear about the latest attacks. Please don't let them get you down. Just recognize the loonies who send them for what they are.

I'll let Randy Schekman know he was included too. It is sad to see the lengths that people will go to for the sake of political points. Witness the latest nonsense in Ukraine.

I attach a document I just received from Ebright. Needless to say I won't be signing, but I hope to convince some others not to also.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 1:15 PM
To: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

Subject: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

EXTERNAL SENDER

All--I am writing to you as founding members of the Cambridge Working Group,

(b)(6) has prepared an open letter entitled "United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and science policy specialists" (see attached).

If you would like to sign the letter, please reply to (b)(6) at (b)(6) or to me at (b)(6) with your name and current affiliation.

Thank you in advance.

RHE

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Date: Fri, 20 May 2022 3:50:30 PM -0400

Sent: Fri, 20 May 2022 3:48:09 PM -0400

Subject: Re: HOTEZ PARAGRAPHS Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)

To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >;

CC: (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg; Outlook-k05ij05q.png; HOTEZ PARAGRAPH FOR PNAS.docx

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OK I drafted a couple of paragraphs for you to use or not or modify, ATTACHED

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
Phone (b)(6)
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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:24 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >;
Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

I should add that the former Lancet Taskforce (Jerry and I are on it) have a "perspectives" paper to submit Monday for PNAS that reviews all the theories on origins and proposes One Health strategies to deal with future pandemic threats, so we don't need to go too far into the arguments for a natural origin – it will be dealt with in detail in that paper.

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

Sounds good, let me know if and how you would like me to contribute, i could write a section that makes the case for natural origins as the most plausible scenario?

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Health Policy Scholar
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iPhone

On May 20, 2022, at 11:45 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Note that I should have said on the last email – I'm not necessarily saying we *should* rebut the paper, nor am I expecting that all of you would want to be involved. I respect your views, your moral support, and your wishes to remain above the fray – that has huge benefits also!

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:40 PM
To: (b)(6); 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) 'David Morens' (b)(6) 'Keusch, Gerald T' < (b)(6) 'Aleksei Chmura' (b)(6)
Subject: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets
Importance: High

FYI, Rich will be speaking with Jeff and I sent him some bullets on general reasons why the call for an investigation into US scientists is flawed, inappropriate and based on easily debunked narratives and simple mistakes.

I think we could draft a polite and decent rebuttal based on these. The general thrust I think should be "Why investigating US scientists is the wrong way to identify COVID-19 origins, and prevent future pandemics". This would take the moral high ground in the same way that Peter Hotez has been doing with anti-vaxx sentiment, by talking about how damaging these narratives are on science, and scientists, and how they ultimately undermine public health.

Here is the summary I sent to Rich. I'll continue to read the paper and identify factual inaccuracies we can correct, but maybe one of you (e.g. Peter) could build on this for a rebuttal draft? I have beaucoup references for each point I make, including peer-reviewed science that demolishes the FCS hypothesis, media articles where we refute some of the claims about our openness and data sharing, and reports that link to articles and emails that have been made public via FoIA.

Bullets for a draft rebuttal:
I think we could start on a conciliatory note that most reasonable scientists who believe the lab leak is 'extremely unlikely' (words of the WHO report I was involved with) also believe it is possible. Therefore, calls for further investigations into the origin (including a potential lab leak) are warranted and valid, and come from a basis of scientific inquiry that is beneficial. If a lab leak did happen, we should know, and it would benefit our defenses against future pandemics. However, we should then rapidly pivot to the main issue: that the call for an independent investigation in to US scientists and organizations that the article lays out, and many of the specific statements in it are based on flawed narratives, misunderstandings of the balance of the evidence, mistakes in interpreting the facts behind the work, and simple errors in understanding how science is conducted. Here are some key issues we could raise:

- Understanding COVID origins will require cooperation with China, not investigation of US scientists. A brief look at the history of recent emerging diseases shows that it usually takes many years to identify the reservoir hosts, the amplifier hosts, and the pathway to emergence (e.g. SARS – our paper showing bats carry SARSr-CoVs that can bind to human cells was published 12 years after the outbreak). To do this requires access to sample collection, testing and analysis within the country of origin, and cooperation with the government. Thus, investigating either a natural or a lab origin of COVID will absolutely require working with China.
- Why 'investigating US scientists' is already a witch hunt. The opinion piece calls for bipartisan independent

commission that doesn't engage in a 'witch hunt'. However, we are already engaged in a witch hunt. The issue was politicized under Trump, and has led to dozens of letters from Republican members of Congress and the Senate to US scientists demanding documents and testimony, or making accusations about them to the agencies, to the DoJ, White House, and which are inevitably made public without the opportunity for US scientists to respond. Each of the allegations I have seen from Republicans against EHA are easily refuted with documentary evidence, but the volume of them, and their inflammatory nature means that responding to each is either logistically impossible, or simply amplifies these attacks. There have been NO bipartisan requests that I have seen.

- All *relevant* data have already been shared publicly or with the relevant govt. agencies. The article states that "*EHA, UNC, NIH, USAID, and other research partners have failed to disclose their activities to the US scientific community and the US public, instead declaring that they were not involved in any experiments that could have resulted in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2.*" This is simply not true. Each collaborating org has published dozens of papers on this work, in US (not Chinese) journals, uploading data to US (not Chinese) databases like Genbank. All of EHA's papers are available on our website for any member of the public to review, and have been for years. Our staff have given literally hundreds of public lectures on this work. Even after these attacks began, we continued to publish data from our China work, e.g. the 700+ CoV sequences we published and uploaded into Genbank in 2020). Lead scientists from each collaborating organization have shared all unpublished data of relevance (i.e. related to SARSr-CoVs) with the relevant federal agencies including NIH, USAID, DoD, and the intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Sharing of these data has been voluntary, extensive and honorable. This information has not been made public, because it undermines the agencies' ability to conduct their work.
- Demanding release of private emails, files from US scientists does not help build trust in science. Demands on US scientists to release private emails, unpublished data, drafts of reports and other documents that are normally not made public does nothing to elucidate the origins of COVID. Neither does it help build trust in science at a time when our country is so divided along party lines, and where this issue has been so politicized. With social media algorithms demonstrably amplifying negative narratives, the release of private emails and drafts of later-published reports or papers, are easily used to drive and amplify these negative narratives. We have seen this played out already – with every FoIA release of emails, they are cherry-picked for partial-sentence quotes that are then misquoted, misconstrued, and published as part of (usually) right wing hit-pieces that drive the narrative of an elite group of scientists trying to make money by manipulating viruses or vaccines. They are dangerous and lead to people avoiding vaccines. In the case of EcoHealth, the release of private documents, and the narratives around them have also demonstrably been linked to death threats, white powder letters, break-ins, and hacking attempts that we have been suffering repeatedly for the past 2.5 years.
- Inability to prove a negative: We can't prove that China didn't release a virus accidently or by design – that's the nature of scientific hypothesis testing. If US scientists are forced to release emails or files that these do not show any evidence of a lab leak, they will be followed by allegations that other files are being hidden, and therefore more requests for data dumps. For example, if my emails show that China was not working on a SARS-CoV-2 virus with NIH funding, they will be followed by allegations that we used other private funding to do this work (this has already been alleged), and further requests for private emails. Meanwhile, every email, report or unpublished paper I'm forced to turn over is used over and over again by the political forces to attack science – misquoting, using innuendo and assumptions of motives.
- Furin cleavage site hypothesis is already debunked: Theories that the FCS of SARS-CoV-2 indicates lab manipulation have been widely circulated for 2 years and repeatedly debunked by leading virologists. Firstly, there is nothing novel about a wild-type virus having an FCS – they are found in influenza where they enhance virulence, and in other CoVs, including MERS-CoV, and a Rat coronavirus we discovered in China, in wildlife farms, hotels and train stations and published during 2021. There are now peer-reviewed scientific papers demonstrating that bat-CoVs closely related to SARS-CoV-2 have mutations around the site where the FCS in SARS-CoV-2 is found, that are a few mutations away from a true FCS, indicating that this could have easily evolved in nature. These mutations around the polybasic cleavage site are found in many of the viruses closely related to SARS-CoV-2 from SE Asia, and in CoVs from European bats. Other theories about the FCS being incredibly efficient at binding to human cells, or being enhanced easily in a lab, have been refuted in these and other papers.
- Inappropriate legal basis to investigate scientists when no evidence of a lab leak has been proffered: At the moment, it is a fact that there's simply no verifiable evidence whatsoever that a lab leak occurred leading to

COVID-19. We have accusations from Secretary Pompeo that people at WIV were sick from COVID in November 2019, but these are allegedly classified. We have stories about the motivations of Chinese scientists in pulling down a database, not citing papers correctly, or removing genomic data from Genbank, but all of these (and all others) can be easily explained by the normal process of doing science, and each of them has occurred many times before with other labs and other circumstances. Many of us, and many other leading scientists have spent countless hours explaining why the theories around lab leaks do not amount to "evidence of a lab leak". Without this it would be massively inappropriate for federal authorities, including the OIG, the FBI or other agencies to launch official investigations into US scientists or US organizations. That's why they haven't, and that's why the public haven't been informed of any investigations.

In addition to these issues, there are multiple factual inaccuracies in the paper that are extremely important, because some of them are used to provide justification for the lab leak theory. For example, here is an inexhaustive list, just by looking at half of one page of the paper:

- "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the United States and China, *has not been disclosed for independent analysis*." ***This is not true because details of field and laboratory work have been published repeatedly in scientific papers in the last 15 years, in reports to NIH and USAID, and are laid out in proposals that include pages of details on human subjects, animal use, biosafety and select agent use etc. These are all now public.***
- "Much of the work on SARS-like CoVs performed in Wuhan was part of an active and highly collaborative US–China scientific research program funded by the US Government (NIH, *Defense Threat Reduction Agency [DTRA]*, and US Agency for International Development [USAID]), coordinated by researchers at EcoHealth Alliance (EHA), but involving researchers at several other US institutions." ***False - DoD DTRA do not and have not funded work in China through EHA. This is an easily verified issue, and is a mistake that causes damage because conspiracy theorists globally are on the lookout for linkages to DoD, which leads to damaging narratives such as the Ukraine Biolabs conspiracy theories. The way to check this is that DTRA are NEVER cited on any publication resulting from the work in China.***
- "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, *including the full array of viruses collected from the field* and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, *remains unknown*." ***Not true. It is a widely circulated myth that our work involved 'collection of hundreds of viruses from bats'. In fact, there were only 3 isolates of SARSr-CoVs from our work. All of these have been published and some shared with labs in the USA where they were used to test Remdesivir, Molnupiravir, COVID-19 vaccine candidates and monoclonal therapies like ADG20. This work has had a direct benefit to public health and has saved lives of US citizens!***
- "These research proposals make clear that the EHA-WIV-UNC collaboration *was involved in the collection of a large number of so-far undocumented SARS-like viruses* and was engaged in their manipulation within biological safety level (BSL)-2 and BSL-3 laboratory facilities, raising concerns that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker (9)" ***Not true – there were only 3 SARS-related CoVs isolated in China. All the rest are genetic sequences of a short read of the RdRp gene, with a few dozen full genomes. It's documented repeatedly in the scientific papers we published in collaboration with WIV, in mainly US journals, all of which are available publicly on PubMED and on our website. All sequences were uploaded into the US Genbank database and have been freely available for other scientists to peruse and use.***

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 8:13 AM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; 'David Morens' (b)(6) 'Keusch, Gerald T' < (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

I don't think PNAS would retract – Sachs is well-known, and this paper will be cited, so it's good for business.

We could ask them to correct, but I think Peter's idea is a good one – a response that's carefully worded, that corrects the errors, and explains why the general approach of investigating scientists based on no evidence would be flawed and damaging to medical progress.

I'm sending some bullets to Rich this morning and will share them with you as a start to addressing some of the errors.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 7:15 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Moren (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Peter: I think a response along the lines you suggest would be a good idea. Sachs's piece is so egregious it shouldn't be allowed to stand. Perhaps even better would be a sharp letter to the editor(s) of PNAS explaining why a retraction is necessary. As you and Peter D point out, his argument is based on a number of readily refuted erroneous assertions – it's surprising that PNAS would have published it in the first place.

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 7:09 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6); David Moren (b)(6) eusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Potentially we could write a response or a commentary piece in PNAS refuting the nonsense, one that begins with the talking points in my Twitter thread.

There is also suggestion from a Nature article that even SARS 1 exhibited some degree of furin cleavage but that with SARS 2 it accelerated and of course evolved even further with alpha then delta to make it more transmissible.

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-02039-y

I could have added that as well. The point is it's not an all or none phenomenon as the Sachs article suggests. He wrote an awful paper that needs to be retracted.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

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iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 9:13 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

I appreciate that Rich.

I understand his motivations – he believes that all data should be put forward because the pandemic makes this an emergency and unprecedented global concern. However, there is no getting away from the fact that there's simply no evidence whatsoever for a lab leak, so no matter how much data or emails I and other labs are forced to turn over, it will never disprove the negative. We can't prove that China didn't release a virus accidently or by design – that's the nature of scientific hypothesis testing. Meanwhile, every email, report or unpublished paper I'm forced to turn over is used over and over again by the political forces to attack science – misquoting, using innuendo and assumptions of motives. It's a naïve argument from Jeff Sachs at best, and one based on a series of easily refutable errors in black and white, in his paper.

Cheers,

Peter

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 8:34 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Peter:

Thanks. I intend to take this up with Jeff.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
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Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 6:41 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

EXTERNAL SENDER

This might work to see the tweet – it won't take you to Twitter – it's on a webpage now

https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1527398466305105921.html

and here's Jamie Metzl's commentary – says it's a 'critically important new opinion piece'!!

https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1527404374804287495.html

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Roberts, Rich < (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:48 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

Peter:

I don't do Twitter. Can someone send me Peter's piece please?

Thanks

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:41 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) eusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just read it now Peter – it's already getting amplified. Extremely glad you did this.

The response from virologists on the furin cleavage site garbage in his PNAS piece will be pretty damning…it's been discussed, debated and debunked for 2 years now!

Meanwhile, the witch hunt continues…

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) (b)(6) leksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

I just put out a thread on Twitter to point out why Jeff's article does not hold much water even on scientific grounds

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
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Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

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iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 4:27 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

What's really irksome is that this article in PNAS is full of errors and misunderstandings.

I haven't read the whole thing, but just about every paragraph contains an erroneous assumption that could easily be refuted, e.g.:

- "EHA, UNC, NIH, USAID, and other research partners have failed to disclose their activities to the US scientific community and the US public, instead declaring that they were not involved in any experiments that could have resulted in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2." BS – we published dozens of papers on our work (they're on our website!) and sent reports in to NIH each year. We also gave hundreds of public lectures on this and spoke with the intelligence agencies about it.

"The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the United States and China, has not been disclosed for independent analysis." BS – that's what happens when you publish peer-reviewed papers. Maybe Sachs has forgotten how that works!

"Much of the work on SARS-like CoVs performed in Wuhan was part of an active and highly collaborative US–China scientific research program funded by the US Government (NIH, Defense Threat Reduction Agency [DTRA], and US Agency for International Development [USAID]), coordinated by researchers at EcoHealth Alliance (EHA), but involving researchers at several other US institutions." Wrong again – DoD DTRA do not and have not funded work in China, let alone the Wuhan lab.

"The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, including the full array of viruses collected from the field and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, remains unknown." BS – all 'viruses' collected from the field have been published already.

"These research proposals make clear that the EHA-WIV-UNC collaboration was involved in the collection of a large number of so-far undocumented SARS-like viruses and was engaged in their manipulation within biological safety level (BSL)-2 and BSL-3 laboratory facilities, raising concerns that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker (9)" BS – there were only 3 SARS-related CoVs isolated in China. All the rest are simply genetic sequences of a short read of the RdRp gene, with a few dozen full genomes. It's all in the scientific papers that Sachs hasn't bothered to read.

And so on, and so forth.

Honestly, it would take me about a day to go through this paper and rebut every single error and misconception, but who's got time for that!

By the way – all of these questions have been asked repeatedly on Twitter, by journalists, by the FBI and CIA, and by hundreds of people who've spoken with me over the last 2 years. I've answered them all, now I have to do it all again, and again, and again. Problem I see here is that he just doesn't believe me, so the only option is for my laptop to be downloaded in front of a Great Inquisition, led by an eminent person such as…dare I say…Professor Sachs himself.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Ja (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 4:58 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

How could PNAS publish this crap?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 3:54 PM, Roberts, Rich <(b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

As you say more nonsense. My opinion of Sachs is waning rapidly.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Roberts, Rich <
Subject: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Looks like Sachs has been taken down yet another rabbit hole by a scientist at Columbia (Harrison) who doesn't work in the field, and is just plain wrong. It's the old Furin cleavage site hypothesis again, without any new data or evidence. Of course, that's their point – the lack of evidence means we're all hiding information and need to be hung, drawn and quartered.

They've published an opinion piece in PNAS (attached) and there's this article in 'The Intercept'. Ebright is quoted, of course!

https://theintercept.com/2022/05/19/covid- lab-leak-evidence-jeffrey-sachs/

All this will be put straight into the subpoena letters that we've been told by Democrat staffers to expect to arrive in Jan/Feb 2023 when the Republicans take over the house (their words, not mine).

Blue/Bloomberg via Getty Images

JEFFREY SACHS PRESENTS EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE LAB ORIGIN OF COVID-19

An article in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences calls for an independent investigation of information held by U.S.-based institutions that could shed light on the origins of Covid.



Sharon Lerner
May 19 2022, 4:00 p.m.

IN AN ARTICLE published Thursday, economist Jeffrey Sachs called for an independent investigation of information held by U.S.-based institutions that could shed light on the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic. Writing in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Sachs and his co-author, Neil Harrison, a Columbia University professor of molecular pharmacology and therapeutics, said that federal agencies and universities possess evidence that has not been adequately reviewed, including virus databases, biological samples, viral sequences, email communications, and laboratory notebooks. Sachs and Harrison also highlighted a tantalizing scientific detail that may be an indication that SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes Covid-19, originated in a laboratory: a sequence of eight amino acids on a critical part of the virus's spike protein that is identical to an amino acid sequence found in cells that line human airways.

Sachs and Harrison are hardly the first to suggest that SARS-CoV-2 might have been created in a lab. Since its genetic sequence was first published in February 2020, scientists have puzzled over the furin cleavage site, an area on the virus's spike that allows it to be broken apart by a protein on the membrane of human cells and makes the

coronavirus particularly dangerous to people. Once split, the virus releases its genetic material into the cell and reproduces. While all viruses work by attaching themselves to cells, breaking apart, and releasing their genetic material, SARS-CoV-2 is the only one of its class, sarbecoviruses, to use this particular mechanism to do so.

As with past discussion of a possible lab origin of SARS-CoV-2, this latest theory has already been met with considerable pushback. Even some scientists who are open to the idea that a lab accident could have sparked the pandemic remain unconvinced by the particular trail of evidence laid out by Sachs and Harrison.

The journal article offers a scientific road map for how this unusual sequence of amino acids could have made its way into the furin cleavage site, or FCS, of the virus. Sachs and Harrison acknowledge that the sequence could have arisen naturally. But they also lay out another possibility: that scientists might have purposefully inserted this particular string of amino acids into a bat coronavirus in the course of their work. They focus particularly on scientists who submitted an unfunded grant proposal to a division of the Defense Department called the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, laying out plans to insert a furin cleavage site into a bat coronavirus.

"We do not know whether the insertion of the FCS was the result of natural evolution — perhaps via a recombination event in an intermediate mammal or a human — or was the result of a deliberate introduction of the FCS into a SARS-like virus as part of a laboratory experiment," Sachs and Harrison write. "We do know that the insertion of such FCS sequences into SARS-like viruses was a specific goal of work proposed by the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership within a 2018 grant proposal ("DEFUSE") that was submitted to the US Defense Advanced Research Projects (DARPA)."

EHA is a reference to EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit research group based in New York City that has received more than $118 million in grants and contracts from federal agencies. WIV, or the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is a Chinese research organization that collaborated with EcoHealth Alliance in the past and was listed as a subcontractor on the DARPA grant. UNC is mentioned because Ralph Baric, a molecular biologist at the University of North

Carolina, Chapel Hill, was to have conducted part of the work pitched to DARPA. The grant proposal touted Baric's "two-decade track record of reverse engineering [coronavirus] and other virus spike proteins."

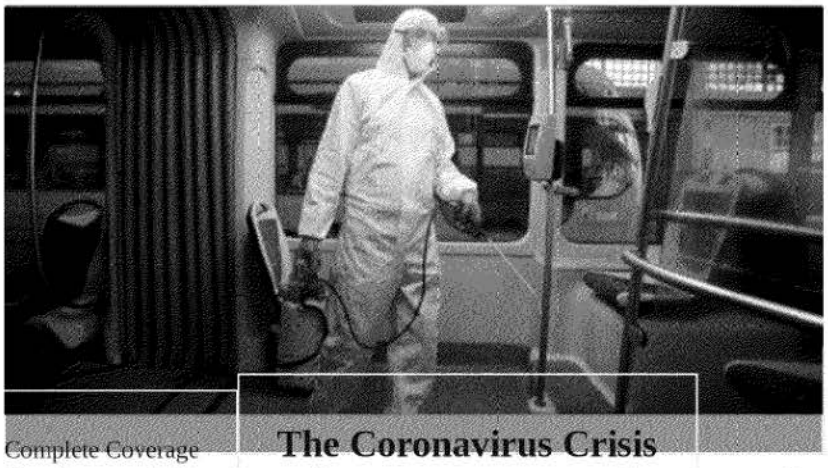
The intent of the DARPA proposal was to prevent emerging pathogenic threats, but the work, if conducted, could have created a novel virus capable of infecting humans. "We will introduce appropriate human-specific cleavage sites and evaluate growth potential in [a type of mammalian cell commonly used in microbiology] and [human airway epithelial cell] cultures," the proposal stated.

Several scientists interviewed about the DARPA proposal in September told The Intercept that scientists often begin research before seeking funding and thus that some of the experiments described in the proposal could have already been completed. But when asked about that possibility in an interview, Peter Daszak, the president of EcoHealth Alliance, rejected it: "The DARPA proposal was not funded. Therefore, the work was not done. Simple."

A Rational Choice

As Sachs and Harrison note, the part of a protein on the cell membrane that shares its amino acid sequence with the bat coronavirus is critical for lung function. Known as an epithelial sodium channel-alpha, or ENaC-alpha, it is found in human airway cells, as well as in human kidneys and colons. Intriguingly, like SARS-CoV-2, ENaC-alpha, which facilitates the absorption of fluid in cells, is also activated by the unusual furin cleavage site. Harrison, a physiologist affiliated with Columbia's Department of Molecular Pharmacology and Therapeutics, studies ion channels, the larger category to which ENaC-alpha belongs.

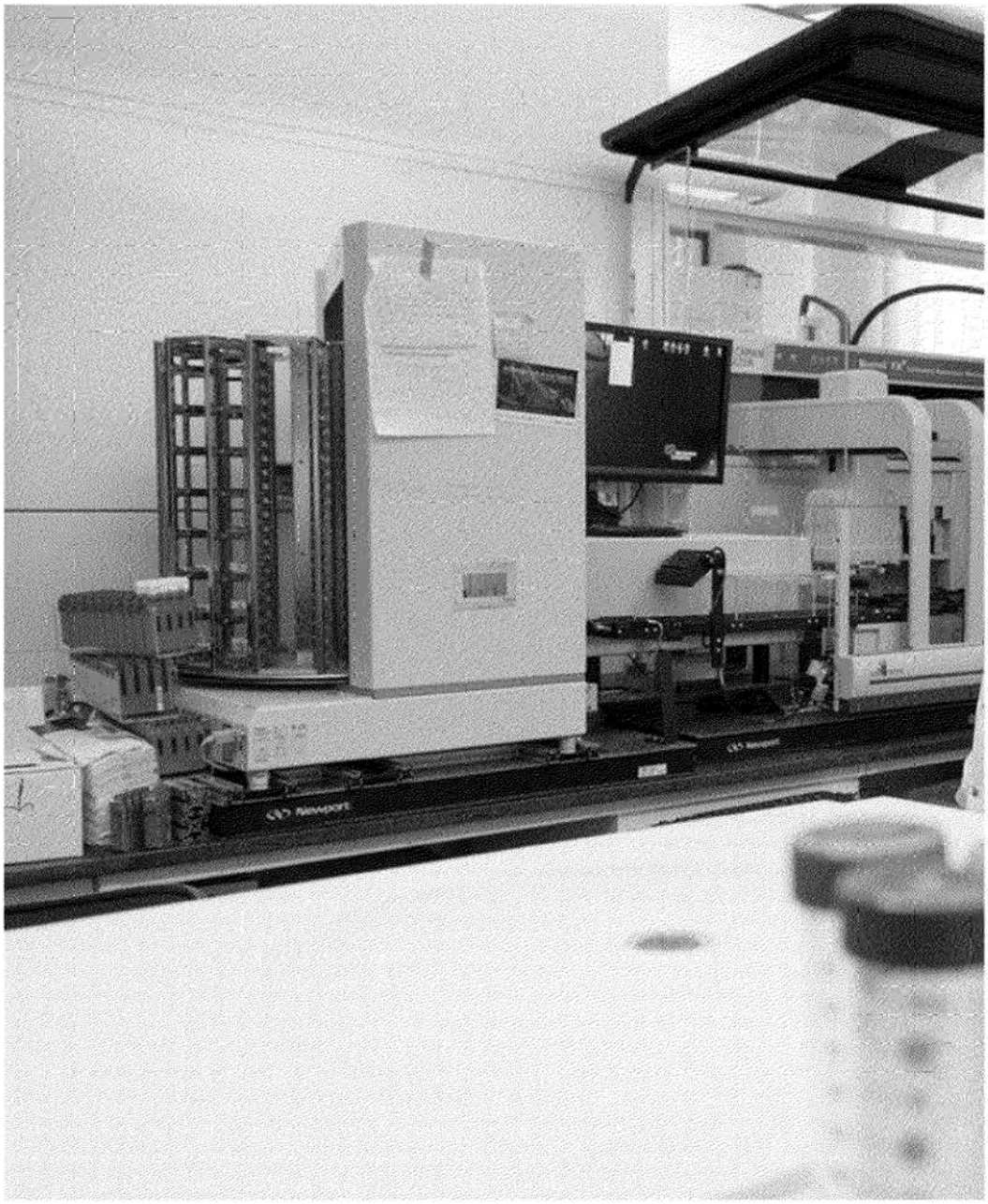
Other scientists have already pointed out the match between the amino acid series in the furin cleavage site of SARS-CoV-2 and the ENaC-alpha found in human airways. In 2020, a team from the biomedical company Nference suggested that the overlap between the virus and the sequence found in human lungs is part of the reason that Covid-19 is so damaging to the respiratory system. Those scientists described the sequence as having evolved naturally.



Read Our Complete Coverage **The Coronavirus Crisis**

Sachs and Harrison, in contrast, suggest that researchers may have inserted the string of amino acids into a bat coronavirus precisely because of its known importance to lung function. "For a research team assessing the pandemic potential of SARS-related coronaviruses, the FCS of human ENaC — an FCS known to be efficiently cleaved by host furin present in the target location (epithelial cells) of an important target organ (lung), of the target organism (human) — might be a rational, if not obvious, choice of FCS to introduce into a virus in order to alter its infectivity, in line with other work performed previously," they write.

Such a choice, they point out, would have been in keeping with another viral research project on which EcoHealth Alliance, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and UNC's Baric collaborated: a 2014 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases that involved increasing the transmissibility and pathogenicity of bat coronaviruses.



Ralph Baric, a researcher at the University of North Carolina's Gillings School of Global Public Health, in Chapel Hill, N.C., on Feb. 14, 2020.

Photo: Christopher Janaro/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Growing List of Coincidences

The intriguing theory of viral engineering hinges on two observations: that the amino acid sequences match and that experts in both the ENaC-alpha furin cleavage site and the insertion of genetic

sequences into bat coronaviruses happen to work at the same academic institution: the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Baric, whose work aims to prevent and create treatments for viral outbreaks, has previously inserted segments of DNA and RNA into viruses and created an infectious clone of SARS using his own patented "No See'm" method of inserting genetic materials without a trace. He has also collaborated on coronavirus research with scientists from a center for lung studies at UNC-Chapel Hill who are knowledgeable about ENaC-alpha. In one 2016 study, the scientists created a new virus using the spike of a bat coronavirus that had been isolated and characterized by the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The experiment found that the new virus "replicated efficiently" in human airway cells that were cultured in a lab.

In another paper, published a year earlier, Baric, along with the Wuhan Institute of Virology's Shi Zhengli and a lung expert UNC-Chapel Hill's lung institute, described creating a hybrid virus using a SARS-like virus from a bat and a "mouse-adapted" coronavirus. The new virus caused mice to get sicker than those exposed to the original virus. The goal of these experiments was to prepare for the possibility that a virus might jump naturally from animals to humans, as SARS had in 2003. But even before the pandemic, the experiment drew criticism from other scientists, who were concerned because the researchers had created a virus that was able to spread in humans.

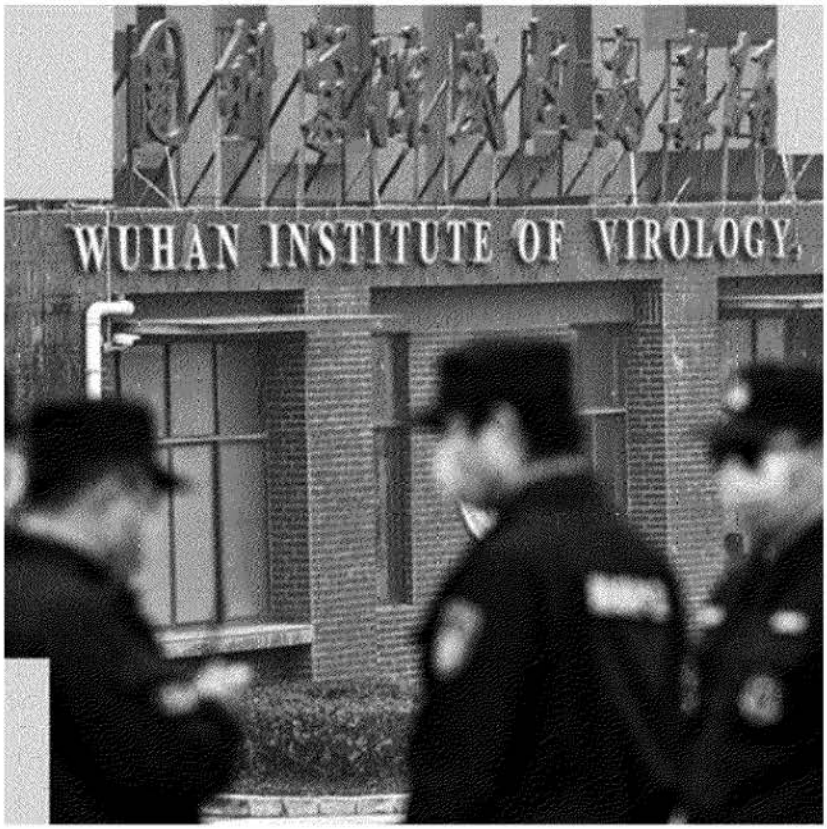
Sachs and Harrison note that the scientists who co-authored the DARPA grant proposal would have been aware of research on coronavirus furin cleavage sites, including one 2006 experiment in which a furin cleavage site was inserted into a coronavirus. "The research team would also have some familiarity with the FCS sequence and the FCS-dependent activation mechanism of human ENaC, which was extensively characterized at UNC," they write.

"The list of coincidences is getting verrrrrrrrrry long."

Still, both the overlap in the amino acid sequence and the fact that experts in the furin cleavage site of the ENaC-alpha and insertion of genetic material into bat coronaviruses work at the same university could be coincidental, as Harrison and Sachs acknowledge. Some virologists, though, say that the coincidence strains credulity.

"Could be," Richard Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University, wrote in an email to The Intercept when asked about the possibility that these things are both chance occurrences. "But the list of coincidences is getting verrrrrrrrrry long."

Ebright, a vocal proponent of the lab-leak theory whom Harrison and Sachs thank "for helpful commentary on the manuscript," spelled out some of the other Covid coincidences that he considers questionable, including its initial outbreak in a city that, well before 2019, had already been pegged as a biosafety risk. Ebright also noted Wuhan's 1,000-mile distance from the nearest wild bats that carry the type of SARS-related coronaviruses that caused the pandemic. And he pointed to the particular coding of the amino acids in the furin cleavage site of SARS-CoV2.



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The Lab-Leak Theory Is Looking Stronger by the Day. Here's What We Know.

"The sequence encoding the FCS of the pandemic virus contained two consecutive CGG arginine codons," Ebright explained in his email. (A codon, or a combination of three nucleotides, supplies the genetic code for a single amino acid, though most amino acids can be

represented by multiple different codons. Each nucleotide is represented by a letter — for RNA, either A, C, U, or G.) "This codon usage is unusual for a natural bat SARS-related coronaviruses (for which fewer than 1 in 30 arginine codons are CGG) but is optimal for humans (for which most arginine codons are CGG codons)."

Still, Ebright said that at first he didn't see the identical amino acid sequences as particularly suspicious. "I had known for more than a year that there was a perfect match to an eight-amino acid sequence present in human ENaC. What I had not known was that the sequence was known to be a functional furin cleavage site and that it was a sequence extensively studied at UNC," he said. "The crucial point that the ENaC sequence was a known functional site, not just that there happens to be a match to a protein that happens to be in humans. … That suddenly turned it from what I thought to be largely irrelevant to being a logical and obvious choice to proceed."

Ralph Baric and the University of North Carolina did not immediately respond to requests for comment.



The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, on June 24, 2021.

Photo: Kyodo via AP Images

Name Calling

Other scientists dismiss the idea that the ENaC sequence might have been purposefully inserted into a coronavirus. Scientists who are already convinced that the new coronavirus emerged naturally are unlikely to be persuaded by Sachs and Harrison's article, which appears in the opinion section of the esteemed journal. Over the past year, many scientists involved in the debate over the origins of the

pandemic have settled into an increasingly acrimonious, coarse, and unyielding opposition.

Some proponents of the natural origin theory became particularly dismissive of those open to the possibility of a lab leak after the February release of two pre-print studies mapping the early spread of the virus at the Huanan market in Wuhan. Angela Rasmussen, one of a team of virologists who worked on the project, described it on Twitter as "dispositive evidence of a zoonotic origin" that will "drive those with personal interest in the lab leak hypothesis out of their goddam minds." In another tweet, Rasmussen referred to proponents of the lab-leak theory as a "pack of ghouls, who through gullibility, stupidity, & conspiracist thinking have decided this is their thing despite zero expertise."

Although the pre-prints had not been peer-reviewed and may have simply illustrated the spread of the virus rather than its original outbreak, the New York Times ran a front-page story about them that quoted an epidemiologist as saying that the origins debate "has been settled with a very high degree of evidence." The story, which was announced by a push notification from the paper, also noted a lack of direct evidence for a lab leak.

Meanwhile, Kristian Andersen, another co-author of the pre-prints and a virologist at the well-regarded Scripps Research Institute, used the "poop" emoji to criticize a deeply researched article by Katherine Eban about EcoHealth Alliance. On Twitter, Andersen tarred Eban, New York Times columnist Zeynep Tufekci, and others reporting on biosafety issues that could have led to the release of SARS-CoV-2 as "deep in conspiracy theories" and on the other side of "a clear split" from journalists who dismiss the possibility of a lab origin, whom Andersen referred to as "science-based."

Even some scientists who have been vocal about the possibility that the pandemic may have been sparked by research have expressed skepticism about the theory suggested by Harrison and Sachs. "I'm sure that these authors believe in their own hypothesis and arguments, but to me, it's not one that is particularly convincing," said Alina Chan, a scientist who laid out a number of possible routes for how the coronavirus might have emerged through research-related incidents in her recent book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19."

“There’s no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses.”

While she is open to the possibility that the furin cleavage site might have been purposefully inserted into the coronavirus, Chan said there was no reason to think that researchers would mine humans for such material. “These scientists literally had access to hundreds of SARS-like viruses and sequences,” said Chan, referring to the vast collection of coronaviruses from bats and other animals that researchers amassed at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. “There’s no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses.”

Jack Nunberg, a virologist at the University of Montana, was also not immediately persuaded by the theory of engineering suggested by Sachs and Harrison. “It’s possible,” Nunberg said of the idea that the ENaC segment was inserted into a bat coronavirus as part of research designed to gauge the pandemic potential of a virus. “But I don’t find their evidence on ENaC compelling because furin cleavage sites have a lot of common amino acids, and therefore it may just have happened by chance.”

Others say that the article adds noteworthy information to the public conversation about the origins of the pandemic. “The defenders of the natural origin indicate that the virus on which this type of experiment could have been done — the backbone — has never been published and that specialists in the furin cleavage sites would have chosen a more commonly used furin cleavage site like RARR rather than PRRAR. The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article contradicts this argument and indicates that specialists knew that the RRAR’SVAS site was efficiently cleaved by furin,” Etienne Decroly, director of virology research at the Aix-Marseille Université in France, wrote in an email to The Intercept.

Decroly added, “It is impossible to decide on the basis of the information currently available and it is urgent that the WHO Special Advisory Group for the Origins of Novel Pathogens investigate this question.”

On the suggestion of an investigation, Nunberg is in agreement. "You can't argue with that," he told The Intercept. "Who's going to argue for burying one's head in the sand?"

For their part, Sachs and Harrison emphasize that they're not saying laboratory manipulation was involved in the emergence of the pandemic virus, only "that it could have been." They also give a nod to other possibilities, including that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker. Rather than argue that any of these conceivable scenarios happened, they present the clues of the matching amino acid sequences to argue for an independent and transparent scientific investigation of the U.S.-based evidence related to the origins of the virus.

Among the institutions that Sachs and Harrison list as possibly having "knowledge of the detailed activities that were underway in Wuhan and in the United States" are the National Institutes of Health; the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which has provided grant funding to EcoHealth Alliance; the Department of Homeland Security; DARPA; the U.S. Agency for International Development, which funded the $200 million PREDICT program that catalogued potential pandemic viruses; and the University of California, Davis, which participated in that program.

The authors suggest that EcoHealth Alliance and UNC may have particularly important untapped resources. "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the US and China, has not been disclosed for independent analysis," they write. "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, including the full array of viruses collected from the field and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, remains unknown."



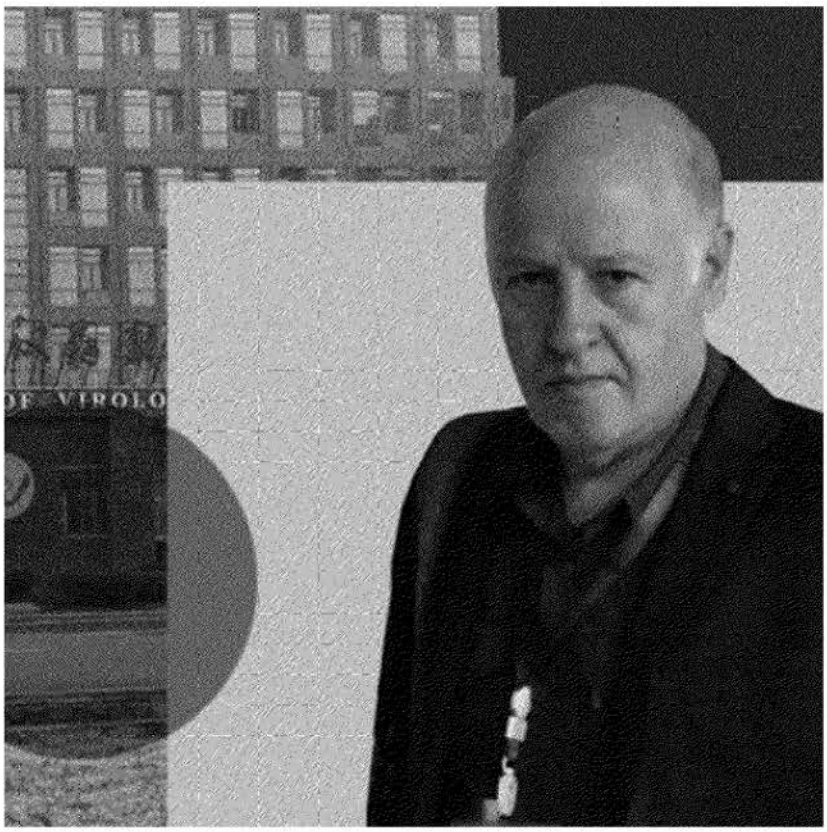
Peter Daszak, one of the members of the World Health Organization team investigating the origins of the Covid-19, on a balcony at a hotel in Wuhan, China, on Feb. 6, 2021.

Photo: Hector Retamal/AFP via Getty Images

A Reversal

The publication in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences marks a reversal of sorts for Sachs, the chair of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission who, in November 2020, appointed Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, to lead a task force to investigate the origins of the pandemic. Earlier that year,

Daszak had signed on to a public statement published in The Lancet on behalf of scientists who said they "condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin."



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Peter Daszak Answers Critics and Defends Coronavirus Research

Yet that early certainty about the pandemic's origins — and the sense of shared civic responsibility among members of the Lancet task force — soon disintegrated. In February 2021, emails revealed that Daszak coordinated the public statement in The Lancet tamping down suspicions of a lab leak. And by June 2021, Sachs was expressing his openness to the possibility of a lab origin, writing that NIH-funded research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology "deserves scrutiny under the hypothesis of a laboratory-related release of the virus." Three months later, he disbanded the task force that had been organized to "carefully scrutinize the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus" in the hopes of preventing future disease outbreaks, explaining that he had concerns that several members of the commission had conflicts of interest because of their ties to EcoHealth Alliance.

After leading the mainstream scientific inquiry into the origins of the

pandemic, Sachs is now skewering it. “A steady trickle of disquieting information has cast a darkening cloud over the agency,” he and Harrison write of the NIH, going on to accuse the entire federal government of not doing enough to explore the possible role of its grantees in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 and investigate “overlooked details” such as the matching amino acid sequences.

Noting that the NIH has insisted that “the pandemic virus could not have resulted from the work sponsored by” the agency, Sachs and Harrison write that “blanket denials from the NIH are no longer good enough.”

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 8:15 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

It’s all so convoluted I can even understand it. We’ll see if they pick (b)(6) from (b)(6) to be next NIH Director. I know her quite well, her husband is Baylor

President and my boss.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering,
Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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E-mail: (b)(6)
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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 11, 2022, at 6:39 PM, David Morens (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) wrote:

CAUTION: This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open

attachments you know are safe.

Yes, i know. I fail to understand why our nih leaders keep forming circular firing squads. one thing is for sure: in recent times nih has suffered abysmal leadership

It wasn't like that in the Varmus years. He didn't suffer any political fools no matter how high up, and was comfortable giving them all a big middle finger. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 11, 2022, at 18:37, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

This is an utterly ridiculous set of BS. Jesse Bloom is the person driving it – he buys into the lab leak theory and found that some folks from WIV uploaded partial genomes early on, then added a bunch of more complete ones, and asked for the partial sequences to be removed. Absolutely normal, but he's trying to turn it into a 'mystery'.

Of course, NIH makes it all worse by not releasing emails, redacting critical parts of them, and failing to explain why they follow the wishes of the submitter re. Genbank. It's perfectly logical really – if NIH now starts releasing sequences you as a submitter asked them to remove for whatever reason, submitters will think twice about using Genbank. We already have China working with its own database and all this BS will make them twice-shy about submitting.

Even worse, Tabak now says that 'don't worry, we still have the data on back up tapes' so everyone now knows that NIH keeps the stuff you thought they agreed to delete, and no doubt has already handed it over to the FBI and the CIA.

It's a conspiracy, wrapped within an enigma, encapsulating a riddle….

PS – heres a cracker of an email from an NIH press office (?) person at O/D ripping into a journalist (Carl Zimmer) who wanted information on the 'missing' china sequences. Now it turns out that US submitters also deleted early COVID genomes…even more reason for the public to not trust scientists…:

From: Myles, Renate (NIH/OD
To: Carl Zimmer; Wojtowicz
Cc: Fine, Amanda (NIH/OD
Subject: RE: FW: Query from Ne
Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2

Hi Carl:

I saw your story. Just noting that it was withdrawn. Also, it didn't disa I know that Dr. Bloom is making th reporters not hype language.

Also, just to clarify, NLM conducte packages were withdrawn upon re included one requested by the sub the U.S.

1

Thanks,
Renate

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 5:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) peter hotez (b)(6) Roberts, Rich < (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** (b)(6)
Date: Wed, May 11, 2022 at 4:54 PM
Subject: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists
To: David Morens ((b)(6)

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 4:12 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

By
Steven Nelson
May 11, 2022 3:47pm



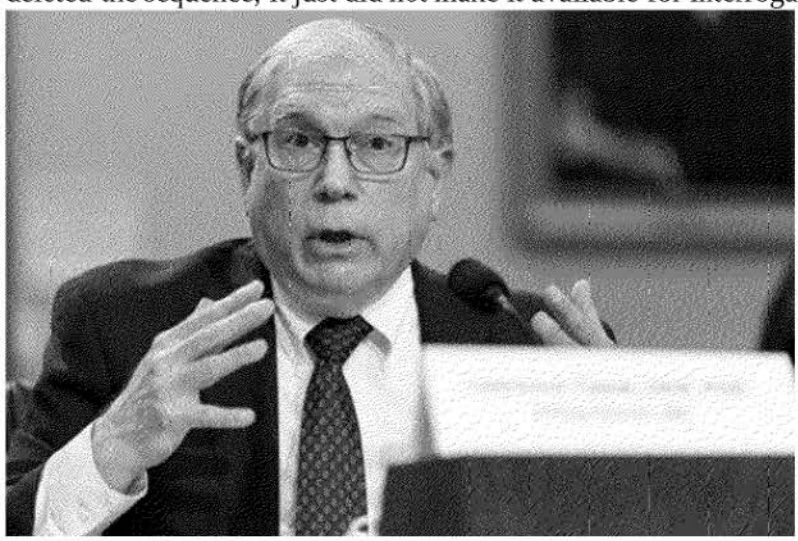
National Institutes of Health acting director Lawrence Tabak confirmed to lawmakers Wednesday that US health officials concealed early genomic sequences of COVID-19 at the request of Chinese scientists — but insisted the data remains on file.

Tabak told a House Appropriations subcommittee that the NIH "eliminated from public view" the data from the pandemic epicenter in Wuhan, China, before adding that researchers can still access it via an archaic "tape drive."

Vanity Fair recently reported that the information was hidden in response to a request from Chinese scientists, despite potentially resolving whether the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology or passed naturally from animals to humans.

Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Wash.) asked Tabek to explain why US officials would comply with such a request.

"There's no question that the communication that we had about the sequence archive — Sequence Read Archive — could have been improved. I freely admit that," Tabek said. "If I may, the archive never deleted the sequence, it just did not make it available for interrogation."



Lawrence Tabak, acting director of the National Institutes of Health, testifies on May 11. Jacquelyn Martin/AP

"So wait, you have the information still?" Beutler followed up.

"We have the information … Anybody who submits to the Sequence Read Archive is allowed to ask for it to be removed," Tabak explained. "And that investigator did do that. But we never erase it."

"So you don't have the information anymore?" Beutler asked.

"We do. We never erase the information. We keep it," Tabak clarified.

"So they were able to withdraw public viewing of it?" the congresswoman followed up.

"That's correct," he said.

"OK, so researchers can apply to the NIH and get the information from you?" Beutler asked.

"In the way that it was originally eliminated from public view, it was withdrawn, and that's the most difficult for people to access," Tabak replied. "The error that was made, and we found this out after a review of all of our processes, was it should have been suppressed. The distinction being that if it's withdrawn, it is kept archivally on a tape drive — old technology, but that's how it's done. But when it is withdrawn, it can still be accessed by accession number, and so researchers are able to access that information."



Security personnel keep watch outside Wuhan Institute of Virology during the visit by the World Health Organization on Feb. 3, 2021. Thomas Peter/REUTERS

"So the information is still there?" Beutler summed up.

"That's correct. The information was never lost," Tabak repeated.

In a March 31 article, Vanity Fair reported that evolutionary biologist Jesse Bloom discovered last year that early COVID-19 sequences had disappeared from a federally run data repository.

When Bloom raised the issue, he was reportedly ganged up on by a group of researchers assembled by then-NIH Director Francis Collins and infectious disease institute head Dr. Anthony Fauci.

Bloom shared a draft academic paper with Collins and Fauci, who allegedly objected on a June 2021 Zoom video conference to Bloom's description of Chinese scientists "surreptitiously" removing the sequences. Fauci said the word was "loaded" and implied a coverup, the report said.

Evolutionary biologist Kristian Andersen, who was selected to participate on the call by Collins, allegedly told Bloom that the Wuhan team had a right to claw back early pandemic information and that it was unethical for Bloom to question it.



Tabak noted that while the request for information to be removed was honored, it was not erased fully.ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE
Andersen allegedly went so far as to offer to delete Bloom's article from a "preprint" server "in a way that would leave no record that this had been done."
China's government has refused to cooperate with an international investigation of the origins of the pandemic. The COVID-19 virus has killed about 1 million Americans since March 2020 and caused massive social, economic and educational disruptions.
The US intelligence community said in an August report that it's possible the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, calling the theory one of two "plausible" explanations along with natural transmission from animals.



Lawrence Tabak confirmed Wednesday that early genomic sequences of COVID-19 were concealed at the request of Chinese specialists.
Jacquelyn Martin/AP

President Biden rarely speaks publicly about wanting China to be transparent about the origins of the pandemic. Former President Donald Trump, by contrast, has demanded that China pay $10 trillion in reparations.

The Biden administration is considering undoing some of Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods "separately" from US pressure for coronavirus transparency, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told The Post on Monday.

Documents published in September by The Intercept revealed that US health officials indirectly funded so-called "gain of function" research at the Wuhan lab — including the modification three bat coronaviruses distinct from COVID-19 and the discovery that they became much more infectious among "humanized" mice when human-type receptors were added to them.

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Date:	Fri, 17 May 2024 9:52:45 AM -0400
Subject:	Fwd: Nature: US halts funding to controversial virus-hunting group: what researchers think
From:	David Morens (b)(6)
To:	Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; peter hotez (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image001.jpg

From the cell phone of David Morens

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]** (b)(6)
Date: Fri, May 17, 2024, 08:33
Subject: Nature: US halts funding to controversial virus-hunting group: what researchers think
To:

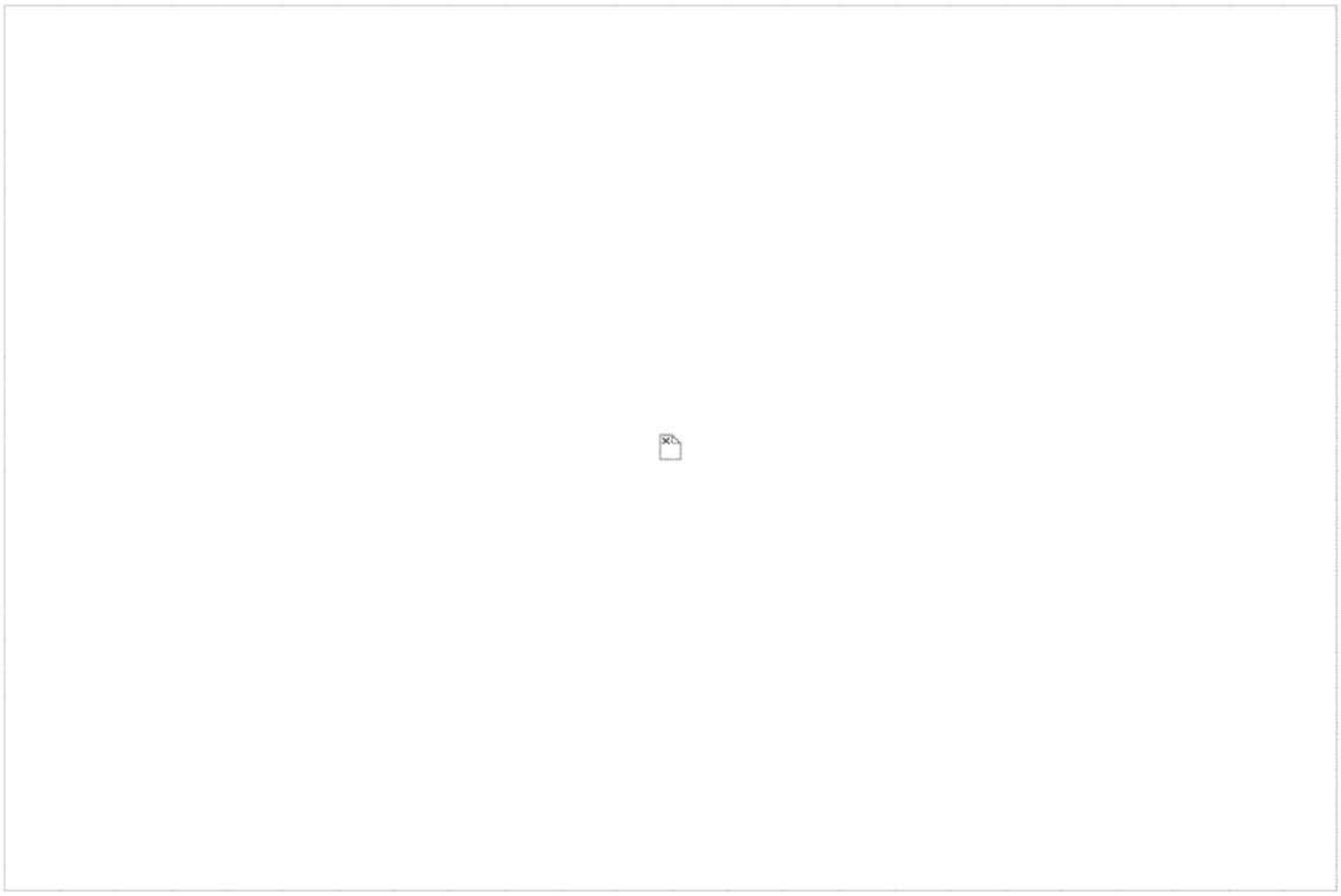
- NEWS
- 16 May 2024

US halts funding to controversial virus-hunting group: what researchers think

Some scientists think the decision regarding EcoHealth Alliance is fair, while others say it might negatively impact virus surveillance.

By

- Mariana Lenharo



EcoHealth Alliance president Peter Daszak testified before a congressional panel on 1 May, two weeks before the US government suspended the organization's federal funding.Credit: Andrew Harnik/Getty

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has suspended federal funding for EcoHealth Alliance, a New York City-based nonprofit organization that came under scrutiny during the COVID-19 pandemic for collaborating with a virology laboratory in China accused of potentially leaking the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. Researchers who spoke to *Nature* are divided in their reaction to the decision: some think that the HHS made the right call given EcoHealth's apparent failure to comply with terms of a grant it was awarded, undermining public trust; others say that the decision seems to be unfairly wrapped up in politics.

The shifting sands of 'gain-of-function' research

In a memo detailing the decision, Henrietta Brisbon, the HHS's suspension and debarment official, argued that EcoHealth did not provide adequate oversight of research activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), in China. The WIV was a subrecipient on a federal grant awarded to EcoHealth by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), meaning that it was a partner given funds to carry out some of the research. The document also describes how EcoHealth repeatedly failed to provide information pertaining to the research conducted under the grant that was requested by the NIH.

The decision by the HHS comes two weeks after EcoHealth's president, infectious-disease specialist Peter Daszak, was grilled during a hearing run by a US House of Representatives subcommittee investigating the

origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that session, Republican representatives suggested that EcoHealth had conducted risky research with the WIV and Democrats criticized the nonprofit's lack of transparency.

In announcing the latest suspension of funding to EcoHealth, the HHS also proposed debarring the organization from federal funding — a more definitive halting of grant money for a period generally of up to 3 years. Debarments of grantees are usually reserved for serious violations: according to a 2022 report, the HHS issued 134 debarments between 2015 and 2019, most of them owing to a criminal conviction or civil judgment.

In a statement, an EcoHealth spokesperson said that the organization is disappointed by the HHS's decision and will be contesting the proposed debarment. "We hope we will get a fair chance to present the volumes of evidence we have that all of these allegations are false, and that they do not rise to the level of something that should lead to an organization being debarred in this way," Daszak told *Nature*.

Controversial virus-hunting scientist skewered at US COVID-origins hearing

It is important for research organizations to demonstrate that they have a robust oversight system, says social scientist Filippa Lentzos, a specialist in biosecurity at King's College London, "even more so when we're talking about research with pandemic risks, where potentially the entire world could be affected by an accident". She adds that the decision to suspend funding seems appropriate: "Whatever the particulars of the EcoHealth Alliance case, it is clear the institution has lost the confidence of the HHS, politicians on both sides of the aisle and many other stakeholders to act safely, securely and responsibly."

EcoHealth could have done a better job of explaining its work to the NIH and to the public, acknowledges Lawrence Gostin, a health-law and policy specialist at Georgetown University in Washington DC. But, in his view, the suspension has a strong political bent to it. "It's not clear to me at all whether this decision was based on science, ethics or politics," he says. "There's been this drumbeat of criticism of EcoHealth Alliance, particularly from congressional Republicans, and there's been this myth that the WIV was responsible for the pandemic, but all of the evidence points in the opposite direction," to a natural spillover of SARS-CoV-2 from wild animals to humans, he adds.

Two-year delay

EcoHealth had been collaborating with scientists in China to study pathogens with pandemic potential for years when, in 2014, it received a grant from the NIH to investigate bat coronaviruses. The NIH would eventually suspend this grant in April 2020, in the early months of the pandemic. This came at a time when then-president Donald Trump had been publicly implying that China might be responsible for the pandemic. The funding was reinstated in May 2023 under extensive restrictions, and the WIV was debarred from receiving US funding through subawards later that year.

NIH to intensify scrutiny of foreign grant recipients in wake of COVID origins debate

The current suspension was motivated by the alleged lack of compliance with the 2014 grant's terms and conditions. One key problem listed by the HHS is EcoHealth's submission of a grant progress report more than two years past the deadline. The HHS said that this report contains information suggesting that an experiment conducted by the WIV possibly led to enhanced growth of a modified virus beyond a replication limit set by the NIH. EcoHealth and the WIV were modifying a coronavirus linked to Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), to study the potential origins of this type of virus in bats. When reviewing progress on the grant, the NIH told EcoHealth that if any virus generated under the grant showed evidence of replication beyond the set

threshold, the nonprofit should ensure that all experiments were halted and communicate the issue to the agency, which was not done. This led the HHS to conclude that the research "likely violated protocols of the NIH regarding biosafety".

An EcoHealth spokesperson said that it is untrue that the nonprofit violated the terms of the grant, given that the experiments did not rise to a level that would be considered significant enough to report as unusual. Regarding the delay in submitting the report, the spokesperson said that EcoHealth made every effort to file the report on time, "but these were stymied by contradictory advice from NIH grant management officials, and an online system [for submitting the report] that is confusing and error-prone, leading to multiple instances where the system locked us out."

The HHS memo says that, according to a forensic audit performed by the NIH, EcoHealth was never locked out of the system.

Federal auditors have cited the NIH for its part in not pursuing the late report and recommended that the agency intensify its monitoring of foreign institutions that receive NIH funds.

Responding to the HHS's allegation that EcoHealth failed to adequately respond to the NIH's requests for information and materials related to the WIV's research, the spokesperson said that, considering the geopolitical pressure on US–China relations during the pandemic, and that the HHS, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the intelligence community were all unable to get evidentiary information out of the WIV, "it is outrageous to propose this as grounds to debar our organization". (The WHO organized an initial investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic in China, but further efforts were stymied by that country's lack of cooperation.)

Questions of oversight

Amesh Adalja, an infectious-disease specialist at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security in Baltimore, Maryland, says that any grant recipient is expected to comply with a series of conditions — which include submitting reports in a timely fashion and overseeing partner institutions — and that the HHS memo seems to indicate that EcoHealth did not fully meet those standards. "There's enough listed there to call into question what type of stewardship was going on with that taxpayer money," he says.

NIH reinstates grant for controversial coronavirus research

EcoHealth Alliance has played an important role in illuminating scientists' understanding of novel viruses, Gostin says. In addition to work on coronavirus surveillance in wildlife, the group has studied the spillover of Nipah virus and other pathogens to humans. He worries that the suspension could disincentivize research aimed at pandemic preparedness and prevention done in partnership with other countries. The next pandemic could easily arise in a country that trades wild animals, like China, so the type of research and surveillance that EcoHealth does is important, he says. The decision sends "a chilling signal to any future researcher that might want to better understand zoonotic viruses in the Chinese region", he adds.

Before the suspension, EcoHealth had three active NIH-funded grants aiming to study the risk of emerging viruses in countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar and Vietnam. Since 2008, the organization has been awarded a total of US$90.3 million in federal funding, $19.59 million of which was from the HHS.

doi: https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-024-01460-3

With additional reporting from Max Kozlov.

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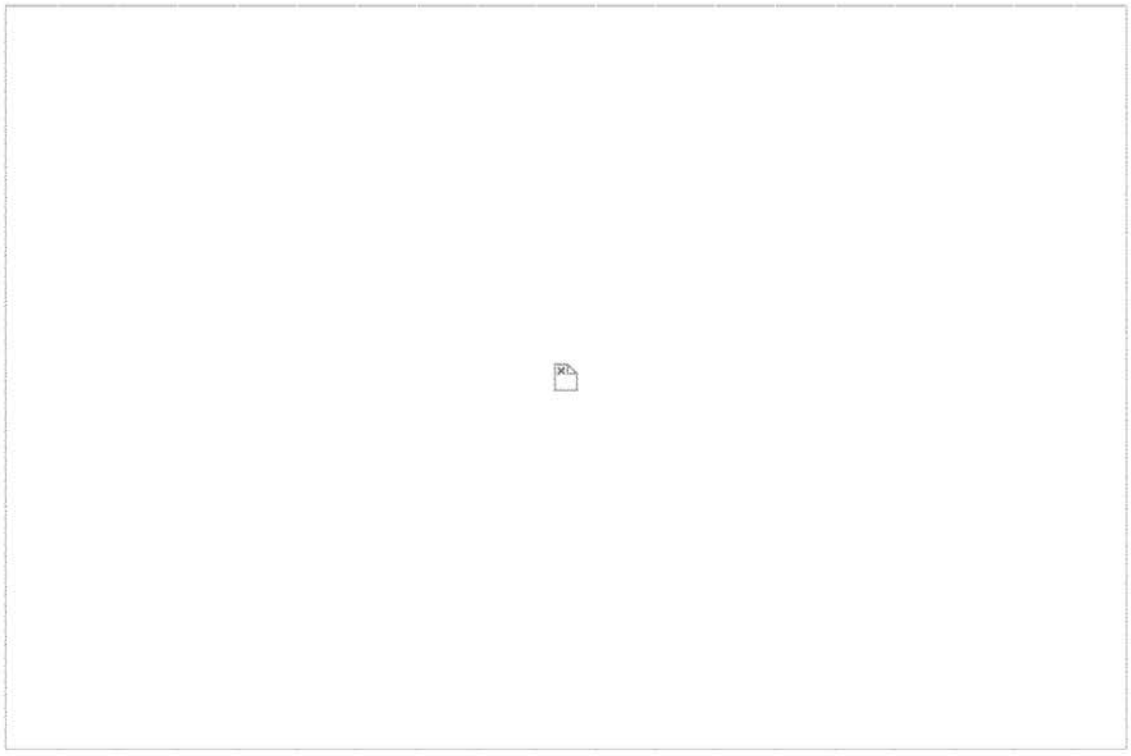
Date:	Wed, 1 May 2024 7:48:53 PM -0400
Subject:	Fwd: NYT: Republicans Step Up Attacks on Scientist at Heart of Lab Leak Theory
From:	David Morens (b)(6)
To:	Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) peter hotez (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; (b)(6)
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.png; image001.jpg; image002.png

From the cell phone of David Morens

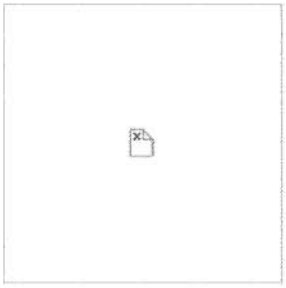
---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]** (b)(6)
Date: Wed, May 1, 2024, 19:36
Subject: NYT: Republicans Step Up Attacks on Scientist at Heart of Lab Leak Theory
To:

Republicans Step Up Attacks on Scientist at Heart of Lab Leak Theory

A heated hearing produced no new evidence that Peter Daszak or his nonprofit, EcoHealth Alliance, were implicated in the Covid outbreak.



Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance, testifying during a hearing on Capitol Hill on Wednesday.Credit...Ting Shen for The New York Times



By Benjamin Mueller

May 1, 2024, 6:54 p.m. ET

House Republicans demanded on Wednesday that the president of a virus-hunting nonprofit group be criminally investigated and barred from federal research funds, a sharp escalation in their campaign against scientists in the United States who Republicans have suggested either had links to the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic or obscured its true beginnings.

During a heated three-hour hearing of the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic, Republican lawmakers at times raised their voices at the nonprofit's leader, Peter Daszak, and said that they believed that he would fare poorly as a defendant in criminal court.

The nonprofit, EcoHealth Alliance, which receives federal funding to study global threats from wild animal viruses, has faced suspicion over a proposal that it made in 2018 to team up with Chinese scientists on novel coronavirus experiments that Republicans believe could have led to the pandemic, despite that project's never receiving funding.

But in a report and in extensive questioning on Wednesday, the Republicans offered no new information suggesting that EcoHealth Alliance or Dr. Daszak were involved in the coronavirus outbreak. And they did not produce any evidence pointing directly to a coronavirus leak from a lab in China, with or without EcoHealth's involvement, a hitch in their yearslong effort to implicate Chinese and American scientists in the beginnings of the pandemic.

Democrats on the subcommittee seized on the dearth of new evidence, even as they echoed Republican concerns that Dr. Daszak had not been forthcoming about his collaborations with Chinese scientists.

The subcommittee, which is led by Republicans, has reviewed nearly a half-million pages of documents and conducted over 100 hours of private interviews in the course of investigating the origin of Covid, Representative Raul Ruiz of California, the panel's top Democrat, said on Wednesday.

But, Mr. Ruiz said, the subcommittee has found "no evidence" linking the pandemic to EcoHealth's research. And he added that the investigation had not "meaningfully advanced our understanding of the pandemic's origins." Rather, he said, the subcommittee's work now "appeared to be an effort to weaponize concerns about a lab-related origin to fuel sentiment against our nation's scientists and public health officials for partisan gain."

Republicans, for their part, pledged that their investigation would continue. They have called Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, the former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, to testify next month. A Republican member of the subcommittee pushed in January for Dr. Fauci to be jailed.

"I support work that will make the world safer," the chairman of the subcommittee, Representative Brad Wenstrup of Ohio, a Republican, said as he opened the hearing on Wednesday. "Our concern is that this research and research similar does the opposite," he said, referring to EcoHealth's collaborations with Chinese scientists. "It puts the world at the risk of a pandemic."

Republicans and Democrats alike hammered Dr. Daszak on Wednesday for what they described as a long list of misrepresentations and evasions. They suggested, among other things, that he was being untruthful about why he had been late to submit a required report to health officials before the pandemic and that he had cast research proposals in ways that helped his chances of receiving funding but misled reviewers. Dr. Daszak strongly denied those charges.

Much of the suspicion centered on an EcoHealth request made in 2018 for Defense Department funding to collect and experiment on coronaviruses with novel traits that would make them highly transmissible in humans.

EcoHealth's proposed partners included the Wuhan Institute of Virology, a premier site for coronavirus research in China. That institute's presence in the city where the Covid outbreak began was at the heart of theories that the virus had first infected people as a result of research activities.

Republicans said that notes on a draft of the proposal from 2018 suggested Dr. Daszak was trying to mislead American officials about the extent of Chinese involvement in the project. Dr. Daszak denied that, saying that he had sought — and received — approval from American defense officials for Chinese scientists to participate. Dr. Daszak said the research had never been carried out.

"It's utterly irrelevant to the origins of Covid," Dr. Daszak said of the proposal. He acknowledged that Wuhan scientists could have been conducting research independently that he was not aware of.

The Wuhan institute's biosafety practices have intensified concerns about the possibility of a lab leak. On Wednesday, Republicans doubled down on worries about its lab's protocols, citing private emails and comments in a closed-door congressional interview by Ralph Baric, a virologist at the University of North Carolina who has collaborated with EcoHealth and the Wuhan institute.

In an email to Dr. Daszak in 2021, Dr. Baric said the Wuhan institute had failed to conduct virus experiments under appropriately safe conditions, and called the idea that they were taking proper precautions a "load of BS." Still, Dr. Baric told Dr. Daszak in a separate email that year that the coronavirus had most likely jumped from animals to people outside of a lab. He cited the absence of any evidence that the Wuhan institute possessed a virus related closely enough to the one that caused the pandemic.

There remains no evidence that the Wuhan institute stored any virus that could have become the coronavirus and caused Covid, with or without scientific tinkering, researchers have said.

Scientists who specialize in tracing outbreaks have published analyses of early cases and viral genomes that they say point to the pandemic's starting at an illegal wild-animal market in Wuhan. The presence of the coronavirus in samples from the market containing genetic material linked to raccoon dogs, they have said, is consistent with that scenario.

Dr. Daszak cited animal-borne disease threats on Wednesday in defending projects by EcoHealth, which works with collaborators around the world to identify and study dangerous viruses circulating in nature.

In April 2020, as EcoHealth came under attack from President Donald J. Trump, the group had a grant terminated by the National Institutes of Health. The grant was reinstated last year, but it does not provide funding for any research in China. The Biden administration has also taken steps to impose a 10-year ban on funding for the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Republicans on Wednesday cited concerns about EcoHealth's compliance with grant reporting requirements in arguing that EcoHealth, too, should be barred from receiving federal funds. The N.I.H. faulted the group in 2021 for failing to promptly report findings from studies on how well bat coronaviruses grow in mice. An internal federal watchdog agency chided the N.I.H. last year for failing to demand a progress report from EcoHealth that was two years late.

In an interview after the hearing, Mr. Wenstrup, the Republican subcommittee chair, said that oversight by health agencies was too weak. He called for the creation of criminal penalties for violating health agency protocols — "anything from a misdemeanor to a felony," he said — as a way of better policing certain scientific research.

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Date: Fri, 31 May 2024 3:10:08 PM -0400

Subject: Re: RE: RE: Comment from Peter Staley about Tony Fauci re. our suspension and proposed debarment

From: (b)(6)

To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Attachments: image001.jpg

When Trump is in jail and the republican politicians get voted out of office.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 1:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: RE: Comment from Peter Staley about Tony Fauci re. our suspension and proposed debarment

EXTERNAL SENDER

When will it ever end????? d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 5/31/24 09:17, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Thanks David – I'll read that. We're still on heightened security alert here at my house and the office, and the hate online and in emails is palpable.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 7:05 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Comment from Peter Staley about Tony Fauci re. our suspension and proposed debarment

Peter, good to know, thank you.

In the Wash Post this am there is an article you should check out, as it happened to you a couple weeks ago.

If you remember police officer
Michael Fanone, who was attacked and seriously injured on Jan 6, yesrerday his 75 year old mother was "swatted": police showed up. at her door and scared the wits out of her, as they had received a fake tip that she had been murdered in her home.

America has gone crazy. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 5/30/24 16:09, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Just to let you all know that I heard from Peter Staley, who's one of the original Act Up! Members who protested NIH then became a close friend of Tony Fauci. I let him know what had happened to us re. the SSCP, the Democrats, HHS Secretary, NIH Director, all lining up to allow us to be suspended and proposed for debarment.
>
> He said that what's happening to EcoHealth is a 'travesty' and that he, Peter, first heard about it from Tony Fauci, who was "shocked by the development".

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 10:39 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: RE: My meetings at Stanford this week

Peter:

Thanks. I have all of the Nobel Laureates on my contact list. It is always good to know when they are very concerned. If you see her again, please remind her that it is always appreciated when she replied to my emails.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 10:17 AM

To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Dasza (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6) ; Keith Martin (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: My meetings at Stanford this week

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich: I'm giving visiting lectures at Stanford and have been speaking again (b)(6) (b)(6) last year's (b)(6) in (b)(6) I briefed (b)(on the House Subcommittee hearings and (b)(6 is very concerned about what's going on and i think is prepared to help in the defense of science. So as you organize the other laureates, I would encourage you to keep (b)(in mind, In addition to (b)(6) best Peter

(b)(6)

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: (b)(6)

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:34:02 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Date: Sat, Apr 29, 2023 at 4:55 PM
Subject: RE: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) leksei Chmura (b)(6) >, Peter Daszak (b)(6) >

And how is he doing? He was always a good scientist, cultured, and thoughtful, and his summer course at the MBL was a great contribution.

Speaking about some of the greats of the past, have you kept up with Tony Cerami? Is he OK? Where is he and what is he doing? Last I knew he had retired and was living somewhere in Europe.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Saturday, April 29, 2023 7:15 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; (b)(6) leksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Yes he retired to NY he was the last chair of tropical public health at Harvard

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Apr 28, 2023, at 6:29 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

The GND cytokine guy from Harvard School of Public Health? No I wasn't aware that he was there. What's he up to these days? I thought he had moved to Brazil for a while – is he now a New Yorker?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 2:37 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) > (b)(6)
(b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Thank you Jerry, it was so great seeing you and everyone! Did you get a chance to see John David, that was nice as well.

I thought the evening was a great show of support for Peter Daszak and the EcoHealth Alliance, especially from the Board. I think that was probably the best part of the gala, the unbridled enthusiasm for the mission, it was nice to see.

The meeting at the RF in the afternoon was impactful and meaningful. I think we have some momentum to move forward on a coalition. So let's meet next week by zoom.

Warmest regards, Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: p.hotez

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 12:34 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Agree. Let's find a time for a 1 pager for Mitchell and then focus on a short concept paper amd next steps to circulate among the participants and to get more folks involved. Peter H and Peter D you both did a great job at RF and at the Gala for EHA. Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) > wrote:

Peter:

That's good! We should look further for funding as well.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 10:43 AM
To: David Morens (b)(6) >
Cc: Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6)

Aleksei Chmura [(b)(6)]>; Peter Daszak [(b)(6)]>; Roberts, Rich [(b)(6)]>
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

EXTERNAL SENDER

It was great to see everyone yesterday, I think we had a good start yesterday. We should zoom next week to decide how we want to follow up with the Mitchell Foundation

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

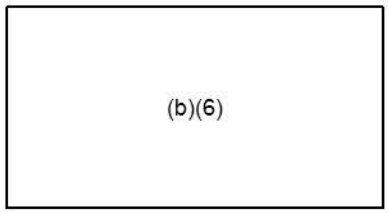
E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: [(b)(6)]

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: [(b)(6)]

[(b)(6)] | Phone: [(b)(6)] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:



iPhone

On Apr 28, 2023, at 10:40 AM, David Morens (b)(6) > wrote:

CAUTION: This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.

Timely report related to many comments yesterday

d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
Date: April 28, 2023 at 10:37:33 EDT
To: David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: Fwd: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]" (b)(6)
Date: April 27, 2023 at 16:34:53 EDT
Subject: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Lawyers have found a way to cash in on outrage over mask mandates and vaccines.

Kiera Butler10 hours ago

In late March, I watched as some 300 lawyers, doctors, and activists assembled in the aggressively beige conference wing of the Midtown Atlanta Hilton for the inaugural Covid Litigation Conference. A promotional flier promised that the event would "provide attendees with the resources they need to begin taking on Covid cases for the first time or to expand the range of Covid claims that they currently handle." An unsuspecting lawyer could have been forgiven for expecting tips on how to help clients who had been disabled by Covid that they caught at their factory jobs, for instance, or those whose medical bills their insurance refused to pay.

But those kinds of cases were entirely absent from the agenda. Rather, the topic was a very particular kind of litigation: How best to advance the movement that organizers called "medical freedom." In other words, how to sue the people who created and enforced public health measures like vaccine and mask requirements, policies against Covid misinformation, and treatment protocols for hospitalized Covid patients.

The conference organizers wore t-shirts emblazoned with the slogan "Misinformation Superspreader." Steve Kirsch, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, philanthropist, and a main organizer of the event, told me that the slogan was a cheeky reference to what he saw as the unfair labeling of anti-vaccine activists as peddlers of misinformation. "We said, 'Okay if that's what they're calling us," he explained, "let's kind of make fun of it." Indeed, many of the attendees seemed to see themselves as underdogs, scrapping against government and pharmaceutical behemoths.

What those underdogs didn't mention during the sessions, though, is their friends in high places: specifically, federal judges who seem to be sympathetic to their aversion to pandemic policies. Pointing to some of the victories that medical freedom lawyers have enjoyed in US District courts, Dorit Reiss, a public health lawyer and law professor at the University of California College of the Law, noted, "They're having some success in the federal system in front of Trump-appointed judges, and they're very much forum shopping right now." Adam Winkler, a constitutional law scholar at the University of California-Los Angeles, agreed. "The courts have issued a lot of what were once thought to be outlandish kinds of rulings with regard to any number of issues like abortion and affirmative action," he said. "I'd expect that encourages people to bind hope to the prospects of lawsuits that they would otherwise seem certain to lose."

When I arrived, I didn't think I'd get past the Misinformation Superspreaders and make it into the ballroom where the event was taking place. The media liaison for the conference, Trevor FitzGibbon,

asked me if I was there to write about disinformation, and he seemed to balk at my affirmative answer. When I said I worked for Mother Jones, he noticeably brightened. He had come up in the PR business working for prominent progressive candidates and groups, he explained, including Barack Obama, MoveOn, and Planned Parenthood, which I took to mean that he considered us to be politically kindred spirits. And then he let me into the ballroom.

Once inside, I watched as one indignant panelist after another enumerated their grievances. At the Hospital Negligence Panel, doctors who refused to deviate from CDC protocol to treat Covid patients with unproven drugs like the antiparasitic medication ivermectin and antimalarial hydroxychloroquine were the targets of rage. The Education Mandates session featured the mother of a California teenager who had defied her school's mask requirement, showing up at school without a mask for weeks on end in 2021, and standing outside the school for hours every day after she was kicked out. The panelists batted around ideas: Could the refusal to wear a mask be considered free speech? Could putting a kid in detention for not wearing a mask count as false imprisonment?

In his speech, Kirsch, the conference organizer, told the story of how, at the beginning of the pandemic, he had invested $1 million of his own money toward studying existing drugs as potential Covid treatments. Somewhere along the way, he became convinced that the Covid vaccines were dangerous. Last year, he founded the Vaccine Safety Research Foundation, whose goal, according to its website, is "to advance COVID-19 vaccine safety through scientific research, public education, and advocacy, and to support the vaccine injured." After his speech, Kirsch told me that he sees litigation as a way to force the federal government agencies to release data that he believes they're concealing about the dangers of the Covid vaccines. He said he is sure that "the only reason that we're not allowed to see any of the data is because it's bad."

Many of the other speakers seemed to share Kirsch's belief that the public isn't seeing the whole picture of Covid. In a constitutional law panel, Robert Barnes, an attorney who previously represented both Kenosha shooter Kyle Rittenhouse and Sandy Hook conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, said, "Pfizer makes the Mexican drug cartels look like a street corner dealer by comparison." To hold the public health crowd accountable, he implored the lawyers at the ballroom tables to "knock down the doors of every court we can."

But not just any court. Medical freedom activists have already started enjoying some successes in front of conservative judges. At the local level, several have sided with plaintiffs who've sued hospitals for refusing to give patients ivermectin. But it's been on the federal level, with Trump-appointed judges, where they've enjoyed some of their most significant successes. In 2021, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton sued the Biden administration over a proposed policy that would have required Covid vaccinations for all Head Start employees. In March 2023, Judge James Wesley Hendrix of the Northern District of

Texas, a Trump appointee, struck down the proposed policy. In January 2022, a group of government workers sued the Biden Administration over the president's vaccination requirements for all federal employees; in 2022, Judge Jeffrey Vincent Brown, whom Trump appointed in 2019, ruled in their favor. That ruling was briefly overturned, but in 2023, the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans upheld it; the opinion was written by Trump appointee Judge Andrew Oldham.

In August 2022, a group of physicians sued the Biden Administration over its efforts to hold social media companies accountable for platforming physicians who spread misinformation about Covid. The plaintiffs, two of whom created the 2020 Great Barrington Declaration to oppose pandemic protections, accused the federal government of violating their First Amendment rights. "The US government used its vast power over social media and big tech to censor legitimate scientific and policy discussion about Covid during the pandemic," Jay Bhattacharya wrote in a statement. That case is still ongoing, but in March, Trump-appointed judge Terry Doughty, in the Western District of Louisiana, denied a motion to dismiss it.

"The US government used its vast power over social media and big tech to censor legitimate scientific and policy discussion about Covid during the pandemic."

There is more to come. Several of the conference speakers have embarked on a Covid litigation bonanza of late. Mark Meuser, a member of the Future Litigation and Censorship panels, boasts on his website that he "has been involved in 22 lawsuits brought against [California Governor Gavin] Newsom for his unconstitutional usurpation of power as a result of COVID-19." In the exhibition area, I visited the booth of Children's Health Defense, the anti-vaccine organization helmed by the new presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., who announced his bid to replace Joe Biden in April. A flier that highlighted some of the dozens of lawsuits that the group had recently filed reveals its eagerness to sue the government, at both local and federal levels. It's suing California over a law that prohibits doctors from spreading misinformation; the Washington Post and other news outlets over their efforts to stop the spread of misinformation; and the CDC for access to reports of "unusual or unexpected patterns of adverse events reporting that can signal safety problems with a vaccine." Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) is getting sued for calling for a review of the Amazon algorithms that allegedly promoted anti-vaccine books, and Facebook parent company Meta is being sued for "collusion with the US government to censor CHD social media content." Add to the long list of defendants Rutgers University for its vaccine mandate for students and staff.

Law professor Reiss is dubious about the prospects for some of those lawsuits, especially those in which individuals sue a private company for censorship. The First Amendment, she noted, also protects "the freedom of private companies like Twitter and YouTube to kick them off." Nor was the idea of students suing universities, a winning strategy. "You don't have the right to go to a specific university,"

she said. "And if you don't like the university policies, universities are on pretty solid grounds denying you admission."

Yet she noted that some of the victories the medical freedom movement has racked up so far could pave the way for future legislation that would last long beyond the Covid era—and possibly transform established public health practices. In fact, that's already happening: Several panelists suggested making vaccination status a protected class like race or sex—which means that it would be illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of whether or not they had received immunizations. In 2021, Montana became the first state to pass such a law. In February of this year, Idaho followed suit. Employers there who require vaccination against Covid can now be fined $1,000 per violation. A similar bill in Florida is currently under consideration.

Another potential opening for medical freedom advocates, Reiss said, is a broader interpretation of laws about religious exemptions to vaccine mandates, which most states allow. With the current Supreme Court's expansion of what is included within the definition of freedom of religion, she worried they may include religious objections to vaccines. "If they go there, it will make it a lot harder to prevent the abuse of religious exemption," she said. On April 18, a few weeks after I spoke to Reiss, a US district judge ruled that Mississippi must change its current policy to allow religious exemptions for vaccine mandates. (The judge, Halil Suleyman Ozerden, had been nominated by Trump in 2019 to serve on the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, but key Republicans questioned his conservative bona fides and he was never confirmed.)

With all this coming litigation, some of the conference sponsors saw a business opportunity. While the speakers inside the ballroom railed against big pharma and the CDC, just outside, representatives from law-firm-adjacent companies handed out business cards. Zena Obebe, the CEO of Hill Redaction Services, told me, "We wanted to get in front of those litigation lawyers and say, 'Hey, you can use us for the medical records.'" She expects to see many more Covid-related cases soon, explaining, "There's a huge influx that's coming down the pipeline."

Though Covid was the official topic of the conference, many of the people I talked to made detours into other subjects. Their involvement in the medical freedom movement, they said, had caused the scales to fall from their eyes. Kirsch, the conference organizer, explained that before the pandemic, he had never been skeptical of routine childhood vaccinations, but over the past few years, he has come to believe they cause autism (a theory that has been extensively discredited but one cherished by RFK, Jr. whose campaign, Kirsch says, he looks forward to supporting). So fervent is his newfound aversion to immunizations, he told me, that he now believes "nobody should ever" even vaccinate their pets.

For FitzGibbon, the comms guy, his involvement with the medical freedom movement has led to a more thorough disenchantment with his

progressive roots. In 2020, during the height of the pandemic, he had become acutely ill with Covid, but two different hospitals sent him home. Only when a doctor-client put in a good word for him did he get admitted to an ICU, where he received monoclonal antibodies—an effective though underutilized treatment—which he credits with saving his life.

In the months that followed, he became skeptical of what he saw as the single-minded focus on Covid vaccines and what he considered to be the suppression of treatments like the one he received, as well as more scientifically dubious drugs like ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine. "All you saw in the US media was vaccine, vaccine, vaccine," he said. "Any other mentions of these alternative treatments were blacklisted." He now believes not only that the Covid vaccines are bioweapons, but also that the Democratic party has lost its way—he saw it even before Covid in Democrats' soft stance on domestic surveillance under Obama, and now he sees it in foreign policy, too. In a pivot I frankly did not see coming, he said, "I do not recognize this administration or this party when it comes to the war in Ukraine," especially since he claims that Russia had good reason to invade the country because of its problem with Nazis (ostensibly a reference to Russian President Vladimir Putin's shaky-at-best justification for his invasion).

It's possible, though, that something unrelated to politics deepened his disenchantment with progressives: In 2015, his PR firm closed abruptly after several female former employees accused him of sexual assault and harassment; he spoke to me on the condition that I note that the US Attorney declined to file any criminal charges, and a woman who had accused him of rape publicly retracted her allegations and apologized as part of a settlement in 2019.

Both Kirsch and FitzGibbon complained that progressive groups with whom they both were previously allied would no longer return their calls—about Covid or anything else. Aggrieved, they were determined to press on in what they saw as a countercultural but righteous crusade—a sentiment echoed by many of the speakers. Their alienation and what they consider to be oppression only further energizes them and their cause. In a heartfelt speech in the ballroom, Sujata Gibson, a New York-based lawyer and activist who recently won a lawsuit that led to New York overturning its vaccine mandate for healthcare workers, compared current medical freedom activism to the Indian struggle for independence, Nelson Mandela's campaign against apartheid in South Africa, and the American civil rights movement. "Part of what we have to do as lawyers when we're in these tyrannical moments in history—and this one is quite extreme—is we have to hold the line in the courts," she said. "I've been lucky enough to see time after time how David and Goliath battles can be won."

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Date: Tue, 21 May 2024 1:45:15 PM -0400
Subject: Re: RE: Disappointing tweet from Amy Maxmen re. a disappointing article in Nature.
From: (b)(6)
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Thanks for trying to help us. If I was able to do so I would reach out to our Mayland reps and try to get their help. NIH is not only in MD but in the center of MD's most wealthy and mnost populous County, Montgomery, and they all don't want interference
with nih, which brings inabout $40 billion annually
Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 5/21/24 12:04, Keusch, Gerald wrote:

Another approach, I have contacted my Congresswoman and my two Senators imploring them to intervene with the Democratic members of the Select Subcommittee about the dangerous and consequential actions being taken against Peter, David and Tony. I have raised it to the level of an existential challenge to the survival of science, and a persecution without justification of the three of you. I don't know if it will resonate with them, but I will let you know if I hear anything back.

I have also provided Jocelyn Kaiser with material to write further about the SSCP actions and important ambiguities and misinformation in Tabak's testimony. Her response back to me was "Got it". I don't know what that means other than she is pondering the issues.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 4:22 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) >; Alison Andre (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; (b)(6) (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Disappointing tweet from Amy Maxmen re. a disappointing article in Nature.

You can write to her and cc me (b)(6)

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | **Donate** to Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 3:09 PM
To: Keusch, Geral (b)(6); Alison Andre (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Disappointing tweet from Amy Maxmen re. a disappointing article in Nature.

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

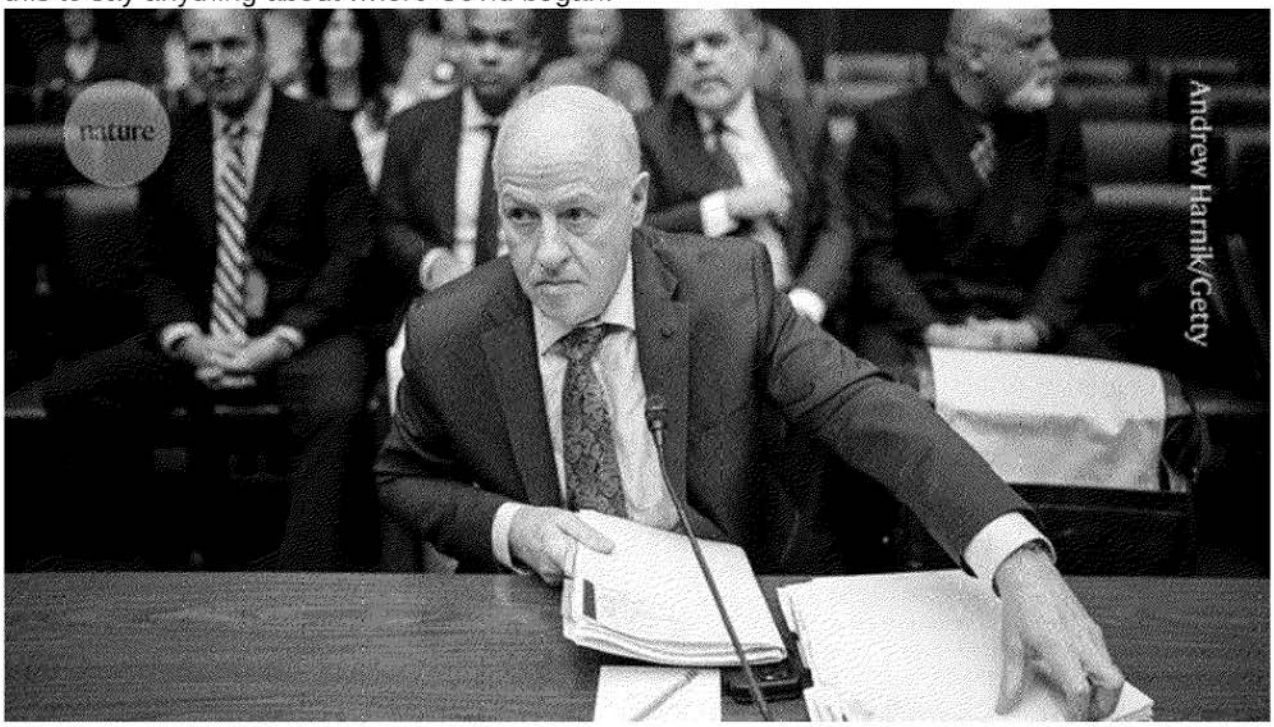
Shame to see Amy Maxmen following the trend of the article in Nature that seems to just parrot what the Democrats on the SSCP said - EcoHealth did something wrong, but they didn't cause COVID-19.

Of course, we were not given a chance to respond to allegations on the day, and now that they've moved forward with a Suspension pending debarment proceedings, we have to respond to the HHS first on a legal matter, then can talk publicly.

Amy's tweet is below, and my response (trying to be as diplomatic as possible).



Amy Maxmen, PhD
@amymaxmen
5h
EcoHealth Alliance didn't comply with NIH granting conditions, eg not sending regular updates on its research. Without repercussions, those rules are meaningless.
https://nature.com/articles/d41586- 024-01460-3… The problem is when public/media interprets this to say anything about where Covid began.



US halts funding to controversial virus-hunting group: what researchers think

From nature.com
1.2K



Peter Daszak
@PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance has repeatedly refuted allegations that it "didn't comply" & has yet to respond to the HHS letter. Calling for "repercussions" seems premature until some level of due process has played out. Let's hear the argument against debarment before we all move on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 1:36 PM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald' (b)(6); Alison Andre (b)(6); 'Hotez, Peter Jay' <(b)(6)>; David Morens' (b)(6); 'Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); (b)(6)
Subject: Testimony by David Morens, Ralph Baric, Peter Daszak

Here are testimonies by David, myself, and Ralph Baric. David had to go through this twice because his first interview was cut short when lawyers for NIH objected to the SSCPs line of questioning.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 11:49 AM
To: Alison Andre (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) (b)(6) ich Roberts < (b)(6)
Cc (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Meeting Thursday or Friday this week

Thursday before 1 pm works. Friday is iffy and probably a no for me.

Jerry

From: Alison Andr (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 11:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Subject: Meeting Thursday or Friday this week

Dear All,

We'd like to schedule another meeting on Thursday May 23 or Friday May 24 this week. Could you please take a moment to indicate your availability below?

https://calendly.com/d/cp3y- mxp-j7h/small-group-meeting

Thank you,
Alison

--
Alison Andre
Executive Assistant to the President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Ave, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018

(b)(6) (direct)
1.212.380.4465 (fax)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Fri, 17 May 2024 12:32:59 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 17 May 2024 12:32:14 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Origins of COVID NPR
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) ; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.png; image002.png; image003.png; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png

Good to hear that. In the meantime looks like the Committee is now coming after me personally. They're aiming to call for my debarment as an individual:

https://oversight.house.gov/release/hearing- wrap-up-nih-repeatedly-refutes-ecohealth-alliance-president-dr-peter-daszaks-testimony-tabak-testimony-reveals-federal-grant-procedures-in-need-of-serious-reform/

Press Release **Published: May 17, 2024**

Hearing Wrap Up: NIH Refutes EcoHealth's Testimony, Tabak Reveals Federal Grant Procedures in Need of Serious Reform

WASHINGTON — The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic held a hearing titled "Overseeing the Overseers: A Hearing with NIH Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak" to examine the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) process for funding and overseeing scientific research as well as investigate NIH's relationship

with EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. (EcoHealth). Members pressed former Acting NIH Director and current Principal Deputy Director, Dr. Lawrence Tabak, to explain numerous inconsistencies between the public and private testimonies of NIH employees and EcoHealth President, Dr. Peter Daszak. Dr. Tabak offered substantial evidence that Dr. Daszak purposefully misled both the NIH and the Select Subcommittee about EcoHealth's efforts to comply with grant procedures. In a shocking admission

that directly contradicts Dr. Fauci's previous statements, Dr. Tabak testified that the NIH was funding gain-of-function research in Wuhan, China through a grant to EcoHealth. Members highlighted the dangers of continuing to fund gain-of-function research in foreign laboratories where NIH cannot ensure proper biosafety measures are implemented. Both Dr. Tabak and Select Subcommittee Members agreed that, in "hindsight," the NIH could have done more to protect the American taxpayer

from EcoHealth.

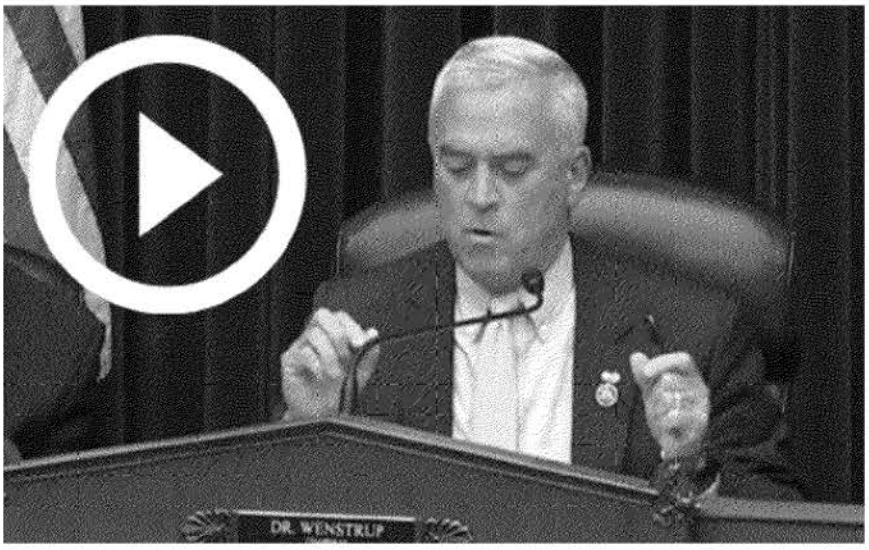
Key Hearing Takeaways

- NIH Deputy Director and former Acting NIH Director, Dr. Lawrence Tabak, acknowledged that NIH funded gain-of-function research in Wuhan, China.
- Dr. Lawrence Tabak repeatedly refuted EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak's public and private testimonies. It is now clear that Dr. Daszak misled both the Select Subcommittee and the NIH on numerous occasions.
- Serious shortcomings and failures in the NIH's grant awarding and grant oversight procedures enabled EcoHealth to facilitate gain-of-function research in Wuhan, China. These NIH deficiencies were exploited by Dr. Daszak and his team in an effort to avoid oversight and maintain funding.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) decision to immediately suspend funding and commence debarment proceedings against EcoHealth is backed by substantial evidence and necessary to protect America's national security. The Select Subcommittee also recommends that HHS immediately begin debarment proceedings against Dr. Peter Daszak personally.
- The NIH often lacks the necessary subject matter and scientific expertise to ensure U.S. taxpayer funds are spent and overseen safely. Dr. Tabak testified to these gaps in NIH's system today, and former NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins recounted similar problems during his transcribed interview found here.
- The Select Subcommittee's investigation into EcoHealth's impropriety is far from over. Chairman Wenstrup appreciates Dr. Tabak's honesty today and intends to use his testimony to hold EcoHealth accountable for its facilitation of gain-of-function research and its blatant contempt for the American taxpayer.

Member Highlights Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

Chairman Brad Wenstrup (R-Ohio), D.P.M, pressed Dr. Tabak to address Dr. Daszak's testimony that EcoHealth was "locked out" of the NIH's

grant reporting system. NIH conducted an internal forensic audit which proves EcoHealth was, in fact, not "locked out" from submitting its required NIH grant research update report on time. Notably, EcoHealth finally submitted its report nearly two years after the required deadline. According to the facts gathered by NIH, Dr. Daszak's sworn testimony appears to be false.



Chairman Wenstrup: “

EcoHealth, like every other NIAID grantee, was required to submit a five-year progress report, as you know. This report was submitted nearly two years late. Dr. Daszak testified that EcoHealth had tried to submit the report on time but was locked out of the NIH system. Dr. Lauer testified that a forensic

audit was conducted, and no such system error was detected. Is NIH now willing to share the findings of this forensic audit with the Select Subcommittee?
"

Dr. Tabak: "*We certainly will work together with you to obtain things that you require, sir*."

Chairman Wenstrup: "*Does the audit indicate that EcoHealth could have submitted their report on time?*"

Dr. Tabak: "*That's what our audit indicates, yes.*"

Chairman Wenstrup: "*When EcoHealth eventually submitted its year-five report,*

Dr. Daszak testified it took 11 days to unlock the NIH system. Is this true?"

Dr. Tabak: "*We have no evidence of that.*"

…

Dr. Tabak: "*All I can say to you is that our system did not lock them out and there was no impediment for them to provide that report on time.*"

Committee on Oversight and Accountability Chairman James Comer (R-Ky.) questioned Dr. Tabak about the employment status of alleged federal records violator and top advisor to Dr. Anthony Fauci — Dr. David Morens —

who was placed on administrative leave after the Select Subcommittee uncovered incriminating information. Dr. Morens used his personal email(s) to hide conversations about the origins of COVID-19 and undermine the operations of the NIH.



Chairman Comer: "*What is Dr. Morens's current employment status?*"
Dr. Tabak: "*He is an employee of NIH.*"
Chairman

Comer: "*Well, I think you see where my lines of questioning were leading. We have some serious concerns. We have fought in this Select Subcommittee, the Oversight committee, on obtaining information. And here you have an admission of deleting information, going to great lengths to not be transparent, in an apparent cover-up of something that I think we would agree, in a bipartisan manner, is one of the most serious issues that our country has ever faced, the COVID 19 pandemic.*"

Rep. Debbie Lesko (R-Ariz.) elicited an admission from Dr. Tabak that the NIH funded gain-of-function research at the WIV through a grant to EcoHealth. This directly contradicts Dr. Fauci's U.S. Senate testimony in 2021 in which he claimed the NIH "has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." This type of research is known to be dangerous and even former NIH Director Francis Collins

and Dr. Fauci were willing to admit that there are risks associated with this experimentation.



Rep. Lesko: "*Dr. Tabak, did NIH fund gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology through EcoHealth?*"

Dr. Tabak: "*It depends on your definition of gain-of-function research. If you're speaking about the generic*

term, yes, we did…the generic term is research that goes on in many, many labs around the country. It is not regulated. And the reason it's not regulated is it poses no threat or harm to anybody."

Rep. Rich McCormick (R-Ga.), M.D., proved that EcoHealth violated the terms of its NIH grant when it failed to produce "laboratory notebooks" with information about the WIV's gain-of-function research. On May 1, Dr. Daszak falsely testified that he was not required

to produce these notebooks as a condition of his grant.



Rep. McCormick: "*When the National Institutes of Health requested the notebooks from EcoHealth, was EcoHealth required to produce them under its grant terms?*"

Dr. Tabak: "*Yes, they were.*"

Rep. McCormick: "*When NIH requested notebooks from*

EcoHealth should EcoHealth have been able to access them or already have access to them?"

Dr. Tabak: "*That's correct.*"

Rep. McCormick: "*Did EcoHealth ever produce the requested notebooks?*"

Dr. Tabak: "*They have not.*"

Rep. McCormick: "*Dr. Daszak testified two weeks ago that he was not required to produce the lab notebooks. Would NIH disagree with that testimony?*"

Dr. Tabak: "*Yes, we disagree with that testimony*."

Rep. McCormick: "*The*

testimony here today clarifies the inconsistency between Dr. Daszak's testimony and the testimony of numerous NIH officials and NIAID officials, also, including yourself. Dr. Daszak continues to thwart congressional oversight through semantics and outright dishonesty, quite frankly. He has routinely failed to produce pertinent documents and made countless misleading statements to the Select Subcommittee right here."

Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-Iowa), M.D., uncovered

serious shortcomings in NIH's grant awarding and grant oversight procedures. Dr. Tabak testified that he would never again support a grant to EcoHealth Alliance to fund gain-of-function research in Wuhan and believes the NIH relied too heavily on Dr. Daszak attestations.

.



Rep. Miller-Meeks: "*As*

/

mentioned, the Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence Grant was an almost $4 million grant that partially went to the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the Wuhan University of Public Health. Do you believe this grant was an effective use of taxpayer dollars, and would you support issuing the same grant today?"

Dr. Tabak: "*Well, with the benefit of what we know today, no, of course not.*"

Rep. Miller-Meeks: "*There is great concern with Dr. Daszak interaction*

with NIH and NIAID pertaining to the one log growth term of the award. The NIH relied on Dr. Daszak to monitor and report virus growth after being a month late on his annual reporting requirements, which were outlined in the grant. Dr. Tabak, looking back, did the NIH rely too much on Dr. Daszak's self-reporting information?
"

Dr. Tabak: "*Again, with the benefit of hindsight, we did because we never received the information.*
"

Rep. Miller-Meeks: "*Well, as an*

ophthalmologist, hindsight is always 20/20."

Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-N.Y.) revealed NIH's honest viewpoint regarding its funding of EcoHealth's risky research at the WIV. Dr. Tabak testified that NIH believed it was not funding any dangerous research prior to or during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Rep. Malliotakis: "*We also*

know that at least 20 more EcoHealth research projects received funding since March of 2020, and they are conducting research Nipah, zoonotic viruses, bat coronaviruses, MERS. They are doing a lot of this research, mostly actually in third world countries. Subpar safety conditions. How do you ensure that our federal dollars are not going to do risky experiments in countries where there are subpar safety regulations? And do you believe that should be a criteria that is put forth

to ensure that the money doesn't?"
Dr. Tabak: "*Well, again, once we established special conditions for award on EcoHealth Alliance, we have monitored them very carefully with regard to expenditure and with regard to their various administrative processes. There was never a concern with the danger, if you will, of the experiments that NIH approved for EcoHealth Alliance to with under subaward with WIV.*"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2024 12:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens < (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: Origins of COVID NPR

I just did this long interview debunking the nonsense, piece by piece

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Geoffrey Brumfiel <GBrumfiel@npr.org>
> **Date:** May 17, 2024 at 11:06:26 AM EDT
> **To:** "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
> **Subject: Origins of COVID**
>
> *****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**
>
> ---
>
> Hi Peter,

We haven't spoken for a year or two since I was covering vaccine misinformation. Anyway, I'm being put back on the origins of COVID beat ahead of the Fauci hearing next month. I've been loosely following the twists and turns with EcoHealth and NIH and all the rest, but I'm needing to get a little more caught up.

Would you be up for a quick background conversation?
Best,
Geoff

Geoff Brumfiel | National Public Radio | gbrumfiel@npr.org | desk: (b)(6) | cell: (b)(6)

Date:	Sun, 20 Feb 2022 1:52:42 PM -0500
Sent:	Sun, 20 Feb 2022 1:51:49 PM -0500
Subject:	Some details of NIH O/D deliberations prior to canceling our R01
From:	Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To:	David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
CC:	Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments:	Political actions, letters re. EcoHealth's CoV research in China, NIH grant etc..docx

Hi David and Jerry,

NIH was forced to release some emails to the Intercept, who've rand a BS story about the redactions (they redacted draft copies of the NIH COVID-19 strategic plan and other internal reports). However, there are interesting details in the foia'd emails that show between 4/13 and 4/21/20, emails among NIH Office of the Director and Program staff at NIAID details how they were gathering information on EcoHealth's R01 grant in response to inquiries from Matt Gaetz and Marco Rubio. Then on 4/15/20 at 3:49 PM an email from Michelle Bulls to Mike Lauer cc'ing "Jodi OER" (NIH Office of Extramural Research) titled "Request for a call" and marked "Urgent" has a redacted paragraph but states "This is for convenience and I have some ideas. Waiting to hear back from Emily and will set up time to talk to Jodi tomorrow". Suggests internal discussion about terminating grant "for convenience", which is what happened.

The story's here: https://theintercept.com/2022/02/20/nih- coronavirus-research-wuhan-redacted/
The FoIA'd emails available here: https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21227801/nih- foia-request-55058-february-production.pdf

The point here is that all of this was done in response to a letter from Gaetz and Rubio's staff in response to a White Coat Waste story. Gaetz and Rubio were planning to file a bill to end funding to Wuhan Inst. Virol. And the Washington Examiner was planning a story.

Further evidence that NIH penalized our organization as a direct response to Right wing attacks without ever once asking us directly for information on allowing us some explanation of our work.

I've highlighted this as an angle for Betsy McKay based on the recent attack from Michael Lauer on our 2 U01s. I'll forward that email to you also.

Here is my now-revised timeline of events that led to our termination, and the misery that is now my current life. I've also attached the full timeline from 2018 to current in case you want to check in on any details – lots of links in there.:

NIH Termination of EHA R01 "Understanding the risk of emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses"
Correspondence available here: https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant.html ; https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant2.html .

- 11/5/18: Dr. Daszak submits R01 renewal proposal 2R01AI110964 following successful 5 yrs of research on prior award resulting in 18 peer-reviewed papers including 2 in the world's leading journal *Nature* and 1 in *Cell*.
- 3/6/19: Proposal is scored extremely highly – in top 3% of those received. Panel summary calls it an "outstanding application" and it receives a very high impact score of 20.
- 7/24/19: Grant is awarded for 5 years, with a start date of 6/1/19.
- 4/13/20 White Coat Waste VP Justin Goodman writes to Sen. Marco Rubio & Matt Gaetz to inform them that they've "exposed" that NIH has been funding the "controversial lab" in Wuhan, including "dangerous experiments on coronavirus-infected bats captured from caves". Sen. Rubio's staff, Ansley Rhyne, forwards email to NIH w/ request for information and statement that Rubio and Gaetz are "are working on a letter to ensure no taxpayer dollars are sent to that Institute. FoIA'd emails available here: https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21227801/nih- foia-request-55058-february-production.pdf) from an article in Intercept: https://theintercept.com/2022/02/20/nih- coronavirus-research-wuhan-redacted/
- 4/13 – 4/21/20: Emails among NIH Office of the Director and Program staff at NIAID show them gathering information on EcoHealth's R01 grant and NIH Office of the Director organizing strategy to block funding. Email on 4/15/20 at 3:49 PM from Michelle Bulls to Mike Lauer cc'ing "Jodi OER" (NIH Office of Extramural Research) titled "Request for a call" and marked "Urgent" is heavily redacted but states "This is for convenience and I have some ideas. Waiting to hear back from Emily and will set up time to talk to Jodi tomorrow". Suggests internal discussion about terminating grant "for convenience". Article in Intercept: https://theintercept.com/2022/02/20/nih- coronavirus-research-wuhan-redacted/ and FoIA'd emails available here: https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21227801/nih-

foia-request-55058-february-production.pdf

- 4/14/20 Dr. Daszak gives invited lecture on results from R01 research in China to the NIAID COVID-19 investigators weekly meeting at invitation of NIAID Program Officers. Program Officer emails next day to say "Thanks again for speaking yesterday, I thought it was a great discussion."

- 4/16/20 Informal contact w/ EHA from NIAID program officers warning of FoIAs and political (house and senate letters) re. grant. Recommended that 'we contact our political representatives & seek legal advice'.

- 4/17/20 White House Press Conf. Trump responds to question from *One America News Network* re. EHA funding: "We will end that grant"

- 4/19/20: NIH writes to the wrong EHA staff member (Dr. Olival), and the wrong address (Columbia University), cc'ing Senior University staff, advising EHA collaborating institution, Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) is 'under investigation' and ordering cessation of subcontract to WIV. 4/20/20: Letter forwarded to EHA.

- 4/21/20: EHA respond and assures full compliance, NIH responds same day noting EHA's assurances & commenting "We appreciate you working with us"

- 4/23/20: NIH releases "NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research", with 4 priorities, all of which EHA's R01 addresses: 1) research on virus natural history, transmission, surveillance; 2) development of rapid, accurate diagnostics and assays; 3) developing therapeutics (& citing Remdesivir); 4) developing safe, effective vaccines. https://www.nih.gov/news- events/news-releases/niaid-strategic-plan-details-covid-19-research-priorities Full strategic plan here: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NIAID- COVID-19-Strategic-Plan-2020.pdf

- 4/24/20: Grant terminated by NIH "for convenience", stating "At this time, NIH does not believe that the current project outcomes align with the program goals and agency priorities." This despite grant being in top 3% of those reviewed, its fit with the NIAID strategic plan for COVID-19 published the day before, its role in Remdesivir, papers in *Nature*, *Science* etc. https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076.

- 4/27/20: Call with NIAID program staff: Erik Stemmy, Cristina Cassetti, Emily Erbelding to discuss possibility of reversal of decision. NIAID staff express their disgust at the decision and support for EHA's work. Given political pressure from Trump admin, they suggest 'moving on', 'not talking to press', & rapidly submitting proposal for similar work in other countries.

- 4/27/20: EHA informed by *Politico* journalists that NIH has leaked the letter about termination of EHA's grant. Story published that evening: https://www.politico.com/news/2020/04/27/trump- cuts-research-bat-human-virus-china-213076

- 4/28/20: Dr. Daszak writes to NIAID COVID-19 investigators group and NIAID program staff to explain that EHA will continue the work unfunded and he would like to continue joining these calls if they would have him: Dr. Alan Embry (NIAID responds): "We would very much appreciate it if you would still be willing to join these meetings. Your expertise is greatly appreciated."

- 5/21/20 Nobel laureates & scientific societies protest termination

- 5/22/20 EHA appeals termination with letter from *pro bono* lawyers explaining why the termination was, essentially, illegal.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Sun, 23 Jul 2023 1:09:02 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 23 Jul 2023 1:07:54 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Can we have a call to discuss how to build momentum to push back against the Republican's anti-science 'investigation' agenda?
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Alison Andre (b)(6) >
Date: Thu, Jan 19, 2023 at 2:59 PM
Subject: Re: Can we have a call to discuss how to build momentum to push back against the Republican's anti-science 'investigation' agenda?
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >, Rich Roberts (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) > (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Dear All,

Please take a moment to fill out your availability in the doodle poll below or feel free to reply to me with your availability.

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdoodle.com%2Fmeeting%2Fparticipate%2Fid%
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=CnY1Uwla2gFJitx83MJ%2BTbAQ%2Be%2By5uYRQBs3q9Fg0ig%3D &reserved=0

Thank you,
Alison

On Thu, Jan 19, 2023 at 12:48 PM Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:
>
> Adding Peter's assistant Douglas Soriano.

>
>
>
> I also just heard from the FBI that yet another death list has been circulated with my name and EcoHealth's on it.
>
>
>
> Peter – you might also be interested in this effort from Texas State lawmaker Briscoe Cain: https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.based-politics.com%2F2023%2F01%2F19%2Ftexas- calls-on-the-federal-government-to-investigate-covid%2F &data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585 &sdata=WsjRYhcp7P8%2BWYG9tjpvKXR1DLOFU8iv%2FYdEs3WFIxw%3D &reserved=0
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> Peter Daszak
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> President
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> EcoHealth Alliance
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> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

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> New York, NY 10018-6507
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> USA
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> Tel.: (b)(6)
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> Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=H9UCNgjb3Q2itoM48bTxgClUUE6yklF7X8sP%2BC1PNyU%3D &reserved=0
>
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
>
>
> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
>
>
>
> From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
> Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2023 10:43 AM
> To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6) >; 'David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6)
>; Rich Roberts (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
> Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6) > (b)(6)
(b)(6) 'Alison Andre (b)(6)
(b)(6) >
> Subject: Can we have a call to discuss how to build momentum to push back against the Republican's anti-science 'investigation' agenda?
> Importance: High
>
>
>
> Happy new year everyone!
>
>
>
> It's been a while since we all connected, and after a hectic build up to the holidays (I was on 3, multi-week trips to Southeast Asia between Sept and Dec), I wanted to get back in touch with you and let you know what's happening. As you know, we received a letter from Reps. Comer and Jordan mid-December demanding documents and on-the-record interviews as part of their 'investigations' they're planning into COVID origins. The White House received similar letters demanding docs and interviews with the HHS Secretary, multiple people from NIH (incl. David Morens) and others. They pushed back because the Republicans weren't even in power, and we've now heard from the staffers that they're getting ready to send new letters over to us all. None of us are sure how actively or rapidly they'll get to their COVID investigation, or if this will involve public hearings. They've got a lot of other issues, and a priority to target Hunter Biden's laptop, as well as new issues like the debt ceiling and classified documents. However, we do expect that they will get to it eventually, and that the Republicans in the House will be aggressively targeting EcoHealth Alliance (and probably other organizations) with efforts to defund us.
>
> This all adds to a growing anti-science movement that Peter Hotez has been highlighting in articles and online recently around COVID origins, the mask mandates, vaccine mandates and other anti-vaxx and 'anti-expert' type attacks. The Republicans will want to turn up the heat to keep all of this in the press so it helps them in

their attacks on Biden, Fauci etc. It's pure politics, but has a real threat of damage to us, and to the research we all value. At the very least, we expect to see substantial efforts to legislate against so-called gain-of-function work, and as of yet, zero pushback from the scientific community writ large – the societies, academies, universities. The media are jumping in. Everyone wants to write an article about COVID origin and given the aggression on social media, these are being amplified rapidly and getting into the public eye. Just in the last couple of days:
>
>
>
> · A long-winded whiny article from The Intercept about FoIA'd emails that basically show how scientists discussed the lab hypothesis early on, but David Relman (at the end of the article) claims shows they were rushing to judgement:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftheintercept.com%2F2023%2F01%2F19%2Fco
origin-nih-emails%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=%2BGqajuxdo79ukyTTLwcJdFCL9zf8QQsQx%2B3vqYG0MMc%3D &reserved=0
>
> · Article from Washington Post that links Boston Univ's NEIDL's 'risky research' to Wuhan's 'risky research' and to the origin of COVID
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fhealth%2F2023%
leak-theory-virologist%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=sYugo9Jx48jmGAZwh3%2BCv7uPQyz5InMNz04oq8tzAH0%3D &reserved=0
>
> · A report from the GAO yesterday that mildly criticizes NIH's oversight of Gain of Function review:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gao.gov%2Fassets%2Fgao- 23-
105455.pdf
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=eSckG16R4EfD1iJpQxO6oTnkC08mzaNIeoflYlx0klg%3D &reserved=0
>
> · Three days ago a paper from North Carolina from a Republican perspective that criticizes Ralph Baric's lab..
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.carolinajournal.com%2Fopinion%2Fnc-
can-be-a-leader-in-safe-biotech-research%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=DQFxuUR0AqnAz51%2Btk3OGSTxvWTKXtncbeEFWK9Veac%3D &reserved=0
>
>
>
> The problem I see is that the Republicans are getting what they want – keeping the lab leak hypothesis and anti-science sentiments in the mainstream press and setting the stage for the McCarthy-style witch hunts that Peter Hotez has been talking about. We are actively reaching out to Democrats in Senate and Congress to try to build up their energy to defend against this, but we are just one small organization, and I'm worried about how successful we can be. I've been talking with (b)(6) about renewing our efforts to try and build a coalition to counter this, involving the societies, activist groups like Research! America, university coalitions like the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), ASTMH, APHA, NL Campaigns, The pandemic Action coalition, etc.
>
>
>
> Will you all be willing to have a one hour call in the next week or two to do some initial brainstorming of this, namely:
>

> · Who to involve
>
> · How to go about setting up a 'coalition'
>
> · What the goals should be, e.g. a position paper laying out reasons why research on pandemic prevention and preparedness is necessary, Op Eds, briefing notes, a website, visiting staffers on the Hill etc.
>
> · How to do this without drawing political pressure
>
>
>
> I'm cc'ing Alison Andre, who can work with your schedules to make this happen, and am really looking forward to talking with you all again.
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> Cheers,
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> Peter
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>
> Peter Daszak
>
> President
>
>
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
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> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
>
> New York, NY 10018-6507
>
> USA
>
> Tel.: (b)(6)
>
> Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585

&sdata=H9UCNgjb3Q2itoM48bTxgClUUE6yklF7X8sP%2BC1PNyU%3D &reserved=0
>
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
>
>
> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
>
>

--
Alison Andre
Executive Assistant to the President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Ave, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018

(b)(6) (direct)
1.212.380.4465 (fax)
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Cb153ed576acc4dea555f08db8b9f8291%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=H9UCNgjb3Q2itoM48bTxgClUUE6yklF7X8sP%2BC1PNyU%3D &reserved=0

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
pandemics and promote conservation.
CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments
unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Mon, 20 May 2024 8:53:17 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 20 May 2024 8:52:43 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Disappointing tweet from Amy Maxmen re. a disappointing article in Nature.
From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
CC: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Alison Andre (b)(6) >; (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

It's beyond terrible, I'm so sorry

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)
Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On May 20, 2024, at 7:15 PM, (b)(6) rote:

(b)(6)

(b)(6) d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------

On 5/20/24 17:57, Peter Daszak wrote:

I'll do that – good suggestion Peter

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 4:22 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald (b)(6); Alison Andre < (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6); (b)(6) >; Keith Martin (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Disappointing tweet from Amy Maxmen re. a disappointing article in Nature.

You can write to her and cc me (b)(6)

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 3:09 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6); Alison Andre (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) leksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; (b)(6)
Subject: Disappointing tweet from Amy Maxmen re. a disappointing article in Nature.

CAUTION: This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Shame to see Amy Maxmen following the trend of the article in Nature that seems to just parrot what the Democrats on the SSCP said - EcoHealth did something wrong, but they didn't cause COVID-19.

Of course, we were not given a chance to respond to allegations on the day, and now that they've moved forward with a Suspension pending debarment proceedings, we have to respond to the HHS first on a legal matter, then can talk publicly.

Amy's tweet is below, and my response (trying to be as diplomatic as possible).

<image001.jpg>

Amy Maxmen, PhD
@amymaxmen
5h
EcoHealth Alliance didn't comply with NIH granting conditions, eg not sending regular updates on its research. Without repercussions, those rules are meaningless. https://nature.com/articles/d41586- 024-01460-3… The problem is when public/media interprets this to say anything about where Covid began.
<image002.jpg>
US halts funding to controversial virus-hunting group: what researchers think

From nature.com
1.2K

<image003.jpg>

Peter Daszak
@PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance has repeatedly refuted allegations that it "didn't comply" & has yet to respond to the HHS letter. Calling for "repercussions" seems premature until some level of due process has played out. Let's hear the argument against debarment before we all move on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 1:36 PM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Alison Andr (b)(6) ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < (b)(6) ; 'David Morens' (b)(6)
Martin' < (b)(6) 'Rich Roberts' (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Testimony by David Morens, Ralph Baric, Peter Daszak

Here are testimonies by David, myself, and Ralph Baric. David had to go through this twice because his first interview was cut short when lawyers for NIH objected to the SSCPs line of questioning.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald <(b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 11:49 AM
To: Alison Andre(b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); David Morens <(b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6)>; Peter Daszak (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Meeting Thursday or Friday this week

Thursday before 1 pm works. Friday is iffy and probably a no for me.

Jerry

From: Alison Andre (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 11:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald (b)(6); David Morens <(b)(6); (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6)>; Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6)>
Subject: Meeting Thursday or Friday this week

Dear All,

We'd like to schedule another meeting on Thursday May 23 or Friday May 24 this week. Could you please take a moment to indicate your availability below?

https://calendly.com/d/cp3y- mxp-j7h/small-group-meeting

Thank you,
Alison

--

Alison Andre

Executive Assistant to the President

EcoHealth Alliance

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New York, NY 10018

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1.212.380.4465 (fax)

www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 11:17:19 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 11:13:23 AM -0400
Subject: RE: [The Washington Post] White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)

Good point Jeff – here's their quote of our rebuttal:

The inspector general for the Department of Health and Human Services this year faulted NIH's oversight of EcoHealth, saying the agency failed to "appropriately monitor" the organization's work. EcoHealth has persistently denied wrongdoing in its research and said Wenstrup inaccurately characterized the group's work in China.

"The fact is that the bat coronavirus research conducted by EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology could not have started the covid-19 pandemic," the group said this week.

I like the way they say "The group said this week." The truth is we say the same thing every week because there's an almost daily barrage of BS reporting that we rebutt…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2023 8:49 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts <
Subject: RE: [The Washington Post] White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH

At least they cited EHA's rebhttal of Wenstrup's comments - he had 4 egregious errors in one sentence!

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

-------- Original message --------
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
Date: 4/20/23 7:57 AM (GMT-05:00)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6), Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: [The Washington Post] White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH

Why WaPo used that topic to attack unfairly EcoHealth is ridiculous, part of their new agenda?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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(b)(6) Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Apr 20, 2023, at 6:53 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH

The National Institutes of Health has not had a permanent director since December 2021, when its longtime leader stepped down.

By Laurie McGinley and Dan Diamond

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/04/19/nih- director-monica-bertagnolli/

Download The Washington Post app.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/04/19/nih- director-monica-bertagnolli/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Thu, 16 May 2024 7:25:04 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 16 May 2024 7:24:49 PM -0400
Subject: Nature article on EcoHealth's suspension
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image002.png

This one isn't so bad, but it's really disappointing that the only outside people he went for quotes to were "Global Health Security" academics, most of whom either lean 'lab leak' or do 'both-sideism' about it. The article has a good quote from Larry Gostin, but two others just say that it seems ok to them that we're heading for debarment!

I also spent time sending Max Kozlov at Nature (who was supposed to write this) information from the now-public transcripts of NIH officials that directly contradict the HHS' debarment filing, but they didn't use any of that – very frustrating.

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 024-01460-3

- NEWS
- 16 May 2024

US halts funding to controversial virus-hunting group: what researchers think

Some scientists think the decision regarding EcoHealth Alliance is fair, while others say it might negatively impact virus surveillance.

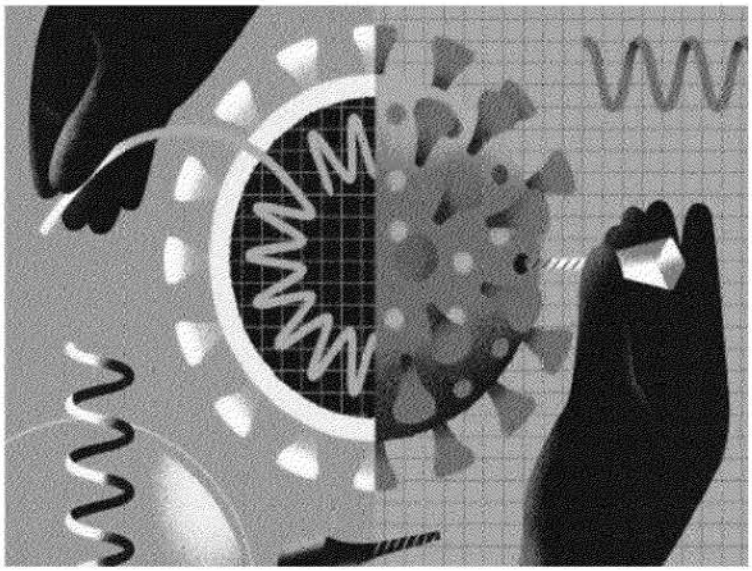
By

- Mariana Lenharo
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Email



EcoHealth Alliance president Peter Daszak testified before a congressional panel on 1 May, two weeks before the US government suspended the organization's federal funding.Credit: Andrew Harnik/Getty

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has suspended federal funding for EcoHealth Alliance, a New York City-based nonprofit organization that came under scrutiny during the COVID-19 pandemic for collaborating with a virology laboratory in China accused of potentially leaking the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. Researchers who spoke to *Nature* are divided in their reaction to the decision: some think that the HHS made the right call given EcoHealth's apparent failure to comply with terms of a grant it was awarded, undermining public trust; others say that the decision seems to be unfairly wrapped up in politics.



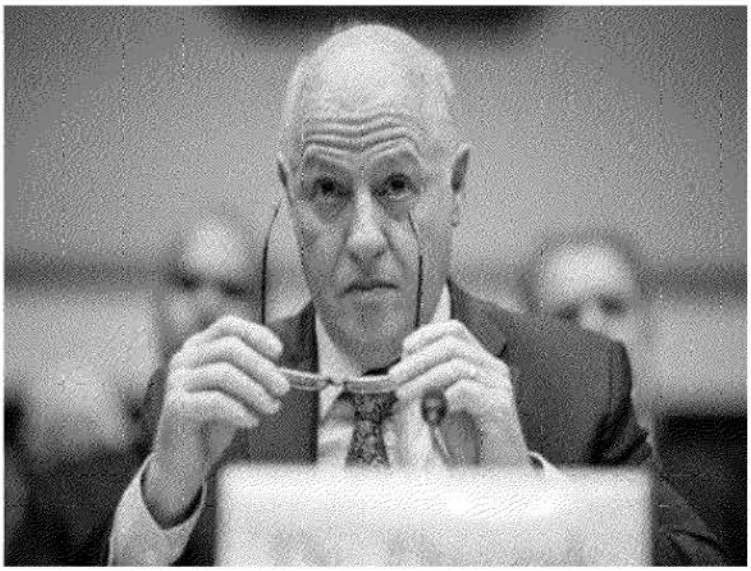
The shifting sands of 'gain-of-function' research

In a memo detailing the decision, Henrietta Brisbon, the HHS's suspension and debarment official, argued that EcoHealth did not provide adequate oversight of research activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), in China. The WIV was a subrecipient on a federal grant awarded to EcoHealth by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), meaning that it was a partner given funds to carry out some of the research. The document also describes how EcoHealth repeatedly failed to provide information pertaining to the research conducted under the grant that was requested by the NIH.

The decision by the HHS comes two weeks after EcoHealth's president, infectious-disease specialist Peter Daszak, was grilled during a hearing run by a US House of Representatives subcommittee investigating the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that session, Republican representatives suggested that EcoHealth had conducted risky research with the WIV and Democrats criticized the nonprofit's lack of transparency.

In announcing the latest suspension of funding to EcoHealth, the HHS also proposed debarring the organization from federal funding — a more definitive halting of grant money for a period generally of up to 3 years. Debarments of grantees are usually reserved for serious violations: according to a 2022 report, the HHS issued 134 debarments between 2015 and 2019, most of them owing to a criminal conviction or civil judgment.

In a statement, an EcoHealth spokesperson said that the organization is disappointed by the HHS's decision and will be contesting the proposed debarment. "We hope we will get a fair chance to present the volumes of evidence we have that all of these allegations are false, and that they do not rise to the level of something that should lead to an organization being debarred in this way," Daszak told *Nature*.



Controversial virus-hunting scientist skewered at US COVID-origins hearing

It is important for research organizations to demonstrate that they have a robust oversight system, says social scientist Filippa Lentzos, a specialist in biosecurity at King's College London, "even more so when we're talking about research with pandemic risks, where potentially the entire world could be affected by an accident". She adds that the decision to suspend funding seems appropriate: "Whatever the particulars of the EcoHealth Alliance case, it is clear the institution has lost the confidence of the HHS, politicians on both sides of the aisle and many other stakeholders to act safely, securely and responsibly."

EcoHealth could have done a better job of explaining its work to the NIH and to the public, acknowledges Lawrence Gostin, a health-law and policy specialist at Georgetown University in Washington DC. But, in his view, the suspension has a strong political bent to it. "It's not clear to me at all whether this decision was based on science, ethics or politics," he says. "There's been this drumbeat of criticism of EcoHealth Alliance, particularly from congressional Republicans, and there's been this myth that the WIV was responsible for the pandemic, but all of the evidence points in the opposite direction," to a natural spillover of SARS-CoV-2 from wild animals to humans, he adds.

Two-year delay

EcoHealth had been collaborating with scientists in China to study pathogens with pandemic potential for years when, in 2014, it received a grant from the NIH to investigate bat coronaviruses. The NIH would eventually suspend this grant in April 2020, in the early months of the pandemic. This came at a time when then-president Donald Trump had been publicly implying that China might be responsible for the pandemic. The funding was reinstated in May 2023 under extensive restrictions, and the WIV was debarred from receiving US funding through subawards later that year.



NIH to intensify scrutiny of foreign grant recipients in wake of COVID origins debate

The current suspension was motivated by the alleged lack of compliance with the 2014 grant's terms and conditions. One key problem listed by the HHS is EcoHealth's submission of a grant progress report more than two years past the deadline. The HHS said that this report contains information suggesting that an experiment conducted by the WIV possibly led to enhanced growth of a modified virus beyond a replication limit set by the NIH. EcoHealth and the WIV were modifying a coronavirus linked to Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), to study the potential origins of this type of virus in bats. When reviewing progress on the grant, the NIH told EcoHealth that if any virus generated under the grant showed evidence of replication beyond the set threshold, the nonprofit should ensure that all experiments were halted and communicate the issue to the agency, which was not done. This led the HHS to conclude that the research "likely violated protocols of the NIH regarding biosafety".

An EcoHealth spokesperson said that it is untrue that the nonprofit violated the terms of the grant, given that the experiments did not rise to a level that would be considered significant enough to report as unusual. Regarding the delay in submitting the report, the spokesperson said that EcoHealth made every effort to file the report on time, "but these were stymied by contradictory advice from NIH grant management officials, and an online system [for submitting the report] that is confusing and error-prone, leading to multiple instances where the system locked us out."

The HHS memo says that, according to a forensic audit performed by the NIH, EcoHealth was never locked out of the system.

Federal auditors have cited the NIH for its part in not pursuing the late report and recommended that the agency intensify its monitoring of foreign institutions that receive NIH funds.

Responding to the HHS's allegation that EcoHealth failed to adequately respond to the NIH's requests for information and materials related to the WIV's research, the spokesperson said that, considering the geopolitical pressure on US–China relations during the pandemic, and that the HHS, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the intelligence community were all unable to get evidentiary information out of the WIV, "it is outrageous to propose this as grounds to debar our organization". (The WHO organized an initial investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic in China, but further efforts were stymied by that country's lack of cooperation.)

Questions of oversight

Amesh Adalja, an infectious-disease specialist at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security in Baltimore, Maryland, says that any grant recipient is expected to comply with a series of conditions — which include submitting reports in a timely fashion and overseeing partner institutions — and that the HHS memo seems to indicate that EcoHealth did not fully meet those standards. "There's enough listed there to call into question what type of stewardship was going on with that taxpayer money," he says.



NIH reinstates grant for controversial coronavirus research

EcoHealth Alliance has played an important role in illuminating scientists' understanding of novel viruses, Gostin says. In addition to work on coronavirus surveillance in wildlife, the group has studied the spillover of Nipah virus and other pathogens to humans. He worries that the suspension could disincentivize research aimed at pandemic preparedness and prevention done in partnership with other countries. The next pandemic could easily arise in a country that trades wild animals, like China, so the type of research and surveillance that EcoHealth does is important, he says. The decision sends "a chilling signal to any future researcher that might want to better understand zoonotic viruses in the Chinese region", he adds.

Before the suspension, EcoHealth had three active NIH-funded grants aiming to study the risk of emerging viruses in countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar and Vietnam. Since 2008, the organization has been awarded a total of US$90.3 million in federal funding, $19.59 million of which was from the HHS.

doi: https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-024-01460-3

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2024 9:27 AM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: 'David Morens' (b)(6) 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Washington Post cites Democrats with more negative comments about EcoHealth
Importance: High

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2024/05/16/covid- origins-spotlight-feds-cut-funding-virus-hunters/

It's written as if "The Fix is in" – they've (SSCP, HHS, Democrats in general) decided that Michael Lauer's, Tabak's and the Republicans allegations are just true, and therefore we're out of business. We never did, yet, get chance to respond – certainly not at my public hearing.

The EcoHealth saga continues

What did the deputy director of the **National Institutes of Health** know, and when did he know it? Top NIH official **Lawrence Tabak** is set to face off this morning with the House panel probing the coronavirus response. Expect lawmakers to focus on the agency's oversight and funding of **EcoHealth Alliance**, a nonprofit organization that worked with the Wuhan Institute of Virology before the pandemic.

EcoHealth was thrown back into the spotlight Wednesday, after the Department of Health and Human Services said it was suspending funding to the organization and moving to debar the New York-based nonprofit from receiving additional funds, citing evidence EcoHealth had failed to monitor and report on risky virus experiments in China.

EcoHealth has said it is appealing the decision, but the news was hailed on Capitol Hill. Both Republicans and Democrats had called on HHS to review the organization's funding and its NIH grants; GOP leaders have gone further and called for a criminal probe.

"Our investigation into EcoHealth and Dr. Daszak's actions is not over," Rep. **Brad Wenstrup** (R-Ohio), who chairs the **House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**, plans to say to Tabak today, in remarks shared with The Health 202. "This issue has highlighted broader concerns with the NIH — especially that it is up to the grantee to oversee themselves. That is a recipe for waste, fraud, abuse and deception."

Years of questions

EcoHealth has been at the center of questions about **SARS-CoV-2**'s origins since the pandemic's earliest days, given the organization's ties to Wuhan, China — the epicenter of the outbreak — and its work to

research and experiment with coronaviruses. Then-President **Donald Trump** publicly said his administration was looking into EcoHealth's work, and Tabak was among the officials in April 2020 who moved to abruptly halt NIH funding to the organization. (It was later restored.)

The House coronavirus panel also recently grilled **Peter Daszak**, EcoHealth's president, on his conflicting statements and outstanding questions, including why his organization waited nearly two years to submit a required report about the results of its research and activities leading up to the pandemic.

EcoHealth has repeatedly denied accusations that it played any role in the pandemic, and its defenders have said it's been wrongly scapegoated. There's no existing evidence EcoHealth, the Wuhan Institute of Virology or another organization had SARS-CoV-2 in its possession before the pandemic.

Federal and congressional officials also cautioned that the HHS decision to cut funding to EcoHealth shouldn't be interpreted as a smoking gun about the virus's origins or a possible lab leak. Officials on Wednesday told me the theory that the pandemic began naturally — when a virus spread from animals to humans — continues to be favored by several government agencies and many scientists.

But at minimum, federal officials had grown increasingly uneasy about EcoHealth's work and safeguards, they said. "HHS wanted to be out of the EcoHealth business," one official told me.

What Tabak will be pushed on today

Republicans' line of attack was previewed in a letter to NIH last week, in which Wenstrup laid out Daszak's claims and compared them with other officials' statements under oath.

"The Select Subcommittee is eager to uncover the true sequence of events and has identified multiple occasions where Dr. Daszak directly contradicts NIH's or NIAID's assertions," Wenstrup wrote.

Republicans have hinted that they could refer Daszak to the **Justice Department** on perjury grounds.

Expect GOP lawmakers to probe Tabak's conversations with **Anthony S. Fauci**, his longtime colleague at NIH and the center of persistent Republican attacks over his pandemic recommendations, his agency's funding of EcoHealth and other issues. Fauci, who retired from government at the end of 2022, is set to testify in front of the panel in June.

Democrats, meanwhile, have tried to draw a line between what they characterized as bad actions by EcoHealth and Daszak, and the more sweeping charge that the organization helped spark the pandemic.

"While the Select Subcommittee's probe has uncovered efforts by Dr. Peter Daszak to mislead his funders at the National Institutes of Health and the **National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases**, it has not substantiated any allegations that federal grant funding for EcoHealth Alliance created the COVID-19 pandemic," Rep. **Raul Ruiz** (D-Calif.), the top Democrat on the House coronavirus panel, plans to say in remarks today previewed with The Health 202.

The EcoHealth saga continues

Lawrence Tabak, principal deputy director of the National Institutes of Health, is returning to Capitol Hill today. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

What did the deputy director of the **National Institutes of Health** know, and when did he know it?

Top NIH official **Lawrence Tabak** is set to face off this morning with the House panel probing the coronavirus response. Expect lawmakers to focus on the agency's oversight and funding of **EcoHealth Alliance**, a nonprofit organization that worked with the Wuhan Institute of Virology before the pandemic.

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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2024 8:15 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Moren (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
(b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Science article on HHS action to suspend EcoHealth Alliance

https://x.com/peterhotez/status/1790893300595274228?s=46

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: (b)(6)

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On May 15, 2024, at 7:06 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

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From Jocelyn Kaiser at Science: https://www.science.org/content/article/federal- officials-suspend-funding-ecohealth-alliance-nonprofit-entangled-covid-19

RELATED ARTICLE
'We've done nothing wrong.' EcoHealth leader fights charges that his research helped spark COVID-19
BY
● JON COHEN

NEWS

17 NOV 2021

Federal officials today suspended federal funding for the EcoHealth Alliance, possibly dealing a mortal blow to a U.S. research nonprofit that has been under fire since early in the COVID-19 pandemic. The group has been the focus of concerns that SARS-CoV-2 may have emerged from bat virus research funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) and conducted by EcoHealth's collaborators in Wuhan, China.

In a letter to the New York City organization, an official for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), NIH's parent agency, informed the group it is suspended from federal funding programs and that the department is proposing to formally debar—or ban—the organization from receiving funding. Grants from NIH and other U.S agencies provide the bulk of its budget, which was about $14 million in 2022.

EcoHealth said in a statement it "is disappointed by HHS'[s] decision today and we will be contesting the proposed debarment. We disagree strongly with the decision and will present evidence to refute each of these allegations and to show that NIH's continued support of EcoHealth Alliance is in the public interest."

The move comes 2 weeks after a bipartisan House of Representatives panel grilled EcoHealth President Peter Daszak about allegations the group had violated NIH grant rules. Members of the House's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic cited missteps such as the group filing a late progress report on its bat virus studies and highlighted allegations that EcoHealth misrepresented the risks of experiments conducted by its collaborators at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).

The announcement also comes 1 day before a top NIH official is scheduled to testify before the same panel. Representative Brad Wenstrup (R–OH), chair of the subcommittee, called HHS's actions "a victory for the U.S. taxpayer, but also for American national security and the safety of citizens worldwide." The panel's ranking member, Representative Raul Ruiz (D–CA), also praised HHS's action. While noting Democrats on the panel do not believe EcoHealth helped create the pandemic, he pointed to EcoHealth's "failure" to "meet the utmost standards of transparency and accountability to the American public."

The suspension involves EcoHealth's management of a grant to study bat coronaviruses with WIV, which received a small subaward. In April 2020, then-President Donald Trump pressured NIH to ax the grant after some conservative politicians and commentators alleged that SARS-CoV-2 could have leaked from WIV. That move sparked condemnation by scores of scientists who defended EcoHealth's actions and history of pandemic prevention research. HHS reinstated the grant a few months later but immediately suspended it. Last year it was restarted without WIV, which failed to respond to NIH's requests for lab notebooks related to the work.

Meanwhile, documents obtained through public records requests by *The Intercept* raised numerous questions about EcoHealth's oversight of the work. For example, they found that WIV had filed a 2019 progress report more than 2 years late. Critics also suggested experiments at the lab creating hybrid bat viruses qualified as dangerous "gain-of-function" (GOF) research that should have received high-level scrutiny from HHS. EcoHealth noted it consulted on the work with NIH, which found the experiments did not meet its definition for risky GOF studies.

At last month's hearing, both Democrats and Republicans hammered Daszak and EcoHealth for allegedly mismanaging grants and making misleading statements about the work at WIV. NIH had told the committee last fall that a forensic audit found no evidence to support EcoHealth's claims that it was unable to file the 2019 progress report because it was locked out of NIH's grants system.

In an 11-page memo, HHS suspension and debarment official Henrietta Katrina Brisbon echoes the select committee's concerns, including questions about whether EcoHealth should have reported an experiment finding unexpected growth in mice of a chimeric virus distantly related to SARS-CoV-2. "I have determined that the immediate suspension of EHA [EcoHealth Alliance] is necessary to protect the public interest and due to a cause of so serious or compelling a nature that it affects EHA's present responsibility," the memo states.

It is relatively rare for HHS to debar an NIH grantee. Debarments typically last about 3 years, but agencies have the option of lengthening or shortening the penalty.

For years, EcoHealth has led research aimed at identifying viruses found in the wild that could pose a threat to humans. That work has produced hundreds of publications over the past 2 decades, including papers in high-profile journals such as *Science* and *Nature*. The group has a total of three active NIH grants totaling $2.6 million in fiscal year 2023 to study the risks that animal viruses will jump to humans in Southeast Asia and how Nipah virus moves from bats to people in Bangladesh. It also has large awards from the Department of Defense and other U.S. agencies.

Lawrence Gostin, an expert on global health law at Georgetown University, says that although EcoHealth has 30 days to contest the suspension, he expects any such effort will fail.

"All in all, this has an unpleasant political smell behind it," Gostin says, adding that he believes the move reflects "a political campaign to dissuade scientific cooperation with China."

Virologist Stuart Neil of King's College London says the alleged grant offenses are not "crimes, nor are they evidence of misuse of public money." He calls the HHS action "performative political nonsense carried through by the cowardice of the ranking Democrat members [on] the select committee."

Peter Hotez, a vaccine researcher at Baylor College of Medicine, adds that "EcoHealth Alliance is one of the few organizations we have to track the emergence of new and dangerous virus pathogens. If they disappear, our national security suffers."

But critics of EcoHealth applauded the decision. More details may come out at tomorrow's hearing, where NIH Principal Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak will answer questions about EcoHealth and NIH's grants process.

With reporting by Meredith Wadman.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2024 6:13 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) >; peter hotez (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) , Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)

Subject: Fwd: Testimony for tomorrow's hearing with NIH Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak

From the cell phone of David Morens

--------- Forwarded message --------
From: **Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]** (b)(6)
Date: Wed, May 15, 2024, 17:30
Subject: Testimony for tomorrow's hearing with NIH Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak
To:

Overseeing the Overseers: A Hearing with NIH Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak

Subject
Overseeing the Overseers: A Hearing with NIH Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak
Date
May 16, 2024
Time
9:00 am
Place
2154 Rayburn House Office Building
Witnesses and testimonies: Dr. Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D.
Principal Deputy Director
National Institutes of Health

Document

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Date: Sun, 23 Jul 2023 1:08:46 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: 6 virologists names posted on a 4Chan "Kill List"
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Date: Mon, Nov 7, 2022 at 2:39 PM
Subject: RE: 6 virologists names posted on a 4Chan "Kill List"
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) > (b)(6)
(b)(6) leksei Chmura (b)(6) >,
David Morens (b)(6) >

It's truly appalling what so many Republican politicians, whether they totally agree or are just looking for a political edge in their election, can do knowing full well what they are unleashing. While most of the threats are just that, threats that are never considered to be actionable, there is plenty of reason to be concerned if there is one particularly evil Maggot out there.

I don't know why but today I'm feeling more upbeat about the outcome than the polls and history suggest likely. Tomorrow I vote and then I turn off my devices until Wednesday, as fortunately one of my best friends is performing in the Harvard Institute for Learning in Retirement Shakepeare players presentation of Midsummer's Night Dream, followed by Chinese food at a really good place in Cambridge. The latter two, set for tomorrow evening, seem more than coincidental to me and are the source of some optimism.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 1:42 AM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; (b)(6)
(b)(6) eusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura
(b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: 6 virologists names posted on a 4Chan "Kill List"

Let's see what new twists await us post Tuesday

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics |
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
| Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
| Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology &
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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced
Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: (b)(6)

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Nov 7, 2022, at 4:31 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

You too – there are some really despicable characters in this world.

Let's hope the police and/or the FBI can put a stop to thie.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 11:03 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: 6 virologists names posted on a 4Chan "Kill List"

EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes I'm included as well unfortunately, we've notified Houston PD, Texas Med Center police, and FBI. I've given a heads up to everyone on the list, it was first picked up by Texas Children's Hospital security, except Ralph Baric since I don't know him, but believe Angie did.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Nov 6, 2022, at 9:38 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Dear all,

Just wanted to let you know that I found out my name was on a 'kill list' posted on the Right wing anonymous internet site 4Chan. Someone posted the names of 6 virologists, including myself, and encouraged people who have had enough and were ready to commit suicide, to take go out and murder this group first. Even more horrific, they named my wife (who's got a different last name to mine, so is now traceable) and my eldest daughter, posting her name and University name also.

I'm traveling in Malaysia/Singapore with Janet this week, but have already contacted the FBI and both daughter's universities, but as you can imagine this is pretty awful, though sadly not unexpected.

I expect this will get worse after the mid-terms, when the truly heinous folks on the Right start the launch of their McCarthyesque witch hunts against scientists re. covid origins, vaccines, masks etc.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 8:56 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura
(b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs moderated a Lancet Commission webinar on COVID-19 origins this morning

Kopp fabricated a story against me in the anti GMO press insinuating

I'm behind GOF research. It unleashed a slew of copycat articles in the far right press and a wave of threats online. It's among the more unethical things I've ever seen from someone who calls themself a journalist.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Nov 1, 2022, at 7:32 PM, (b)(6) wrote:

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Rich: Your summary of my summary is right on point – that was exactly the vibe of Sachs's comments during the webinar. He let Ebright and Kopp spell out the crazier aspects of the lab leakers' viewpoint.
Chan was more balanced than I expected her to be (although her summary clearly had a thumb on the scale).

Best regards,

Jeff

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 8:28 PM
To: (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs moderated a Lancet Commission webinar on COVID-19 origins this morning

Jeff:

Great summary, but nothing really new as all the presenters had well-known views. My only comment is that Sachs recently seems to be a little less adamant that it was a lab leak and just now relies on innuendo.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 8:15 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: Jeff Sachs moderated a Lancet Commission webinar on COVID-19 origins this morning
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

All: I listened in this morning on the webinar on COVID-19 origins that Jeff Sachs moderated under the auspices of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). I wasn't able to stay until the end of the Q&A, but I did hear the three main presentations. Sachs said that he plans to post the recording of the session (on SDSN?). This was the first of three planned webinars – the second (on global health financing) will take place on November 22, the third (on health system strengthening) on December 8.

Sachs served as moderator. His introduction was fairly mundane. His basic premise was that there are two "absolutely viable" hypotheses for the origin of COVID-19 – either zoonotic or due to a lab leak. (Note that the language he uses – "absolutely viable" – obscures the fact that the evidence differs significantly for each of the two hypotheses. But this was a bias that ran through all of the presentations.) He then argued that we need to follow both lines of inquiry equally, to have a proper understanding of both possibilities. He alluded to the bimodal distribution of most discussion of these questions – with "mainstream media" coming down on natural origins, and "alternate media" arguing for laboratory origins (including in this Senator Burr's Senate Minority Report). He then turned to two "leading scientists" and a "leading reporter" for further perspectives.

The speakers were Alina Chan (Broad Institute), Richard Ebright (Rutgers University) and Emily Kopp (US Right to Know) – no great surprises there.

Alina Chan's main argument was that there is not enough evidence to decide which hypothesis is true, and that all the evidence is circumstantial. She did say that there is no argument over the fact that the pandemic originated in spillover from bats – just a difference of opinion on how and where this happened.

She presented a set of factors that would explain the chain of causation for each of the two hypotheses:

Natural origins

- Earliest cases handled live animals?

- Were there infected animals in markets or farms?

- Were there animal variants of the virus?

- Was there antibody evidence of infected animals or traders (not presenting with pneumonia)?

- Was there a strong wildlife conduit between known bat reservoirs and the outbreak site?

She then claimed that none of these have been established for

SARS-CoV-2, and thus we can't say that natural origins hypothesis is true.

Lab leak

- WIV was the HQ for virus hunting program targeting both animals and humans

- WIV found and developed SARS-CoV-2-like viruses by 2013

- WIV did advanced work with virus isolates and "seamless clones"

- Live virus work was done in BSL2 and BSL3 environments, which could not contain airborne viruses

- WIV and collaborators were planning to insert furin cleavage sites in different viruses (she referred to a "pipeline" of risky research and made a big deal of the rejected DARPA proposal, for which the research was never done)

Her conclusion: evidence is not definitive for either hypothesis, but these aspects of research at the WIV were "very concerning" and thus we need to investigate both conclusions.

Richard Ebright was then asked what should be done about improving the oversight of research in this area from the perspective of biosafety, biosecurity, and biorisk management. He concurred with Sachs and Chan that the available data do not enable a choice between the two hypotheses of COVID-19 origin. But regardless of where one stood on this question, the research by EcoHealth Alliance, WIV, and their collaborators – according to Ebright – used inadequate biosafety protocols and lacked transparency. Again, according to him, this points to, but does not prove, a research spillover as the origin of COVID-19.

I've attached a screen shot of the slide he shared that lays out his bill of complaint. As you can see, he's fixated on the work that WIV and EHA did from 2016-2019, arguing that, while this doesn't prove laboratory origins, it "exceeds the standard of probable cause" and provides "ample basis to initiate investigation and ample basis to improve oversight." (Like Chan, he also made much of EHA's rejected DARPA proposal, trying to use it as a "smoking gun" for malign intent by EHA and WIV, despite the fact that this research was never done!)

He spent most of his time, however, outlining a basis for and recommendations for improved research regulation and oversight in biosafety, biosecurity, and bio risk management.

Sachs and Ebright had an exchange about the recent news of the creation of a variant of COVID-19 that appeared to be more virulent than Omicron, without the "knowledge or approval of NIH." This was evidence for both of them of the need for enhanced oversight.

Emily Kopp, an investigative journalist with US Right to Know, then made a breathless presentation about her attempts to bring the truth about COVID-19 origins to light through FOIAs and dogged persistence. The gravamen of her complaint is that much of the relevant research has been underwritten by NIH, DOD, and USAID with taxpayer funds, and conducted in the US (at EHA, University of North Carolina, University of Texas, and UC Davis), yet she and her colleagues have had to file dozens of FOIA requests and lawsuits to get access to what they consider to be relevant information.

She reviewed five categories of evidence:

1. EHA progress reports to the NIH: She noted that the Intercept is going after 31 EHA NIH proposals and over 1000 other documents not yet released. They also plan to go after EHA Board members and collaborators at the U of Maryland and UC Davis.

2. USAID databases from PREDICT.

3. NIH bioinformatics databases for sequence data from WIV: She was quite exercised about the "apathy" of NIH at not going through archived sequences to provide the information that USRTK wants.

4. The Baric Lab at UNC: She said as yet there are few clues to planned work on genetic engineering techniques here.

5. Department of Defense: Again, she railed about the lack of transparency about the rejected EHA DARPA proposal, which she claimed

DARPA tried to conceal. She also mentioned data from PREEMPT.

She then claimed that the public can't trust the credibility and integrity of the NIH on these matters, since they tried to obscure the existence of relevant data – and event tried to obscure the involvement of other scientists in the discussion of COVID-19 origins in the conversations that led to the Nature Medicine correspondence in 2020 (I lost her here – the discussion became very "inside baseball"). She concluded with a plea that the public deserves more clarity about the pandemic's early days.

Sachs then threw her a softball about the Nature Medicine correspondence, inviting her to tell the listeners how it appeared that NIH was trying to obscure who came up with the zoonotic origins theory (and then didn't credit those authors on the publication). She then said that the virologists who were on this correspondence have continued "to be aggressive about natural origins and to marginalize other theories" – asking (rhetorically) if they have shown integrity.

Sachs then said that all of this information had to be pried out of the NIH and the USG, rather than being offered transparently. He showed how the NIAID had redacted most of the 300-page COVID strategic plan of April 2020, and also made a point of saying that Robert Redfield had wanted to attend today's webinar but couldn't, noting that he believes a lab leak is more likely – and that he was shut down by NIH when he tried to call for further investigation. Sachs then teased that there may be new revelations that the WIV and US scientists were implicated in evidence that COVID-19 emerged in China before December 2019. (This latter evidence-free speculation seems to refer to Mike Pompeo's evidence-free contention that the USG had evidence of this – but that evidence has never materialized.)

Sachs then reiterated his contention that both hypotheses need further investigation – and that the relevant information may be in the US, not China. We need an independent, rigorous, transparent scientific investigation. (Despite this language, I think you can sense from my summary of the webinar that Sachs is actually shading the argument toward his belief that COVID-19 had a laboratory origin.)

I wasn't able to stay on for the Q&A, but we should be able to review the rest of the session when Sachs posts the recording.

Hope this is helpful.

As ever,

(b)(6)

Date:	Tue, 31 Jan 2023 2:49:42 PM -0500
Sent:	Tue, 31 Jan 2023 2:48:23 PM -0500
Subject:	Second great article....
From:	Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
CC:	Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments:	image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg

And I don't know if you saw this, but there was an excellent essay by John Ehrenreich in *Slate* yesterday making the point that the so-called "COVID-19 origins debate" is unscientific, political and extremely damaging. Both of these, in addition to the 156 virologists who published a strong opinion piece in MBio, and David Quammen's essay in Washington Post, are at least showing there is some support for a coalition to push back against Republicans trying to shut down scientific research.

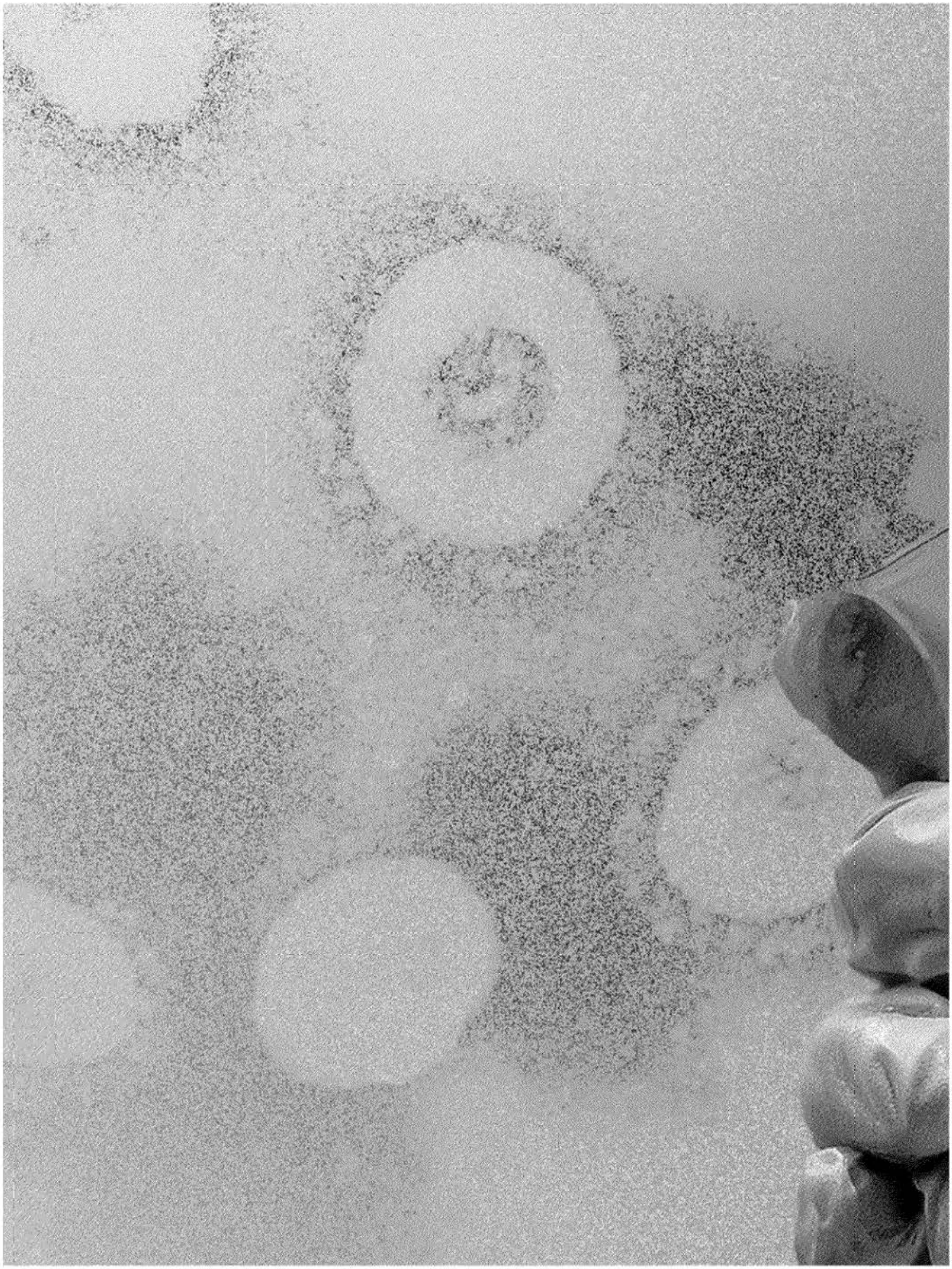
I'm really looking forward to talking with you all tomorrow to brainstorm how we can maybe keep the momentum among the greater community. I'll send round an agenda by tomorrow morning…:

https://slate.com/technology/2023/01/lab- leak-three-years-debate-covid-origins.html

The Lab-Leak Theory Still Can't Be Disproved. Should We Care?

The idea has been part of the public discourse for three years. It isn't really about preventing future pandemics.

BY JOHN EHRENREICH
JAN 30, 20235:45 AM



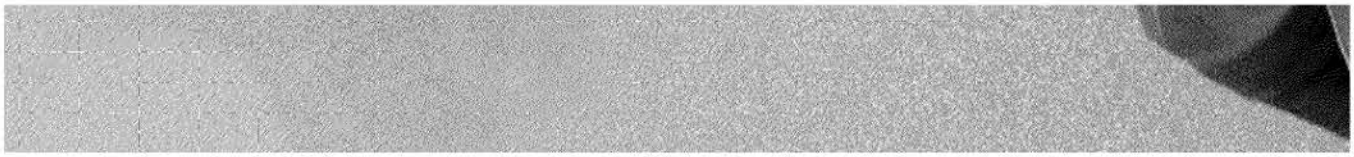


Photo illustration by Slate. Photos by Jelly Stock/iStock/Getty Images Plus and CDC/Getty Images.

On Jan. 30, 2020, Republican Sen. Tom Cotton addressed military leaders at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing and presented a startling idea. At that time, the novel coronavirus was spreading around China and had killed hundreds of people, though it had not yet been identified in the U.S. Chinese officials said the virus had originated at a seafood market in Wuhan.

Cotton charged that China was "lying" about the origins of COVID-19. He raised another possibility: "I would note that Wuhan also has China's only biosafety level-four 'super laboratory' that works with the world's most deadly pathogens to include, yes, coronavirus." What if the virus had instead originated there?

With that, the "lab-leak" debate came crashing into the public discourse. Cotton wasn't the only one to ask about the virus' origins; days before his remarks, a Daily Mail article raised the possibility of a lab leak too, and a scientific study in the Lancet noted that many of the earliest cases of COVID had no connection to the wet market. The debate gained substantial traction in 2021, when a group of researchers published a commentary in Science calling for further investigation into the origins of SARS-CoV-2.

The lab-leak debate has raged for three years now, without reaching a universally accepted resolution. There may not be a conclusive answer for a while: It took 29 years to definitively identify the source of Ebola, 26 years for HIV/AIDS, and 15 years for SARS.

I am not expert enough to fully evaluate each piece of evidence presented by the two sides. But right from the start, the "debate" *itself* was peculiar: It was justified by the hope that identifying the origins of COVID-19 would help us better prepare for future public health threats. As recently as November 2022, both the editorial board of the Washington Post and the editor in chief of ProPublica insisted that resolving the debate remains essential "to prevent future pandemics." But in fact *we already knew* where the threat of future pandemics lies and how to fight them.

Over the past 50 years, the rate of outbreaks of infectious disease has more than quadrupled. At least 55 of those outbreaks have killed hundreds or thousands of people and have had the potential to become pandemic. But with *only one* possible exception—the "Russian flu" pandemic of 1977–78—*every single one* of these was either a previously unknown disease originating in animals (e.g., HIV/AIDS, Ebola, SARS, MERS, novel strains of flu) or an exacerbation of a previously endemic disease (e.g., dengue, malaria, cholera). Regardless of where the COVID-19 pandemic came from, it's clear that the threat of pandemics in general comes from spillover of novel viruses from wild animals or factory-farmed animals to humans.

A pandemic *could* come from an accidental or malicious lab leak, of course. But researchers have reported that most infections resulting from lab research accidents are relatively mild. And a 2016 survey of biosafety level-three and level-four laboratories (the labs working with the most dangerous pathogens), carried out by a large, international team of scientists, concluded that "laboratory-acquired infections have been infrequent and even rare in recent years."

The lab-leak debate, regardless of which side is right, has little to contribute to the question of where the threat of future pandemics lies or how to respond to that threat. The public health implications of the debate are already settled: Few scientists on either side would argue against the conventional wisdom that the major source of the threat of future pandemics is spillover of pathogens from animals to people. And few would argue

against the need for tight safety precautions at laboratories doing research on potentially deadly microbes.

So, why has a debate about issues that are largely of academic interest become so vitriolic? So politicized? What is the debate *really* about? Several observations suggest that it is not a scientific debate at all and is not *really* driven by concern over the origins of the pandemic.

Most mass media have reported the lab-leak debate as a bitter debate between two groups of scientists. In fact, the debate is asymmetrical. On the one side, the overwhelming weight of opinion among virologists, epidemiologists, evolutionary biologists, and other scientists with experience and expertise in studying epidemic viral diseases is that COVID reached humans directly from an animal host or hosts. Although a few such experts have supported the lab-leak side, the most prominent proponents of a lab-leak origin are journalists, economists and public policy experts, politicians, postdoctoral fellows, and more-senior scientists who lack relevant expertise or experience.

While *direct* evidence for either a lab leak or an animal origin remains lacking, the lab-leak side has relied much more heavily on purely circumstantial evidence (e.g., pointing out that the Wuhan lab and the initial outbreak of COVID-19 occurred in the same city) and speculation (e.g., arguing that certain aspects of the molecular structure of the virus "could only" have arisen through experimental manipulation, not through evolution). Their claim that the failure to identify the animal that was the source of the virus discredits the animal-origin hypothesis is spurious—again, it can take decades to identify the exact source of a disease.

Even the concept of a lab leak has been a shifting target: Initially, the concern was often that the source of SARS-CoV-2 was bioweapon research. Later, accusations flew that SARS-CoV-2 had been created by laboratory manipulation of less dangerous viruses. Other voices raised suspicions about sloppy handling of virus-bearing bats or carelessness with lab samples or problems arising in the course of testing a vaccine.

The animal-origin side, by contrast, has predominately relied on the standard tools of epidemiology and virology. These include genomic evidence, spatial and temporal and epidemiological analysis of cases of COVID-19, the existence of closely related wildlife coronaviruses, the presence of species of animals in the Wuhan wet market known to carry related coronaviruses, and studies of potential evolutionary sequences that could have led to the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 in the wild.

At times, the debate has gotten nasty, with each side accusing the other of bad faith. Early on, it was common for the liberal media to call the belief that SARS-CoV-2 was a human-made virus created in the lab a conspiracy theory. Today, with most scientists dismissing that position, it is lab-leak proponents who proclaim that scientists who support the animal-origin position are guilty of a cover-up. These researchers have been "weaponizing their expertise to avoid potential accountability for their colleagues killing millions of people," lab-leak advocate Alex Washburne has said. (Washburne is a mathematical biologist working at a private consulting firm.) They "colluded in telling the media that [the lab-leak hypothesis] was a debunked conspiracy theory," journalist and businessman Matt Ridley wrote in the Telegraph. The National Institutes of Health's Dr. Anthony Fauci "colluded" with Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg to shut down talk about the origins of COVID, the state attorneys general of Missouri and Louisiana charged in a federal court.

The debate has also been politicized right from the start. Blaming China for the pandemic has become a project of the Republican Party. As COVID-19 was shutting down businesses and schools in the U.S., then-President Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo were already insisting on China's responsibility, despite the absence of evidence. Whether intentionally or not, the attacks on scientists and on China served the purpose of diverting attention from the Trump administration's failure to effectively address the pandemic and, later, bashing the Biden administration for not being tough enough on China.

As more and more has become known about the virus, most scientists have concluded that the evidence points more and more strongly toward the animal-spillover theory. Republican politicians have continued to tout the lab-leak hypothesis, however. In mid-2021, for instance, top Republican lawmakers held a forum to demand

hearings on "the public health question of our time": how the virus arose. "China lied and Americans died," said Elise Stefanik, then the No. 3 Republican in the House of Representatives. More than a year later, in October 2022, Sen. Richard Burr, the top Republican on the Senate Health Committee, released a staff report arguing that the pandemic was "more likely than not" caused by a laboratory incident in China. And, keeping a campaign promise, no sooner had the Republicans taken control of the House in January 2023 than they commissioned a new probe into the origins of COVID-19.

The lab-leak theory has an appeal that transcends scientific evidence. People like stories that explain things that happen to us. With bad events especially, we look for a simple story with a clear villain to blame. Both the lab-leak theory and the continuing debate itself provide such stories. In fact, humans have long blamed pandemics on others.

Pandemics create uncertainty and fear, which easily turn to speculation and suspicion. Jews were blamed for the Black Death, which wiped out 40 percent of the population of Europe in the 14th century. The 1918 influenza pandemic, AIDS, SARS-1, the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, and the Zika virus all caused substantial parts of the population to believe that the diseases were somehow human-made. Why should COVID-19 be any different?

In the case of COVID-19, the primary potential villain identified by lab-leak proponents, of course, is China. The lab-leak hypothesis fits into the needs of the growing number of Americans who are hostile to China and receptive to opportunities for China-bashing. Conservative New York Times columnist Ross Douthat gleefully noted in 2021 that if it could be proved that the virus had originated in a lab leak, it would show that the whole pandemic "was basically [the Chinese] Chernobyl except their incompetence and cover-up sickened not just one of their own cities but also the entire globe."

The lab-leak debate also plays into another narrative commonly pushed by the right: hostility to science and "experts" and to the elites that support them. The NIH's Fauci has been an especially frequent target of right-wing enmity. Other scientists who have discussed COVID-19 in the media have become targets of harassment, intimidation, and threats from people who believe that the pandemic is a hoax, that the virus was created intentionally to cause harm, or that vaccines are dangerous. Of 510 scientists who published articles dealing with COVID-19 and who responded to a 2022 Science Magazine survey, 38 percent reported being the target of attacks ranging from insults to death threats.

Despite most qualified scientists finding the evidence for an animal origin compelling, the American public has increasingly bought into the lab-leak hypothesis. In March 2020, at the very beginning of the pandemic, only 28 percent of Americans believed that the virus had been made in a Chinese lab. By the end of 2021, the number had risen to 72 percent. As with early warnings of climate change and as with efforts to get widespread compliance with public health measures to mitigate the pandemic, "listen to the science" seems not to have worked.

If the debate is not really about how to lessen the likelihood of a future pandemic, what gives the lab-leak theory oxygen? What feeds the continued insistence on maintaining the debate? It goes deeper than a simple desire to cast blame on China. Another part of the explanation may lie in where people get information. The reports of proponents of an animal origin are, by and large, published in peer-reviewed journals such as Science, Cell, the Lancet, and Nature, which are read mainly by other scientists. While a few peer-reviewed articles by lab-leak proponents have appeared, the most widely discussed presentations of their views are in more-accessible mass-market books, lay periodicals such as Vanity Fair, the Wall Street Journal, and the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, widely reported statements by politicians and their staff, and non-peer-reviewed "preprint" journals whose conclusions have been reported uncritically by the press.

People also generally prefer simple, straightforward stories that give them a sense of control over complex ones filled with ambiguity and complexity that foster a sense of helplessness. The lab-leak story is simple. Short version: Someone in a lab in China doing research on deadly viruses screwed up. The actions to take are clear:

Blame China. Demand reparations. Tighten up regulation of laboratories doing research on disease-causing microbes. Bar gain-of-function research that *alters viruses to make them more deadly*.

The animal-origin story is much more complex: What animals are natural reservoirs for the virus? Why didn't those animals die before passing the disease on to us? What other kinds of animals did they transmit it to? How did the animal disease evolve to become deadly to humans? How did people come into contact with sick animals? Why are diseases that start in animals occurring more often and spreading more rapidly than in the past? If the disease were already in animals, why didn't people catch it sooner? Why are there reports of people who may have been ill with what was later called COVID-19, several months before the pandemic emerged? Why haven't we found animals in the Wuhan wet market with the virus? And so forth.

The answers to these questions are not simple. They lie in the complex interactions among climate change, deforestation, the growing trade in wildlife and wildlife products, factory farming, urbanization and the expansion of slums worldwide, and globalization. At best, the actions needed to address these are complex, prolonged, expensive, and disruptive to existing social and economic institutions and processes. At worst, we are left feeling helpless.

Finally, we seek explanations of events that are consistent with what we already believe about other things and with what our family, friends, and neighbors believe. Political convictions and allegiances can also bias information processing and what we believe. Conservatives are likely to agree with Republican politicians who have strongly argued for the lab-leak hypothesis and for hostility to "experts," while liberals are likely to agree with Democratic politicians, who are more likely to be concerned with issues such as global warming, loss of biodiversity, and the ethics of factory farming.

The lab-leak debate was never a scientific debate about the sources of future pandemics. What it tells us is not where COVID-19 came from, but the limits of science in informing public debate. Whether facts and theories are believed, by scientists and laypeople alike, depends not only on the "facts" (people even disagree on what constitutes a fact) but also on who is making the argument, to whom it is addressed, and how it is made visible.

Scientific debates are not simply arguments among objective scientists as they sift facts and seek the best explanations. They are messy, often quarrelsome, and political all the way down. As the late philosopher and historian of science Bruno Latour has reminded us, "Facts remain robust only when they are supported by a common culture, by institutions that can be trusted, by a more or less decent public life, by more or less reliable media."

We've been here before. Recall the climate change debate: Was the earth actually getting warmer? If so, were humans really the cause? Although almost all scientists knew the answers to these questions years ago, fossil-fuel interests portrayed it as a real scientific "debate." The result was a 30-year delay in acting on the causes of global warming, a delay that is already having disastrous consequences.

Whatever the conscious intentions of the proponents of a lab leak as the source of COVID-19, their arguments and their insistence on playing and replaying the debate have become dangerous. They shift responsibility for the U.S.' disastrous handling of the pandemic *away from* the failures of our political system, our politicians, and our health and public health systems *and to* a geopolitical rival. They are a partisan political cudgel, diverting attention from the real sources of danger of future pandemics and delaying action on what could be an existential threat to humans.

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 2:43 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6); 'David Morens' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6); 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Two great articles!
Importance: High

First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the COVID-19 vaccines, hundreds of thousands of Americans died after

refusing it.

Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.

I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?

Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad*, and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.

What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.

The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.

The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.

All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no

longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.

Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.

Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?

Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.

Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?

Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?

Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.

Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus say the flu or MMR vaccines?

Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee] money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the

lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part

of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology.* You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?"

And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to

make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us. And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
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iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
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Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

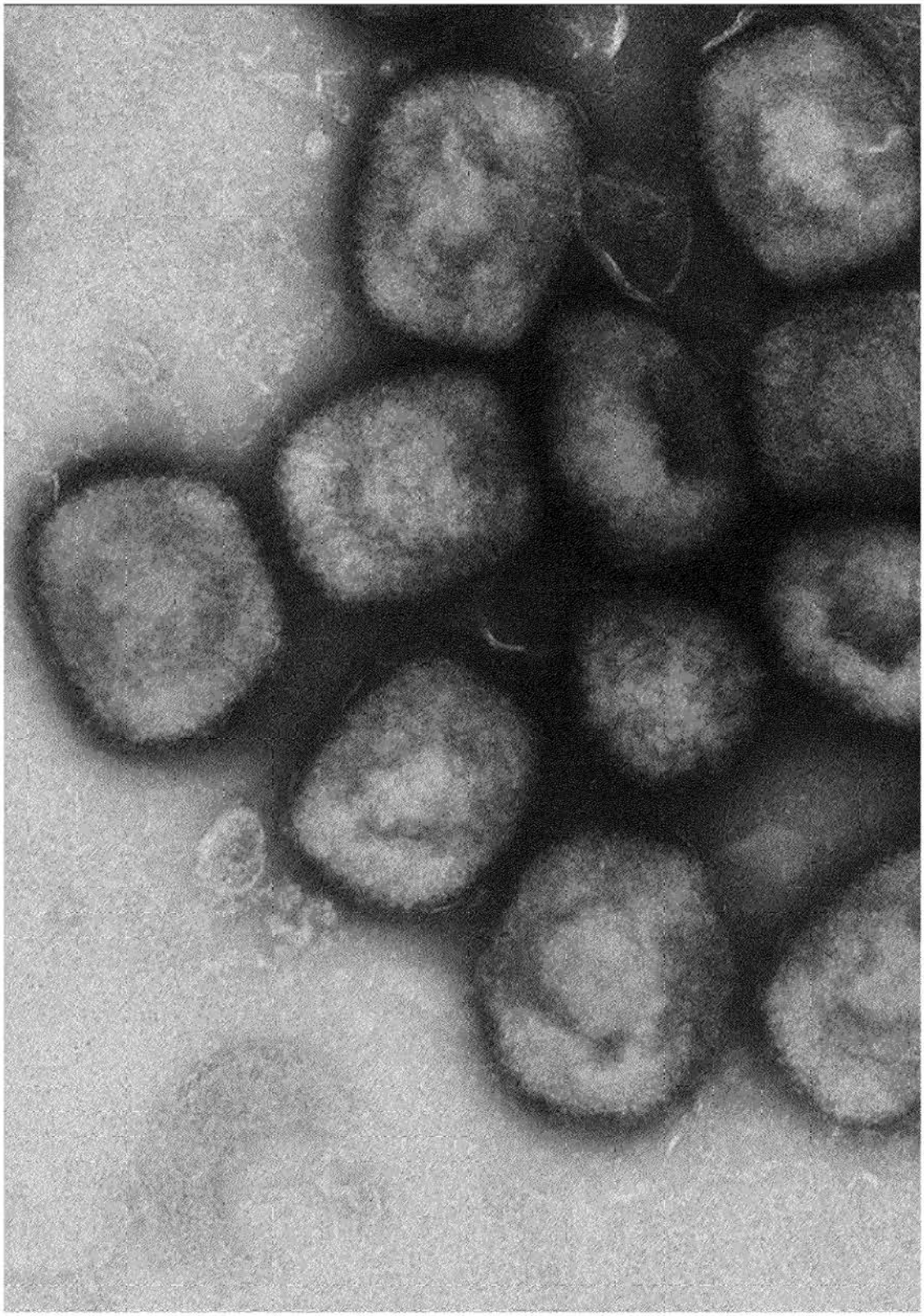
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH
Virologists defend their science as

officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.

NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident or malicious attack.

They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.

The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.

"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

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He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.

Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.

"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route," says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

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"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.

He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.

That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.

"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

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She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.

If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work."

But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

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Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it."

He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens

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Email

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, Ashish Jha and Nahid Bhadelia, to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T <(b)(6)> wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that Scott Weaver would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6) >
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of clinical management of rare hereditary pediatric diseases such as Job disease and CGD. Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position
That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak [(b)(6)] wrote:

Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!

Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [(b)(6)]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak < (b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura <
>; David Morens (b)(6)
Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
(b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) leksei Chmura <
(b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)
Gerald Keusch (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ;
Rich Roberts <
Subject: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

(b)(6)

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Sun, 22 Jan 2023 7:02:22 PM -0500
Sent: Sun, 22 Jan 2023 6:59:33 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Morens checking in
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
To: David Morens (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6) (b)(6)

I think given the political attacks (sorry 'investigations') that have already called for NIH/HHS interviews/documents, it's probably a good move to hold off on the NIH Director for a few months at least….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, January 21, 2023 11:50 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Rich Robert (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Morens checking in

Yes, i think we are all surprised about not filling the nih director position

My guess is that it is not high on the WH radar screen, and that it would just he picking another fight with the right wing nut jobs. Maybe they figure scientists know what they are doing even without political puppeteers. Who knows? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 21, 2023, at 11:42, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

I probably won't do that. If there was a groundswell of interest I would consider it, but my science is going well here, and for now they are not running me out of Texas. Although that could change on a dime as well. I'm surprised the White House has no urgency to fill the NIH Director's slot.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 21, 2023, at 10:34 AM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

PS, this may sound cynical, but by applying and letting it be known publicly, you could force them from pursuing a cover up selection

There is much concern here that a poorly qualified nih or other candidate could be selected under the radar. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 21, 2023, at 11:31, David Morens (b)(6) > wrote:

I wouldn't bet on anything re Tony's position. If anyone here is in charge of anything, they are doing a great job of keeping it secret. david

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 21, 2023, at 10:33, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) > wrote:

Many thanks for that thoughtful email. Interesting times indeed! So far I've held off applying thinking they already know what they must want, etc. Warmest Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 21, 2023, at 9:23 AM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

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Yes, sadly, you are right. We are in for alot more shit

In terms of us looking for a new director, since this is not a political appointment position, niaid has much leeway in doing what we want, subject to HHS and NIH oversight/coordination, but not outright control

There seems to be secrecy around the process of finding a new director, which is not the way we have done things in the past. The job description is not what i would have written, eg, in specifying someone who is politically savvy. We have 27 IC directors here at nih and i can't recall any prior search looking for someone with political chops.

I am afraid we could end up with a pliant nih insider rather than an outsider with strong science credentials. The model is former NCI director Harold Varmus who was perceived as too big to mess with, and used that reputation to push back against all kinds of BS

There is no guarantee that anything will happen soon. Hugh is Acting Director but is taking a hands off, just-keep-the-ship-afloat approach so far. I hope he will be more proactive, as he is smart and capable, and has alot of management expertise

But internally there is absolute silence about what if anything is happening. I know all the senior leaders here, and none are involved in any search "above board", at least. Several have implied to me that they are as much in the dark as everyone else. If so, that is not good news because it raises the possibility of a covert and possibly politically oriented process

That is one reason i encouraged you to apply: an nih outsider who has political skills and a scientific reputation, as well as skill in pushing back against the BS. If you think of all possible scientists who would be good in the job, the list is not long, or at least my list isn't. If you know anyone please urge him or her to apply asap!

david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jan 21, 2023, at 09:50, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:
>
> Thanks for the thoughtful note David, in terms of moving forward with your plan, a couple of things to keep in mind:
>
> The GOP House Oversight and Judiciary Committees each headed by Freedom Caucus members will begin their investigative hearings this year. While Biden is the major target at some point they hope to discredit NIH, and especially NIAID. They will also target their grantees.
>
> NIAID is looking for a new director? Will that happen soon?
>
> Best Peter
>
> **Peter Hotez**, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
>
> **Texas Children's Hospital**: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development
>
> **Baylor College of Medicine:** Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University , University Professor
Rice University , Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University , Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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On Jan 21, 2023, at 8:39 AM, David Morens < (b)(6) wrote:

Hi all, my apologies for being out of touch; had some non fatal health issues and surgery yesterday morning, but should be back to work part time this week

There is a front page story in the Wash Post this morning about GOF and the NEIDL. You should all read

Since Tony stepped down 12/31, I have been mulling the implications for me being able to speak up more

Our deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, is a good and reasonable guy, but i have not yet spoken to him about how muzzled i am expected to be going forward. I think the party line at nih is to be very fearful of the crazies in and out of congress, and in practice our guidelines of never speaking to the press unless approved by HHS or the White House remains in effect. That is why 95% of my interactions with the press are on background and off the record. (Incidentally, although i have spoken to Joel Achenbach on background numerous times in the past, i did not speak to him for today's article).

Here is how it works. Our press office knows that whereas Tony has the patter and nuance down pat, I will say pretty much exactly what i think scientifically, and therefore they do whatever they can ethically to cut me off from sensitive issues, knowing that HHS will cut me off if they don't

But I plan to sit down with Hugh and ask him to let me use my judgement in these issues. There is no govt reason anymore for me being forbidden to even speak with colleagues such as you all

And an interesting thing happened recently that i think bodes well. As you all know, over the last 15-20 years or so i have written 40-50 scientific papers with Tony, mostly reviews and commentaries that provide springboards for him to talk to the press. Usually i propose the topics and he says yes or no.

Ever since the GOF thing broke 15 years ago, with Ron F and Yoshi K publishing their two papers on H5N1, GOF has been a no no for me/us to write about. And so far, still is a no no. Another subject that has been a no no is my conclusion that our whole scientific enterprise to make vaccines against respiratory viruses is off base scientifically, and needs to be reoriented

A few months ago, Tony surprised me be giving me the go-ahead to write a review that says as much, implicitly criticizing what we at nIH and others do in terms of vaccine development approaches. Many others at NIH told me that we dare not write that. But about 10 days ago the paper came out in Cell Host and Microbes, with Tony's name on it, and has been greeted very positively by many high level folks in and out of govt

This gives me SOME hope that us discussing GOF head on might be possible, by which i don't necessarily mean talking to the press, but by writing in science articles why it is that the whole concept of GOF is being (often willfully) misunderstood. The aim would be to have statements by govt scientists that change the terms of the dialog, ie, be more proactive rather than letting the crazies control the dialog

I wrote such a paper with Jeff Taubenberger 10 years ago, which has sat unpublished in a file cabinet ever since, and could easily resurrect it with updates addressing SARS-CoV-2....

So..... I am hoping that I will no longer be bound and gagged from from enjoying my first amendment right to speak to you all about scientific matters if importance. It's a new year and time to move forward by being more proactive

David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:03:16 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.png; image002.jpg; image005.png

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: (b)(6)
Date: Fri, Jul 1, 2022 at 10:32 AM
Subject: RE: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens <
(b)(6)

LOL!

JLS

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2022 10:23 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens <
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Sachs and Relman quoted again today

You know physicists discovered electrons, protons and neutrons – but they missed the morons.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2022 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
>; David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Sachs and Relman quoted again today

EXTERNAL SENDER

It's getting crazy again

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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iPhone

On Jul 1, 2022, at 8:37 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

We've been fielding questions all week from a reporter at US Right to Know because they've FoIA'd another batch of emails. Here's an article today claiming that Ian Lipkin should have reported working with EHA as a 'Conflict of Interest' for his Nature Medicine paper with Kristian Andersen et al. back in Feb 2020.

Here's the link: https://usrtk.org/biohazards-blog/anti-lab-leak-virologist-ecohealth-alliance-partner/

You'll be irritated to see quotes from Jeff Sachs and David Relman. Everyone seems happy with the idea that somehow collaborating with EcoHealth Alliance means you have a conflict of interest in this world of fake COVID origin stories.

The article is also utterly disingenuous in pretending it took a FoIA lawsuit to find out that Ian Lipkin collaborated with us. All it would have taken is a 5 second Google Search.

Note also US Right to Know's motto: "Pursuing truth and transparency for public health".

US RTK

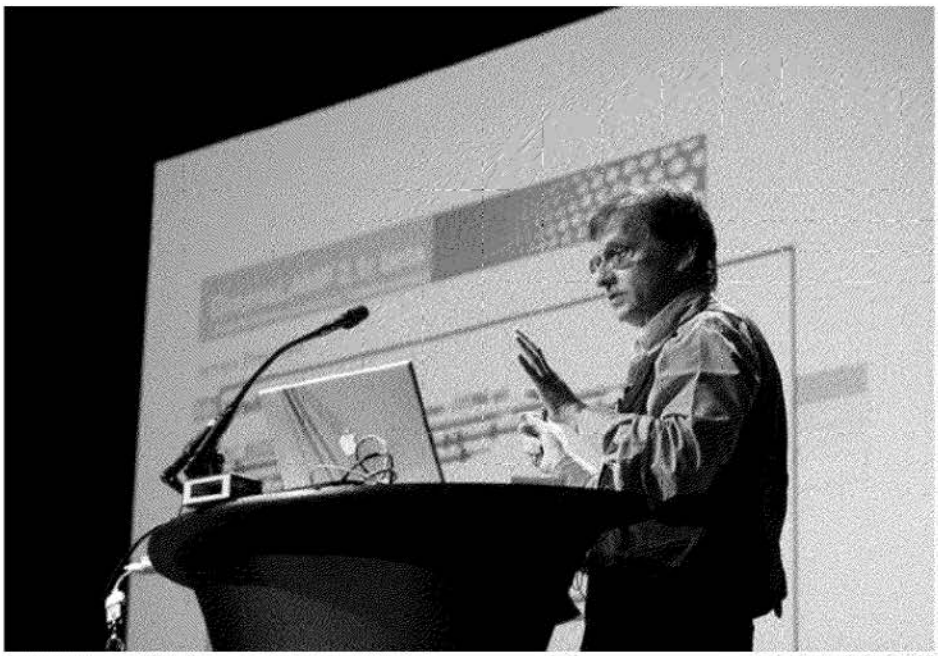
U.S. RIGHT TO KNOW

PURSUING TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Virologist who tried to discredit the lab leak theory was once a 'partner' to EcoHealth Alliance

Print Email Share Tweet

Posted on July 1, 2022 by Emily Kopp



Columbia University virologist Ian Lipkin has coauthored several articles with EcoHealth Alliance since 2011. (Photo credit: kris krüg)

A virologist who coauthored a paper marginalizing the lab leak theory did not disclose his ties to the research group at the center of it.

Director of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity Ian Lipkin has often worked with EcoHealth Alliance, a U.S.-based collaborator of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the group confirmed in an email.

EcoHealth Alliance listed Lipkin as a "partner" from 2012 to 2014, an archived version of the group's website shows. Lipkin has coauthored at least ten scientific papers with EcoHealth researchers from 2011 to 2021, EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in an email. These publications include a paper about novel coronaviruses EcoHealth and its partners sampled around the world.

EcoHealth Alliance hunts for novel viruses in wildlife and funds research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Lipkin did not disclose his partnership with EcoHealth in "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," a highly influential paper that states that COVID-19 arose from nature.

A central premise of that paper: COVID-19 is too dissimilar from viruses commonly employed in experiments to have spilled out of a lab.

"It is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus," the paper states. "The genetic data irrefutably show that SARS-CoV-2 is not derived from any previously used virus backbone."

But Lipkin did not disclose his connection to a nonprofit that uncovers new and novel viruses. Some of those viruses were likely studied at its partnering lab in Wuhan, which housed one of the world's largest collection of bat coronaviruses.

Lipkin did not return several requests for comment.

At 5.7 million views, the *Nature Medicine* article may be one of the most widely read scientific papers in history — though the piece is formally a "correspondence."

David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist and emerging infectious diseases expert for the National Academies, said conflicts of interest are especially troublesome when writing on high profile issues.

"For any major, controversial issue, I believe that all of us have an even greater responsibility to reveal those conflicts upfront—and let others have an opportunity to judge what effect those conflicts might have had," said Relman.

Relman also called into question the logic of the paper's premise. The Wuhan Institute of Virology may have simply been experimenting with unfamiliar viruses. The disappearance of the

lab's coronavirus sequence database in 2019 and the lab's history of gain-of-function experiments also weaken the claims of Lipkin and his coauthors, Relman said.

"The Proximal Origins paper is flawed in its assumptions, logic and the soundness of its conclusions. I was very surprised that it passed review at *Nature Medicine*," he said.

Columbia University Center for Sustainable Development Director Jeffrey Sachs — chair of The Lancet COVID-19 Commission — said the citation the authors used to prop up the paper's premise deserves more scrutiny.

"The Proximal Origins paper has no credibility," Sachs wrote in an email. "The paper's central claim — that SARS-CoV-2 is not related to viruses previously reported in laboratory research — offers as proof a footnote to a 2014 paper!"

"It ludicrously claims to debunk a 2019 lab emergence using a 2014 paper," he continued. "The paper offers no real evidence whatsoever against the possible lab origin of the virus, even though it claimed to do so."

Lipkin himself has since acknowledged the possibility that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was experimenting with unknown viruses, contradicting the popular paper he coauthored.

"If they've got hundreds of bat samples that are coming in, and some of them aren't characterized, how would they know whether this virus was or wasn't in this lab? They wouldn't," Lipkin said in an interview with the Washington Post last year.

But Lipkin has not disclosed his work with EcoHealth to reporters.

Nature Medicine, the journal that published the paper, defines a "competing interest" requiring disclosure as including "personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals" — paid or unpaid. A spokesperson for parent company Springer Nature did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

Lipkin's connection to a group at the center of lab leak suspicions is the latest revelation to cast doubt on the correspondence.

Significant questions remain. It's still unclear how the authors dispelled their own private concerns that the virus had been engineered within a couple of days.

For example, Lipkin privately voiced concerns to his coauthors about a "nightmare of circumstantial evidence" pointing to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Vanity Fair reported.

It's also unknown to what extent leaders of the National Institutes of Health, which funded the EcoHealth Alliance, may have shaped the paper.

Grant reports that led a reporter to the defunct link showing Lipkin's partnership with EcoHealth Alliance were obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Biohazards, Biohazards Blog Anthony Fauci, David Relman, EcoHealth Alliance, Ian Lipkin, Jeff Sachs, Kristian Andersen, Peter Daszak, proximal origin, Robert Garry, The Lancet's COVID Commission, Virologist, Wuhan Institute of Virology

0

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

From: Roberts, Rich [(b)(6)]
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [(b)(6)]; Peter Daszak [(b)(6)]
Cc: Gerald T Keusch [(b)(6)]; Aleksei Chmura [(b)(6)] David Morens < [(b)(6)]
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

≤

Date: Fri, 20 May 2022 12:44:53 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 20 May 2022 12:42:11 PM -0400
Subject: Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)>
To: (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6)>; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)>;
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image014.jpg; image015.jpg; image016.jpg; image017.jpg; image018.jpg; image019.jpg; image020.jpg; image021.jpg; image022.jpg; image023.jpg

Note that I should have said on the last email – I'm not necessarily saying we *should* rebut the paper, nor am I expecting that all of you would want to be involved. I respect your views, your moral support, and your wishes to remain above the fray – that has huge benefits also!

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:40 PM
To: '(b)(6)'; 'Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6); 'David Morens' (b)(6) 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6)
'Aleksei Chmura' (b)(6)
Subject: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets
Importance: High

FYI, Rich will be speaking with Jeff and I sent him some bullets on general reasons why the call for an investigation into US scientists is flawed, inappropriate and based on easily debunked narratives and simple mistakes.

I think we could draft a polite and decent rebuttal based on these. The general thrust I think should be "Why investigating US

scientists is the wrong way to identify COVID-19 origins, and prevent future pandemics". This would take the moral high ground in the same way that Peter Hotez has been doing with anti-vaxx sentiment, by talking about how damaging these narratives are on science, and scientists, and how they ultimately undermine public health.

Here is the summary I sent to Rich. I'll continue to read the paper and identify factual inaccuracies we can correct, but maybe one of you (e.g. Peter) could build on this for a rebuttal draft? I have beaucoup references for each point I make, including peer-reviewed science that demolishes the FCS hypothesis, media articles where we refute some of the claims about our openness and data sharing, and reports that link to articles and emails that have been made public via FoIA.

Bullets for a draft rebuttal:
I think we could start on a conciliatory note that most reasonable scientists who believe the lab leak is 'extremely unlikely' (words of the WHO report I was involved with) also believe it is possible. Therefore, calls for further investigations into the origin (including a potential lab leak) are warranted and valid, and come from a basis of scientific inquiry that is beneficial. If a lab leak did happen, we should know, and it would benefit our defenses against future pandemics. However, we should then rapidly pivot to the main issue: that the call for an independent investigation in to US scientists and organizations that the article lays out, and many of the specific statements in it are based on flawed narratives, misunderstandings of the balance of the evidence, mistakes in interpreting the facts behind the work, and simple errors in understanding how science is conducted. Here are some key issues we could raise:

- Understanding COVID origins will require cooperation with China, not investigation of US scientists. A brief look at the history of recent emerging diseases shows that it usually takes many years to identify the reservoir hosts, the amplifier hosts, and the pathway to emergence (e.g. SARS – our paper showing bats carry SARSr-CoVs that can bind to human cells was published 12 years after the outbreak). To do this requires access to sample collection, testing and analysis within the country of origin, and cooperation with the government. Thus, investigating either a natural or a lab origin of COVID will absolutely require working with China.
- Why 'investigating US scientists' is already a witch hunt. The opinion piece calls for bipartisan independent commission that doesn't engage in a 'witch hunt'. However, we are already engaged in a witch hunt. The issue was politicized under Trump, and has led to dozens of letters from Republican members of Congress and the Senate to US scientists demanding documents and testimony, or making accusations about them to the agencies, to the DoJ, White House, and which are inevitably made public without the opportunity for US scientists to respond. Each of the allegations I have seen from Republicans against EHA are easily refuted with documentary evidence, but the volume of them, and their inflammatory nature means that responding to each is either logistically impossible, or simply amplifies these attacks. There have been NO bipartisan requests that I have seen.
- All *relevant* data have already been shared publicly or with the relevant govt. agencies. The article states that "*EHA, UNC, NIH, USAID, and other research partners have failed to disclose their activities to the US scientific community and the US public, instead declaring that they were not involved in any experiments that could have resulted in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2*." This is simply not true. Each collaborating org has published dozens of papers on this work, in US (not Chinese) journals, uploading data to US (not Chinese) databases like Genbank. All of EHA's papers are available on our website for any member of the public to review, and have been for years. Our staff have given literally hundreds of public lectures on this work. Even after these attacks began, we continued to publish data from our China work, e.g. the 700+ CoV sequences we published and uploaded into Genbank in 2020). Lead scientists from each collaborating organization have shared all unpublished data of relevance (i.e. related to SARSr-CoVs) with the relevant federal agencies including NIH, USAID, DoD, and the intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Sharing of these data has been voluntary, extensive and honorable. This information has not been made public, because it undermines the agencies' ability to conduct their work.
- Demanding release of private emails, files from US scientists does not help build trust in science. Demands on US scientists to release private emails, unpublished data, drafts of reports and other documents that are normally not made public does nothing to elucidate the origins of COVID. Neither does it help build trust in science at a time when our country is so divided along party lines, and where this issue has been so politicized. With social media algorithms demonstrably amplifying negative narratives, the release of private emails and drafts of later-published reports or papers, are easily used to drive and amplify these negative narratives. We have seen this played out already – with every FoIA release of emails, they are cherry-picked for partial-sentence quotes that are then misquoted, misconstrued, and published

as part of (usually) right wing hit-pieces that drive the narrative of an elite group of scientists trying to make money by manipulating viruses or vaccines. They are dangerous and lead to people avoiding vaccines. In the case of EcoHealth, the release of private documents, and the narratives around them have also demonstrably been linked to death threats, white powder letters, break-ins, and hacking attempts that we have been suffering repeatedly for the past 2.5 years.

- Inability to prove a negative: We can't prove that China didn't release a virus accidently or by design – that's the nature of scientific hypothesis testing. If US scientists are forced to release emails or files that these do not show any evidence of a lab leak, they will be followed by allegations that other files are being hidden, and therefore more requests for data dumps. For example, if my emails show that China was not working on a SARS-CoV-2 virus with NIH funding, they will be followed by allegations that we used other private funding to do this work (this has already been alleged), and further requests for private emails. Meanwhile, every email, report or unpublished paper I'm forced to turn over is used over and over again by the political forces to attack science – misquoting, using innuendo and assumptions of motives.
- Furin cleavage site hypothesis is already debunked: Theories that the FCS of SARS-CoV-2 indicates lab manipulation have been widely circulated for 2 years and repeatedly debunked by leading virologists. Firstly, there is nothing novel about a wild-type virus having an FCS – they are found in influenza where they enhance virulence, and in other CoVs, including MERS-CoV, and a Rat coronavirus we discovered in China, in wildlife farms, hotels and train stations and published during 2021. There are now peer-reviewed scientific papers demonstrating that bat-CoVs closely related to SARS-CoV-2 have mutations around the site where the FCS in SARS-CoV-2 is found, that are a few mutations away from a true FCS, indicating that this could have easily evolved in nature. These mutations around the polybasic cleavage site are found in many of the viruses closely related to SARS-CoV-2 from SE Asia, and in CoVs from European bats. Other theories about the FCS being incredibly efficient at binding to human cells, or being enhanced easily in a lab, have been refuted in these and other papers.
- Inappropriate legal basis to investigate scientists when no evidence of a lab leak has been proffered: At the moment, it is a fact that there's simply no verifiable evidence whatsoever that a lab leak occurred leading to COVID-19. We have accusations from Secretary Pompeo that people at WIV were sick from COVID in November 2019, but these are allegedly classified. We have stories about the motivations of Chinese scientists in pulling down a database, not citing papers correctly, or removing genomic data from Genbank, but all of these (and all others) can be easily explained by the normal process of doing science, and each of them has occurred many times before with other labs and other circumstances. Many of us, and many other leading scientists have spent countless hours explaining why the theories around lab leaks do not amount to "evidence of a lab leak". Without this it would be massively inappropriate for federal authorities, including the OIG, the FBI or other agencies to launch official investigations into US scientists or US organizations. That's why they haven't, and that's why the public haven't been informed of any investigations.

In addition to these issues, there are multiple factual inaccuracies in the paper that are extremely important, because some of them are used to provide justification for the lab leak theory. For example, here is an inexhaustive list, just by looking at half of one page of the paper:

- "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the United States and China, *has not been disclosed for independent analysis.*" ***This is not true because details of field and laboratory work have been published repeatedly in scientific papers in the last 15 years, in reports to NIH and USAID, and are laid out in proposals that include pages of details on human subjects, animal use, biosafety and select agent use etc. These are all now public.***
- "Much of the work on SARS-like CoVs performed in Wuhan was part of an active and highly collaborative US–China scientific research program funded by the US Government (NIH, *Defense Threat Reduction Agency [DTRA]*, and US Agency for International Development [USAID]), coordinated by researchers at EcoHealth Alliance (EHA), but involving researchers at several other US institutions." ***False - DoD DTRA do not and have not funded work in China through EHA. This is an easily verified issue, and is a mistake that causes damage because conspiracy theorists globally are on the lookout for linkages to DoD, which leads to damaging narratives such as the Ukraine Biolabs conspiracy theories. The way to check this is that DTRA are NEVER cited on any publication resulting from the work in China.***
- "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, *including the full array of viruses collected from the field*

and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, *remains unknown*." ***Not true. It is a widely circulated myth that our work involved 'collection of hundreds of viruses from bats'. In fact, there were only 3 isolates of SARSr-CoVs from our work. All of these have been published and some shared with labs in the USA where they were used to test Remdesivir, Molnupiravir, COVID-19 vaccine candidates and monoclonal therapies like ADG20. This work has had a direct benefit to public health and has saved lives of US citizens!***

- "These research proposals make clear that the EHA-WIV-UNC collaboration *was involved in the collection of a large number of so-far undocumented SARS-like viruses* and was engaged in their manipulation within biological safety level (BSL)-2 and BSL-3 laboratory facilities, raising concerns that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker (9)" ***Not true – there were only 3 SARS-related CoVs isolated in China. All the rest are genetic sequences of a short read of the RdRp gene, with a few dozen full genomes. It's documented repeatedly in the scientific papers we published in collaboration with WIV, in mainly US journals, all of which are available publicly on PubMED and on our website. All sequences were uploaded into the US Genbank database and have been freely available for other scientists to peruse and use.***

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 8:13 AM
To: ' (b)(6) 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) 'David Morens' (b)(6) >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

I don't think PNAS would retract – Sachs is well-known, and this paper will be cited, so it's good for business.

We could ask them to correct, but I think Peter's idea is a good one – a response that's carefully worded, that corrects the errors, and explains why the general approach of investigating scientists based on no evidence would be flawed and damaging to medical progress.

I'm sending some bullets to Rich this morning and will share them with you as a start to addressing some of the errors.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 7:15 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Peter: I think a response along the lines you suggest would be a good idea. Sachs's piece is so egregious it shouldn't be allowed to stand. Perhaps even better would be a sharp letter to the editor(s) of PNAS explaining why a retraction is necessary. As you and Peter D point out, his argument is based on a number of readily refuted erroneous assertions – it's surprising that PNAS would have published it in the first place.

As ever,
(b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 7:09 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Potentially we could write a response or a commentary piece in PNAS refuting the nonsense, one that begins with the talking points in my Twitter thread.

There is also suggestion from a Nature article that even SARS 1 exhibited some degree of furin cleavage but that with SARS 2 it accelerated and of course evolved even further with alpha then delta to make it more transmissible.

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-02039-y

I could have added that as well. The point is it's not an all or none phenomenon as the Sachs article suggests. He wrote an awful paper that needs to be retracted.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

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Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 9:13 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

I appreciate that Rich.

I understand his motivations – he believes that all data should be put forward because the pandemic makes this an emergency and unprecedented global concern. However, there is no getting away from the fact that there's simply no evidence whatsoever for a lab leak, so no matter how much data or emails I and other labs are forced to turn over, it will never disprove the negative. We can't prove that China didn't release a virus accidently or by design – that's the nature of scientific hypothesis testing. Meanwhile, every email, report or unpublished paper I'm forced to turn over is used over and over again by the political forces to attack science – misquoting, using innuendo and assumptions of motives. It's a naïve argument from Jeff Sachs at best, and one based on a series of easily refutable errors in black and white, in his paper.

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 8:34 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Peter:

Thanks. I intend to take this up with Jeff.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (b)(6)
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 6:41 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

EXTERNAL SENDER

This might work to see the tweet – it won't take you to Twitter – it's on a webpage now

https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1527398466305105921.html

and here's Jamie Metzl's commentary – says it's a 'critically important new opinion piece'!!

https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1527404374804287495.html

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:48 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
(b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

Peter:

I don't do Twitter. Can someone send me Peter's piece please?

Thanks

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:41 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just read it now Peter – it's already getting amplified. Extremely glad you did this.

The response from virologists on the furin cleavage site garbage in his PNAS piece will be pretty damning…it's been discussed, debated and debunked for 2 years now!

Meanwhile, the witch hunt continues…

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

I just put out a thread on Twitter to point out why Jeff's article does not hold much water even on scientific grounds

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

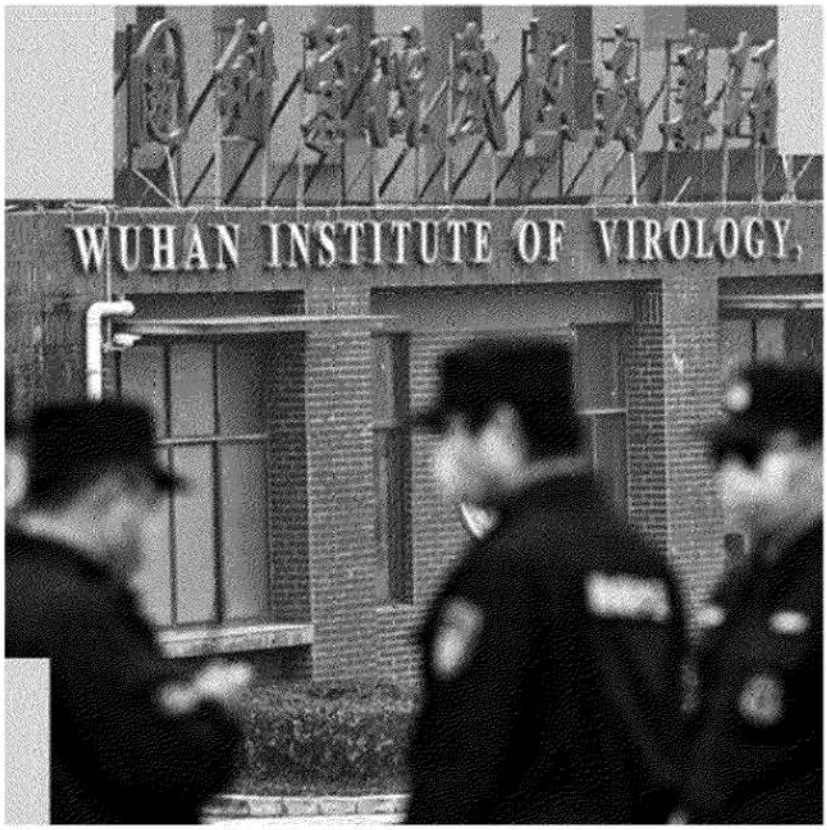
Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez



Related

The Lab-Leak Theory Is Looking Stronger by the Day. Here's What We Know.

"The sequence encoding the FCS of the pandemic virus contained two consecutive CGG arginine codons," Ebright explained in his email. (A codon, or a combination of three nucleotides, supplies the genetic code for a single amino acid, though most amino acids can be represented by multiple different codons. Each nucleotide is represented by a letter — for RNA, either A, C, U, or G.) "This codon usage is unusual for a natural bat SARS-related coronaviruses (for which fewer than 1 in 30 arginine codons are CGG) but is optimal for humans (for which most arginine codons are CGG codons)."

Still, Ebright said that at first he didn't see the identical amino acid sequences as particularly suspicious. "I had known for more than a year that there was a perfect match to an eight-amino acid sequence present in human ENaC. What I had not known was that the sequence was known to be a functional furin cleavage site and that it was a sequence extensively studied at UNC," he said. "The crucial point that the ENaC sequence was a known functional site, not just that there happens to be a match to a protein that happens to be in humans. … That suddenly turned it from

what I thought to be largely irrelevant to being a logical and obvious choice to proceed."

Ralph Baric and the University of North Carolina did not immediately respond to requests for comment.



The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, on June 24, 2021.

Photo: Kyodo via AP Images

Name Calling

Other scientists dismiss the idea that the ENaC sequence might have been purposefully inserted into a coronavirus. Scientists who are already convinced that the new coronavirus emerged naturally are unlikely to be persuaded by Sachs and Harrison's article, which appears in the opinion section of the esteemed journal. Over the past year, many scientists involved in the debate over the origins of the pandemic have settled into an increasingly acrimonious, coarse, and unyielding opposition.

Some proponents of the natural origin theory became particularly dismissive of those open to the possibility of a lab leak after the February release of two pre-print studies mapping the early spread of the virus at the Huanan market in Wuhan. Angela Rasmussen, one of a team of virologists who worked on the project, described it on Twitter as "dispositive evidence of a zoonotic origin" that will "drive those with personal interest in the lab leak hypothesis out of their goddam minds." In another tweet, Rasmussen referred to proponents of the lab-leak theory as a "pack of ghouls, who through gullibility, stupidity, & conspiracist thinking have decided this is their thing despite zero expertise."

Although the pre-prints had not been peer-reviewed and may have simply illustrated the spread of the virus rather than its original outbreak, the New York Times ran a front-page story about them that quoted an epidemiologist as saying that the origins debate "has been settled with a very high degree of evidence." The story, which was announced by a push notification from the paper, also noted a lack of direct evidence for a lab leak.

Meanwhile, Kristian Andersen, another co-author of the pre-prints and a virologist at the well-regarded Scripps Research Institute, used the "poop" emoji to criticize a deeply researched article by Katherine Eban about EcoHealth Alliance. On Twitter, Andersen tarred Eban, New York Times columnist Zeynep Tufekci, and others reporting on biosafety issues that could have led to the release of SARS-CoV-2 as "deep in conspiracy theories" and on the other side of "a clear split" from journalists who dismiss the possibility of a lab origin, whom Andersen referred to as "science-based."

Even some scientists who have been vocal about the possibility that the pandemic may have been sparked by research have expressed skepticism about the theory suggested by Harrison and Sachs. "I'm sure that these authors believe in their own hypothesis and arguments, but to me, it's not one that is particularly convincing," said Alina Chan, a scientist who laid

out a number of possible routes for how the coronavirus might have emerged through research-related incidents in her recent book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19."

"There's no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses."

While she is open to the possibility that the furin cleavage site might have been purposefully inserted into the coronavirus, Chan said there was no reason to think that researchers would mine humans for such material. "These scientists literally had access to hundreds of SARS-like viruses and sequences," said Chan, referring to the vast collection of coronaviruses from bats and other animals that researchers amassed at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. "There's no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses."

Jack Nunberg, a virologist at the University of Montana, was also not immediately persuaded by the theory of engineering suggested by Sachs and Harrison. "It's possible," Nunberg said of the idea that the ENaC segment was inserted into a bat coronavirus as part of research designed to gauge the pandemic potential of a virus. "But I don't find their evidence on ENaC compelling because furin cleavage sites have a lot of common amino acids, and therefore it may just have happened by chance."

Others say that the article adds noteworthy information to the public conversation about the origins of the pandemic. "The defenders of the natural origin indicate that the virus on which this type of experiment could have been done — the backbone — has never been published and that specialists in the furin cleavage sites would have chosen a more commonly used furin cleavage site like RARR rather than PRRAR. The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article contradicts this argument and indicates that specialists knew that the RRAR'SVAS site was efficiently cleaved by furin," Etienne Decroly, director of virology research at the Aix-Marseille Université in France, wrote in an email to The Intercept.

Decroly added, "It is impossible to decide on the basis of the information currently available and it is urgent that the WHO Special Advisory Group

for the Origins of Novel Pathogens investigate this question."

On the suggestion of an investigation, Nunberg is in agreement. "You can't argue with that," he told The Intercept. "Who's going to argue for burying one's head in the sand?"

For their part, Sachs and Harrison emphasize that they're not saying laboratory manipulation was involved in the emergence of the pandemic virus, only "that it could have been." They also give a nod to other possibilities, including that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker. Rather than argue that any of these conceivable scenarios happened, they present the clues of the matching amino acid sequences to argue for an independent and transparent scientific investigation of the U.S.-based evidence related to the origins of the virus.

Among the institutions that Sachs and Harrison list as possibly having "knowledge of the detailed activities that were underway in Wuhan and in the United States" are the National Institutes of Health; the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which has provided grant funding to EcoHealth Alliance; the Department of Homeland Security; DARPA; the U.S. Agency for International Development, which funded the $200 million PREDICT program that catalogued potential pandemic viruses; and the University of California, Davis, which participated in that program.

The authors suggest that EcoHealth Alliance and UNC may have particularly important untapped resources. "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the US and China, has not been disclosed for independent analysis," they write. "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, including the full array of viruses collected from the field and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, remains unknown."



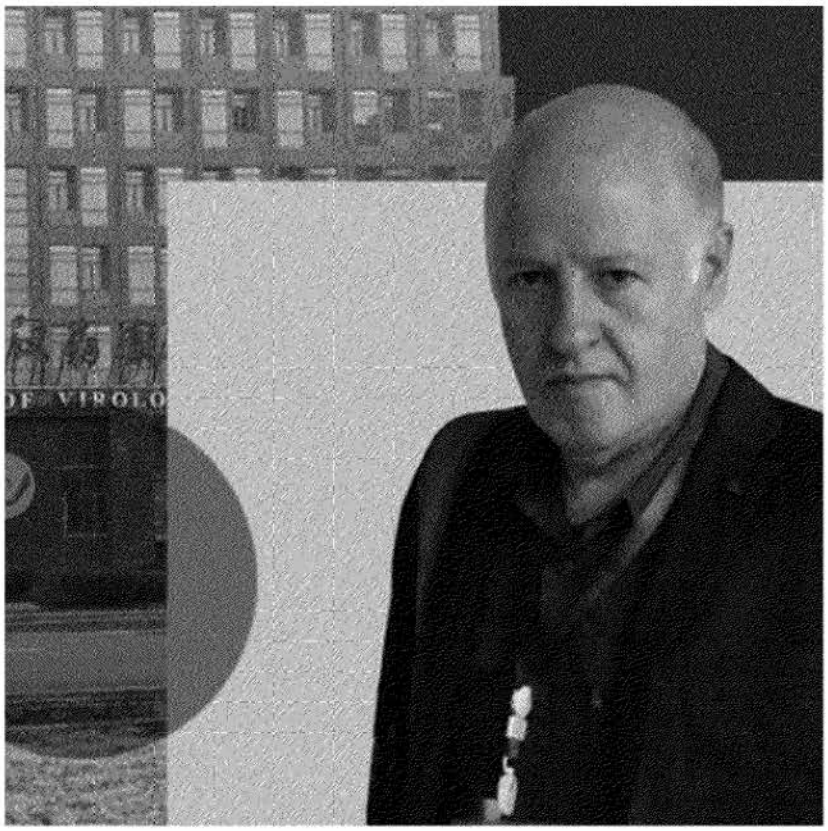
Peter Daszak, one of the members of the World Health Organization team investigating the origins of the Covid-19, on a balcony at a hotel in Wuhan, China, on Feb. 6, 2021.

Photo: Hector Retamal/AFP via Getty Images

A Reversal

The publication in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences marks a reversal of sorts for Sachs, the chair of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission who, in November 2020, appointed Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, to lead a task force to investigate the origins of the pandemic. Earlier that year, Daszak had signed on to a

public statement published in The Lancet on behalf of scientists who said they "condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin."



Related

Peter Daszak Answers Critics and Defends Coronavirus Research

Yet that early certainty about the pandemic's origins — and the sense of shared civic responsibility among members of the Lancet task force — soon disintegrated. In February 2021, emails revealed that Daszak coordinated the public statement in The Lancet tamping down suspicions of a lab leak. And by June 2021, Sachs was expressing his openness to the possibility of a lab origin, writing that NIH-funded research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology "deserves scrutiny under the hypothesis of a laboratory-related release of the virus." Three months later, he disbanded the task force that had been organized to "carefully scrutinize the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus" in the hopes of preventing future disease outbreaks, explaining that he had concerns that several members of the commission had conflicts of interest because of their ties to EcoHealth Alliance.

After leading the mainstream scientific inquiry into the origins of the

pandemic, Sachs is now skewering it. "A steady trickle of disquieting information has cast a darkening cloud over the agency," he and Harrison write of the NIH, going on to accuse the entire federal government of not doing enough to explore the possible role of its grantees in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 and investigate "overlooked details" such as the matching amino acid sequences.

Noting that the NIH has insisted that "the pandemic virus could not have resulted from the work sponsored by" the agency, Sachs and Harrison write that "blanket denials from the NIH are no longer good enough."

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 8:15 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak <(b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) effrey (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6); Roberts, Rich < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

It's all so convoluted I can even understand it. We'll see if they pick Mary Klotman from Duke to be next NIH Director. I know her quite well, her husband is Baylor President and my boss.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: (b)(6)

iPhone

On May 11, 2022, at 6:39 PM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

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Yes, i know. I fail to understand why our nih leaders keep forming circular firing squads. one thing is for sure: in recent times nih has suffered abysmal leadership

It wasn't like that in the Varmus years. He didn't suffer any political fools no matter how high up, and was comfortable giving them all a big middle finger. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 11, 2022, at 18:37, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

This is an utterly ridiculous set of BS. Jesse Bloom is the person driving it – he buys into the lab leak theory and found that some folks from WIV uploaded partial genomes early on, then added a bunch of more complete ones, and asked for the partial sequences to be removed. Absolutely normal, but he's trying to turn it into a 'mystery'.

Of course, NIH makes it all worse by not releasing emails, redacting critical parts of them, and failing to explain why they follow the wishes of the submitter re. Genbank. It's perfectly logical really – if NIH now starts releasing sequences you as a submitter asked them to remove for whatever reason, submitters will think twice about using Genbank. We already have China working with its own database and all this BS will make them twice-shy about submitting.

Even worse, Tabak now says that 'don't worry, we still have the data on back up tapes' so everyone now knows that NIH keeps the stuff you thought they agreed to delete, and no doubt has already handed it over to the FBI and the CIA.

It's a conspiracy, wrapped within an enigma, encapsulating a riddle….

PS – heres a cracker of an email from an NIH press office (?) person at O/D ripping into a journalist (Carl Zimmer) who wanted information on the 'missing' china sequences. Now it turns out that US submitters also deleted early COVID genomes…even more reason for the public to not trust scientists…:

From: Myles, Renate (NIH/OD) [F]
To: Carl Zimmer; Wojtowicz, Em
Cc: Fine, Amanda (NIH/OD) [E]
Subject: RE: FW: Query from New Yo
Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2021

Hi Carl:

I saw your story. Just noting that it isn
was withdrawn. Also, it didn't disappe
I know that Dr. Bloom is making the m
reporters not hype language.

Also, just to clarify, NLM conducted ar
packages were withdrawn upon reque
included one requested by the submit
the U.S. 1

Thanks,
Renate

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 5:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura <
(b)(6); peter hotez (b)(6); Roberts, Rich <
Subject: Fwd: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** < (b)(6)
Date: Wed, May 11, 2022 at 4:54 PM
Subject: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists
To: David Morens (b)(6)

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 4:12 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov >; NIAID OCGR Leg < NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov >; NIAID OD AM < NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov >
Subject: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

By
Steven Nelson
May 11, 2022 3:47pm



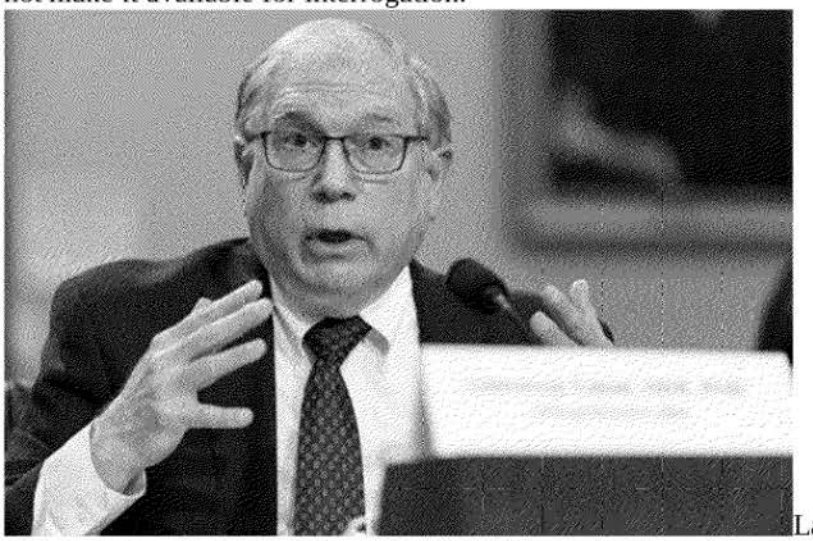
National Institutes of Health acting director Lawrence Tabak confirmed to lawmakers Wednesday that US health officials concealed early genomic sequences of COVID-19 at the request of Chinese scientists — but insisted the data remains on file.

Tabak told a House Appropriations subcommittee that the NIH "eliminated from public view" the data from the pandemic epicenter in Wuhan, China, before adding that researchers can still access it via an archaic "tape drive."

Vanity Fair recently reported that the information was hidden in response to a request from Chinese scientists, despite potentially resolving whether the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology or passed naturally from animals to humans.

Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Wash.) asked Tabek to explain why US officials would comply with such a request.

"There's no question that the communication that we had about the sequence archive — Sequence Read Archive — could have been improved. I freely admit that," Tabek said. "If I may, the archive never deleted the sequence, it just did not make it available for interrogation."



Lawrence Tabak, acting director of the National Institutes of Health, testifies on May 11. Jacquelyn Martin/AP

"So wait, you have the information still?" Beutler followed up.

"We have the information … Anybody who submits to the Sequence Read Archive is allowed to ask for it to be removed," Tabak explained. "And that investigator did do that. But we never erase it."

"So you don't have the information anymore?" Beutler asked.

"We do. We never erase the information. We keep it," Tabak clarified.

"So they were able to withdraw public viewing of it?" the congresswoman followed up.

"That's correct," he said.

"OK, so researchers can apply to the NIH and get the information from you?" Beutler asked.

"In the way that it was originally eliminated from public view, it was withdrawn, and that's the most difficult for people to access," Tabak replied. "The error that was made, and we found this out after a review of all of our processes, was it should have been suppressed. The distinction being that if it's withdrawn, it is kept archivally on a tape drive — old technology, but that's how it's done. But when it is withdrawn, it can still be accessed by accession number, and so researchers are able to access that information."



Security personnel keep watch outside Wuhan Institute of Virology during the visit by the World Health Organization on Feb. 3, 2021. Thomas Peter/REUTERS

"So the information is still there?" Beutler summed up.

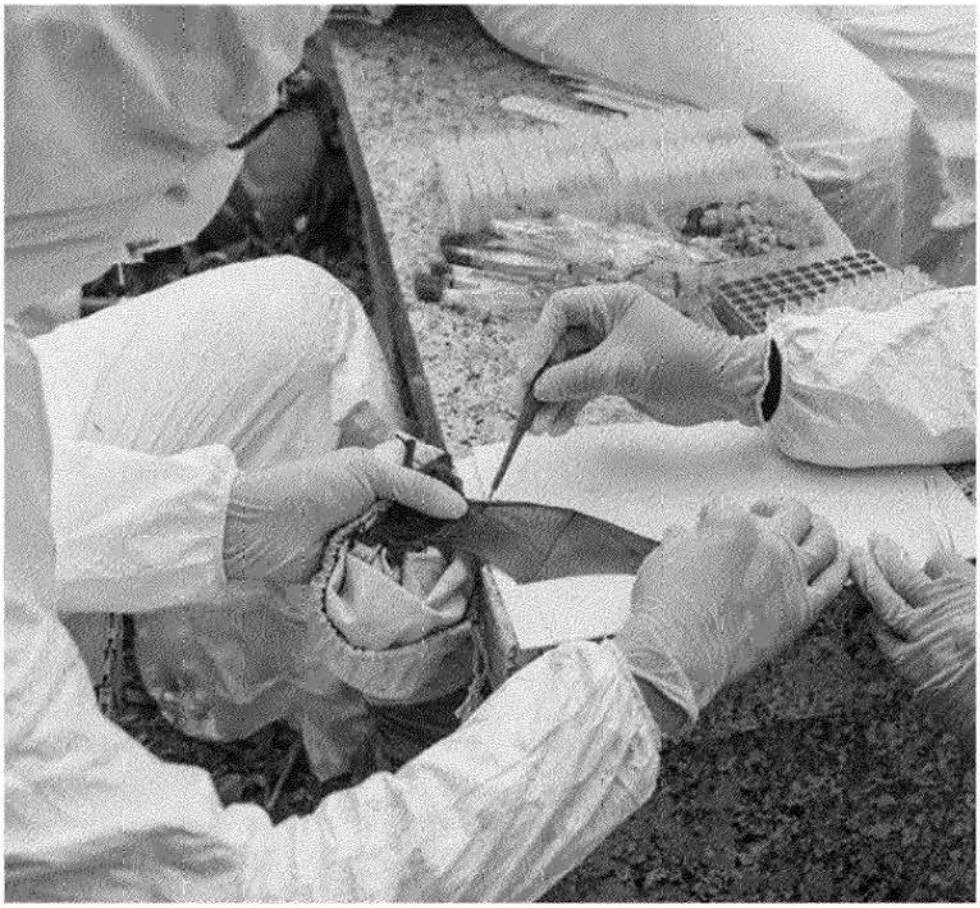
"That's correct. The information was never lost," Tabak repeated.

In a March 31 article, Vanity Fair reported that evolutionary biologist Jesse Bloom discovered last year that early COVID-19 sequences had disappeared from a federally run data repository.

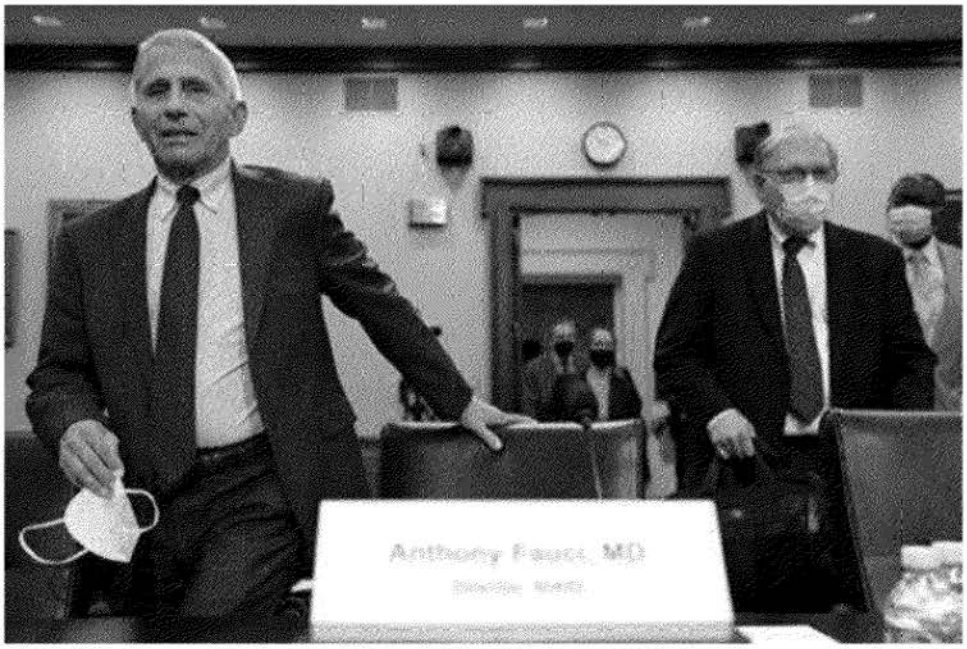
When Bloom raised the issue, he was reportedly ganged up on by a group of researchers assembled by then-NIH Director Francis Collins and infectious disease institute head Dr. Anthony Fauci.

Bloom shared a draft academic paper with Collins and Fauci, who allegedly objected on a June 2021 Zoom video conference to Bloom's description of Chinese scientists "surreptitiously" removing the sequences. Fauci said the word was "loaded" and implied a coverup, the report said.

Evolutionary biologist Kristian Andersen, who was selected to participate on the call by Collins, allegedly told Bloom that the Wuhan team had a right to claw back early pandemic information and that it was unethical for Bloom to question it.



Tabak noted that while the request for information to be removed was honored, it was not erased fully.ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE
Andersen allegedly went so far as to offer to delete Bloom's article from a "preprint" server "in a way that would leave no record that this had been done."
China's government has refused to cooperate with an international investigation of the origins of the pandemic. The COVID-19 virus has killed about 1 million Americans since March 2020 and caused massive social, economic and educational disruptions.
The US intelligence community said in an August report that it's possible the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, calling the theory one of two "plausible" explanations along with natural transmission from animals.



Lawrence Tabak confirmed Wednesday that early genomic sequences of COVID-19 were concealed at the request of Chinese specialists. Jacquelyn Martin/AP

President Biden rarely speaks publicly about wanting China to be transparent about the origins of the pandemic. Former President Donald Trump, by contrast, has demanded that China pay $10 trillion in reparations.

The Biden administration is considering undoing some of Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods "separately" from US pressure for coronavirus transparency, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told The Post on Monday.

Documents published in September by The Intercept revealed that US health officials indirectly funded so-called "gain of function" research at the Wuhan lab — including the modification three bat coronaviruses distinct from COVID-19 and the discovery that they became much more infectious among "humanized" mice when human-type receptors were added to them.

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Date: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 7:57:26 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 7:57:15 AM -0400
Subject: Re: [The Washington Post] White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6)

Why WaPo used that topic to attack unfairly EcoHealth is ridiculous, part of their new agenda?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)
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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Apr 20, 2023, at 6:53 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) > wrote:

White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH

The National Institutes of Health has not had a permanent director since December 2021, when its longtime leader stepped down.

By Laurie McGinley and Dan Diamond

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/04/19/nih- director-monica-bertagnolli/

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Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:00:03 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 12:59:17 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Date: Sat, Dec 31, 2022 at 3:13 PM
Subject: Re: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) >, Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >, Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)

Yes troubling and they have money and now political power

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Dec 31, 2022, at 1:02 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) > wrote:

Awful – and so disappointing that these people live among us and vote.

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, December 31, 2022 1:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio <J_Sturchio@msn.com>; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!

EXTERNAL SENDER

This week I had some of the lead antivaxxers: Robert Malone, Peter Koury, Peter McCullough, and Steve Kirsch all hang up on me with online harassment. Now a new round of death threats. It never ends

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Dec 31, 2022, at 12:17 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

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Not pleasant reading but thanks for sharing this link. It's a stream-of-consciousness diatribe that makes you think this guy is simply mentally ill, but actually he's a well-known right wing 'influencer', appearing on Steve Bannon's podcast, member of the Brownstone Institute and regular on other outlets. In the end, just probably a sad lonely person looking for outside validation. Still, pretty disturbing to read…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C9bfba49527cc4258aae608db8a0bec48%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=sfjUVVUanjc9cWCTV5gQmR40NF9zRSioD6JM5jU4AJI%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2022 2:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6) >
Subject: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpalexander.substack.com%2Fp%2Ffauci-birx-francis-collins-azar-bourla
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C9bfba49527cc4258aae608db8a0bec48%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=uUH8OHejarsizLqr1pDJp1yGlLKgr425GkylJago%2BMQ%3D &reserved=0

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
| Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
| Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology &
Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced
Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Fri, 1 Mar 2024 7:56:40 AM -0500
Sent: Fri, 1 Mar 2024 7:56:33 AM -0500
Subject: EcoHealth Alliance Benefit April 18th
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
To: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6); Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6)
CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Steve Bauder (b)(6) John Feigelson (b)(6) >;

Dear All,

Just wanted to let you know that we have our annual benefit in New York on April 18th at 6pm.

The them is "Green planet, One Health" to support our work linking ecology to health issues. We're honoring the Climate Change scientist Michael Mann, who like many others in that field has been attacked politically, in the press, and in the real world for his work. He recently hit the news because he won a defamation suit against a second rate journalist who published particularly heinous stories about him and his work.

You are all invited, and a guest, without cost. We can't pay the travel costs, but if you're able to be in New York that night, it would be great to see you.

John and steve will follow up with a save-the-date email.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:16 AM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; Keith Martin (b)(6)

Date: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 7:57:26 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 7:57:15 AM -0400
Subject: Re: [The Washington Post] White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6)

Why WaPo used that topic to attack unfairly EcoHealth is ridiculous, part of their new agenda?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Apr 20, 2023, at 6:53 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) > wrote:

White House plans to nominate cancer center chief to lead NIH

The National Institutes of Health has not had a permanent director since December 2021, when its longtime leader stepped down.

By Laurie McGinley and Dan Diamond

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/04/19/nih- director-monica-bertagnolli/

Download The Washington Post app.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/04/19/nih- director-monica-bertagnolli/

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:00:03 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 12:59:17 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Date: Sat, Dec 31, 2022 at 3:13 PM
Subject: Re: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) >, Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >, Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)

Yes troubling and they have money and now political power

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Dec 31, 2022, at 1:02 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) > wrote:

Awful – and so disappointing that these people live among us and vote.

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, December 31, 2022 1:53 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio <J_Sturchio@msn.com>; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!

EXTERNAL SENDER

This week I had some of the lead antivaxxers: Robert Malone, Peter Koury, Peter McCullough, and Steve Kirsch all hang up on me with online harassment. Now a new round of death threats. It never ends

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Dec 31, 2022, at 12:17 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

CAUTION: This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.

Not pleasant reading but thanks for sharing this link. It's a stream-of-consciousness diatribe that makes you think this guy is simply mentally ill, but actually he's a well-known right wing 'influencer', appearing on Steve Bannon's podcast, member of the Brownstone Institute and regular on other outlets. In the end, just probably a sad lonely person looking for outside validation. Still, pretty disturbing to read…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C9bfba49527cc4258aae608db8a0bec48%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=sfjUVVUanjc9cWCTV5gQmR40NF9zRSioD6JM5jU4AJI%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2022 2:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6) >
Subject: Fauci, Birx, Francis Collins, Baric, Azar, Daszak, Bourla, Bancel, Jha, Njoo, Theresa Tam, Walensky, Doug Ford, Williams, Kieran, Marks, de Villa, Jüni, Hotez, Tedros, CDC, FDA officials, HANG high!

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpalexander.substack.com%2Fp%2Ffauci-birx-francis-collins-azar-bourla
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C9bfba49527cc4258aae608db8a0bec48%7C14b77578977342d585
&sdata=uUH8OHejarsizLqr1pDJp1yGlLKgr425GkylJago%2BMQ%3D &reserved=0

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Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Fri, 1 Mar 2024 7:56:40 AM -0500
Sent: Fri, 1 Mar 2024 7:56:33 AM -0500
Subject: EcoHealth Alliance Benefit April 18th
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
To: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6); Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6)
CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Steve Bauder (b)(6) John Feigelson (b)(6) >;

Dear All,

Just wanted to let you know that we have our annual benefit in New York on April 18th at 6pm.

The them is "Green planet, One Health" to support our work linking ecology to health issues. We're honoring the Climate Change scientist Michael Mann, who like many others in that field has been attacked politically, in the press, and in the real world for his work. He recently hit the news because he won a defamation suit against a second rate journalist who published particularly heinous stories about him and his work.

You are all invited, and a guest, without cost. We can't pay the travel costs, but if you're able to be in New York that night, it would be great to see you.

John and steve will follow up with a save-the-date email.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:16 AM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >; Keith Martin (b)(6)

Jeff Sturchio < (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura <
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Some comments from me for Jeffrey Sachs

How I wish I could be a white face hornet on the wall for that exchange.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Feb 27, 2024, at 3:02 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:
>
> Peter et al.:
>
> Thanks for all the suggestions re Jeff Sachs. I guess I will have to play it by ear, but I will make sur he knows that I think he is really crazy (and stupid) on this issue. Given his lack of expertise in the area, I will likely use that as the main issue to start with.
>
> Rich
>
> Richard J. Roberts
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
> USA
> Tel: (b)(6)
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email (b)(6)
>
> Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
> Tel: (b)(6)
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: (b)(6)
>
> **From:** Peter Daszak (b)(6)
> **Sent:** Saturday, February 24, 2024 4:22 PM
> **To:** Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
> **Cc:** Keith Martin (b)(6) ; Jeff Sturchio < (b)(6) ; Keusch, Gerald (b)(6)
> David Morens (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
> **Subject:** Some comments from me for Jeffrey Sachs
> **Importance:** High
>
> **EXTERNAL SENDER**
>
> I hope you give him a piece of my mind Rich. One of the problems with people who've bought into these conspiracies is that the narratives are so well practiced and set in stone that I suspect he'll just come back at you with a load of 'facts' that are demonstrably false, but so complex that they can only be refuted by those who've spent time to find the evidence and answers.
>
> I'm attaching a Q&A document that we prepared last year re. most of the allegations that people raise against EHA – I hope it helps, but you can see the complexity of the garbage we have to respond to.
>
> Jeff Sachs is clearly in at the deep end, given that he believes the US blew up the Nordstream pipeline, as well as various COVID origin conspiracies. However, he will likely proffer the following narratives, which I've answered simply below,

as well. These are ones he spent hours talking through with me, Jerry, Peter and others on the (formerly) Lancet COVID Commission, prior to him closing it down:

- **I refused to share a grant proposal with him that he requested.** Answer: I explained to him at the time that this grant proposal had not been made public, and that it was subject to a FoIA request that NIH was contesting, and had been sued to release, and concerned the grant that had been terminated and that our lawyers were disputing with NIH. I was under instructions from my lawyers that if I shared it with anyone I might breach NIH's rules re. their FoIA lawsuit, and/or cause them to shut down our negotiation to return the grant. You might also remind him that in the end NIH returned the grant to EcoHealth, likely because it was an illegal termination, as our lawyers repeatedly pointed out.

- **The DEFUSE proposal from EcoHealth Alliance had plans to insert a Furin Cleavage Site into SARS-related CoVs.** Response: The grant proposal was never funded, and the work was never done. It's really quite simple. Also important - the recombinant virus work was proposed at UNC, not in China, but in any case, the grant was never funded, and the work never done.

- **I lied to him about the work I'd been doing in China and with NIH.** Response: This is something he's said a few times to the press. If he says that to you, tell him that I strongly refute it, and that it's an outrageous slur on my reputation and character that he simply cannot back up with facts. You might also remind him that Michael Mann, the climate scientist, recently won a defamation lawsuit to the tune of $1,000,000 against a person who maligned his reputation in an online article.

- **EcoHealth Alliance conducted Gain-of-function research.** Response: I'm sure it's inconvenient for this lab leak community, but our research was very carefully reviewed by NIH and determined, by them in a letter to us in 2016, NOT to be gain of function. The reasons for this are clear – GoF rules apply to pathogens known to be able to infect people, and our work was purely on bat-CoVs never known to infect humans. Some might argue that the rules should be changed, but it is not appropriate to apply any desired new rules retrospectively and allege that EHA did something wrong – we did not.

All that said, my experience is that trying to talk sense to conspiracy theorists is usually 1) a waste of time, and 2) extremely frustrating because facts don't work….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2024 7:58 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keith Martin (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio < (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeffrey Sachs

Indeed

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2024 7:44 AM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keith Martin (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio < (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Jeffrey Sachs

EXTERNAL SENDER

And his podcasts with RFK jr. Or perhaps if he raises this issue.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Feb 24, 2024, at 5:50 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Hi:

I just received the list of speakers for a meeting I am going to in Nepal. It includes our friend Jeff Sachs. I'm going to push him about his lab leak theory and his attacks on Peter and others.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Date: Fri, 15 Apr 2022 10:58:14 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 15 Apr 2022 10:58:11 PM -0400
Subject: Re: CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
CC: David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) ; peter hotez (b)(6)

I was pretty clear. The buck stopped at Collins desk and he wasn't up to it. The integrity of science was on the line - you were the easy target - and Collins failed. Lauer was the hit man and your have been harassed unmercifully as Lauer protected the mafia Don.

I hope he does a good job.

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 15, 2022, at 3:50 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Just had a 1.5 hour conversation with Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed about the circumstances of NIH throwing us under the bus. I tried to be balanced, objective and decent, mainly because it's pretty clear Michael Lauer, Lawrence Tabak and others in NIH O/D are willing to cut our other funding if we speak out too strongly. I do think it will be a useful story when it comes out. He mentioned he'd talked with you Jerry.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2022 10:03 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald Keusch (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) peter hotez < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170

This clarifies alot. Let's hope it does some good! d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 14, 2022, at 16:31, Peter Daszak <(b)(6)> wrote:

Yes – I do know the journalist Peter Aldhous. I've found him to be persistent and generally balanced, but not averse to doing the usual journalistic strategy of always getting both sides of an issue and giving them appearance of equal weight. He did this in an article on the WHO mission's report last spring, but now this seems to be more balanced than some: https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/peteraldhous/who- covid-origins-china-report-lab-accident

He did an earlier piece after Trump canceled our grant which tried to explain what the work was: https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/peteraldhous/wuhan- lab-coronavirus-trump

I heard from him last week (email below). He says now that he's investigating what the political motivations were for the initial cancelation of our grant, which he believes were in-part driven by the awful pressure group White Coat Waste (he's correct). He might also be looking into their involvement in the attacks on Tony re. the alleged 'beagles with leishmaniasis'. Here's an email I got from him a few days ago:

From: Peter Aldhous <(b)(6)>
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 9:28 PM
To: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)>
Subject: Could we set up a conversation this week?

Dear Peter,

I hope all is well. I am now working on a piece based in part of the materials we've received from our FOIA to NIH surrounding the cancellation of your grant and subsequent developments.

My focus is a little different from previous coverage. I'm looking at the role of the animal group White Coat Waste in the events that led up to the cancellation of your grant and the subsequent "lab leak" and "gain-of-function" controversies, WCW's links to prominent Republican politicians, its subsequent involvement in attacks on Tony Fauci, and its current activities, which include (questionable) claims about research funded by NIH in Russia. There are some clear parallels this campaign and the way in which the group targeted your grant.

The piece will also discuss the big shift in the tone of internal NIH discussion of your grant before and after WCW's claims were published in the Daily Mail and elsewhere and pressure began to be exerted through WCW's links with politicians including Matt Gaetz and Marco Rubio. And it will go over NIH's missteps in the termination of your grant as the agency bent under this pressure.

I'd like to your input on the key developments as they affected the EcoHealth Alliance. I noticed that you've been quoted some of the stuff we discussed previously off the record, including in this piece in Science.

Can we set up a time for this? I'm due to file a draft early next week, so if we can speak in the next couple of days, I'd be very grateful.

Thanks,

Peter

--
Peter Aldhous
Science reporter | **BuzzFeed News**
tel: (b)(6)
cell: (b)(6)
peter.aldhous@buzzfeed.com
@paldhous
www.peteraldhous.com

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens <(b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2022 12:01 PM
To: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)>; Gerald Keusch (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6)>; peter hotez (b)(6)
Subject: Re: CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170

Note that this foia is ostensibly about Leishmaniasis so hopefully not of concern to you, but we have had foia folks try to sneak in through the back door recently

In 5 years here i have never heard of a foia for Leishmaniasis so just want to be sure..... d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 14, 2022, at 11:57, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
Date: April 14, 2022 at 11:56:08 EDT
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
> **Date:** April 14, 2022 at 07:48:35 EDT
> **To:** David Morens (b)(6)
> **Subject: Fwd: CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** "Barasch, Kimberly (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
> > **Date:** April 14, 2022 at 07:46:57 EDT
> > **To:** "West, Elisabeth (NIH/NHLBI) [E]" (b)(6), "Awwad, David (NIH/NIAID) [C]" (b)(6), "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < (b)(6)
> > **Cc:** "Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6) Manheim, Marianne (NIH/NHLBI) [E]" (b)(6) Schofield, Robin (NIH/NHLBI) [E] (b)(6) "Conrad, Patricia (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6), "Doepel, Laurie (NIH/NIAID) [E]" < Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <
> > **Subject: RE: CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170**
> >
> > Hi Beth,
> > Okay for CIT to search.
> >
> > Thank you,
> >
> > Kim Barasch
> > Office of the Director
> > National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases
> > (b)(6)
> >
> > **From:** West, Elisabeth (NIH/NHLBI) [E] (b)(6)
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022 4:15 PM
> > **To:** Awwad, David (NIH/NIAID) [C] (b)(6); Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
> > **Cc:** Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6); Manheim, Marianne (NIH/NHLBI) [E] (b)(6); Schofield, Robin (NIH/NHLBI) [E] (b)(6); Conrad, Patricia (NIH/NIAID) [E] < (b)(6) >; Doepel, Laurie (NIH/NIAID) [E] < ; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6) >; Barasch, Kimberly (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
> > **Subject:** CIT Search Request: NIAID IOD FOIA Request 58170
> > **Importance:** High
> >
> > Good afternoon,

We have received a FOIA request from Dr. Aldhous, freelance journalist, on 4/13/22 (attached). I am reaching to you specifically for item 3 of his request:

- **communications among NIAID IOD/OCGR staff regarding this paper**: "Enhanced attraction of sand fly vectors of Leishmania infantum to dogs infected with zoonotic visceral leishmaniasis" https://journals.plos.org/plosntds/article?id=10.1371/journal.pntd.0009647
- date range: **July 21, 2021 and date of search**

I am seeking permission to request a CIT search of the following emails:

Anthony Fauci
Greg Folkers
Patricia Conrad
Kimberly Barasch
David Morens
Laurie Doepel

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Attached:

- Request

Thank you,
Beth

Elisabeth West
Government Information Specialist
NIH/NHLBI/OM/FOIA Service Center
Rockledge One, 4th Floor
(b)(6) (b)(6) NHLBI FOIA Main Line)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (Direct Line)

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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:24:23 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:23:02 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Publication of Angie Rasmussen article
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Date: Thu, Sep 15, 2022 at 12:49 PM
Subject: Publication of Angie Rasmussen article
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >, Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6), Peter Daszak (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforeignpolicy.com%2F2022%2F09%2F15%2Fc theories-covid-19-commission%2F &data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C72c6d7f88b4a4ff78dc008db8a0f3d82%7C14b77578977342d585(&sdata=xu8WyBV0ErJnmSfYJ%2F4ZgYLsFtE7wzLb4BbDlMutKhY%3D &reserved=0

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Sep 15, 2022, at 11:49 AM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

FYI, Srinath Reddy in discussing the epidemiology of the pandemic did not get into the Sachs framework and stayed pretty much at a higher level as a public health professional.

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 11:31 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Another attack from Republican Senators

He repeated every inappropriate and unbalanced view he has repeatedly

pushed everywhere else. Totally inappropriate, and he more than implied that these were the conclusions of the Commission.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 11:27 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Another attack from Republican Senators

I can't bring myself to watch

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Sep 15, 2022, at 11:18 AM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

Watching Jeff expound and I am nauseated.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 15, 2022, at 9:19 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

It's just

(b)(6)

I can tell you what he'll likely say, About how well behaved Jeff was at the press event, but no mentions or apologies for past horrors

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Sep 15, 2022, at 9:10 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) > wrote:

Peter:

Do you have Horton's email address? I was going to write to him about Jeff and see what he has to say.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 7:57 AM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Another attack from Republican Senators

EXTERNAL SENDER

I'm just sick of the whole thing. Richard Horton sent me an inappropriate note this morning. I feel as though I protected the reputation of the LC by being the bad cop with Jeff, and beat up for it.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Sep 14, 2022, at 10:56 PM, Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) wrote:

Peter: The Washington Post report was pretty balanced – and I'm glad that Dan Diamond gave you and Angela Rasmussen the space to clarify some of the more dubious elemenets of the Lancet Commission report. Your quotation was excellent – strong, succinct, clear, and true. Angela's was also terrific.

As ever,
jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 10:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura

(b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Another attack from Republican Senators

It's awful, here are my quotes in the Washington Post tonight

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fhealth%2F2022%
covid-commission-report-who%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C72c6d7f88b4a4ff78dc008db8a0f3d82%7C14b77578977342d585(
&sdata=VkWsNOJ3bzLQwKk8UnQgBh3N0BM66Rgs3KUHKFq7ZqI%3D &reserved=0

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Sep 14, 2022, at 8:31 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Just saw this letter being promoted by Richard Ebright online. It's an effort to get USAID to defund EcoHealth, even when the funding they give us at present doesn't involved viral work at all – it's conservation and training grants.

The letter's led by Sen. Marshall, cosigned by the usual suspects, Rand Paul, Marc Rubio etc.

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.marshall.senate.gov%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2FUSAID- Letter-re-EHA-suspension-9.14.2022.pdf &data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C72c6d7f88b4a4ff78dc008db8a0f3d82%7C14b77578977342d585(&sdata=ZqH8UhrGIY%2F6eHArEb7uGj4ykWvPMtnDwfJ%2BYLvfpp4%3D &reserved=0

I hope it won't get much traction or lead to further delays in our work.

Cheers,

Peter

<
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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:41:18 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:40:36 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Question re. NIH refusing to allow
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Date: Fri, May 5, 2023 at 11:22 AM
Subject: Question re. NIH refusing to allow
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) >, Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)

Rich just shared a 'fruity' quote he gave to the Daily Telegraph re. Francis Collins' particular weakness in terminating NIH funding on direction from Trump. I'll leave it for you to either read it in the press, or hear it from Rich – it's a cracker…

It reminded me of the opposite outcome, a story I read when Hillary Clinton was a New York Senator and tried to push NIH to fund 9/11 syndrome grants that had been rejected. My memory is that she met with Tony Fauci, who politely (but repeatedly) reminded her that the NIH grant review system is independent and can't be politically interfered with.

David, Jerry – do you know where that was reported – I can't find it online. David – do you remember if it was Tony Fauci or Elias Zerhouni that Hillary met with?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7Ccce63f3e214947f044db08db8a11afa5%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=6FAyOgN7CFVxQ6VZFYBCUeEV1y1VdOR7DDSr23%2B9P84%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 9:51 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Subject: RE: New White House pandemic center

Typical government approach – ask for something to be done and then give no money to get it done.

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: (b)(6)

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Subject: New White House pandemic center

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced
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E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

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Date: Wed, 3 Aug 2022 11:53:35 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 3 Aug 2022 11:53:30 AM -0400
Subject: FW: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" (b)(6)
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)

This is the email I just sent to Ian Lipkin. I have an upcoming call and I will send similar messages to Wafaa El-Sadr and Joe Stiglitz after that, and anyone else I can think of at Columbia who has a functioning brain and hopefully some guts. I don't subscribe to the "if you ignore the crazies they will go away". They don't.

Jerry

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:47 AM
To: Ian Lipkin (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
Importance: High

Hi Ian,

Its been a while since we were in touch. I am certain you have seen what Jeff Sachs has been saying, all of the inaccuracies he glosses over because he doesn't understand it, presents no evidence but just conspiracy ideas, as he joins forces with the likes of Richard Ebright and Stephen Quay. I would be surprised if you were not embarrassed by his stream of PR events, as many of your Columbia colleagues would be as well. As an alum of Columbia College I am outraged by his rhetoric and the damage it does to science and, undoubtedly, to Columbia University itself. I can understand why the university cannot silence him, although they could issue a disclaimer that he speaks for himself and not for the University. But even more important would be for faculty to speak out and challenge him to produce evidence instead of spreading innuendo. Maybe not in the colorful language Angela Rasmussen uses on twitter, but clear and multi-voiced from scientifically qualified and knowledgeable faculty.

If you ask what I am doing personally, I can only say I am awaiting the editors decision on a manuscript that addresses what happened on the basis of what we know, looks forward to what we need to do to be better prepared in the future, and avoids spotlighting the lab leak argument.

For better days, Jerry

https://www.currentaffairs.org/2022/08/why- the-chair-of-the-lancets-covid-19-commission-thinks-the-us-government-is-preventing-a-real-investigation-into-the-pandemic

Why the Chair of the Lancet's COVID-19 Commission Thinks The US Government Is

Preventing a Real Investigation Into the Pandemic

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs says he is "pretty convinced [COVID-19] came out of US lab biotechnology" and warns that there is dangerous virus research taking place without public oversight.

Current Affairs

filed 02 August 2022 in THE VIRUS

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs is the Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University and the President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. He has also served as the chair of the COVID-19 commission for leading medical journal the *Lancet*. Through his investigations as the head of the COVID-19 commission, Prof. Sachs has come to the conclusion that there is extremely dangerous biotechnology research being kept from public view, that the United States was supporting much of this research, and that it is very possible that SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19, originated through dangerous virus research gone awry.

Prof. Sachs recently co-authored a paper in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences calling for an independent inquiry into the virus's origins. He believes that there is clear proof that the National Institutes of Health and many members of the scientific community have been impeding a serious investigation of the origins of COVID-19 and deflecting attention away from the hypothesis that risky U.S.-supported research may have led to millions of deaths. If that hypothesis is true, the implications would be earth-shaking, because it might mean that esteemed members of the scientific community bore responsibility for a global calamity. In this interview, Prof. Sachs explains how he, as the head of the COVID-19 commission for a leading medical journal, came to the conclusion that powerful actors were preventing a real investigation from taking place. He also explains why it is so important to get to the bottom of the origins of COVID: because, he says, there is extremely dangerous research taking place with little accountability, and the public has a right to know since we are the ones whose lives are being put at risk without our consent.

NATHAN ROBINSON:

I want to quote something that you said recently:

"I chaired the commission for the Lancet for two years on COVID. I'm pretty convinced it came out of U.S. lab biotechnology, not out of nature, just to mention. After two years of intensive work on this. So it's a blunder in my view of biotech, not an accident of a natural spillover. We don't know for sure, I should be absolutely clear. But there's enough evidence that it should be looked into. And it's not being investigated, not in the United States, not anywhere. And I think for real reasons that they don't want to look underneath the rug, the statement."

The statement that you made there is a controversial one. Just to read a couple of quotes from the *New York Times* in the last year:

"In a review of recent studies and comparisons to other outbreaks, a group of virologists contends that there is more evidence to support a natural spillover from animals to humans."

"Scientists released a pair of extensive studies over the weekend that point to a large food and live animal market in Wuhan, China, as the origin of the coronavirus pandemic."

So I want to start by asking you just to tell us a little bit about the investigation that you were part of and what led you to think that what I just quoted is a misleading statement of the state of the evidence.

JEFFREY SACHS:

Well, the funny thing is those scientists who are saying that said the same thing on February 4, 2020, before they had done any research at all. And they published the same statement in March 2020, before they had any facts at all. So they're creating a narrative. And they're denying the alternative hypothesis without looking closely at it. That's the basic point.

Now, what is the alternative hypothesis? The alternative hypothesis is quite straightforward. And that is that there was a lot of research underway in the United States and China on taking SARS-like viruses, manipulating them in the laboratory, and creating potentially far more dangerous viruses. And the particular virus that causes COVID-19, called SARS-Cov-2, is notable because it has a piece of its genetic makeup that makes the virus more dangerous. And that piece of the genome is called the "furin cleavage site." Now, what's interesting, and concerning if I may say so, is that the research that was underway very actively and being promoted, was to insert furin cleavage sites into SARS-like viruses to see what would happen. Oops!

Well, that is what *may* have happened. And what has been true from the start is that that very real possibility, which a lot of scientists know, has not been looked at closely, even though it's absolutely clear that it could have happened that way. They're not looking. They just keep telling us, "Look at the market, look at the market, look at the market!" But they don't address this alternative. They don't even look at the data. They don't even ask questions. And the truth is from the beginning, they haven't asked the real questions.

But not *quite* the beginning. Because at the beginning, which we could date from the first phone call of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with a group of virologists on February 1, 2020, the virologists said "Oh my god, that is strange, that could well be a laboratory creation. What is that furin cleavage site doing in there?" Because scientists knew that was part of an active ongoing research program. And yet, by February 3, the same group is saying "No, no, it's natural, it's natural." By February 4, they start to draft the papers that are telling the public, "Don't worry, it's natural." By March, they write a paper—totally spurious, in my view—called the proximal origins paper that is the most cited bio paper in 2020. It said: it is absolutely natural. [Note: the paper's conclusion is "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."] But they didn't have any of the data that you read about in the *New York Times*. They didn't have any of this. They just said the labs weren't working on this alternative. But you know what, they don't know what the labs were working on, because they never asked, and NIH hasn't told us.

ROBINSON:

Let me ask you if we can distinguish between what we know for certain and what is speculative because we just haven't got the data. So we *do* know that there was—correct me if I'm wrong—research proposed that would have dealt with this category of viruses and would have modified them in ways that would have made them potentially more lethal. Do we know whether that kind of research was in fact actually ongoing somewhere?

SACHS:

We have enormous reason to believe that it was. And clearly, we haven't even asked that question. But we have a lot of reason to believe that it was, because the scientists that were doing that research loved that research. And they explained to us publicly why it's so important. And they wrote editorials about why this research must continue. And they made grant proposals saying that it should continue. And for those of us in the business of writing grant proposals, the fact that a particular grant proposal that's deeply troubling was turned down *doesn't* mean that it wasn't carried out afterwards. But where is NIH saying, "Yeah, that's an interesting question. Why don't we get the evidence?" It doesn't even ask that question.

And the scientists like those that talk about the Huanan market, they don't even discuss that research that was underway. That is just misdirection, to my mind. It's like sleight of hand art. Don't look over there. Look over here. But we know that there was a tremendous amount of this research underway. We have interviews by the lead scientists. We have these research proposals. I know the intention of doing this research from discussions. I've read so many studies of the importance of this research claimed by the scientists. And yet I see NIH with its head in the ground. "Oh, no, nothing here to look at." And then I see the scientists. "Oh, nothing here to look at. We know it's the market. Did we find an animal? No. Do we have an explanation of where that furin cleavage site came in? No. We don't have an explanation of the timing, which doesn't quite look right. Oh, but *don't look over there*, because there's nothing there, they keep telling us. Well, that's a little silly.

So my point is, there is a huge amount of reason to believe that that research was underway. Because there are published papers on this. There are interviews on this. There are research proposals. But NIH isn't talking. It's not asking. And these scientists have never asked either. From the very first day, they have kept hidden from view the alternative. And when they discuss the alternative, they don't discuss the research program. They discuss complete straw men about the lab, not the actual kind of research that was underway, which was to stick furin cleavage sites into SARS-like viruses in a way that could have created SARS-Cov-2.

What I'm calling for is not the *conclusion*. I'm calling for the *investigation*. Finally, after two and a half years of this, it's time to fess up that it might have come out of a lab and here's the data that we need to know to find out whether it did.

ROBINSON:

One of the things that struck me that I didn't know when I started writing about this and actually doing some some research is realizing that in the years leading up to the pandemic, there was a huge controversy about whether it was wise to modify viruses in the course of research in ways that could make a virus more infectious or more lethal. And some people were arguing that this kind of research was insane. And some people were warning that in the case of a lab accident—an accident, mind you, not as an intentional "bioweapon"—a simple

human error could cause a real catastrophe.

SACHS:

That is exactly right. There were several kinds of experiments of manipulation of the genes of dangerous viruses. And this raised a lot of alarm. And there was actually a moratorium in 2014. But the champions of this kind of research pushed on, they applied for waivers, which they got, and finally the moratorium came off in 2017. And they said how important it is to do this dangerous kind of research, because they claimed, "Well, there are lots of viruses out there. And we don't know when they're going to become highly pathogenic, and we need to develop drugs and vaccines against a wide spectrum of them. So we have to test all these viruses that we can find, to see whether they have high spillover potential." But they weren't actually aiming to just test viruses that they were collecting in nature. They were aiming to *modify* those viruses. Because the scientists knew that a SARS-like virus without a furin cleavage site wouldn't be that dangerous. But they wanted to test their drugs and vaccines and theories against dangerous viruses. Their proposal was to take hundreds, by the way—or least they talked about in one proposal more than 180 previously unreported strains—and test them for their so-called "spillover potential." How effective would they be? And to look: do they have a furin cleavage site, or technically what's called a proteolytic cleavage site? And if not, *put them in*. For heaven's sake. My God! Are you kidding?

Okay, but we didn't even ask the question from the first day: did you guys *do* that? Tell us what you did. Could you give us your lab notebooks? We're kind of curious. Instead, these people who are writing these *New York Times* articles right now and publishing these pieces about the market, from the first day—without asking about the experiments—they said, "Nope, it's natural." That's why I don't trust them. Because they've never looked at the alternative hypothesis. And their hypothesis has so many gaps, so many holes in it. But they don't even try to look at the alternative hypothesis.

ROBINSON:

I think it's very important to make clear that the "alternative hypothesis" is mainly a hypothesis about an accident, and scientific hubris. It's important to distinguish the kooky theories from the incredibly plausible theories. Because what you're talking about is people who did not appreciate the dangers of what they were doing.

SACHS:

In fact, it's very interesting. The alternative that is the *right* one to look at is part of a very extensive research program that was underway from 2015 onward, funded by the NIH, by Tony Fauci, in particular NIAID [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases], and it was to examine the spillover potential of SARS-like viruses. The champions of this research explained in detail their proposals. But after the event, we'd never asked them, "So what were you actually doing? What experiments did you do? What do you know?" We somehow never asked. It was better just to sweep it under the rug, which is what Fauci and the NIH have done up until this point. Maybe they could tell us, "Oh, full exoneration," but they haven't told us that at all. They haven't shown us anything.

So there's nothing "kooky" about it, because it's precisely what the scientists were doing. And then you can listen to the scientists on tape describing why they think the research program is so important, because they say these are dangerous viruses, and therefore we have to prepare broad spectrum vaccines and drugs. They explain it's not good enough to test one or two viruses. We have to test all of them. And then they came to realize, as I said earlier, that just having a SARS-like virus, if it doesn't have this piece of the gene, it's almost surely not going to be that effective. So they got around to the idea. "Well, let's put these in," if you can imagine that. To my mind, it's mind-boggling.

But they were proud of this, because it's actually genius at a technological level. Can you imagine: you can take a sequence of letters, which defines the genome, you can recreate the virus just from the letters. You don't even have to have the biological virus in hand, you just need the sequence. Then you can say "I'm going to add these four letters RRAR, the furin cleavage site, or maybe it's eight, RRARSVAS, this is a sequence of eight amino acids—I'm going to stick it in there right at the S1 S2 junction of the spike protein, because I know from my research program that will make it more pathogenic, that is more disease-causing. And then I can see whether my drug candidates like remdesivir, or some other candidate works against it. That is their idea. There's nothing kooky about our claim: Hey, what were you doing? Because *they told us that they wanted to do these projects.* And they told us that they were wanting to do these projects in the months leading up to this outbreak. And

then what is absolutely strange is that even though scientists knew right from the start, that is very weird to have that RRAR furin cleavage site in there—never saw that before in a SARS-like virus, and that that could well have come from a lab—hush, hush. Don't talk about it. Don't even discuss it. Just say right from the beginning: *This is natural. Of course, it's natural. Everything else is kooky.*

So you saw a narrative being created. And the scientists are not acting like scientists. Because when you're acting like a scientist, you're pursuing alternative hypotheses. And the scientists just wrote recently an op-ed saying the only evidence that this came out of a lab that's been put forward is that it came in a city, Wuhan, where an institute was located. Well, that's a lie. That is not the only coincidence that leads to this theory. What leads to this alternative hypothesis is the *detailed research program the NIH funded* that was underway in the years leading up to the outbreak. So I see the scientists absolutely trying to create a narrative and take our eyes off of another issue.

Now, again, let me emphasize, we don't have definitive evidence of either hypothesis. But what we do have is definitive evidence that officialdom has tried to keep our eyes away from the lab creation hypothesis.

ROBINSON:

You mentioned the lab in Wuhan. It's not just that there was a lab in Wuhan doing research on viruses. But there were ties between the lab and those pursuing this program. What do we know about the research that was actually occurring there?

SACHS:

We know that at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the scientists there had been trained by American scientists to use advanced bioengineering methodologies. And in particular, we have scientists in North Carolina, Texas, and so forth who do this kind of research, believe in it, argue for it, and say that they don't want any regulations on it and so on. And they were in close contact with Wuhan Institute of Virology, and they were part of a joint research group that was stitched together by something called EcoHealth Alliance. And EcoHealth Alliance was the kind of marriage maker between the American scientists and the Chinese scientists. That was the vehicle for funding from the U.S. government, especially from the National Institutes of Health, and especially from Tony Fauci's unit, the NIAID. There were years of grants, there were grant proposals. We don't know exactly what was done. But we have enough reason to know that we should be *asking* exactly what was done. And we know definitively that from the beginning, NIH has been running from telling us what has been done. They're not telling us the truth, that they had reason to fear from the start that this came out of a lab. And that to this day, they have reason to suspect it, but they're not talking.

ROBINSON:

A shocking thing to me was that the head of the EcoHealth Alliance was on the World Health Organization team that actually investigated the origins of COVID and concluded that it wasn't the lab.

SACHS:

Well, more than that: I appointed him—this was Peter Daszak—I appointed him to chair the task force of the pandemic commission that I was running for the *Lancet.* And he headed a task force on the origins. I thought, naively at the beginning, "Well, here's a guy who is so connected, he would know." And then I realized he was not telling me the truth. And it took me some months, but the more I saw it, the more I resented it.

And so I told him, "Look, you have to leave." And then the other scientists in that task force attacked me for being anti-scientific. And I asked them: "What are your connections with all of this?" They didn't tell me. Then when the Freedom of Information Act released some of these documents that NIH had been hiding from the public, I saw that people that were attacking me were also part of this thing. So I disbanded that whole task force. So my own experience was to witness close up how they're not talking. And they're trying to keep our eyes on something else. And away from even asking the questions that we're talking about. We don't have the answers. But we have good reasons to ask. And we have good reasons to know that NIH is not doing its job properly right now.

ROBINSON:

So you're saying that Daszak and others did not disclose to you pretty serious conflicts of interest? Since, on the hypothesis that it had something to do with this kind of research, that would have implicated Daszak himself in the origins of the crisis?

SACHS:

Well, he could have explained to me right from the beginning that there was a big research program and that

they were manipulating the viruses, and here's how. He could have given me the research proposals. And when I asked him for one of the research proposals, he said, "No, my lawyer says I can't give it to you." I said, "What? You're heading a commission. We're a transparent commission. You're telling me your *lawyer* says you can't give me your project proposal." I said, "Well, then you can't be on this commission. This is not even a close call."

But there were so many other things. He was just filled with misdirection. I don't know whether he understands or not, maybe he doesn't understand. But the things he said just were absolutely not right.

ROBINSON:

When people hear you say, "They're sweeping it under the rug, they don't want to look," one question that may come to their minds is "Well, why? Why would people not be interested in getting to the truth?" But the alternate hypothesis from the natural spillover that you're talking about could have serious repercussions. It would implicate a lot of people in potentially millions of deaths. So there's a lot at stake here for the scientific community. Which explains why there would be an interest in directing people away from this possibility.

SACHS:

There are at least two reasons why they might be doing what they're doing. One is, as you say, the implications are huge. Imagine if this came out of a lab. And we have, by some estimates, about 18 million dead worldwide from this. That's not the official count. But that's the estimated excess mortality from COVID. Well, the implications of that—the ethical, the moral, the geopolitical—everything is enormous.

But there's a second matter that is really important, too. One thing that is rather clear to me is that there is so much dangerous research underway right now under the umbrella of biodefense or other things that we don't know about, that is not being properly controlled. This is for sure. And that's happening around the world. And governments say "don't poke your nose into that." That's our business, not your business. But it's actually our business. It's our business to understand what is going on with this. This is not to be kept secret. We don't trust you.

Let me put it this way: I don't trust them right now. I want to know. Because even what we know of the dangerous research is enough to raise a lot of questions of responsibility for the future. And to pose the question: "Hey, what other viruses are you guys working on? What should we know?" Because no matter what the truth is on SARS-Cov-2, what is pretty clear is we've got so much technological capacity to engineer dangerous pathogens right now. And a lot of that is being done. And it's classified. It's secret, and we don't know what it is. And I don't like that feeling at all. I don't recommend it for us and for the world.

ROBINSON:

Well, you've rather answered the question of why it's important to get to the bottom of this. Because one of the excuses you hear is, "Well, who really cares? Does it matter? It was an animal, it was a lab, whatever it is, it's here." But what you're saying is, "No, we actually need to know where this started." Because this isn't going to be the only one, whatever the origins are. And we don't want people to die from future viruses. This is critically important. If we're going to save millions of lives, we have to find out the answer.

SACHS:

I can tell you one thing that I've learned from talking to a lot of scientists in the last couple of years: the technological capacity to do dangerous things using this biotechnology is extraordinary right now. So I want to know what's being done. I want to know what other governments are doing, too, not just ours. I want some global control over this stuff.

We've kind of understood the nuclear risk—even that, of course, is in a lot of ways hidden from view. But this is a clear and present risk. And there's reason to believe we're actually in the midst of it, not just hypothetically. So come on: it's time to open the books everywhere. It's time to find out. Maybe it was the marketplace. Maybe it wasn't a lab. But we need to get real answers, now. Not the kind of misdirection that's been going in since February 2020. Enough nonsense! Enough *New York Times* stories saying, "Oh, it's this, it's that," without looking closely at the very plausible laboratory hypothesis.

ROBINSON:

It seems from what you're saying that as the head of the *Lancet*'s COVID-19 commission, you didn't feel you were able to get satisfactory answers or see the data you wanted. What kind of investigation do we need and who ought to do it?

SACHS:

The most interesting things that I got as chair of the *Lancet* commission came from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits and whistleblower leaks from inside the U.S. government. Isn't that terrible? NIH was actually asked at one point: give us your research program on SARS-like viruses. And you know what they did? They released the cover page and redacted 290 pages. They gave us a cover page and 290 blank pages! That's NIH, for heaven's sake. That's not some corporation. That is the U.S. government charged with keeping us healthy. What I found is that we have a lot of data which we're not finding right now. And I don't want to have to rely on FOIA and leaks, though those can be incredibly informative. I want clear, independent scientific investigation and transparency. One way to do this would be a bipartisan congressional oversight investigation that had subpoena power. Give us your lab records, your notebooks, your data files of virus strains, and so forth. There are many questions that we need independent scientists to define, to tell us exactly the kinds of information. But we know right now we're operating in an environment in which the government is working to hide the data that we need to make a real assessment.
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Current Af

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:33:05 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:32:17 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: The new NIH Director nomination
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Date: Sat, May 20, 2023 at 4:42 PM
Subject: RE: The new NIH Director nomination
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >, Peter Daszak
(b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura
(b)(6) >
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) >, Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >

Hi Rich,

Totally agree with the need to get rid of the slogan for attacks on science that GOF has become. The question is how. That would be something a new advocacy organization that engages the scientific societies to fight back against the attacks on science and scientists could pick up and pursue.

More immediate is the issue of EHA and what Bertagnolli will experience in the hearings. Ordinarily what Harold suggests would be fine, however in the current circumstances Building 1 remains hostile to EHA and too reticent with the republican congressmen. I don't trust them to prep her in a manner that we would consider both rational and reasonable. Maybe the other way to get her attention is to get something in Science (? via and editorial from you and Harold, or prod Holden Thorpe to take a proactive stance) providing the

background including the suspensions, terminations, reversals, reimpositions etc in a way that has stopped the important work EHA does for all this time. Jocelyn Kaiser has a nice news report in Science; what is needed now is an editorial that Bertagnolli will see and hopefully ask lots of questions to the legal office at NIH and HHS.

Peter, is there anybody in that office who has been willing to both listen and to hear the message? I don't know how to get more information to that person, that office, without stepping over red lines for influencing (rather than informing) decision making. What is needed is some sort of amicus brief. Is there any precedent for something like that outside the courts?

I'm just verbally mulling over where this issue is and what can be legitimately be done proactively in defense.

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2023 2:13 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >
Subject: FW: The new NIH Director nomination

Peter and Jerry:

Got this from Harold. Have you already delivered this material to NIAID?

I will respond to his GOF comment. It would probably be helpful to get another descriptor.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Harold E. Varmus (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2023 1:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: The new NIH Director nomination

EXTERNAL SENDER

Rich, yes, I know Monica and we have talked several times about the NCI and NIH jobs. But I don't expect to be involved in her preparation for the hearing on her nomination as NIH Director. That is usually organized by the legislative offices in the NIH Office of the Director and by the legislative team at DHHS. I am sure that she will get briefed about the EHA grant and it is likely that NIAID will be asked to provide background material.

The document you sent has a lot of detailed information that she might want to read but it would best be delivered to her via NIAID; in addition, the source of the document (presumably EHA itself) should be apparent. EHA might simply provide that to NIAID's current

leadership and I expect that they've done that already.

Best,

HV

PS Can't we find a better, more restricted way to label experiments that enhance pathogenicity or transmissibility of infectious agents than "gain of function"? Even DURC (dual use research of concern) is better than that. I've been doing GoF research for decades, enhancing cell growth by enhancing the function of proto-oncogenes!

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Date: Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 11:25 AM
To: Harold E. Varmus (b)(6)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The new NIH Director nomination

Harold:

You probably know Monica Bertagnolli and I am wondering if you will be contacting her prior to the Senate Hearing?

I ask because in light of the recent events related to EcoHealth Alliance she is likely to be questioned about their funding and the relationship to the COVID lab-leak hypothesis. I had let you know that their grant had been re-instated (2 1/2 years after we asked for it!), but I don't see that will stop some awkward questions for her.

If you do get the chance to chat you might mention some of the possible responses to questions that are covered in the attached.

If you will not be speaking with her, perhaps you could suggest someone else I might contact about this matter.

Hope all is well with you.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
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email: (b)(6)
CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date:	Tue, 30 Apr 2024 4:58:35 PM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 30 Apr 2024 4:54:58 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Re: Latest tweet from SSCP - schoolyard behavior at best!
From:	Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To:	Roberts, Rich (b)(6) kuuipo9 (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
CC:	Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) John Feigelson (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments:	image002.png

Thanks all – this will the one and only positive moment in the hearing!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2024 4:42 PM
To: kuuipo9 <(b)(6)>; Pe (b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio <(b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) (b)(6) ;Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Re: Latest tweet from SSCP - schoolyard behavior at best!

I agree totally!

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA
Tel: (b)(6)
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email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2024 3:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
>
Subject: Re: Re: Latest tweet from SSCP - schoolyard behavior at best!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I read your opening statement this morning. Excellent, well written.... Good luck tomorrow. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/30/24 14:45, Peter Daszak wrote:

> My opening statement is now up on the SSCP website -



Daszak-Testimony
PDF Document · 48 KB

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Apr 29, 2024, at 7:37 PM, Jeffrey Sturchio <(b)(6)> wrote:

Peter: This is puerile nonsense! Stay strong!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 6:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); John Feigelson (b)(6) Gerald Keusch <(b)(6)>; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6) Rich Roberts <(b)(6)>; (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Latest tweet from SSCP - schoolyard behavior at best!

Having spent 27 yrs in the USA, going through the immigration process and becoming a US citizen, I'm reminded what a great honor it is to have a chance to meet esteemed members of Congress. Here they are in their latest tweet mocking our organization by repeating insults from a private message of one of the Proximal Origins paper virologists.

I look forward to answering their questions in detail about this tattle-tale schoolyard gibberish on Wednesday morning. Thank God I worked hard for my Ph.D so that I can have all the right science-based answers on these critical issues!
<image001.jpg>

Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic
@COVIDSelect

"**EgoHealth**" was allegedly a "term of endearment" used by the co-authors of the now infamous "Proximal Origin" paper to describe EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak. Is this characterization fact or fiction? On Wednesday, Dr. Daszak will testify before @COVIDSelect.
<image002.jpg>

5:44 PM · Apr 29, 2024

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 5:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts < (b)(6) ; (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: From Marcia McNutt

Below, after our panel

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

From: "McNutt, Marcia K." (b)(6)
Date: April 29, 2024 at 3:48:31 PM CDT
To: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6) Anthony Fauci (b)(6)
"Iwasaki, Akiko" (b)(6) "Mann, Michael E." <
(b)(6)
Cc: "Agee, Jennylee" (b)(6) "Chalfie, Martin" (b)(6) Martin
Chalfie (b)(6) "Everly, Rebecca Rich
Roberts
Subject: Re: Thank you!

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Dear Peter, Tony, Akiko, and Michael,

I cannot tell you how many members approached me to say how moved, inspired, and informed they were by your presentation yesterday. I've been responding to emails all day from members who want to find some way to help. I had thought that there would be wider understanding of what you all were enduring; I did not anticipate how many eyes were opened to the persecution of people who speak out for the public good, even when the information is difficult to take in.

I will definitely keep you all informed as we move forward. I think the four of you would make an excellent sounding board for ideas, as I am sure that some strategies could have the potential to backfire if we are not very very careful in how we approach the issue.

I am not so naive as to think that we can reach everyone - too many opinions are baked in, often for nefarious reasons. However, I do have faith that the majority of Americans will respond to reason.

Marty and Becca can comment on the extent to which CHR can help with this issue. I certainly value their input as they have such a long history of dealing with persecution of scientists. Domestic cases have to date been outside of their scope, and your cases are all somewhat different than the majority of CHR interventions. Your persecution is coming from the public, whereas CHR mostly deals with foreign government actions. If CHR decides that this is beyond their remit, then we definitely will need to find some other unit at the NAS to take this on.

And Peter: thanks for the heads up about the Mitchell Foundation having an interest in supporting work to address this issue. Happy to talk to you more about it.

My gratitude to you all,

Marcia

NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS

Dr. Marcia K McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Mailing Address | Physical location:
500 Fifth Street NW | 2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001 | Washington, DC 20418
(b)(6) (office) (b)(6) (cell)
NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS

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On Apr 29, 2024, at 3:47 PM, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

Dear Marcia (Martin): Thank you again for the extraordinary opportunity to meet with the NAS members and discuss the rise of anti-science activism in America. I received so much nice and productive feedback both at the panel session and the afternoon reception. As I indicated, the panel could be game-changing in helping to counter the anti-science monster.

I look forward to the follow up in the coming weeks and months. Perhaps working through the committee on human rights is a potential mechanism?

In the meantime we recently received some modest funding from the George and Cynthia Mitchell Foundation for this purpose and I will explore with them the potential for working through the NAS, etc.

Again, thank you for everything! It was a memorable weekend on many fronts.

Warmest regards, Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)
iPhone

Date: Thu, 16 Jun 2022 2:31:55 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 16 Jun 2022 2:31:51 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs saying it out loud
From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; M. D. Gerald T. Keusch (b)(6) (b)(6) >; peter hotez (b)(6) >;
CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;

What an idiot! And then he goes on to say that the war in Ukraine was preventable – with about as much evidence as he has for his conclusion that SARS-CoV-2 emerged from US biotechnology.

Jeff

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 2:12 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Jeff Sachs saying it out loud

I think you'll enjoy this – Jeff Sachs on a web interview now on Youtube saying that he is convinced SARS-CoV-2 came out of "US biotechnology, not from nature".

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rRBuX4U0DU &t=745s

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter (b)(6)

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 2:52 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6); 'Jeff Sturchio' (b)(6); David Morens' (b)(6); 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6); 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022

Thanks for the comments Rich. It's now over with the NAM for their scholarly deliberations!

I'm now straight onto dealing with the draft of the HHS OIG audit – they were asked by NIH to do an audit of EHA, and they're trying to paint us as heinously incompetent and duplicitous, so we've now got to spend another few days drafting responses and supplying documentary evidence that we're not the bad guys people would like us to be….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

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---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 1:51 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022

Peter:

This is excellent! I'm sorry to be slow in responding, but "officially" I have been on vacation and unable to read all emails coming my way without alerting my wife to my "non-vacation" behaviour. I am not en route home and have had the chance to read through this response.

What is so annoying here is that politicians have the easy option of targeting would-be scapegoats to uphold a political agenda and ignore science.

I hope the NAM will finally decide to follow the science and tell the politicians to go to hell.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 12:34 AM
To: Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: FW: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear all,

Thank you very much for your support dealing with this awful situation. Below is my email to NAM with an attached letter responding to the allegations, and a dropbox file with 28 appendices supporting each of the points I make (feel free to click on the link and sift through if you've got a spare few hours!).

Having been lucky enough to get a scholarship to one of those schools in the UK where we had to stand when the teachers (who we had to call "masters") came in the room, this brings back some powerful memories of the way institutions can be manipulated to make the lives of the people they're supposed to serve totally bloody miserable.

I only hope the committee is able to see beyond the political narratives, and their desire to save the NAM from attack, and do the right thing by one of their members. If not, I'll get ready with my appeal, and continue this tedious journey…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 12:24 AM
To: 'Fuentes-Afflick, Elena' (b)(6); 'Dzau, Victor J.' (b)(6); 'Kim, Se' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) (b)(6)>
Subject: RE: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Fuentes-Afflick,

I want to thank you and the NAM for granting me the extra time to respond to the allegations from the three Republican members of the Congress. I am attaching the original letter to the NAM (attachment A), the focused allegations (attachment B), your letter to me informing me of the intent to open an investigation ("Letter to Member…."), and my response to your letter refuting these allegations ("Dr. Daszak, response to NAM letter of April 11th 2022").

As you can see, I have provided a detailed refutation of each of the allegations, along with documentary evidence to support each point. This consists of 28 appendices (many are quite short consisting of specific email chains or short documents). However, because of their overall size, I have placed them in a secure dropbox folder that is available for you to download and circulate among the committee by clicking on the following link:

(b)(6)

As you stated below, I appreciate that this process is confidential, and I would ask that you take particular care to ensure that my letter and the appendices are carefully shared so as not to be circulated more widely than necessary – some of these appendices contain information that has never been released publicly before.

I will await the decision of the committee, the NAM Council and Dr. Dzau in due course, but in the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me of my Chief-of-Staff, Dr. Aleksei Chmura (cc'd) for any further information or clarification

Sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 2:06 PM
To: Peter Dasza (b)(6) >; Dzau, Victor J. (b)(6) ; Kim, Se (b)(6)
Subject: confidential

Dr. Daszak,

Thank you for your note of April 22nd. I was traveling and apologize for my delayed response. I have reviewed your letter in detail and will respond to each point.

First, when the NAM receives any allegation of misconduct against a member, we have to follow an independent process that is outlined in the policy document you received. We have undertaken an initial evaluation by an assessment panel which eliminated many of the allegations but recommended a subset of the allegations to be further investigated by the conduct review committee. The list of allegations was shared with you.

I accept your request for a deadline extension to June 12th. You may enlist the assistance of others and I encourage you to request that they honor the confidentiality of the process.

Point 1: To date, the NAM has not conducted its own investigation of the allegations. We have identified a subset of materials for further investigation which were referenced in the April 11, 2022 letter.

Point 2: I apologize for not providing information about the conflicts evaluation. We conducted a thorough evaluation of the conflicts of the assessment panel and conduct review committee members and none were identified.

Point 3: We identified selected references from the list provided in the original letter with the allegations and added one reference that is publicly available on the NIAID's website. These materials and any response you provide are the only materials that the Conduct Review Committee will consider.

Point 4: I should have asked if you have the results of an external investigation related to the allegations under consideration. If you have any such results, please share them.

Point 5: You are correct that our policy does not include a provision to meet with the conduct review committee and I cannot offer you this option. I invite you to submit additional materials if you believe they are relevant.

I want to assure you, personally, that the confidentiality requirement and following our process are my top priorities. I have discussed this with all individuals involved and have not shared information with anyone other than the assessment panel and conduct review committee members. My communication with the representatives of those who wrote the original letter was to confirm receipt of the materials and explain that we would be following our conduct review process.

I would be happy to connect with you, by phone or Zoom, to discuss.

Best,
Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH

NAM Home Secretary

University of California, San Francisco

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 5:14 PM
To: Dzau, Victor J. (b)(6); Fuentes-Afflick, Elena (b)(6); Kim, Se (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations

Dear Victor, Elena and Kim,

I was very concerned to have received three separate press inquiries today regarding a story in *Fox News* (https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house- republicans-ecohealth-alliance-concealed-data). I am not planning to respond to these questions.

As you can see in the *Fox News* article, yet another partisan political letter has been made public with unsubstantiated and clearly politically motivated allegations against our organization and myself. In the article, an aide to Representative McMorris Rodgers states that "*After receiving our letter, NAM notified us they had opened an internal review of Daszak's behavior, per our request…We believe this letter about EcoHealth's potential false statements and fraud is relevant to the ongoing investigation the NAM is conducting into Peter Daszak, so we have sent NAM a copy of this letter as well.*"

In your letters to me, and by phone, you reassured me repeatedly that the process of deciding whether to investigate these allegations was confidential on the NAM side, and you urged me to also treat correspondence with NAM on this issue as confidential, which I have. However, it appears that this is not the case, in that NAM has informed the Republican staff of intent to review my 'behavior' and that this has now been made public, as I indicated could happen in my letter to you last week, April 22, 2022.

It seems rather evident that the letters you have received are part of an ongoing and systematic political campaign to destroy EcoHealth Alliance's reputation and my own, with the ultimate target of undermining the NIH, Dr. Fauci, and the Biden White House. They are hyper-partisan and disingenuous in their goals, in that the letters and the fact they are simultaneously made public on *Fox News* and *Twitter*, are clearly designed to push a false narrative. EcoHealth Alliance has repeatedly and publicly refuted such allegations in our responses to NIH that have since been made public (e.g. https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus- study-of-bats-in-china-met-nih-grant-requirements-ecohealth-says-11635441406) and in carefully given interviews with the press (e.g. https://www.science.org/content/article/we- ve-done-nothing-wrong-ecohealth-leader-fights-charges-his-research-helped-spark-covid-19 and https://theintercept.com/2022/03/11/covid- nih-ecohealth-peter-daszak-interview/).

Given the developments today, I urge you to reconsider your decision to investigate these allegations, which have nothing to do with my adherence to the rules of conduct of NAM members, and to respond to the Republican accusers to state that they do not rise to the level whereby an investigation is warranted. I believe this is justified by the one-sided political nature of the attacks, the lack of prima facie evidence for the allegations, and the fact that your communications have already been made public in defiance of the confidentiality of the matter that NAM and EcoHealth Alliance have maintained. I'm very concerned that this public witch hunt will be damaging not just for myself and our organization, which has consistently produced cutting edge research on emerging diseases that has been fundamental to a series of NAM publications, but that it will also be damaging to NAM and the Academies in general. If you do not stand up to these politicized attacks at this point, they will surely continue and drag in other members of the Academies who have been

publicly criticized and accused by the same politicians for the last two years, and who are being continually attacked by various fringe groups espousing conjectural hypotheses about the origins of SARS-CoV-2, in spite of the increasing scientific evidence supporting the spillover from bats through an intermediary host to humans.

This active political interference with stewardship of science, the integrity of science, and the pursuit of knowledge by scientists, goes well beyond EcoHealth Alliance and threatens the integrity of the entire U.S. scientific enterprise. It is no different except in volume than the incontrovertible political interference by Donald Trump in the scientific enterprise at NIH in April 2020, which prompted you to issue a public statement about the separation of politics from science in response. Your words and those of Marcia McNutt ring even more true at this point: *"Any efforts to discredit the best science and scientists threaten the health and welfare of us all"* (https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/2020/09/nas- and-nam-presidents-alarmed-by-political-interference-in-science-amid-pandemic). EcoHealth Alliance, myself, the NIH, Tony Fauci, NAM and you are in the cross-hairs now because NIH failed to protect science and scientists from Trump's overtly political, and sadly successful, effort to close down research that was politically inconvenient. I worry that this is just the beginning of the goal of this anti-science agenda, and for that reason it demands brave, bold, and decisive action.

Yours sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date: Fri, 3 May 2024 7:10:34 PM -0400
Subject: Re: RE: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X
From: kuuipo9 (b)(6) >
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >;
CC: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) > (b)(6) (b)(6)

And maybe all the more reason we should try to get to the democratic members through our congressional representatives.

Jerry

From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:35 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Keith Martin (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: RE: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

That's encouraging!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:04 PM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6); Keith Martin (b)(6) David Morens <
Subject: Re: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

As far as I can tell, this hearing has received zero national attention. No one beyond our small circle is talking about this

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On May 3, 2024, at 1:52 PM, Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) wrote:

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All:

This is just Wenstrup and the Rs spiking the ball after a hearing in which they refused to let Peter answer the questions posed to him. All of the alleged "evidence" of EHA's supposed transgressions is based on misrepresentation and selective citation of the documentary evidence and false assumptions about the science involved (e.g., since when does a Republican Congresswoman with an MBA and no scientific training get to decide what the definition of gain-of-function research should be?). The only people showing contempt for the American people on Wednesday were the members of Congress and staff who used this hearing as a vehicle to propagate a malicious political narrative that falsely and unfairly blamed Peter Daszak and EHA for research that never happened and outcomes that are chimerical figments of their imagination.

As ever,
Jeff

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 1:12 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Gerald Keusch (b)(6); Keith Martin (b)(6); David Morens <
Subject: Re: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

This is the most awful piece I've seen yet - they say:

"The Select Subcommittee will take further steps to address Dr. Daszak's contempt for the American people."



I am very worried for my future and the future of EcoHealth alliance right now. At best this will drive continued hate and death threats… at worst…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On May 2, 2024, at 10:00 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Excellent article!

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 6:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Gerald Keusch (b)(6); Keith Martin (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6)
Subject: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

EXTERNAL SENDER



Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
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iPhone

Date: Mon, 6 Feb 2023 4:40:22 PM -0500
Sent: Mon, 6 Feb 2023 4:38:34 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Notes from our call
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Just saw that Richard Ebright and others have formed a new 501c3 to combat research that will enhance pathogens:

https://biosafetynow.org/team/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter (b)(6)

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From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 4:58 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Notes from our call

Just to note I have just sent a note to Carlos del Rio about NAM, to Mary Woolley about Research!America, and Stef Bertuzzi about ASM. I'll let you know if and what I hear back from them and we can proceed from there.
Jerry

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:26 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Notes from our call
Importance: High

Attached are notes and action items (also cc'd below), as well as the concept note which I've expanded with more names of orgs to add:

Towards a Coalition to Protect Pandemic Preparedness Research

Notes from call 2/1/23
Rich Roberts, Peter Hotez, Jerry Keusch, David Morens, Jeff Sturchio, Peter Daszak, Aleksei Chmura

Action items:

Rich will speak with:
- Harold Varmus to sound him out re. this issue
- Holden Thorpe to find out the best way to engage AAAS (Sudip Parikh CEO)
- NAS: Rich will be in DC in March talking with Marcia McNutt, Nobel Foundation & NAS – will see if Nobel Foundation will endorse this effort if NAS supports it

Jerry Keusch will reach out to:
- ASM – Stephano Bertuzzi

David Morens will reach out to Tony Fauci to ask advice on how we should progress

Peter Hotez will talk with:
- Head of OSTP (Peter will speak with them in March)
- ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Peter Daszak will contact as many of the others as possible, writing on behalf of all of us, so as to avoid concerns that people might have re EcoHealth being in the line of fire.

Next steps
- each of us will reach out to different contacts
- re-convene by conference call in 3 weeks or so (Peter D. will set up), around Feb 22nd.
- In-person meeting at EHA NYC afternoon of April 27th.

Summary of discussion:

- What could the goals of the coalition be, and what should they not be
  - Overall goal to have a 'coalition of the willing' form, organized by an independent group (hopefully AAAS, or similar level) to defend pandemic prevention research that is under attack
- How should we reach out to build a coalition?
  - Making contact with key people from each of the above, trying to set up a conference call, convened by a leading independent group (e.g. AAAS) where multiple contacts come together and the discussion is led by the independent group.
- Who should we try to engage: Academies, academic societies, pro-science pressure groups, senior figures in the field, funders, and governmental leaders. Initial list:
  - AAAS
  - AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition
  - American Public Health Association (Georges Benjamin)
  - American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (Dan Bausch, Karen Goraleski, Kent Kester)
  - Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities

- Georgia Global Health Alliance
- Bay Area Global Health Alliance
- Consortium of Universities for Global Health
- COVID Collaborative
- Global Health Council
- Global Health Technologies Coalition
- Infectious Diseases Society of America Carlos del Rio (Jerry will reach out)
- International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
- Nobel Laureates Campaigns
- Pandemic Action Network
- PATH
- Research!America – Reach back out – Jerry will
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- Washington Global Health Alliance
- 156 virologists letter
- NAM
- NAS
- NL Campaigns (to be kept informed of progress by Rich)
- CUGH
- The pandemic action coalition
- FASEB
- Global Health technologies coalition
- APLU (KHG has connection)
- Wellcome Trust (Paul Schreier is the interim head).
- Dr. Tony Fauci
- Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes)
- OSTP
- ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Update

Dear all, I spoke with Ann Moscona President-Elect at ASV and she's all in. She also suggested adding Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes) both really good on policy issues, she will give them a heads up, thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 8:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Concept note and Agenda for our discussion today at 1pm Eastern US time

Dear All,

I'm looking forward to our discussion today at 1pm. Attached is a concept note that Jeff Sturchio drafted to frame some ideas around what we might try to do.

I've also attached a rough agenda for us.

Here are the details of the zoom call, and I look forward to speaking with you all later on:

Join Zoom Meeting
(b)(6)

Meeting ID (b)(6)
Passcode (b)(6)
One tap mobile
(b)(6) US (New York)
(b)(6) US

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Two great articles!

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Media Inquiries:

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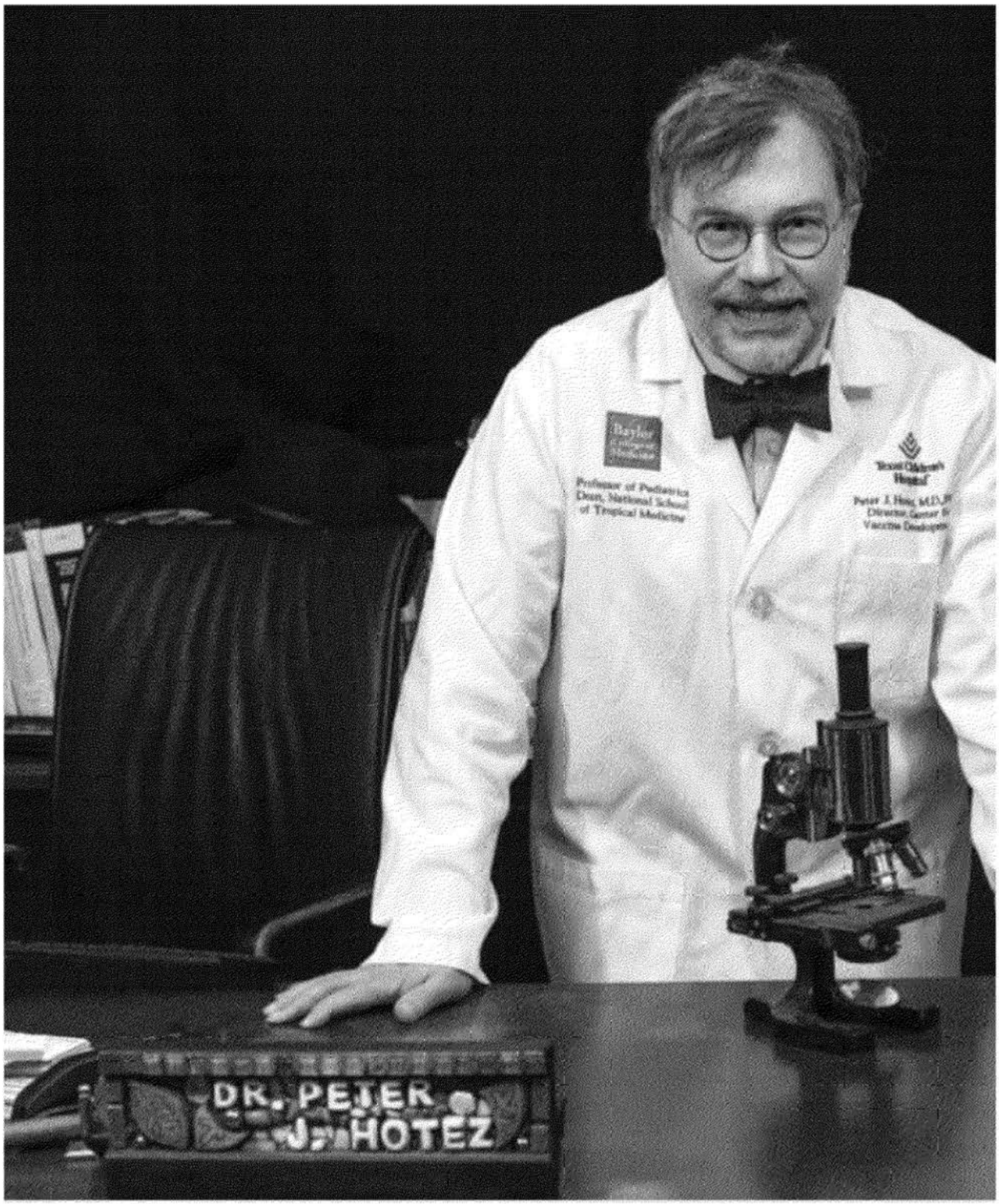
iPhone

On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the COVID-19 vaccines,

hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.

Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.

I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?

Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad*, and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.

What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.

The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.

The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.

All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.
Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.
Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?
Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.
Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?
Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?
Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.
Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus say the flu or MMR vaccines?
Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee]

money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading

these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or

hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?" And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a

COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.

And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [(b)(6)]
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Moren[(b)(6)]
Cc: Roberts, Rich[(b)(6)]; Peter Daszak[(b)(6)]; Keusch, Gerald T <(b)(6)> Jeffrey Sturchio[(b)(6)]; Aleksei Chmura[(b)(6)]
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

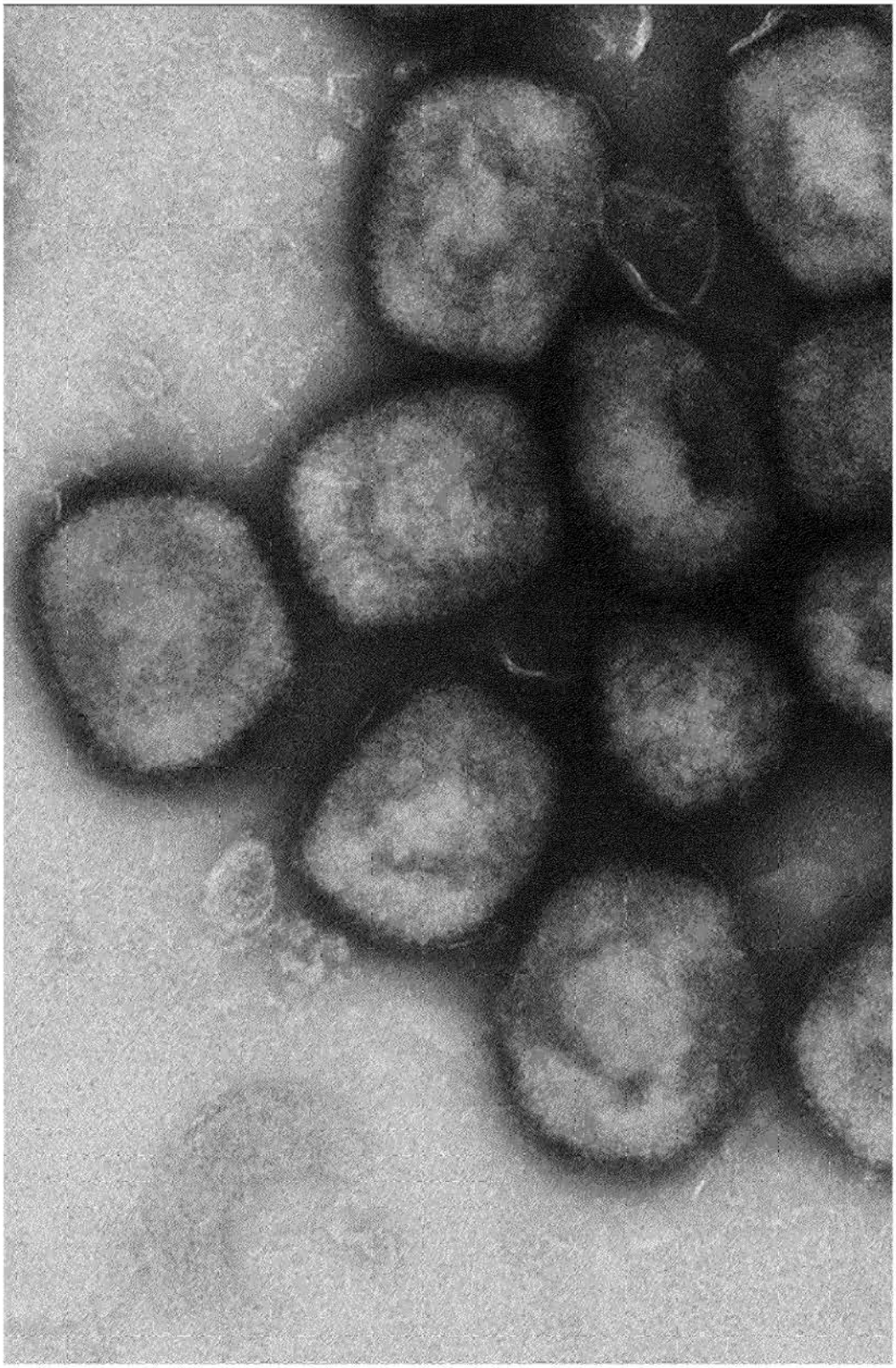
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH
Virologists defend their science as

officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.

NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident or malicious

attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
Sponsor Message
He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route, " says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

Sponsor Message
"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the

lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.
That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.
"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

Sponsor Message

She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.
If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work." But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

Sponsor Message

Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it."
He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things

go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
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Email

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, Ashish Jha and Nahid Bhadelia, to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) ; David Morens (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that Scott Weaver would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
>; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of clinical management of rare hereditary pediatric diseases such as Job disease and CGD. Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position
That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good

friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!

Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak [(b)(6)]
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio [(b)(6)] Aleksei Chmura [(b)(6)]; David Morens [(b)(6)] Gerald Keusch [(b)(6)]; Rich Roberts [(b)(6)]
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

[(b)(6)]

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
> wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
; Aleksei Chmura <
>; David Morens <
(b)(6)
Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,

Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; David Morens < (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter



Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

Date: Thu, 16 Jun 2022 2:24:12 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 16 Jun 2022 2:23:59 PM -0400
Subject: Now a video of the honorable Dr. Fauci saying the right thing out loud
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)

Here's Tony Fauci once again publicly defending EcoHealth's work on our terminated-now-suspended-with-11-impossible-conditions R01 grant: Look at the video **from 44 seconds** in…

https://video.twimg.com/ext_tw_video/1537471325656305669/pu/vid/1228x720/Dz2u_bu9SaIdoXk_.mp4?tag=12

His comments: We have received an "extraordinary amount of information" from EcoHealth's terminated grant. From a relatively small $120K a year subaward "we have received published literature with data that shows they have done what they were given the grant for" in this "peer-reviewed, high priority grant".

This was from his testimony today in the Senate.

He was also attacked by Rand Paul mainly on the issue of receiving royalties (he said his average royalty over a 10 yr period was $191!):

https://video.twimg.com/amplify_video/1537453314392178688/vid/960x540/RjPxZWMrlFaT4DIj.mp4?tag=14

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 2:12 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6); 'Jeff Sturchio' (b)(6); 'David Morens' (b)(6)

'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) >; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' (b)(6)
Subject: Jeff Sachs saying it out loud

I think you'll enjoy this – Jeff Sachs on a web interview now on Youtube saying that he is convinced SARS-CoV-2 came out of "US biotechnology, not from nature".

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rRBuX4U0DU &t=745s

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 2:52 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) 'Jeff Sturchio' (b)(6) 'David Morens' (b)(6) >;
'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022

Thanks for the comments Rich. It's now over with the NAM for their scholarly deliberations!

I'm now straight onto dealing with the draft of the HHS OIG audit – they were asked by NIH to do an audit of EHA, and they're trying to paint us as heinously incompetent and duplicitous, so we've now got to spend another few days drafting responses and supplying documentary evidence that we're not the bad guys people would like us to be….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 1:51 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022

Peter:

This is excellent! I'm sorry to be slow in responding, but "officially" I have been on vacation and unable to read all emails coming my way without alerting my wife to my "non-vacation" behaviour. I am not en route home and have had the chance to read through this response.

What is so annoying here is that politicians have the easy option of targeting would-be scapegoats to uphold a political agenda and ignore science.

I hope the NAM will finally decide to follow the science and tell the politicians to go to hell.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
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Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 12:34 AM
To: Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)

Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: FW: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear all,

Thank you very much for your support dealing with this awful situation. Below is my email to NAM with an attached letter responding to the allegations, and a dropbox file with 28 appendices supporting each of the points I make (feel free to click on the link and sift through if you've got a spare few hours!).

Having been lucky enough to get a scholarship to one of those schools in the UK where we had to stand when the teachers (who we had to call "masters") came in the room, this brings back some powerful memories of the way institutions can be manipulated to make the lives of the people they're supposed to serve totally bloody miserable.

I only hope the committee is able to see beyond the political narratives, and their desire to save the NAM from attack, and do the right thing by one of their members. If not, I'll get ready with my appeal, and continue this tedious journey…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 12:24 AM
To: 'Fuentes-Afflick, Elena' (b)(6) 'Dzau, Victor J.' (b)(6) Kim, Se' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: confidential: Response to letter from NAM April 11th 2022
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Fuentes-Afflick,

I want to thank you and the NAM for granting me the extra time to respond to the allegations from the three Republican members of the Congress. I am attaching the original letter to the NAM (attachment A), the focused allegations (attachment B), your letter to me informing me of the intent to open an investigation ("Letter to Member…."), and my response to your letter refuting these

allegations ("Dr. Daszak, response to NAM letter of April 11th 2022").

As you can see, I have provided a detailed refutation of each of the allegations, along with documentary evidence to support each point. This consists of 28 appendices (many are quite short consisting of specific email chains or short documents). However, because of their overall size, I have placed them in a secure dropbox folder that is available for you to download and circulate among the committee by clicking on the following link:

(b)(6)

As you stated below, I appreciate that this process is confidential, and I would ask that you take particular care to ensure that my letter and the appendices are carefully shared so as not to be circulated more widely than necessary – some of these appendices contain information that has never been released publicly before.

I will await the decision of the committee, the NAM Council and Dr. Dzau in due course, but in the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me of my Chief-of-Staff, Dr. Aleksei Chmura (cc'd) for any further information or clarification

Sincerely,

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

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---

From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 2:06 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Dzau, Victor J. (b)(6) Kim, Se (b)(6)
Subject: confidential

Dr. Daszak,

Thank you for your note of April 22nd. I was traveling and apologize for my delayed response. I have reviewed your letter in detail and will respond to each point.

First, when the NAM receives any allegation of misconduct against a member, we have to follow an independent process that is outlined in the policy document you received. We have undertaken an initial evaluation by an assessment panel which eliminated many of the allegations but recommended a subset of the allegations to be further investigated by the conduct review committee. The list of allegations was shared with you.

I accept your request for a deadline extension to June 12th. You may enlist the assistance of others and I encourage you to request that they honor the confidentiality of the process.

Point 1: To date, the NAM has not conducted its own investigation of the allegations. We have identified a subset of materials for further investigation which were referenced in the April 11, 2022 letter.

Point 2: I apologize for not providing information about the conflicts evaluation. We conducted a thorough evaluation of the conflicts of the assessment panel and conduct review committee members and none were identified.

Point 3: We identified selected references from the list provided in the original letter with the allegations and added one reference that is publicly available on the NIAID's website. These materials and any response you provide are the only materials that the Conduct Review Committee will consider.

Point 4: I should have asked if you have the results of an external investigation related to the allegations under consideration. If you have any such results, please share them.

Point 5: You are correct that our policy does not include a provision to meet with the conduct review committee and I cannot offer you this option. I invite you to submit additional materials if you believe they are relevant.

I want to assure you, personally, that the confidentiality requirement and following our process are my top priorities. I have discussed this with all individuals involved and have not shared information with anyone other than the assessment panel and conduct review committee members. My communication with the representatives of those who wrote the original letter was to confirm receipt of the materials and explain that we would be following our conduct review process.

I would be happy to connect with you, by phone or Zoom, to discuss.

Best,
Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH

NAM Home Secretary

University of California, San Francisco

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 5:14 PM
To: Dzau, Victor J. (b)(6); Fuentes-Afflick, Elena (b)(6); Kim, Se (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations

Dear Victor, Elena and Kim,

I was very concerned to have received three separate press inquiries today regarding a story in *Fox News* (https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house- republicans-ecohealth-alliance-concealed-data). I am not planning to respond to these questions.

As you can see in the *Fox News* article, yet another partisan political letter has been made public with

unsubstantiated and clearly politically motivated allegations against our organization and myself. In the article, an aide to Representative McMorris Rodgers states that "*After receiving our letter, NAM notified us they had opened an internal review of Daszak's behavior, per our request…We believe this letter about EcoHealth's potential false statements and fraud is relevant to the ongoing investigation the NAM is conducting into Peter Daszak, so we have sent NAM a copy of this letter as well.*"

In your letters to me, and by phone, you reassured me repeatedly that the process of deciding whether to investigate these allegations was confidential on the NAM side, and you urged me to also treat correspondence with NAM on this issue as confidential, which I have. However, it appears that this is not the case, in that NAM has informed the Republican staff of intent to review my 'behavior' and that this has now been made public, as I indicated could happen in my letter to you last week, April 22, 2022.

It seems rather evident that the letters you have received are part of an ongoing and systematic political campaign to destroy EcoHealth Alliance's reputation and my own, with the ultimate target of undermining the NIH, Dr. Fauci, and the Biden White House. They are hyper-partisan and disingenuous in their goals, in that the letters and the fact they are simultaneously made public on *Fox News* and *Twitter*, are clearly designed to push a false narrative. EcoHealth Alliance has repeatedly and publicly refuted such allegations in our responses to NIH that have since been made public (e.g. https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus- study-of-bats-in-china-met-nih-grant-requirements-ecohealth-says-11635441406) and in carefully given interviews with the press (e.g. https://www.science.org/content/article/we- ve-done-nothing-wrong-ecohealth-leader-fights-charges-his-research-helped-spark-covid-19 and https://theintercept.com/2022/03/11/covid- nih-ecohealth-peter-daszak-interview/).

Given the developments today, I urge you to reconsider your decision to investigate these allegations, which have nothing to do with my adherence to the rules of conduct of NAM members, and to respond to the Republican accusers to state that they do not rise to the level whereby an investigation is warranted. I believe this is justified by the one-sided political nature of the attacks, the lack of prima facie evidence for the allegations, and the fact that your communications have already been made public in defiance of the confidentiality of the matter that NAM and EcoHealth Alliance have maintained. I'm very concerned that this public witch hunt will be damaging not just for myself and our organization, which has consistently produced cutting edge research on emerging diseases that has been fundamental to a series of NAM publications, but that it will also be damaging to NAM and the Academies in general. If you do not stand up to these politicized attacks at this point, they will surely continue and drag in other members of the Academies who have been publicly criticized and accused by the same politicians for the last two years, and who are being continually attacked by various fringe groups espousing conjectural hypotheses about the origins of SARS-CoV-2, in spite of the increasing scientific evidence supporting the spillover from bats through an intermediary host to humans.

This active political interference with stewardship of science, the integrity of science, and the pursuit of knowledge by scientists, goes well beyond EcoHealth Alliance and threatens the integrity of the entire U.S. scientific enterprise. It is no different except in volume than the incontrovertible political interference by Donald Trump in the scientific enterprise at NIH in April 2020, which prompted you to issue a public statement about the separation of politics from science in response. Your words and those of Marcia McNutt ring even more true at this point: "*Any efforts to discredit the best science and scientists threaten the health and welfare of us all*" (https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/2020/09/nas- and-nam-presidents-alarmed-by-political-interference-in-science-amid-pandemic). EcoHealth Alliance, myself, the NIH, Tony Fauci, NAM and you are in the cross-hairs now because NIH failed to protect science and scientists from Trump's overtly political, and sadly successful, effort to close down research that was politically inconvenient. I worry that this is just the beginning of the goal of this anti-science agenda, and for that reason it demands brave, bold, and decisive action.

Yours sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Fri, 3 Jun 2022 4:20:04 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 3 Jun 2022 4:16:28 PM -0400
Subject: RE: AN EXTREMELY INTERESTING PAPER
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Charlie Calisher (b)(6)
CC: David Morens (b)(6)

(note I'm responding to David's Gmail address).

I read that – it's a lot of innuendo and supposition, but if you remember what it was like in early Feb, it was extremely hard to contact people in China, especially working at a high level on COVID. Couple that with this being the time when early ideas about engineering of SARS-CoV-2 were circulating, it might have simply been that Tony Fauci wanted a way to talk with Zhong quietly and unofficially, and his colleagues in the Harvard group who were working with Evergrande to secure a donation, found out that the evergrande people had a link to Zhong and used that to set up a call. It's not unusual for China that personal contacts are more important than official requests…

And I really don't see the donation being linked to action, as this piece suggests, the discussion that mattered was the one we all had in early Feb as a NASEM group with NIH and Bob Kadlec that openly discussed the idea of engineering and found that a natural origin of the FCS was more likely, given the expected circulation in people or amplifier hosts for a few weeks prior to it taking off…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Charlie Calisher (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 2:28 PM
To: 'Peter Daszak' (b)(6)
Cc: 'David Morens'
Subject: FW: AN EXTREMELY INTERESTING PAPER

FYI

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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:04:40 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:03:37 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
Attachments: image004.png; image005.jpg; image008.png

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Roberts, Rich** (b)(6)
Date: Fri, Jul 1, 2022 at 10:23 AM
Subject: RE: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6), Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6), Aleksei Chmura (b)(6), David Morens < (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)

You know physicists discovered electrons, protons and neutrons – but they missed the morons.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2022 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
>; David Moren (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Sachs and Relman quoted again today

EXTERNAL SENDER

It's getting crazy again

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: (b)(6)
Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Jul 1, 2022, at 8:37 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

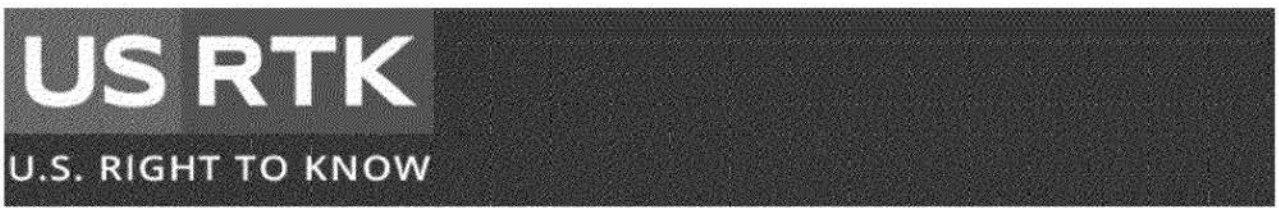
We've been fielding questions all week from a reporter at US Right to Know because they've FoIA'd another batch of emails. Here's an article today claiming that Ian Lipkin should have reported working with EHA as a 'Conflict of Interest' for his Nature Medicine paper with Kristian Andersen et al. back in Feb 2020.

Here's the link: https://usrtk.org/biohazards-blog/anti-lab-leak-virologist-ecohealth-alliance-partner/

You'll be irritated to see quotes from Jeff Sachs and David Relman. Everyone seems happy with the idea that somehow collaborating with EcoHealth Alliance means you have a conflict of interest in this world of fake COVID origin stories.

The article is also utterly disingenuous in pretending it took a FoIA lawsuit to find out that Ian Lipkin collaborated with us. All it would have taken is a 5 second Google Search.

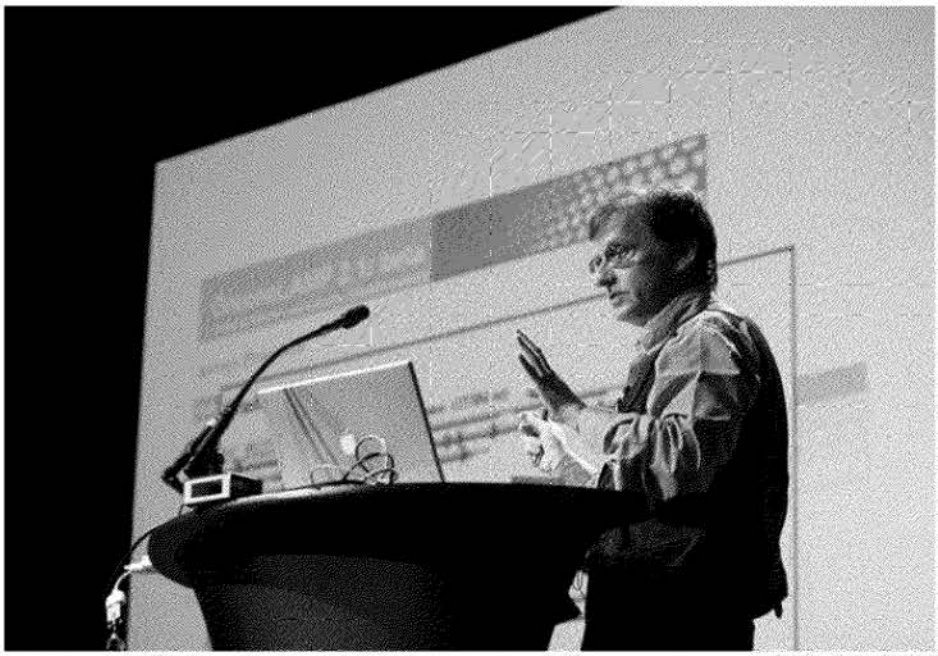
Note also US Right to Know's motto: "Pursuing truth and transparency for public health".



Virologist who tried to discredit the lab leak theory was once a 'partner' to EcoHealth Alliance

PrintEmailShareTweet

Posted on July 1, 2022 by Emily Kopp



Columbia University virologist Ian Lipkin has coauthored several articles with EcoHealth Alliance since 2011. (Photo credit: kris krüg)

A virologist who coauthored a paper marginalizing the lab leak theory did not disclose his ties to the research group at the center of it.

Director of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity Ian Lipkin has often worked with EcoHealth Alliance, a U.S.-based collaborator of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the group confirmed in an email.

EcoHealth Alliance listed Lipkin as a "partner" from 2012 to 2014, an archived version of the group's website shows. Lipkin has coauthored at least ten scientific papers with EcoHealth researchers from 2011 to 2021, EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in an email. These publications include a paper about novel coronaviruses EcoHealth and its partners sampled around the world.

EcoHealth Alliance hunts for novel viruses in wildlife and funds research at the Wuhan Institute

of Virology.

Lipkin did not disclose his partnership with EcoHealth in "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," a highly influential paper that states that COVID-19 arose from nature.

A central premise of that paper: COVID-19 is too dissimilar from viruses commonly employed in experiments to have spilled out of a lab.

"It is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus," the paper states. "The genetic data irrefutably show that SARS-CoV-2 is not derived from any previously used virus backbone."

But Lipkin did not disclose his connection to a nonprofit that uncovers new and novel viruses. Some of those viruses were likely studied at its partnering lab in Wuhan, which housed one of the world's largest collection of bat coronaviruses.

Lipkin did not return several requests for comment.

At 5.7 million views, the *Nature Medicine* article may be one of the most widely read scientific papers in history — though the piece is formally a "correspondence."

David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist and emerging infectious diseases expert for the National Academies, said conflicts of interest are especially troublesome when writing on high profile issues.

"For any major, controversial issue, I believe that all of us have an even greater responsibility to reveal those conflicts upfront—and let others have an opportunity to judge what effect those conflicts might have had," said Relman.

Relman also called into question the logic of the paper's premise. The Wuhan Institute of Virology may have simply been experimenting with unfamiliar viruses. The disappearance of the lab's coronavirus sequence database in 2019 and the lab's history of gain-of-function experiments also weaken the claims of Lipkin and his coauthors, Relman said.

"The Proximal Origins paper is flawed in its assumptions, logic and the soundness of its conclusions. I was very surprised that it passed review at *Nature Medicin*e," he said.

Columbia University Center for Sustainable Development Director Jeffrey Sachs — chair of The Lancet COVID-19 Commission — said the citation the authors used to prop up the paper's premise deserves more scrutiny.

"The Proximal Origins paper has no credibility," Sachs wrote in an email. "The paper's central claim — that SARS-CoV-2 is not related to viruses previously reported in laboratory research — offers as proof a footnote to a 2014 paper!"

"It ludicrously claims to debunk a 2019 lab emergence using a 2014 paper," he continued. "The paper offers no real evidence whatsoever against the possible lab origin of the virus, even though it claimed to do so."

Lipkin himself has since acknowledged the possibility that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was experimenting with unknown viruses, contradicting the popular paper he coauthored.

"If they've got hundreds of bat samples that are coming in, and some of them aren't characterized, how would they know whether this virus was or wasn't in this lab? They wouldn't," Lipkin said in an interview with the Washington Post last year.

But Lipkin has not disclosed his work with EcoHealth to reporters.

Nature Medicine, the journal that published the paper, defines a "competing interest" requiring disclosure as including "personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals" — paid or unpaid. A spokesperson for parent company Springer Nature did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

Lipkin's connection to a group at the center of lab leak suspicions is the latest revelation to cast doubt on the correspondence.

Significant questions remain. It's still unclear how the authors dispelled their own private concerns that the virus had been engineered within a couple of days.

For example, Lipkin privately voiced concerns to his coauthors about a "nightmare of circumstantial evidence" pointing to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Vanity Fair reported.

It's also unknown to what extent leaders of the National Institutes of Health, which funded the EcoHealth Alliance, may have shaped the paper.

Grant reports that led a reporter to the defunct link showing Lipkin's partnership with EcoHealth Alliance were obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Biohazards, Biohazards Blog Anthony Fauci, David Relman, EcoHealth Alliance, Ian Lipkin, Jeff Sachs, Kristian Andersen, Peter Daszak, proximal origin, Robert Garry, The Lancet's COVID Commission, Virologist, Wuhan Institute of Virology

0

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

What a j

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:27:32 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: David Morens (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Edward Holmes (b)(6)
Date: Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 2:16 AM
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
To: Jason Gale (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) >, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
(b)(6) Kristian G. Andersen (b)(6) >, Wang Linfa (b)(6)
(b)(6) Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E]
(b)(6)

Yes, it's very odd. I just can't follow it.

What I did think was interesting - as you note - is that they talk a lot of the market which I thought was totally off the table in China. Also, it's from Nanshan Zhong and I last time I heard him speak he was strongly pushing the frozen food idea.

Perhaps a shift?

Or could just be a wet Wednesday afternoon's ramblings.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,

The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T (b)(6)
E (b)(6)

On 20 Sep 2021, at 4:06 pm, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

I thought the SARS-CoV-2 virus that emerged in Wuhan wasn't capable of infecting mice that weren't genetically engineered to express human ACE2? This paper, with its emphasis of meteorological factors, seems dodgy to me. But it's good to see research on the origins from researchers in China getting out, albeit it in an obscure journal.

From: (b)(6) At: 09/20/21 15:55:39 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

Although I can't quite tell if it is sane.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E (b)(6)

On 20 Sep 2021, at 2:37 pm, Edward Holmes (b)(6) wrote:

Just found this in an obscure journal.

Interesting it is Nanshan Zhong and interesting that there's a lot about the market….

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E (b)(6)

On 20 Sep 2021, at 10:52 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

I did this podcast episode on bats and zoonoses at the start of 2020 with the help of Hume Field, Trevor Drew, Mark Schipp and Linfa. Still seems relevant today.
https://podcasts.apple.com/nz/podcast/how- it-all-started-rebroadcast/id1440051086?i=1000504072911

From: (b)(6) At: 09/20/21 10:17:32 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale)
(b) (6)(b) (6) , (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

100% agree.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E (b)(6)

On 20 Sep 2021, at 10:16 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Suspect geopolitics is the biggest impediment to finding an animal source in China, and the best remedy for this is to rebuild/strengthen r'ships with scientists in China.

From: (b)(6) At: 09/20/21 10:12:48 UTC+10:00
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

Just need to keep sampling, but that sampling ought to be broader.

We need something >99% similar across the whole genome.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E (b)(6)

On 20 Sep 2021, at 9:59 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6) wrote:

Agree totally except your certainty that China is the ultimate source. Admittedly much data point in that direction but how can you be sure?
d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 19, 2021, at 19:28, Edward Holmes (b)(6) wrote:

It's not phylogenetics.

One thing is ascertainment bias which could be huge.

Second thing is to distinguish the long-term ecology of these viruses from the short-term emergence of the virus. These Laos viruses are the former. Clearly these viruses are commonplace in SE Asia. And I don't just think that bats and pangolins will be the only animals with SC2-like viruses. Virus ecology does not work like that. But this is not the same as determining the events that happened in Wuhan. To me, China still looks like the most likely source.

Third, I'm pretty certain that groups in China are sitting on more SC2-like viruses. If you sample bats you find them. It is striking to me that CCDC have published so little on this yet have supposedly sampled so many animals. That doesn't add up. Never discount the politics.

Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
The University of Sydney

On 20 Sep 2021, at 9:00 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6) wrote:

Eddie, please clarify, i don't « get » all the phylogenetic asumptions you guys understand, but can you put it in lsyman's terms? As you know, i have said repeatedly to look past Yunnan to all of SE Asia, as i have bennunconconvinced of the Yunnan centrality of all this, suspecting thAt the universe of these viruses crosses borders to include not only SW and S China but all of SEA.

If that is so, the implications ate huge: this is annintetnational

problem demanding international cooperation. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 19, 2021, at 18:33, Edward Holmes (b)(6) wrote:

Yes, good idea.

The receptor binding domain of some of these Laotian bats is so close to that of SARS-CoV-2 even some of the die-hard leakers are beginning to see the light…

This also effectively excludes that virus-receptor relationship was generated through lab passage, that the pangolin sequences were faked, and that this outbreak had anything to do with the Mojiang mine as a virus from a different country is now closer. That mine will go down in history as the reddest of herrings.

That said, I am a little worried about confirmation bias for the origin being bats from Yunnan/Laos/Cambodia. The more they find there, the more they sequence. But no doubt these Laotian samples are of huge significance. As are the Hubei civets.

<Screenshot from 2021-09-19 17-04-25.png>

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E (b)(6)

On 20 Sep 2021, at 7:52 am, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6) wrote:

Yes, do it! This is important and i say modestly, game changing. The whole « origin » controversy needs to be rethought from the ground up

We have been too micro-focusing (as i have long said to hard push back) but the sarobecovirus and merbecovirus problems are geographically and virologically complex and require us to drop back and study the viral-host universe. Thst universe is huge, complicated , and holds surprises, in my view. d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 19, 2021, at 17:36, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

I'm planning to pull the threads Peter has so eloquently laid out into a story. Bob, Stephen, Joel (and Kristian), if you have time/interest to get on Zoom today, let me know. Thanks a lot. Jason

From: (b)(6) At: 09/20/21 07:31:51 UTC+10:00
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

nPeter, as i am perennially swamped with work that has nothing to do with COVID issues of importance, i am always catching up on reading the important stuff

Just now i poured a martini and-read word for word your "A strategy…" paper with first author Sánchez. Also Kevin and Lin-fa were coauthors. Wow!!!

This is dynamite and also beautifully written. I mean, Hemingway, Conrad, Nin, couldn't have written it better. Beautiful job and so important.

I think you need to promote this work, and emphasize that the conclusions are far reaching and a sort of call to arms.

Let us all keep pushing,
and keep our eyes on the
prize of getting to the bottom of it all
david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 18, 2021, at 12:05, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

I put it all in a twitter thread while drinking coffee in my local diner (Saturday is "full English breakfast" day for me).

https://twitter.com/peterdaszak/status/1439236376776658945?s=21

No doubt ill be attacked by multiple lab leak aficionados but so be it
- at least eddie,
Garry and Kristian won't see. The horrors of that…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Sep 18, 2021, at 10:26 AM, Garry, Robert F (b)(6) wrote:

Of course, the momentum on the lab leak side will continue, with books by Sharri Markison, Alina Chan/Matt Ridley, Op Eds that criticize scientists, 70+ FoIAs by one organization alone, many other FoIAs on their way, 900 pages of FoIA'd grants and reports from EHA/NIAID showing zero evidence of lab leak.

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<Screenshot from 2021-09-19 17-04-25.png>

<healthcare-09-01132-v2.pdf>

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:35:16 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:34:32 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6);

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Date: Fri, Apr 28, 2023 at 7:27 PM
Subject: RE: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >, Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >, Peter Daszak (b)(6) >

The GND cytokine guy from Harvard School of Public Health? No I wasn't aware that he was there. What's he up to these days? I thought he had moved to Brazil for a while – is he now a New Yorker?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 2:37 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Thank you Jerry, it was so great seeing you and everyone! Did you get

a chance to see John David, that was nice as well.

I thought the evening was a great show of support for Peter Daszak and the EcoHealth Alliance, especially from the Board. I think that was probably the best part of the gala, the unbridled enthusiasm for the mission, it was nice to see.

The meeting at the RF in the afternoon was impactful and meaningful. I think we have some momentum to move forward on a coalition. So let's meet next week by zoom.

Warmest regards, Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology &□ Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: (b)(6)

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 12:34 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Agree. Let's find a time for a 1 pager for Mitchell and then focus on a short concept paper amd next steps to circulate among the participants and to get more folks involved. Peter H and Peter D you both did a great job at RF and at the Gala for EHA. Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) > wrote:

Peter:

That's good! We should look further for funding as well.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 10:43 AM
To: David Morens (b)(6) >
Cc: Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Daszak
(b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

EXTERNAL SENDER

It was great to see everyone yesterday, I think we had a good start yesterday. We should zoom next week to decide how we want to follow up with the Mitchell Foundation

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Apr 28, 2023, at 10:40 AM, David Morens (b)(6) > wrote:

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Timely report related to many comments yesterday

d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b)(6)
Date: April 28, 2023 at 10:37:33 EDT
To: David Morens (b)(6) >
Subject: Fwd: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]" (b)(6)
Date: April 27, 2023 at 16:34:53 EDT
Subject: Mother Jones: The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

The Coming Tidal Wave of Right Wing Covid Lawsuits

Lawyers have found a way to cash in on outrage over mask mandates and vaccines.

Kiera Butler10 hours ago

In late March, I watched as some 300 lawyers, doctors, and activists assembled in the aggressively beige conference wing of the Midtown Atlanta Hilton for the inaugural Covid Litigation Conference. A promotional flier promised that the event would "provide attendees with the resources they need to begin taking on Covid cases for the first time or to expand the range of Covid claims that they currently handle." An unsuspecting lawyer could have been forgiven for expecting tips on how to help clients who had been disabled by Covid that they caught at their factory jobs, for instance, or those whose medical bills their insurance refused to pay.

But those kinds of cases were entirely absent from the agenda. Rather, the topic was a very particular kind of litigation: How best to advance the movement that organizers called "medical freedom." In other words, how to sue the people who created and enforced public health measures like vaccine and mask requirements, policies against Covid misinformation, and treatment protocols for hospitalized Covid patients.

The conference organizers wore t-shirts emblazoned with the slogan "Misinformation Superspreader." Steve Kirsch, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, philanthropist, and a main organizer of the event, told me that the slogan was a cheeky reference to what he saw as the unfair labeling of anti-vaccine activists as peddlers of misinformation. "We said, 'Okay if that's what they're calling us," he explained, "let's kind of make fun of it." Indeed, many of the attendees seemed to see themselves as underdogs, scrapping against government and pharmaceutical behemoths.

What those underdogs didn't mention during the sessions, though, is their friends in high places: specifically, federal judges who seem to be sympathetic to their aversion to pandemic policies. Pointing to some of the victories that medical freedom lawyers have enjoyed in US District courts, Dorit Reiss, a public health lawyer and law professor at the University of California College of the Law, noted, "They're having some success in the federal system in front of Trump-appointed judges, and they're very much forum shopping right now." Adam Winkler, a constitutional law scholar at the University of California-Los Angeles, agreed. "The courts have issued a lot of what were once thought to be outlandish kinds of rulings with regard to any number of issues like abortion and affirmative action," he said. "I'd expect that encourages people to bind hope to the prospects of lawsuits that they would otherwise seem certain to lose."

When I arrived, I didn't think I'd get past the Misinformation Superspreaders and make it into the ballroom where the event was taking place. The media liaison for the conference, Trevor FitzGibbon, asked me if I was there to write about disinformation, and he seemed to balk at my affirmative answer. When I said I worked for Mother Jones, he noticeably brightened. He had come up in the PR business working for prominent progressive candidates and groups, he explained, including Barack Obama, MoveOn, and Planned Parenthood, which I took to mean that he considered us to be politically kindred spirits. And then he let me into the ballroom.

Once inside, I watched as one indignant panelist after another enumerated their grievances. At the Hospital Negligence Panel, doctors who refused to deviate from CDC protocol to treat Covid patients with unproven drugs like the antiparasitic medication ivermectin and antimalarial hydroxychloroquine were the targets of rage. The Education Mandates session featured the mother of a California teenager who had defied her school's mask requirement, showing up at school without a mask for weeks on end in 2021, and standing outside the school for hours every day after she was kicked out. The panelists batted around ideas: Could the refusal to wear a mask be considered free speech? Could putting a kid in detention for not wearing a mask count as false imprisonment?

In his speech, Kirsch, the conference organizer, told the story of how, at the beginning of the pandemic, he had invested $1 million of his own money toward studying existing drugs as potential Covid treatments. Somewhere along the way, he became convinced that the

Covid vaccines were dangerous. Last year, he founded the Vaccine Safety Research Foundation, whose goal, according to its website, is "to advance COVID-19 vaccine safety through scientific research, public education, and advocacy, and to support the vaccine injured." After his speech, Kirsch told me that he sees litigation as a way to force the federal government agencies to release data that he believes they're concealing about the dangers of the Covid vaccines. He said he is sure that "the only reason that we're not allowed to see any of the data is because it's bad."

Many of the other speakers seemed to share Kirsch's belief that the public isn't seeing the whole picture of Covid. In a constitutional law panel, Robert Barnes, an attorney who previously represented both Kenosha shooter Kyle Rittenhouse and Sandy Hook conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, said, "Pfizer makes the Mexican drug cartels look like a street corner dealer by comparison." To hold the public health crowd accountable, he implored the lawyers at the ballroom tables to "knock down the doors of every court we can."

But not just any court. Medical freedom activists have already started enjoying some successes in front of conservative judges. At the local level, several have sided with plaintiffs who've sued hospitals for refusing to give patients ivermectin. But it's been on the federal level, with Trump-appointed judges, where they've enjoyed some of their most significant successes. In 2021, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton sued the Biden administration over a proposed policy that would have required Covid vaccinations for all Head Start employees. In March 2023, Judge James Wesley Hendrix of the Northern District of Texas, a Trump appointee, struck down the proposed policy. In January 2022, a group of government workers sued the Biden Administration over the president's vaccination requirements for all federal employees; in 2022, Judge Jeffrey Vincent Brown, whom Trump appointed in 2019, ruled in their favor. That ruling was briefly overturned, but in 2023, the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans upheld it; the opinion was written by Trump appointee Judge Andrew Oldham.

In August 2022, a group of physicians sued the Biden Administration over its efforts to hold social media companies accountable for platforming physicians who spread misinformation about Covid. The plaintiffs, two of whom created the 2020 Great Barrington Declaration to oppose pandemic protections, accused the federal government of violating their First Amendment rights. "The US government used its vast power over social media and big tech to censor legitimate scientific and policy discussion about Covid during the pandemic," Jay Bhattacharya wrote in a statement. That case is still ongoing, but in March, Trump-appointed judge Terry Doughty, in the Western District of Louisiana, denied a motion to dismiss it.

"The US government used its vast power over social media and big tech to censor legitimate scientific and policy discussion about Covid during the pandemic."

There is more to come. Several of the conference speakers have

embarked on a Covid litigation bonanza of late. Mark Meuser, a member of the Future Litigation and Censorship panels, boasts on his website that he "has been involved in 22 lawsuits brought against [California Governor Gavin] Newsom for his unconstitutional usurpation of power as a result of COVID-19." In the exhibition area, I visited the booth of Children's Health Defense, the anti-vaccine organization helmed by the new presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., who announced his bid to replace Joe Biden in April. A flier that highlighted some of the dozens of lawsuits that the group had recently filed reveals its eagerness to sue the government, at both local and federal levels. It's suing California over a law that prohibits doctors from spreading misinformation; the Washington Post and other news outlets over their efforts to stop the spread of misinformation; and the CDC for access to reports of "unusual or unexpected patterns of adverse events reporting that can signal safety problems with a vaccine." Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) is getting sued for calling for a review of the Amazon algorithms that allegedly promoted anti-vaccine books, and Facebook parent company Meta is being sued for "collusion with the US government to censor CHD social media content." Add to the long list of defendants Rutgers University for its vaccine mandate for students and staff.

Law professor Reiss is dubious about the prospects for some of those lawsuits, especially those in which individuals sue a private company for censorship. The First Amendment, she noted, also protects "the freedom of private companies like Twitter and YouTube to kick them off." Nor was the idea of students suing universities, a winning strategy. "You don't have the right to go to a specific university," she said. "And if you don't like the university policies, universities are on pretty solid grounds denying you admission."

Yet she noted that some of the victories the medical freedom movement has racked up so far could pave the way for future legislation that would last long beyond the Covid era—and possibly transform established public health practices. In fact, that's already happening: Several panelists suggested making vaccination status a protected class like race or sex—which means that it would be illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of whether or not they had received immunizations. In 2021, Montana became the first state to pass such a law. In February of this year, Idaho followed suit. Employers there who require vaccination against Covid can now be fined $1,000 per violation. A similar bill in Florida is currently under consideration.

Another potential opening for medical freedom advocates, Reiss said, is a broader interpretation of laws about religious exemptions to vaccine mandates, which most states allow. With the current Supreme Court's expansion of what is included within the definition of freedom of religion, she worried they may include religious objections to vaccines. "If they go there, it will make it a lot harder to prevent the abuse of religious exemption," she said. On April 18, a few weeks after I spoke to Reiss, a US district judge ruled that Mississippi must change its current policy to allow religious exemptions for

vaccine mandates. (The judge, Halil Suleyman Ozerden, had been nominated by Trump in 2019 to serve on the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, but key Republicans questioned his conservative bona fides and he was never confirmed.)

With all this coming litigation, some of the conference sponsors saw a business opportunity. While the speakers inside the ballroom railed against big pharma and the CDC, just outside, representatives from law-firm-adjacent companies handed out business cards. Zena Obebe, the CEO of Hill Redaction Services, told me, "We wanted to get in front of those litigation lawyers and say, 'Hey, you can use us for the medical records.'" She expects to see many more Covid-related cases soon, explaining, "There's a huge influx that's coming down the pipeline."

Though Covid was the official topic of the conference, many of the people I talked to made detours into other subjects. Their involvement in the medical freedom movement, they said, had caused the scales to fall from their eyes. Kirsch, the conference organizer, explained that before the pandemic, he had never been skeptical of routine childhood vaccinations, but over the past few years, he has come to believe they cause autism (a theory that has been extensively discredited but one cherished by RFK, Jr. whose campaign, Kirsch says, he looks forward to supporting). So fervent is his newfound aversion to immunizations, he told me, that he now believes "nobody should ever" even vaccinate their pets.

For FitzGibbon, the comms guy, his involvement with the medical freedom movement has led to a more thorough disenchantment with his progressive roots. In 2020, during the height of the pandemic, he had become acutely ill with Covid, but two different hospitals sent him home. Only when a doctor-client put in a good word for him did he get admitted to an ICU, where he received monoclonal antibodies—an effective though underutilized treatment—which he credits with saving his life.

In the months that followed, he became skeptical of what he saw as the single-minded focus on Covid vaccines and what he considered to be the suppression of treatments like the one he received, as well as more scientifically dubious drugs like ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine. "All you saw in the US media was vaccine, vaccine, vaccine," he said. "Any other mentions of these alternative treatments were blacklisted." He now believes not only that the Covid vaccines are bioweapons, but also that the Democratic party has lost its way—he saw it even before Covid in Democrats' soft stance on domestic surveillance under Obama, and now he sees it in foreign policy, too. In a pivot I frankly did not see coming, he said, "I do not recognize this administration or this party when it comes to the war in Ukraine," especially since he claims that Russia had good reason to invade the country because of its problem with Nazis (ostensibly a reference to Russian President Vladimir Putin's shaky-at-best justification for his invasion).

It's possible, though, that something unrelated to politics deepened his disenchantment with progressives: In 2015, his PR firm closed

abruptly after several female former employees accused him of sexual assault and harassment; he spoke to me on the condition that I note that the US Attorney declined to file any criminal charges, and a woman who had accused him of rape publicly retracted her allegations and apologized as part of a settlement in 2019.

Both Kirsch and FitzGibbon complained that progressive groups with whom they both were previously allied would no longer return their calls—about Covid or anything else. Aggrieved, they were determined to press on in what they saw as a countercultural but righteous crusade—a sentiment echoed by many of the speakers. Their alienation and what they consider to be oppression only further energizes them and their cause. In a heartfelt speech in the ballroom, Sujata Gibson, a New York-based lawyer and activist who recently won a lawsuit that led to New York overturning its vaccine mandate for healthcare workers, compared current medical freedom activism to the Indian struggle for independence, Nelson Mandela's campaign against apartheid in South Africa, and the American civil rights movement. "Part of what we have to do as lawyers when we're in these tyrannical moments in history—and this one is quite extreme—is we have to hold the line in the courts," she said. "I've been lucky enough to see time after time how David and Goliath battles can be won."

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Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:03:37 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:02:45 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
Attachments: image004.png; image005.jpg; image008.png; image007.png

David M. Morens, MD
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

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---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Hotez, Peter Jay** (b)(6)
Date: Fri, Jul 1, 2022 at 11:24 AM
Subject: Re: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >, David Morens (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6)

Funny!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Jul 1, 2022, at 9:23 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

You know physicists discovered electrons, protons and neutrons – but they missed the morons.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: (b)(6)

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2022 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Sachs and Relman quoted again today

EXTERNAL SENDER

It's getting crazy again

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6)
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Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Jul 1, 2022, at 8:37 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

We've been fielding questions all week from a reporter at US Right to Know because they've FoIA'd another batch of emails. Here's an article today claiming that Ian Lipkin should have reported working with EHA as a 'Conflict of Interest' for his Nature Medicine paper with Kristian Andersen et al. back in Feb 2020.

Here's the link: https://usrtk.org/biohazards-blog/anti-lab-leak-virologist-ecohealth-alliance-partner/

You'll be irritated to see quotes from Jeff Sachs and David Relman. Everyone seems happy with the idea that somehow collaborating with EcoHealth Alliance means you have a conflict of interest in this world of fake COVID origin stories.

The article is also utterly disingenuous in pretending it took a FoIA lawsuit to find out that Ian Lipkin collaborated with us. All it would have taken is a 5 second Google Search.

Note also US Right to Know's motto: "Pursuing truth and transparency for public health".

US RTK

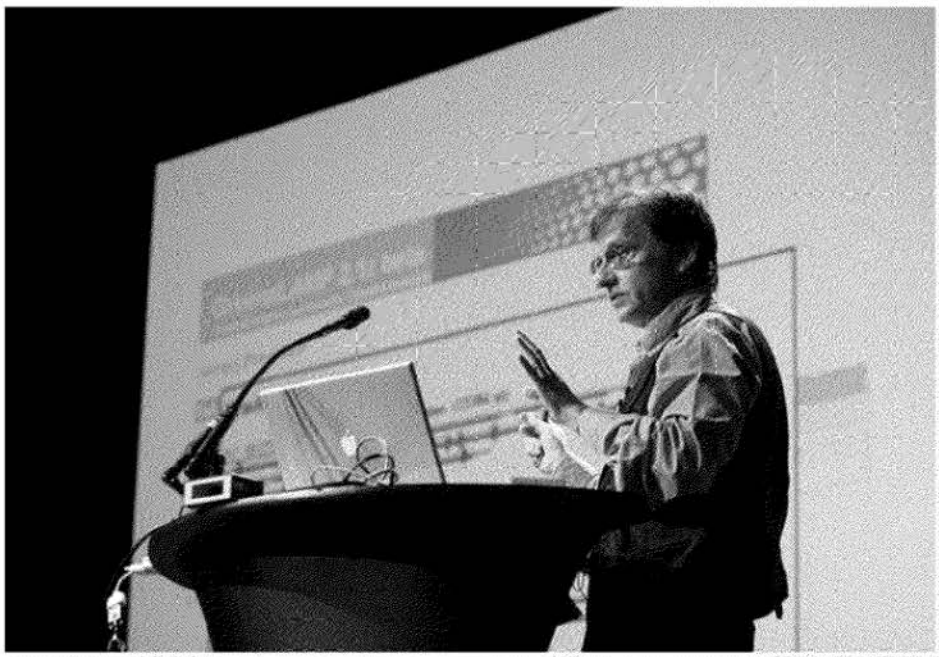
U.S. RIGHT TO KNOW

PURSUING TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Virologist who tried to discredit the lab leak theory was once a 'partner' to EcoHealth Alliance

PrintEmailShareTweet

Posted on July 1, 2022 by Emily Kopp



Columbia University virologist Ian Lipkin has coauthored several articles with EcoHealth Alliance since 2011. (Photo credit: kris krüg)

A virologist who coauthored a paper marginalizing the lab leak theory did not disclose his ties to the research group at the center of it.

Director of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity Ian Lipkin has often worked with EcoHealth Alliance, a U.S.-based collaborator of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the group confirmed in an email.

EcoHealth Alliance listed Lipkin as a "partner" from 2012 to 2014, an archived version of the group's website shows. Lipkin has coauthored at least ten scientific papers with EcoHealth researchers from 2011 to 2021, EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in an email. These publications include a paper about novel coronaviruses EcoHealth and its partners sampled around the world.

EcoHealth Alliance hunts for novel viruses in wildlife and funds research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Lipkin did not disclose his partnership with EcoHealth in "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," a highly influential paper that states that COVID-19 arose from nature.

A central premise of that paper: COVID-19 is too dissimilar from viruses commonly employed in experiments to have spilled out of a lab.

"It is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus," the paper states. "The genetic data irrefutably show that SARS-CoV-2 is not derived from any previously used virus backbone."

But Lipkin did not disclose his connection to a nonprofit that uncovers new and novel viruses. Some of those viruses were likely studied at its partnering lab in Wuhan, which housed one of the world's largest collection of bat coronaviruses.

Lipkin did not return several requests for comment.

At 5.7 million views, the *Nature Medicine* article may be one of the most widely read scientific papers in history — though the piece is formally a "correspondence."

David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist and emerging infectious diseases expert for the National Academies, said conflicts of interest are especially troublesome when writing on high profile issues.

"For any major, controversial issue, I believe that all of us have an even greater responsibility to reveal those conflicts upfront—and let others have an opportunity to judge what effect those conflicts might have had," said Relman.

Relman also called into question the logic of the paper's premise. The Wuhan Institute of Virology may have simply been experimenting with unfamiliar viruses. The disappearance of the lab's coronavirus sequence database in 2019 and the lab's history of gain-of-function experiments also weaken the claims of Lipkin and his coauthors, Relman said.

"The Proximal Origins paper is flawed in its assumptions, logic and the soundness of its conclusions. I was very surprised that it passed review at *Nature Medicin*e," he said.

Columbia University Center for Sustainable Development Director Jeffrey Sachs — chair of The Lancet COVID-19 Commission — said the citation the authors used to prop up the paper's premise deserves more scrutiny.

"The Proximal Origins paper has no credibility," Sachs wrote in an email. "The paper's central claim — that SARS-CoV-2 is not related to viruses previously reported in laboratory research — offers as proof a footnote to a 2014 paper!"

"It ludicrously claims to debunk a 2019 lab emergence using a 2014 paper," he continued. "The paper offers no real evidence whatsoever against the possible lab origin of the virus, even though it claimed to do so."

Lipkin himself has since acknowledged the possibility that the Wuhan Institute of Virology

was experimenting with unknown viruses, contradicting the popular paper he coauthored.

"If they've got hundreds of bat samples that are coming in, and some of them aren't characterized, how would they know whether this virus was or wasn't in this lab? They wouldn't," Lipkin said in an interview with the Washington Post last year.

But Lipkin has not disclosed his work with EcoHealth to reporters.

Nature Medicine, the journal that published the paper, defines a "competing interest" requiring disclosure as including "personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals" — paid or unpaid. A spokesperson for parent company Springer Nature did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

Lipkin's connection to a group at the center of lab leak suspicions is the latest revelation to cast doubt on the correspondence.

Significant questions remain. It's still unclear how the authors dispelled their own private concerns that the virus had been engineered within a couple of days.

For example, Lipkin privately voiced concerns to his coauthors about a "nightmare of circumstantial evidence" pointing to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Vanity Fair reported.

It's also unknown to what extent leaders of the National Institutes of Health, which funded the EcoHealth Alliance, may have shaped the paper.

Grant reports that led a reporter to the defunct link showing Lipkin's partnership with EcoHealth Alliance were obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Wed, 14 Sep 2022 8:31:52 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 14 Sep 2022 8:30:21 PM -0400
Subject: Another attack from Republican Senators
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
CC: David Morens (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Attachments: Sen Marshall USAID-Letter-re-EHA-suspension-9.14.2022.pdf

Just saw this letter being promoted by Richard Ebright online. It's an effort to get USAID to defund EcoHealth, even when the funding they give us at present doesn't involved viral work at all – it's conservation and training grants.

The letter's led by Sen. Marshall, cosigned by the usual suspects, Rand Paul, Marc Rubio etc.

https://www.marshall.senate.gov/wp- content/uploads/USAID- Letter-re-EHA-suspension-9.14.2022.pdf

I hope it won't get much traction or lead to further delays in our work.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 7, 2022 9:17 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens (b)(6); Rich Roberts < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Lancet covid commission report.

I've mostly given up on appealing to Richard Horton. Initially he wouldn't answer my emails, and finally when he agreed to a zoom and promised to redress my concerns, even stating he would do so in writing, so far nothing. He can't be bothered or at some level he agrees with Jeff?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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iPhone

On Sep 7, 2022, at 7:57 AM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

The Task Force paper is now in production. I won't have a real estimated date for publication until the galleys are available and then its 2-3 weeks. So probably end of the month, at best around the time of UNGA.

Now you should remind Horton about his promise to control Sachs. Its shameful how ineffective he, Horton, has been and how slovenly he is with accuracy and science.

We (the Independent Task Force) are addressing the dissemination of our report to be as forceful and as fast as possible when the paper appears.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 7, 2022 6:49 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Lancet covid commission report.

Yes I think it may be released as soon as next week, with press conferences I believe in NY around the time of UNGA (as originally planned). I was not invited to participate.

Two weeks ago, Richard Horton in a zoom agreed to address my concerns about Jeff's specific attacks on me, he was supposed to respond by last week. But nothing so far, so I'm not optimistic. Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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On Sep 7, 2022, at 2:00 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Just been sent this link to a webinar on sept 15th.
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2fOHd3OlRHuljvaKUPrYHg?s=09

It looks like the lancet Covid-19 commission's report will be released then. Is that right Peter?

I note that there's no specific placeholder for a report on the origins despite Jeff Sachs' recent pontification on the subject!!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

Date: Tue, 12 Apr 2022 4:21:20 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 12 Apr 2022 4:21:17 PM -0400
Subject: RE: The NAM are now investigating me based on some of the allegations from the Republican congressional members
From: "Roberts, Rich" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
CC: Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)

Peter:

Appalling! Yet again I am glad that I am not a member of any of the Academies. They are completely toothless as well as incompetent. Almost as bad as the UN.

Happy to chat if it might help. Otherwise I will see in a couple of weeks' time.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 1:14 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: The NAM are now investigating me based on some of the allegations from the Republican congressional members
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Please see the email below that I just received and the attachments.

They've cut down the allegations to a handful that I have to respond to within 30 days. But as I see this, these are grey areas that they could use to easily push me out, no matter my response. It would save them political hassle if they get rid of me, and I'm very worried that this is their ultimate goal.

Obviously, I'll try to be as aggressive as possible in defending against this, but this is devastating to me personally to have to go through this and if they expel me, it would likely cost me my job and career. Even more worrisome is the last paragraph in the letter from the Congressional members – they are playing pure politics here – if I'm found to be in breach, they are demanding that every report I've been involved in, and every committee be investigated.

This feels like a purge orchestrated by politicians for a political goal, and an academy that is too weak to push back.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter (b)(6)

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---

From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 1:58 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Kim, Se (b)(6)
Subject: confidential

Dear Dr. Daszak,

On behalf of the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), I am notifying you that the NAM has received a complaint alleging that you have engaged in conduct(s) that may constitute violation(s) of the NAM Code of Conduct for members.

Please find attached a notification letter, supplemental documentation, and NAM bylaws and Code of Conduct. Pursuant to the NAM Policy and Procedure on Violations of the Code of Conduct, please provide a response to the allegations within 30 days of the date of this notification, and by no later than May 13, 2022.

For your awareness, copies of this notification is postage mailed by FedEx to your office address at EcoHealth Alliance, 520 Eighth Ave Suite 1200, New York, NY 10018.

Sincerely,

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, M.D., M.P.H.
Home Secretary, National Academy of Medicine

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Date: Tue, 19 Mar 2024 7:43:47 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 19 Mar 2024 7:43:44 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Opinion from Jeff Sachs
From: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) (b)(6)

I have a hard time calling him Dr. or Professor for that matter.

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 6:46 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) > (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Opinion from Jeff Sachs

I really don't think this is worth a response to Dr. Sachs or to the journal. There are numerous factual inaccuracies about our work, but it's in an obscure journal I've not heard of, and it isn't being picked up by others. Basically it's safe to say Dr. Sachs has strayed so far down a rabbit hole I don't think he'll be coming out of it based on the fact it's going nowhere…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter (b)(6)

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---

From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 5:25 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >; kuuipo9 (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Opinion from Jeff Sachs

Jerry:

Probably a waste of time to respond, unless you would like me to send something to him personally (and copy his wife).

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Keusch, Gerald (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 4:45 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) ; (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Opinion from Jeff Sachs

EXTERNAL SENDER

This is another totally speculative list of non-data. How many "may be" does it take to understand it is not credible unless you formed your opinion in adcance?

Should there be a very brief point by point response or just let it lay and decay?

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 7:21 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald < (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >; Roberts Rich (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Opinion from Jeff Sachs

Tragic conspiracy nonsense
https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/covid- 19-gain-of-function-us-research

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)
iPhone

Date:	Tue, 4 Jun 2024 9:48:25 AM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 4 Jun 2024 9:48:12 AM -0400
Subject:	Re: House Republicans to grill Anthony Fauci over coronavirus, pandemic response : Shots - Health News : NPR
From:	Keith Martin (b)(6)
To:	Peter Daszak (b)(6) >;
CC:	Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Attachments:	image001.jpg

Dear Peter,
Please share any material we can distribute that is a rebuttal to the sham interrogation of Dr. Fauci and the smears against Ecohealth and the NIH.
We can share them widely.
Thanks so much.
Keith

Hon. Dr. Keith Martin, MD, PC
Executive Director
Consortium of Universities for Global Health
1608 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Washington, DC, 20036

www.cugh.org
Twitter: (b)(6)
Office: (b)(6)

On Sun, Jun 2, 2024 at 10:02 AM Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

> The NPR interviewed good scientists working in the field who all said we've been scapegoated and railroaded. They then interviewed an anti-China political operative (Metzl) and a self-proclaimed "postdoc" working on human genomics who's been pushing the lab leak theory for 4 years. Is it surprising that they both said the opposite.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: (b)(6)

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Sunday, June 2, 2024 7:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) >; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Keith Martin < Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: House Republicans to grill Anthony Fauci over coronavirus, pandemic response : Shots - Health News : NPR

I can't believe they would interview Alina Chan
https://www.npr.org/2024/05/30/g- s1-1788/republicans-probe-covid-origins-attack-on-science-or-long-overdue

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
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Date: Wed, 1 Jun 2022 6:35:07 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 1 Jun 2022 6:33:31 PM -0400
Subject: Paper now published in Nature Communications Biology showing that furin cleavage is readily 'evolvable' in European bat CoVs
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; Peter Hotez (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)

I don't know if this has been shared with us all yet, but a preprint on this issue came out a few months ago and is now published in Nature Communications Biology.

As you can read, it clearly indicates that the ability of SARSr-CoVs to undertake furin cleavage is something that is clearly achievable in nature – in this case in European bat SARSr-CoVs, with just one nucleotide mutation. Normally, this would close the door on all lab leak suppositions around the FCS of SARS-CoV-2, but we're not in a normal world, and with loud voices like Jeff Sachs spuriously claiming the opposite, the confusion will continue in the public's mind…..

https://www.nature.com/articles/s42003- 022-03421-w

Published: 30 May 2022

Genomic determinants of Furin cleavage in diverse European SARS-related bat coronaviruses

- Anna-Lena Sander,
- Andres Moreira-Soto,
- Stoian Yordanov,
- Ivan Toplak,
- Andrea Balboni,
- Ramón Seage Ameneiros,
- Victor Corman,
- Christian Drosten &
- Jan Felix Drexler

Communications Biology **volume 5**, Article number: 491 (2022) Cite this article

- **353** Accesses
- **157** Altmetric
- Metricsdetails

Abstract

The furin cleavage site (FCS) in SARS-CoV-2 is unique within the *Severe acute respiratory syndrome–related coronavirus* (*SrC*) species. We re-assessed diverse *SrC* from European horseshoe bats and analyzed the spike-encoding genomic region harboring the FCS in SARS-CoV-2. We reveal molecular features in *SrC* such as purine richness and RNA secondary structures that resemble those required for FCS acquisition in avian influenza viruses. We discuss the potential acquisition of FCS through molecular mechanisms such as nucleotide substitution, insertion, or recombination, and show that a single nucleotide exchange in two European bat-associated *SrC* may suffice to enable furin cleavage. Furthermore, we show that FCS occurrence is variable in bat- and rodent-borne counterparts of human coronaviruses. Our results suggest that furin cleavage sites can be acquired in *SrC* via conserved molecular mechanisms known in other reservoir-bound RNA viruses and thus support a natural origin of SARS-CoV-2.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: (b)(6)

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From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 7:14 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; Peter Hotez (b)(6) ; Rich Robert (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio <
Subject: RE:

A classic how to obscure truth in writing for a School of Journalism's honor role of how not to do journalism. Rather disgusting. I suspect The Scientist referred to is a chief advisor to Jeff Sachs.

Jerry

From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 2:46 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Peter Hotez (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio <
Subject: Fwd:

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** David Morens (b)(6)
> **Date:** May 31, 2022 at 14:44:17 EDT
> **To:** David Morens (b)(6) >
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date:	Mon, 3 Jun 2024 8:13:53 PM -0400
Sent:	Mon, 3 Jun 2024 8:13:43 PM -0400
Subject:	FW: NASEM service
From:	Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To:	Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) peter hotez (b)(6)
CC:	Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Attachments:	image001.png

Dear Colleagues,

A sad day for me watching Democrats who threw EcoHealth (and David) under the bus laud Dr. Fauci for his honorable service, only to hear Dr. Fauci deny his decades-long relationship with David, then answer the question "Do you agree that EcoHealth should be debarred" with the single word "Yes". Of course it could have been much worse, but I just wonder how far our reputation can be pushed into the mud before it's unsalvageable.

Anyway – on another issue, below is my response to the NASEM's COO and Chief Program Officer Dr. Gregory Symmes, in response to his request for a "meeting to discuss potential impact of the recent HHS decision on your service to the National Academies".

I checked out Dr. Symmes' bio here: https://www.nationalacademies.org/about/leadership/gregory- symmes-h Basically, he's the NASEM equivalent of Michael Lauer. Let's see if he's decent and fair in the way he deals with a politically-targeted NAM member… I'll let you know..

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 7:43 PM
To: 'Symmes, Gregory' (b)(6)
Cc: 'Wood, Tasha' (b)(6) 'Alison Andre (b)(6)
'Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: NASEM service
Importance: High

Dear Dr. Symmes,

Thank you for your email of May 31st and for the reminder of our meeting as part of the Committee to Advise the USGCRP, which I trust is doing well. My understanding is that the HHS letters to EcoHealth Alliance and myself are the initial step in a process during which we will have an opportunity to refute allegations, present evidence that our organization is a good steward of federal funding, and that debarment is not appropriate in this case. EcoHealth Alliance intends to contest debarment vigorously on behalf of the organization and myself. We have already amassed substantial evidence to refute the baseless allegations against us, and to show clearly that EcoHealth Alliance has 'present responsibility' to manage federal awards. There has been a rush to judgment by the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic and HHS, with a conspicuous lack of due process.

As you know, I have served the NASEM on numerous committees and in other roles over the past two decades, working hard on behalf of the Academies, both before and after becoming a member of the NAM. These duties were already disrupted when I was asked to suspend activities while being investigated for around 12 months, following a spurious politically-motivated letter from politicians bent on undermining science. I was completely exonerated by the NAM investigation and rapidly picked up my activities. There is nothing about the HHS process that should or does affect my ability to perform my duties to the NASEM to their fullest capacity. I therefore intend to continue with my duties until due process has been given an opportunity to play out.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Symmes, Gregory (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 3:57 PM
To: Daszak, Peter
Cc: Wood, Tasha (b)(6)
Subject: meeting request

Dear Dr. Daszak,

My name is Greg Symmes and I'm the Chief Program Officer of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. You may remember meeting me years ago during your service on the Committee to Advise the US Global Change Research Program, when I was executive director of the Academies' Division on Earth and Life Studies.

I'm reaching out to schedule a zoom call with you to discuss potential impact of the recent HHS decision on your service to the National Academies.

My executive assistant Tasha Wood will be in touch with your office to arrange a time for us to meet. Please let me know if there is someone in your office Tasha should work with to help with your schedule.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Best,
Greg Symmes

Gregory H. Symmes, Ph.D.
Chief Program Officer
Acting Chief Operating Officer
(b)(6)
(b)(6)

NATIONAL ACADEMIES Sciences Engineering Medicine

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Date:	Fri, 3 Feb 2023 9:35:53 AM -0500
Sent:	Fri, 3 Feb 2023 9:35:39 AM -0500
Subject:	RE: House Energy and Commerce Republicans are now demanding documents/testimony from EcoHealth and NIH
From:	"Roberts, Rich" (b)(6)
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >;
CC:	Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Peter:

Very good. I can use those myself (but only with attribution!)

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, February 3, 2023 9:06 AM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Re: House Energy and Commerce Republicans are now demanding documents/testimony from EcoHealth and NIH

EXTERNAL SENDER

My 2 talking points

Remember, the work of the EcoHealth Alliance is what is helping to keep America safe in first identifying the fourth major coronavirus pandemic in this Century. I'm predicting number 4 will be out before the end of this decade. We must support EcoHealth Alliance.

Remember, it was Marjorie Taylor Green and her colleagues on the House Freedom Caucus and their antivaccine rhetoric that caused thousands of Americans in conservative states in the South, especially in my state of Texas, to shun vaccines and lose their lives. They killed Americans before and now they want to further endanger the US population by shutting down our warning systems for the 4th pandemic will that will surely

come

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Feb 3, 2023, at 7:57 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

Sorry you have to continue with this witch hunt. Almost like being in Salem!

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant (b)(6)
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak < (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, February 3, 2023 2:01 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich < (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: House Energy and Commerce Republicans are now demanding documents/testimony from EcoHealth and NIH

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just to let you all know that, as predicted, we've received our first exhaustive request for documents, information and testimony. 41 questions from the House Energy & Commerce Committee Republicans. Many of them have already been answered over and over again, and many of the documents have been repeatedly FoIA'd, but of course, this isn't about getting to the truth about anything – it's about creating a 'show' for the hard right voters to watch EcoHealth squirm.

They wrote to us by email and simultaneously made the letter public of course. They've also written to NIH asking them 47 questions all about EcoHealth's terrible behavior. David – they're after your emails too…Here's the link, and I've attached the letters to us and NIH to save you the downloading time…

https://energycommerce.house.gov/posts/chairs- rodgers-griffith-and-guthrie-launch-e-and-c-s-118th-congress-covid-19-origins-investigation

Most outrageously, in their preamble they comment that our work in China funded by NIH provided "no scientific work product produced for the American taxpayers who helped finance these efforts, and no useful information to support pandemic preparedness efforts."

Actually, in the first 5 years of the R01 funding, we published 18 papers, including 2 in *Nature* and 1 in *Cell*. It was so productive that our renewal proposal was scored within the top 3% of grants.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

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From: Keusch, Gerald T < (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 4:58 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) oberts, Rich (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Notes from our call

Just to note I have just sent a note to Carlos del Rio about NAM, to Mary Woolley about Research!America, and Stef Bertuzzi about ASM. I'll let you know if and what I hear back from them and we can proceed from there.
Jerry

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:26 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Notes from our call
Importance: High

Attached are notes and action items (also cc'd below), as well as the concept note which I've expanded with more names of orgs to add:

Towards a Coalition to Protect Pandemic Preparedness Research

Notes from call 2/1/23
Rich Roberts, Peter Hotez, Jerry Keusch, David Morens, Jeff Sturchio, Peter Daszak, Aleksei Chmura

Action items:

Rich will speak with:
- Harold Varmus to sound him out re. this issue
- Holden Thorpe to find out the best way to engage AAAS (Sudip Parikh CEO)
- NAS: Rich will be in DC in March talking with Marcia McNutt, Nobel Foundation &
- NAS – will see if Nobel Foundation will endorse this effort if NAS supports it

Jerry Keusch will reach out to:
- ASM – Stephano Bertuzzi

David Morens will reach out to Tony Fauci to ask advice on how we should progress
Peter Hotez will talk with:
- Head of OSTP (Peter will speak with them in March)
- ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Peter Daszak will contact as many of the others as possible, writing on behalf of all of us, so as to avoid concerns that people might have re EcoHealth being in the line of fire.
Next steps
- each of us will reach out to different contacts
- re-convene by conference call in 3 weeks or so (Peter D. will set up), around Feb 22nd.
- In-person meeting at EHA NYC afternoon of April 27th.

Summary of discussion:

- What could the goals of the coalition be, and what should they not be
  - Overall goal to have a 'coalition of the willing' form, organized by an independent group (hopefully AAAS, or similar level) to defend pandemic prevention research that is under

attack

- How should we reach out to build a coalition?
  - Making contact with key people from each of the above, trying to set up a conference call, convened by a leading independent group (e.g. AAAS) where multiple contacts come together and the discussion is led by the independent group.
- Who should we try to engage: Academies, academic societies, pro-science pressure groups, senior figures in the field, funders, and governmental leaders. Initial list:
  - AAAS
  - AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition
  - American Public Health Association (Georges Benjamin)
  - American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (Dan Bausch, Karen Goraleski, Kent Kester)
  - Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities
  - Georgia Global Health Alliance
  - Bay Area Global Health Alliance
  - Consortium of Universities for Global Health
  - COVID Collaborative
  - Global Health Council
  - Global Health Technologies Coalition
  - Infectious Diseases Society of America Carlos del Rio (Jerry will reach out)
  - International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
  - Nobel Laureates Campaigns
  - Pandemic Action Network
  - PATH
  - Research!America – Reach back out – Jerry will
  - Union of Concerned Scientists
  - Washington Global Health Alliance
  - 156 virologists letter
  - NAM
  - NAS
  - NL Campaigns (to be kept informed of progress by Rich)
  - CUGH
  - The pandemic action coalition
  - FASEB
  - Global Health technologies coalition
  - APLU (KHG has connection)
  - Wellcome Trust (Paul Schreier is the interim head).
  - Dr. Tony Fauci
  - Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes)
  - OSTP
  - ASV – Anne Moscona (President-Elect)

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay <(b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 6:21 PM
To: Peter Daszak <(b)(6)
Cc: David Morens <(b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6)>; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura <(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Update

Dear all, I spoke with Ann Moscona President-Elect at ASV and she's all in. She also suggested adding Felicia Goodrum (Arizona) and Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Judes) both really good on policy issues, she will give them a heads up, thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 8:14 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Roberts, Ric (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Concept note and Agenda for our discussion today at 1pm Eastern US time

Dear All,

I'm looking forward to our discussion today at 1pm. Attached is a concept note that Jeff Sturchio drafted to frame some ideas around what we might try to do.

I've also attached a rough agenda for us.

Here are the details of the zoom call, and I look forward to speaking with you all later on:

Join Zoom Meeting
(b)(6)

Meeting ID: (b)(6)
Passcode: (b)(6)
One tap mobile
(b)(6) US (New York)
(b)(6) US

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Two great articles!

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

iPhone

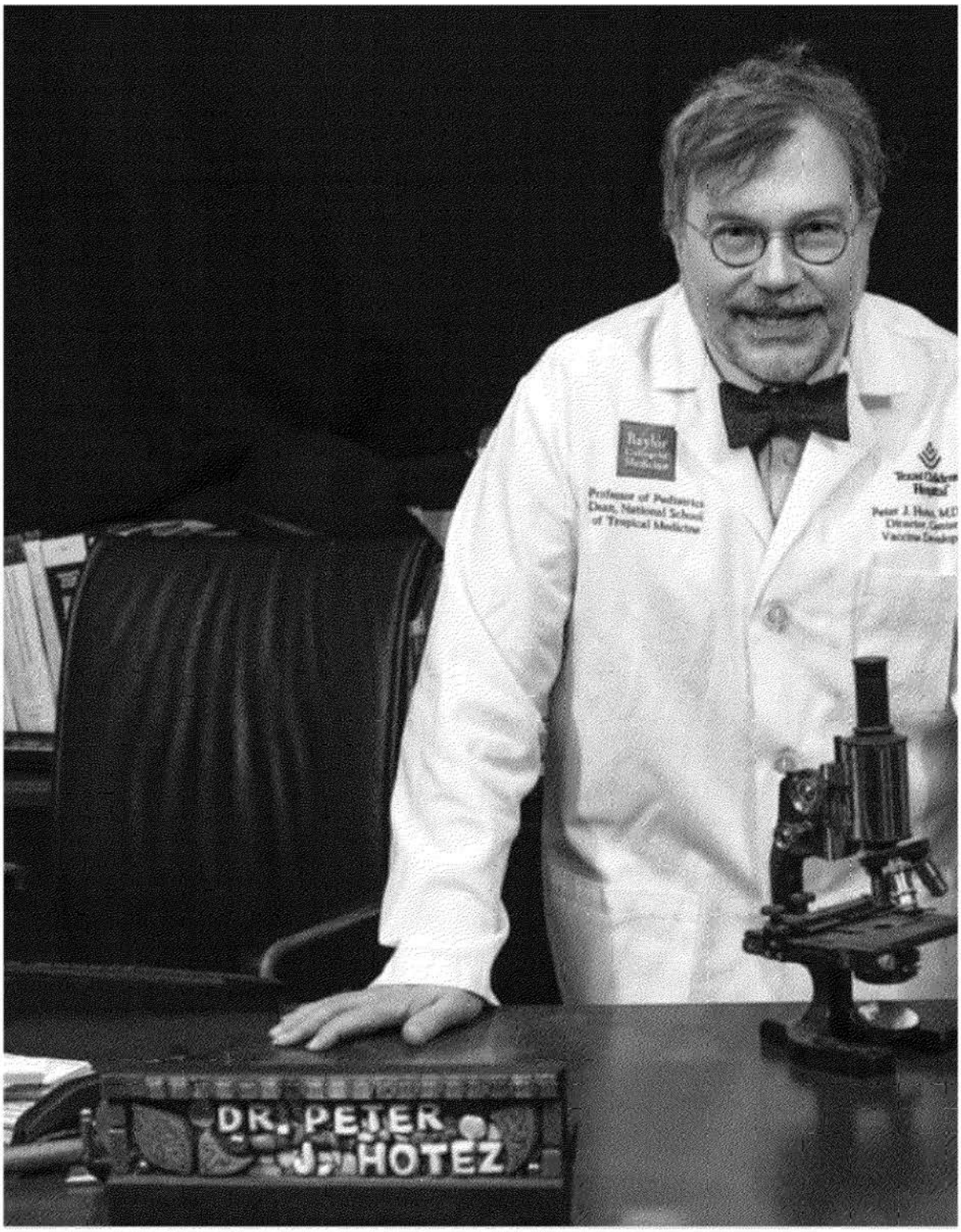
On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the

COVID-19 vaccines, hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.
Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.
In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.
I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?
Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad,* and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.
What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.
The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.
The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.
All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the

partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.

Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.

Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?

Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.

Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?

Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?

Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.

Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus

say the flu or MMR vaccines?

Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee] money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden

administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience

misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?"

And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.

And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6) eusch, Gerald T < (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens (b)(6) wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Media Inquiries:

(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Moren (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!

Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

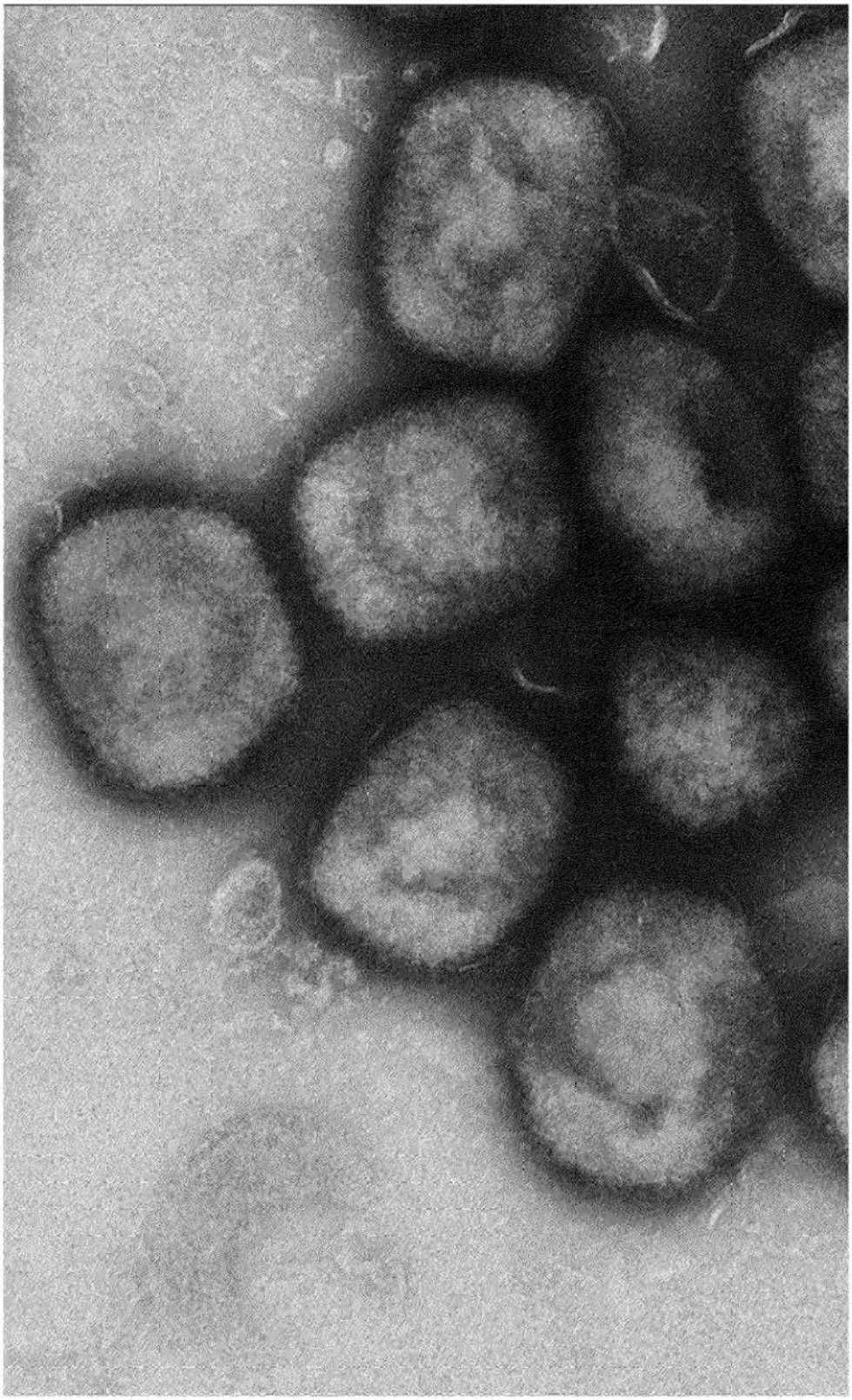
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH

Virologists defend their science as officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.
NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident

or malicious attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
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He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route," says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

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"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.

That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.

"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

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She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.

If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work."

But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

Sponsor Message

Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it." He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
Facebook
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Flipboard
Email

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay <hotez@bcm.edu>
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); David Morens < (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, Ashish Jha and Nahid Bhadelia, to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

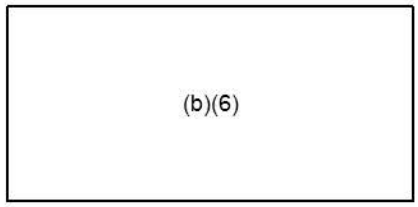
E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:



iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6)
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) ; Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University , Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that Scott Weaver would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of clinical management of rare hereditary pediatric diseases such as Job disease and CGD. Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position

That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6)
> wrote:

Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!

Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) ; Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) ; Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak <
(b)(6) Aleksei Chmura <
David Morens <
(b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner□Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay < (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak < (b)(6) ; Aleksei
Chmura < (b)(6) David Morens <
(b)(6) ; Gerald Keusch (b)(6)
Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6) >; Rich Roberts <
(b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by Miner□Flux on Twitter

Miner□Flux
□@randy_hoebee□

#Hotez pic.twitter.com/eOPpHym0Rw

1/24/23, 4:04 PM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty

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iPhone

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:24:34 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:23:52 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Angela Rasmussen says it all
From: David Morens (b)(6)
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)

David M. Morens, MD

(b)(6)

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (work)
(b)(6) (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) >
Date: Tue, Aug 2, 2022 at 8:40 AM
Subject: Angela Rasmussen says it all
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Cc: David Morens (b)(6) >, Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) >, Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) >, Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=QkxBHT%2FxziZuZB5eYnbj7J0tHCv92P1LDxKqh9Wkqw8%3D &reserved=0

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar

Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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&sdata=Wi8Wjr%2FfVzGrBwB4G%2BtfJic6h1z%2BJGE0Vu0JK2ZikrA%3D &reserved=0

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&sdata=GKVF%2B86XBoyZJAoUcEkXS1N2OA%2B38zPmG%2FJNp7oPUnA%3D &reserved=0

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=awx%2FHgjxSTASRjmlY5W4zIvsHHU87Bpg%2BvDCUQYL7Qc%3D &reserved=0

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Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Aug 1, 2022, at 2:31 PM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Peter Hotez just posted this article from The Hill.

Finally, a response from one Academic Society – Georges Benjamin from APHA, but again, it's not strong enough, not loud enough, and not enough people are listening I suspect. As Peter pointed out – where are the societies and the academies?

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fthehill.com%2Fpolicy%2Fhealthcare%2F35712gop-plots-fauci-probe-after-midterms%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C&sdata=kmtAc%2BlbReZeQH8mFA1%2BcdKhiPYjsuSgSXkH0LXvMo4%3D &reserved=0

HEALTHCARE

GOP plots Fauci probe after midterms

BY NATHANIEL WEIXEL - 07/25/22 5:25 AM ET

SHARETWEET

Congressional Republicans are eagerly floating investigations into Anthony Fauci and the Biden administration's response to the coronavirus pandemic if they win back control of the House or Senate in the midterm elections.

"One way or another, if we are in the majority, we will subpoena his records and he will testify in the Senate under oath," said Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who is in line to become the chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee if Republicans win the majority with the panel's current ranking member, Sen. Richard Burr

(R-N.C.), retiring.

Republicans have not been shy about launching probes into the U.S. response to the coronavirus pandemic, focusing on the origins of the virus and whether the federal government — and by extension, Fauci — helped fund controversial research that might have played a role in its creation.

While Republicans have been in the minority, those investigations have not gained much momentum. But with the majority, the GOP would have the authority to lob subpoenas at the administration to force it to hand over documents.

"If we win in November, if I'm chairman of a committee, if I have subpoena power, we'll go after every one of [Fauci's] records," Paul said earlier this year.

Public health experts said a hard look needs to be taken at the totality of the U.S. response to the pandemic across both the Trump and Biden administrations, but without getting into partisan finger-pointing.

"If you want to have a hearing, you need it to be a credible one. And that has to have a purpose. Other than going out to an 81 year old man," said Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association.

Benjamin has been among the health advocates pushing for an independent commission modeled on the 9/11 Commission to be formed to examine the pandemic response.

"It should be designed to actually get to the right answers. Until they do that, you know, they're going to continue to politicize it," Benjamin said.

Fauci is a career government official who has become a political lightning rod and a villain in the eyes of many on the right. Conservative media has painted him as a scapegoat for many of the nation's missteps over the pandemic.

Paul, a libertarian ophthalmologist, has repeatedly antagonized the nation's top infectious diseases doctor over the benefits of masks, vaccinations and the origins of COVID-19.

In March, Paul tried to attach to the pandemic relief bill a proposal eliminating Fauci's job and dividing it into three positions.

In the House, Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), who is in line to chair the House Judiciary Committee if Republicans win the majority, told The Hill that he sees no limits to what he wants to investigate about Fauci and the pandemic.

Like Paul, Jordan has pressed Fauci to answer questions about whether

his agency, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, funded "gain of function" research in China.

Jordan and Paul have long pushed the idea that COVID-19 escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, either because of an accident or because it was deliberately released, and that U.S.-funded research helped supercharge it into a much more dangerous and deadly version of the coronavirus.

Speaking to right-wing news outlet Just The News earlier this year, Jordan said he envisions that the investigation would aim to untangle "all the lies [and] the misinformation, the disinformation" allegedly spread by Fauci.

"That is because they knew from the get-go [coronavirus] came from the lab, likely came from a lab, gain-of-function likely done, and our tax dollars were used," Jordan said.

The U.S. intelligence community has ruled out the possibility that COVID-19 was a bioweapon developed by China, but beyond that the origins of the virus are unclear.

Some scientists have said the idea that it escaped from a lab needs further investigation but acknowledge that won't happen without China's help. Many others think that it spilled into the human population from animals sold in a Wuhan market.

Still, there is little evidence to suggest it was created in a lab or with funding help from the National Institutes of Health or Fauci.

Moody's: Schumer-Manchin deal will 'nudge' economy, inflation 'in the right direction'Hawley vows to vote 'no' on adding Sweden and Finland to NATO

Rupali Limaye, a health communication scholar at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, said a nakedly partisan investigation of Fauci would do even more damage to the fraying public trust in public health officials.

"I do think that public officials should be held responsible, you should be able to question and think critically about the recommendations that they have made, but it's also a slippery slope," Limaye said.

"Going down this slippery slope of continuing to have investigation after investigation after investigation is not in the best interest for anyone," Limaye said.

TAGS ANTHONY FAUCI ANTHONY FAUCI COVID-19 COVID-19 PANDEMIC JIM JORDAN JIM JORDAN NIH RAND PAUL RAND PAUL RICHARD BURR

The Hill has removed its comment section, as there are many other forums for readers to participate in the conversation. We invite you

to join the discussion on Facebook and Twitter.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 3:22 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6) >; 'David Morens' (b)(6) >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) 'Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) (b)(6) >
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' (b)(6) >
Subject: Now Fox News on Rand Paul's GoF hearing

…and here's Fox News…of course:

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.foxnews.com%2Fpolitics%2Frand-paul-vows-get-answers-covid-19-origins-gain-function-hearing&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C&sdata=oQo%2FoJZqAU3DroALQoiPPecW0m3qH79AvHudIrG6Y3s%3D &reserved=0

COVID-19 origins in gain-of-function hearing

Paul argues there is significant evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic originated in a Wuhan, China, lab

By Michael Lee | Fox News

BeyondWords

Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., announced the first ever hearing on gain-of-function research, which will be aimed at pinning down the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Throughout this pandemic, Dr. Rand Paul has led the effort to hold government officials accountable on the status of efforts being made to combat COVID-19, and the origins of this virus that has killed over 6 million people worldwide," a spokesperson for Paul told Fox News Digital. "This has been over a year-long process of getting Congressional Democrats to finally agree to a hearing, which will also be the first Congressional hearing on gain-of-function research. Dr. Paul looks forward to working with Subcommittee Chairwoman Hassan and hearing from expert witnesses during this critically important hearing that should've happened long ago."

The hearing, which is scheduled for Wednesday, comes a week after the

Kentucky senator attempted to pass an amendment to the CHIPS-Plus Act that would have banned U.S. funding of gain-of-function research in China, with Democrats objecting to the amendment despite it passing unanimously in an earlier version of the bill last year.

In remarks on the floor of the Senate last week, Paul argued that there was significant evidence that the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic could be traced to a lab in Wuhan, China.

RAND PAUL SENDS MESSAGE TO FAUCI: YOU'LL HAVE TO TESTIFY UNDER OATH IF GOP WINS

Sen. Rand Paul speaks during a COVID-19 federal response hearing on Capitol Hill. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

"Gain-of-function research enhances the severity or transmissibility of existing viruses that may infect humans," Paul said. "The dangers are so acute that from 2014-2017, the National Institutes of Health suspended funding for all gain-of-function projects… the emergence of COVID serves as a reminder that dangerous research conducted in a secretive and totalitarian country is simply too risky to fund."

Paul also sent a letter to the acting director of the National Institutes of Health, Lawrence A. Tabak, last week to demand the agency be more transparent on the origins of COVID-19, arguing that NIH has "repeatedly disregarded its responsibilities" under the Freedom of Information Act.

"Of particular concern is NIH's recent admission in Court that the agency is withholding portions of emails between employees because they 'could be used out of context and serve to amplify the already prevalent misinformation regarding the origins of the coronavirus pandemic,'" Paul said in the letter. "This suggests NIH is censoring the information it releases to the public about the origins of the pandemic."

Paul has had several clashes with public health officials throughout the pandemic, including several confrontations with Dr. Anthony Fauci, who currently serves as the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical adviser to President Biden.

Dr. Anthony Fauci responds to questions from Sen. Rand Paul at a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing on Capitol Hill. (Greg Nash-Pool/Getty Images)

Most recently, Paul told Fox News that Fauci would be forced to testify under oath regarding the pandemic if the Republican Party takes control of Congress after the midterm elections.

"If he's in public employment, we will subpoena him," Paul said. "He will have to appear and testify under oath. If Republicans take charge of the House or the Senate or both, he will have to testify under oath

because a million Americans died. And we want to know about was there a cover-up in trying to suppress any link to the lab in China?"

Michael Lee is a writer at Fox News. Follow him on Twitter @UAMichaelLee

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

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https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 3:15 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6) >; 'David Morens' (b)(6) >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) 'Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) (b)(6) >
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' (b)(6) >
Subject: Washington Examiner piece on Rand Paul's GoF hearing

The Washington Examiner is a pretty hard right-wing journal. Here's their story on the hearing on Wednesday, based on a press release from Rand Paul's office. Note that "Rand Paul will once again try to determine the origins of COVID-19"….I thought that was the job of scientific research?

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonexaminer.com%2Fopinion%2F
paul-to-lead-first-congressional-hearing-on-gain-of-function-research%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR3V-
HXpVFZQ8M5Y73_kEQ9ful2giIqWgpSwULr86sFyb1VO1EpWJ27N9TA
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=xRvVMbYFEL5VhRvFhmnq5LKiqSyGFKqvPQpu9WA6oUg%3D &reserved=0

I agree with your point Rich – someone from the scientific community should be pushing back against all this - hearings about scientific research of any type should include people who actually have done that research, or can point to its proposed or actual value.

When I gave my keynote last week in front of a room of virologists, I pointed out to them that it's no good watching EcoHealth be attacked in the press about gain-of-function, and thinking 'glad that's not us' – you guys in the room are the ones actually doing viral research and they're coming for your funding next!

All this, of course, is done to undermine Fauci, undermine Biden, and try to win funding and votes – none of it is actually done to get to the bottom of COVID-19 origins, or protect people in any way…

OPINION

Rand Paul to lead first congressional hearing on gain-of-function research

by Christopher Tremoglie, Commentary Fellow

| July 29, 2022 04:35 PM

.

On Aug. 3, Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) will once again try to determine the origins of COVID-19. Paul, ranking member of the subcommittee on emerging threats and spending oversight, will lead the first congressional hearing on gain-of-function research. This is an important matter that many Democratic politicians have largely ignored given the significance of the COVID-19 pandemic. Paul's office announced the hearing in a press release earlier this week.

"Gain-of-function research has historically been supported by tax dollars both domestically and internationally; as such, this hearing lies at the intersection of the subcommittee's two primary jurisdictional responsibilities — monitoring emerging threats and conducting oversight of federal spending," the press release states. "The dangers of this research are so acute that under President Barack Obama, the National Institutes of Health suspended funding for all gain-of-function projects until a risk assessment protocol could be developed for them. Gain-of-function research resumed in 2017, after a special committee review process was established to help manage these risks. However, serious questions remain about whether that protocol is sufficient to protect the U.S. and the world from the potential negative consequences of this research. Moreover, the debate over what gain-of-function research is and what it is not, is not settled."

Gain-of-function research has been hotly debated. In previous hearings regarding the pandemic, Paul and Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, have had contentious exchanges. In May 2021, the two verbally sparred over whether the National Institutes of Health funded gain-of-function experiments at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Paul claimed that "superviruses" were created. Fauci denied this and said such reports were "entirely and completely incorrect."

"The purpose of this hearing is to examine issues involving gain-of-function research, which attempts to enhance the severity and transmissibility of existing viruses that may infect humans or other mammals. Witnesses include Dr. Richard H. Ebright, Ph.D., Laboratory Director of Waksman Institute of Microbiology, Dr. Steven Quay, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer at Atossa Therapeutics, Inc., and Dr. Kevin M. Esvelt, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Media Arts & Sciences of MIT Media Lab," the press release says.

Much of the skepticism regarding NIH's role in the COVID-19 pandemic stems from a letter sent to Congress by Lawrence A. Tabak, a top NIH official. Tabak claimed that Fauci authorized NIH to fund EcoHealth Alliance to research the relationship between humans and bat-specific pathogens. In the letter, Tabak claimed that NIH failed to report results that revealed an increase in viral growth.

"These medical and scientific professionals will inform and educate lawmakers and the public on the myriad issues involving the risky, virus-enhancing research that is funded by taxpayer money," the press release says.

If proven true, it would be a black eye for NIH, Fauci, and federal government stewardship of taxpayer money.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F

&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 11:47 AM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6) >; 'David Morens' (b)(6) >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) >; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) (b)(6) >
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' (b)(6) >
Subject: update...

….and I apologize David – I've just noticed that the last email chain also had your (!) NIH email address on it…

I'm catching up on emails this week, having been out of the office, giving a keynote at a conference in Colorado – first in-person conference for me since March 2020.

It's been great to see the two papers published in Science, which by the way use data that the 'Joint WHO-China Study of the Animal Origins of COVID-19' first published in our report in March 2021. Despite the rhetoric since our WHO Wuhan work, these data were new, and were freely proffered by the China team. These data point clearly to the industrial-scale trade in farmed and wild-caught wildlife in China as the origins, something which China first publicly stated in Jan 2020, then announcing its goal of closing the wildlife farming industry, and the 14 million jobs it involved. The point here is that, while the lab leak accusers point to China as covering up so they don't get blamed for the pandemic, they had already done the opposite with the wildlife trade.

On other news – we are now trying to stave off efforts to defund us by working with a bi-partisan request from the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. We first heard from last Fall, and the letter came from the

Democrats, Sen. Ossoff's staff, saying they were a bi-partisan group. However, it's clearly being led by the Republicans (Senator Ron Johnson's staff), and they're pushing us to hand over emails and documents back to 2010 relating to any communications w/ federal agencies on a bunch of COVID and lab leak topics. Right now we're trying to slow down their efforts, and narrow their search, but they're harbingers of what we will likely see in November if the Republicans win the House – a bunch of requests to preserve documents, followed by Subpoenas in January/Feb, unless this topic becomes 'old hat'.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

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Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 11:20 AM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' (b)(6) >; 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' (b)(6)
Cc: 'David Morens' (b)(6) >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; 'Roberts, Rich' (b)(6) >
Subject: Upcoming hearing from a Senate Subcommittee on gain of function research

Dear all (David – I didn't cc Jeff Taubenberger because you've all been using his NIH address which would be subject to Congressional requests and to FoIA),

I just spotted this upcoming HSGAC Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight hearing on Wednesday, on one of the lab leaker's social media feeds.

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hsgac.senate.gov%2Fsubcommittees%2Fe
gain-of-function-research-what-the-pandemic-taught-us-and-where-do-we-go-from-here
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C
&sdata=n9%2BVg1LqqpbBJGuhQn9z6EN8TSDhnkXojm%2FDB2G4qbY%3D &reserved=0

The three speakers are all non-virologists, and have been attacking all research that tries to get to the bottom of COVID origins, unless it's pushing a China lab leak agenda.

Richard Ebright has been attacking EcoHealth's work ever since the pandemic as part of his long term criticism of recombinant virus technology. He was part of the Cambridge Group that ended up pausing recombinant viral research in the past, and is extremely vocal (and quite offensively) about our work, which he uses to try to leverage attacks against Dr. Fauci, NIAID, NIH in general.
Stephen Quay is pretty much on the edge of being a quack at this point having made many public statements about HIV inserts in the virus etc.
Kevin Esvelt is calling for research identifying viruses in wildlife as a way to get ahead of pandemics to be closed down, following his

criticisms of CRISPR etc.

It looks like this is another effort by Rand Paul to drum up some public interest from his base, perhaps?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: (b)(6)

Website:
https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecohealthalliance.org%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585C&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter:
CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Wed, 25 Jan 2023 2:27:36 PM -0500
Sent: Wed, 25 Jan 2023 2:27:28 PM -0500
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner□Flux on Twitter
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >;
CC: David Morens (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
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Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)

iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that Scott Weaver would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura < (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of (b)(6) (b)(6) Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position
That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of

a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist (b)(6) (b)(6) - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being (b)(6) but all four have expressed no interest. (b)(6) are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:
>
> Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!
>
> Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: (b)(6)
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
> **Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
> **To:** Peter Daszak (b)(6)

Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

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Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6); Gerald Keusch < (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner□Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Gerald Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio < (b)(6); Rich Roberts (b)(6)
Subject: Tweet by Miner□Flux on Twitter

Miner□Flux
□@randy_hoebee□

#Hotez pic.twitter.com/eOPpHym0Rw

1/24/23, 4:04 PM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor,

Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b)(6)

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6) | Phone: (b)(6) | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
(b)(6)
iPhone

Date:	Thu, 5 May 2022 12:20:16 PM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 5 May 2022 12:11:06 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: Article in Buzzfeed yesterday detailing political motivation behind Termination of EHA's grant
From:	"Hotez, Peter Jay" (b)(6)
To:	Peter Daszak (b)(6) >;
CC:	Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments:	image010.png; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg; image001.jpg; image004.jpg; image001.jpg; image004.jpg; image010.png; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg

Will add this to my "antiscience kills" book, when I get the page proofs will send to you, if not sooner

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
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Skype: (b)(6)
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
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Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 5, 2022, at 10:41 AM, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

Agreed Peter – a small but awful group (White Coat Waste). They are firmly linked with Anti-GMO groups (e.g. Organic Consumers Association, GMO Watch) and anti-vaxx groups that have been partnering with them to attack our work to get at Fauci. Here's an article on the anti-GMO link to the lab leak theory:

https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2021/06/inside- the-anti-gmo-movements-obsession-with-virology-research-and-lab-leaks/

They have a "gain of function" hall of shame that features me, even though EcoHealth has never conducted research that's classified as GoF (a point that's now largely forgotten in the media frenzy!). It also has a link to the "Great Reset" conspiracy theory with George Soros, Bill Gates, and the World Economic Forum etc. and its clear anti-semitic overtones:
https://www.organicconsumers.org/campaigns/covid- 19/gain-of-function-hall-of-shame

Here's an article on the US Right To Know, that's filed over 100 FoIAs for emails linking to EcoHealth, showing that they're linked back to Robert Kennedy's anti-vaxx movement:
https://www.thedailybeast.com/us- right-to-know-fave-mainstream-media-source-is-funded-by-anti-vaxxers

Wait a minute – am I looking at a "conspiracy" here!??

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b)(6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Cc: Peter Daszak (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) Jeff Sturchio (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Article in Buzzfeed yesterday detailing political motivation behind Termination of EHA's grant

Until now I hadn't heard of the white coat project

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: (b)(6)
Twitter: (b)(6)
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Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
(b)(6)
Phone: (b)(6)
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 5, 2022, at 9:15 AM, Roberts, Rich (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) > wrote:

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Peter:

A good article, but hard to know how effective it might be.
It does continue to raise the need for scientists to fight back.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 9:27 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Roberts, Rich (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) ; Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) ; Jeff Sturchio (b)(6)
Cc: Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Article in Buzzfeed yesterday detailing political motivation behind Termination of EHA's grant
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear All,

Peter Aldhous from Buzzfeed has done a deep dive on FoIA'd emails and put together a convincing account of how a pretty awful Animal Rights group (White Coat Waste) was behind much of the initial efforts to get our grant terminated by NIH. It shows that the campaign against EHA and myself was politically motivated and as Jeff Sturchio said in an email to me today 'cravenly opportunistic'. It shows clearly that Francis Collins, Michael Lauer, and a bunch of lawyers at NIH have been on a two-year long campaign to find justification for their actions so they can throw us under the bus to avoid political pressure.

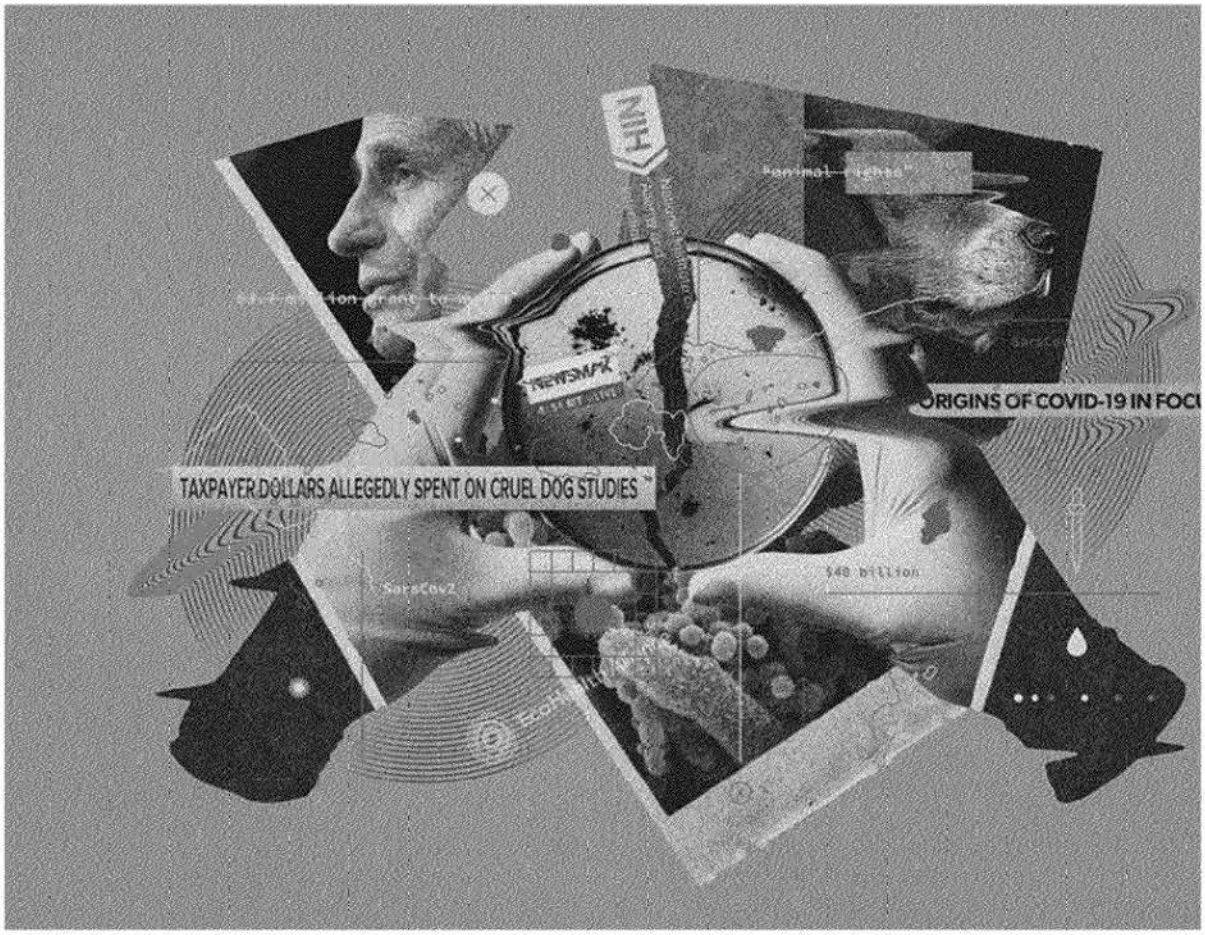
https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/peteraldhous/white- coat-waste-anthony-fauci-nih-ecohealth-alliance-lab

Note the following line, when Michael Lauer discovered that our Yr 5 report arrived late, so they could try to nail us for 'non-compliance' even though we'd already reported the experiment the year earlier.

A heavily redacted series of emails from May 2021 centers on the July 2016 letter from the NIAID that had given EcoHealth permission to resume the chimera work. Accepting a suggestion made by Daszak himself, it stated that if any of the chimeric viruses showed unexpectedly rapid growth, he would "immediately stop all experiments with these viruses" and provide NIAID officials with information about the unexpected outcomes. Shortly after receiving the letter, Lauer sent it on to a senior attorney with the Department of Health and Human Services, assigned to the NIH, changing the subject line on the email thread to "Gift."

What an awful bunch of disingenuous bureaucrats in the Office of the Director – a real rats nest – focused entirely on saving their own jobs, not caring about science or grantees…

Here's the text of the article:



Israel Vargas for BuzzFeed News

As much of the United States entered COVID lockdowns in April 2020, a tiny group that campaigns against federal funding for animal experiments spotted an opportunity. Speculation was swirling in right-leaning media that the virus behind the pandemic had emerged from a lab in Wuhan, China, rather than from wildlife sold for food in the city's markets. As it happened, the White Coat Waste Project had been looking into taxpayer money going to labs in China, including in Wuhan. The group's founder had strong contacts with Republican politicians and had launched the group with the mission of getting conservatives into animal activism.

The White Coat Waste Project sprung into action, persuading DailyMail.com to run a story saying the US government had funded the lab. Then all hell broke loose.

Then-president Donald Trump, keen to blame China for the pandemic, was soon involved. After prodding from the conservative outlet Newsmax at a press conference, his administration terminated the grant from the National Institutes of Health, which had been awarded to a New York–based nonprofit called the EcoHealth Alliance.
Since then, the controversy over whether the COVID pandemic started with a "lab leak" has escalated into a ferocious fight, with conflicting narratives that paint EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology either as out-of-control scientists who may have caused the pandemic through inherently risky research or as the victims of politically motivated conspiracy theories, unfairly vilified as the architects of a catastrophe that they worked for years to prevent by studying the risks posed by bat coronaviruses.

Two years on, and with the scientific trail going cold, it's possible that the mystery of the origins of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, may never be conclusively solved. But thousands of pages of NIH emails and other documents released to BuzzFeed News through a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit show how the White Coat Waste Project rode the wave of partisan pandemic politics to serve its cause, and in the process triggered a storm that engulfed EcoHealth, one of the world's largest groups studying potentially dangerous animal viruses. They also show how the NIH, a behemoth that spends more than $40 billion annually on biomedical research, stumbled under the political pressure the White Coat Waste Project brought to bear.

The White Coat Waste Project has subsequently channeled right-wing anger toward Anthony Fauci, the public face of COVID policies including mask and vaccine mandates, accusing his National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is part of the NIH, of funding "beagle torture." The White Coat Waste Project is writing a controversial new activist playbook — and it's unclear whether anyone can control the forces that it has helped to unleash.

"They jumped on the bandwagon of how I have become public enemy number one of the far right," Fauci told BuzzFeed News. "If you engage and try and push back on that, it very often only gives it legs. And then it becomes even worse of a problem."



White Coat Waste via YouTube / Via youtube.com

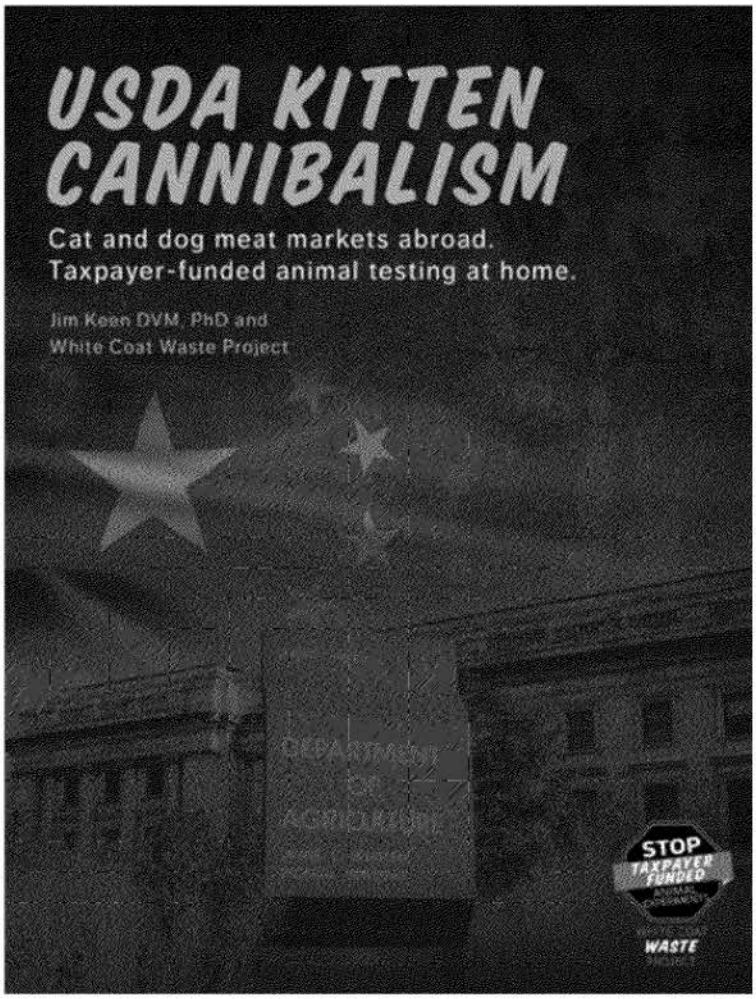
Anthony Bellotti

The White Coat Waste Project was formed in 2013 by Anthony Bellotti, a campaign consultant who over the years had worked for Republican candidates including Arnold Schwarzenegger and Lisa Murkowski, and on efforts to defund Planned Parenthood and Obamacare. But Bellotti's real passion had long been animal protection, he told BuzzFeed News — an interest forged at the age of 17 when he worked as a summer intern in a lab doing research on pigs, studying ways to extend the time they could be kept under anesthesia during

heart surgery. Bellotti said he was struck both by the animals' suffering and the "repugnant and callous attitude" of the experimenters. "It really made a mark on me," he said.
Poring over polling data, Bellotti could see that there was a big gap between Democrats and Republicans on the issue. Democrats were much more likely to support campaigns against animal experiments, which had often focused on corporate labs, and Republicans tended to back the research. So Bellotti crafted a message calculated to bring the missing Republicans on board, focusing on government spending. He avoids the label "animal rights," and has cast the White Coat Waste Project as a "taxpayer watchdog uniting liberty-lovers and animal-lovers."

In addition to mobilizing support from the political right, there was another reason to target government spending: Congress has the power to shut it down. "The goal isn't to change hearts and minds, it's to win the fight," Bellotti told BuzzFeed News. "We had to get to the root cause of the problem, which was the government spending."

The group didn't really take off until 2016, when Bellotti hired Justin Goodman, a former director of laboratory investigations with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, to head the White Coat Waste Project's advocacy efforts. Goodman started digging into government databases and filing FOIA requests to identify projects that the group could campaign to defund.
Even before the pandemic, the White Coat Waste Project scored some victories. An early campaign, launched in a report called "Spending to Death," highlighted experiments involving dogs in federal labs, including one studying the effects of blood transfusions in dogs with pneumonia in which some of the animals died. The group then turned up the heat on the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Richmond, Virginia, focusing on experiments into heart disease in which dogs were run on treadmills after their heart rhythms were disrupted using implanted pacemaker devices. The White Coast Waste Project's multiyear effort to shut down Veterans Affairs dog research eventually led Congress to restrict spending on the work and demand explicit approval from the secretary for veterans affairs for new dog experiments by the agency.



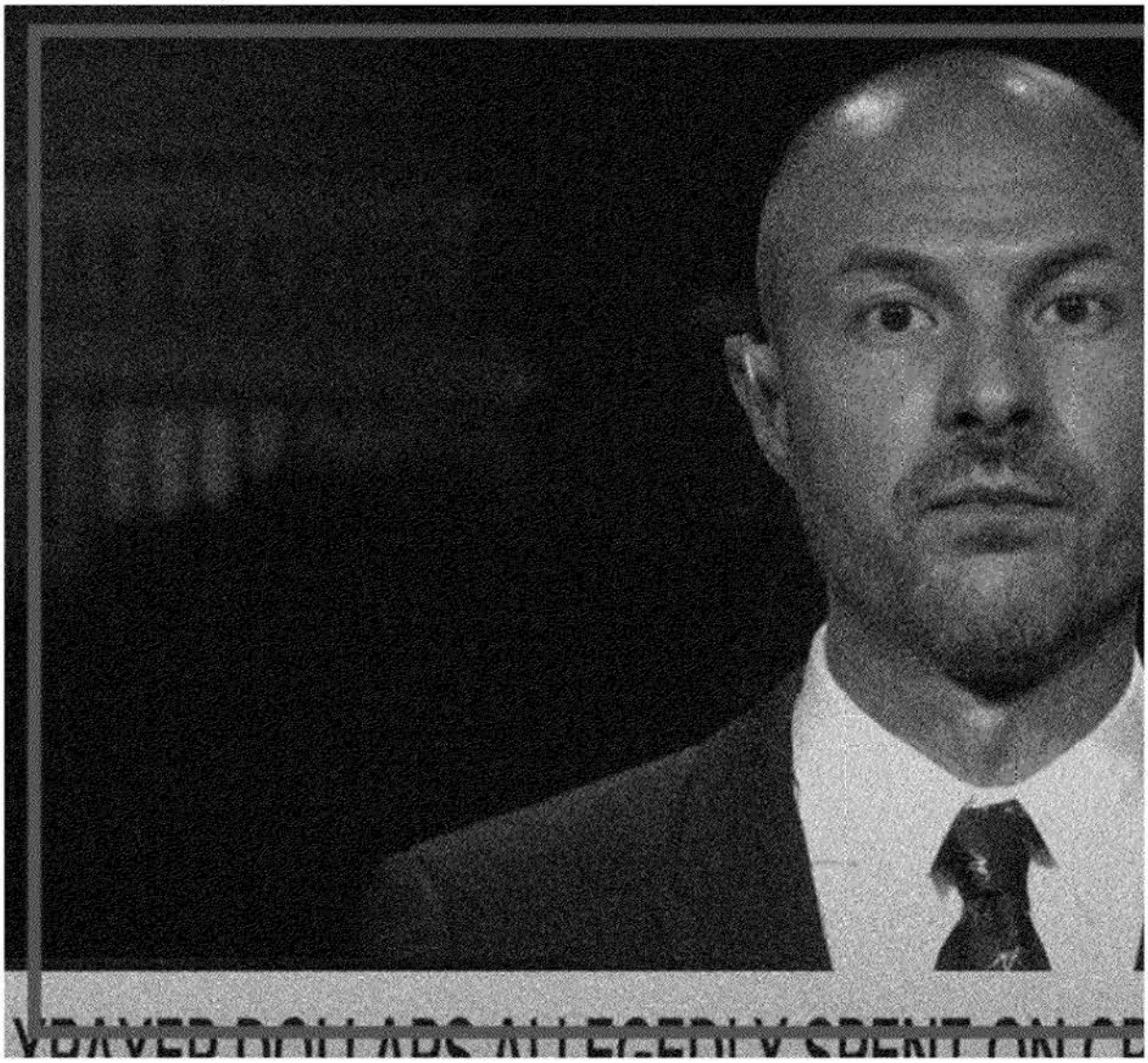
White Coat Waste

The cover of the White Coat Waste Project's 2019 report titled "USDA Kitten Cannibalism" But it was another campaign that sowed the seeds for the attack on EcoHealth and its collaboration with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. In 2018, the White Coat Waste Project began to target the US Department of Agriculture's Animal Parasitic Diseases Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, zeroing in on its research into toxoplasmosis, which can infect people exposed to cat feces and can cause brain or eye damage in those with compromised immune systems. The campaign culminated in a March 2019 White Coat Waste Project report called "USDA Kitten Cannibalism." Its cover featured the Chinese flag superimposed over a photo of USDA's headquarters in Washington, DC.

That framing drew on an experiment published in 2007 in which cats at the Maryland facility were fed meat from other cats purchased at a market in China to gauge its infectivity. Although the full report noted that these experiments were no longer being run, the association between this gruesome-sounding research and a nation seen as a major adversary to the US resonated with members of Congress from both parties and with the media. Within a couple of weeks, the USDA announced that the cat toxoplasmosis research would be shut down, stating that it had "reached its maturity."

After that win, Bellotti said that the White Coat Waste Project started to wonder about what else was being funded with taxpayer dollars outside of the US: "This is horrible stuff. What else is going on?" So Goodman started to look at research in foreign labs funded by the NIH, turning to a list of those given an "animal welfare assurance" needed to receive federal

dollars for animal experiments. He focused particularly on labs in the US's two main geopolitical rivals. "One of the things that struck us was that there were at the time 31 labs in Russia and China," Goodman told BuzzFeed News.



NewsNation via YouTube / Via youtube.com
Justin Goodman

Still, the White Coat Waste Project remained a small player in the world of animal activism: Its total revenue in 2019 of around $1.4 million was dwarfed by the $60 million pulled in by Goodman's former employer PETA. And initial efforts to interest the Trump administration in Goodman's findings on the NIH's overseas animal research didn't gain much traction. In January 2020, as reports emerged of a dangerous new virus spreading in China, the White Coat Waste Project had a meeting with White House officials. Goodman recalls specifically mentioning the Wuhan Institute of Virology, but the Trump staffers didn't bite. "We gave them a bunch of information and never heard back," Goodman said. "We got a cursory 'thank you.'"

At that time, Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, had never heard of the White Coat Waste Project and had no inkling of the storm that was brewing. "If you would

have told me that this chain of events was going to happen, I would have said, 'No way, this is absolutely impossible,'" he told BuzzFeed News.

Federal spending records show that EcoHealth has received almost $120 million from research grants and contracts since 2008, from agencies including USAID, the NIH, and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. EcoHealth's emergence as a major player in assessing pandemic threats, working with labs across the world, was fueled in part by the "near miss" with SARS, another respiratory disease caused by a coronavirus that emerged in southern China in 2002 and killed nearly 800 people before its spread was brought under control. Indeed, in late January 2020, officials in Fauci's institute who were preparing talking points for their boss, due to appear at a Jan. 28 press conference on the US response to the new coronavirus, described Daszak's research into the risks posed by bat coronaviruses in glowing terms. The EcoHealth group was "among the biggest players in coronavirus research," wrote David Morens, senior adviser to Fauci, in an email obtained through the BuzzFeed News FOIA lawsuit. "In short, we have on our team … probably the world's experts in these non-human coronaviruses."

> "If you would have told me that this chain of events was going to happen, I would have said, 'No way, this is absolutely impossible.'"

Fast-forward to April 2020, and the White Coat Waste Project's findings about NIH funding for the Wuhan Institute of Virology were starting to find a receptive audience. On April 11, the group succeeded in getting DailyMail.com, the website of a British tabloid newspaper with a large online readership in the US, to run the story: "REVEALED: U.S. Government Gave $3.7 Million Grant to Wuhan Lab at Center of Coronavirus Leak Scrutiny." ($3.7 million was actually the total sum paid over six years to EcoHealth, gleaned by Goodman from the NIH's grants database; in fact, less than $600,000 went to the Wuhan institute.) The White Coat Waste Project started reaching out to Republicans in Congress — and the NIH was soon reeling. By April 13, NIH officials were scrambling to respond to a request for information from the office of Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, which had forwarded an email from Goodman noting the press coverage of the White Coat Waste Project's "troubling find" about the Wuhan institute. In that email, Goodman noted: "We're working with Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL) and others on a sign-on letter about this."

Two days later, the alarm bells were ringing at the very top of the NIH. Lawrence Tabak, deputy to Francis Collins, then director of the NIH, wrote to his boss and Fauci, whose institute had awarded the grant, emphasizing in bold that the Trump White House was on the warpath: "The **WH has strongly embraced concerns** raised by Congressman Gaetz who is publicly criticizing HHS/NIH for funding the Wuhan laboratory's bat research."

"I reached Tony, he is now informed," Collins replied, confirming Fauci was in the loop.

Then, on April 17, a Newsmax reporter asked Trump about the project, repeating the false claim that $3.7 million had gone to the Wuhan institute. "We will end that grant very quickly," Trump said.

Michael Lauer, head of the NIH Office of Extramural Research, part of Collins' central command, then took control. On April 19, Lauer wrote to inform EcoHealth that NIH was looking to suspend the Wuhan institute from receiving federal funds. Other spending could

continue, but EcoHealth should send no more money to China. In an April 21 email, Daszak told Lauer that since the grant was renewed for a second five-year term in July 2019, no funds had gone to Wuhan "nor has any contract been signed."

But three days later, NIH terminated the entire grant, for "convenience." In a one-page letter to EcoHealth on April 24, Lauer wrote: "At this time, NIH does not believe that the current project outcomes align with the program goals and agency priorities."

Daszak was stunned. So too were many other scientists, disturbed that research that had been exceptionally highly rated in peer review, and which was directly related to the pandemic, could be canceled at a stroke. On May 21, 77 US Nobel Prize winners in science wrote to NIH director Collins and Alex Azar, secretary of health and human services, protesting the decision and describing the explanation given by Lauer about the NIH's priorities as "preposterous under the circumstances."

EcoHealth's response came on the day after the Nobelists' letter, when the group's pro bono lawyer wrote to Lauer contending that the NIH didn't have the legal authority to terminate a research grant in this way, without cause. The letter also argued that EcoHealth's goals were virtually identical to those laid out in the NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research, released the day before the grant termination.

Later, in a congressional hearing, Fauci was asked why the grant was terminated. "It was canceled because the NIH was told to cancel it," he told the House Energy and Commerce Committee on June 23, 2020. "We got it from the highest office of the president: 'Cancel that grant,'" Fauci confirmed to BuzzFeed News.

The backlash against Lauer's initial letter seemed to prompt a rethink from the NIH. As first reported by the Wall Street Journal, Lauer came back to EcoHealth with a second letter on July 8. Abandoning the explanation about the NIH's priorities, Lauer wrote that the grant was reinstated, but immediately suspended because of concerns about biosafety at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. That tied the suspension directly to the lab leak theory, which posits that the pandemic may have started with the accidental release of a virus being studied in the lab, perhaps through a worker who became infected.

"We have concerns that WIV has not satisfied safety requirements under the award, and that EcoHealth Alliance has not satisfied its obligations to monitor the activities of its subrecipient to ensure compliance," Lauer wrote.

To lift that suspension, EcoHealth would have to respond to seven requests for information and materials. They included: "EcoHealth Alliance must arrange for WIV to submit to an outside inspection team charged to review the lab facilities and lab records, with specific attention to addressing the question of whether WIV staff had SARS-CoV-2 in their possession prior to December 2019." There was no way a US nonprofit could get the Chinese authorities to agree to such a request: Even the WHO team, including Daszak, that later visited the institute in February 2021 as part of its study of the origins of COVID-19 didn't get this unfettered access.

With Lauer's second letter, the grant entered a state of limbo from which it has yet to emerge — and seems unlikely to.



Hector Retamal / AFP via Getty Images

The Wuhan Institute of Virology on Feb. 3, 2021

Since then, Republicans in Congress have leaned hard into the lab leak theory and the related idea that the NIH funded EcoHealth and the Wuhan institute to conduct "gain-of-function" research — when scientists deliberately make viruses more dangerous in order to study pandemic risks. Internal correspondence obtained by BuzzFeed News shows NIH officials discussing at length how to respond to demands for information from congressional Republicans about the agency's funding for EcoHealth and the Wuhan institute.

The White Coat Waste Project once again entered the fray. In November 2021, it released 378 pages of documents obtained through FOIA, including a back-and-forth in 2016 between Daszak and two NIAID officials. Those officials were concerned that some experiments under EcoHealth's collaboration with the Wuhan institute might breach a pause the US government had imposed on gain-of-function work that could create a potentially pandemic

virus. The experiments involved creating "chimeric" coronaviruses, engineered to combine genetic sequences from different viruses sampled from the wild.

Some proposed experiments involved chimeras based on the virus that causes MERS, a respiratory disease that first showed up in Saudi Arabia in 2012 and has since killed almost 900 people. EcoHealth wanted to replace the MERS virus's "spike" protein, used to enter animal or human cells, with those from these new viruses, to see whether they were also able to latch onto a molecule on cell surfaces targeted by the MERS virus. The NIAID officials also wanted to know more about two chimeras that had already been made, in which the genes for spike proteins from newly discovered bat coronaviruses had been put into another bat coronavirus called WIV1, named after the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

The NIAID officials accepted Daszak's explanation that these experiments didn't meet the US government's definition of gain-of-function research: He had argued that there was no reason to suppose the chimeric viruses would be any more dangerous than the viruses behind MERS and SARS. So the NIAID allowed the research to continue.

Daszak responded: "This is terrific! We are very happy to hear that our Gain of Function research funding pause has been lifted." The White Coat Waste Project later claimed that it had caught Daszak "red-handed, admitting to gain-of-function research" — omitting the context that this quote was part of an exchange in which he had argued that the research didn't meet the US government's definition of that term.

"We'll have to agree to disagree here," Goodman said, when BuzzFeed News questioned this claim. "We're not interested in debating the interpretation of these emails or the definition of gain-of-function. We're only interested in exposing and ending wasteful government spending on dangerous animal experiments."

Emails and other documents obtained by BuzzFeed News show that the chimera experiments had already been deepening EcoHealth's problems, as Lauer and other NIH officials looked for evidence that EcoHealth had breached the terms and conditions of its grant.

> "Because [Fauci] became a household name as the pandemic progressed, sure, it created an opportunity to go after him for animal testing in a way that would really make waves."

A heavily redacted series of emails from May 2021 centers on the July 2016 letter from the NIAID that had given EcoHealth permission to resume the chimera work. Accepting a suggestion made by Daszak himself, it stated that if any of the chimeric viruses showed unexpectedly rapid growth, he would "immediately stop all experiments with these viruses" and provide NIAID officials with information about the unexpected outcomes. Shortly after receiving the letter, Lauer sent it on to a senior attorney with the Department of Health and Human Services, assigned to the NIH, changing the subject line on the email thread to "Gift ."

Daszak's problem was that the NIH determined that an experiment described in annual progress reports for the grant indicated that one of these viruses had made mice engineered to carry the human receptor targeted by SARS-like viruses sicker than expected and showed

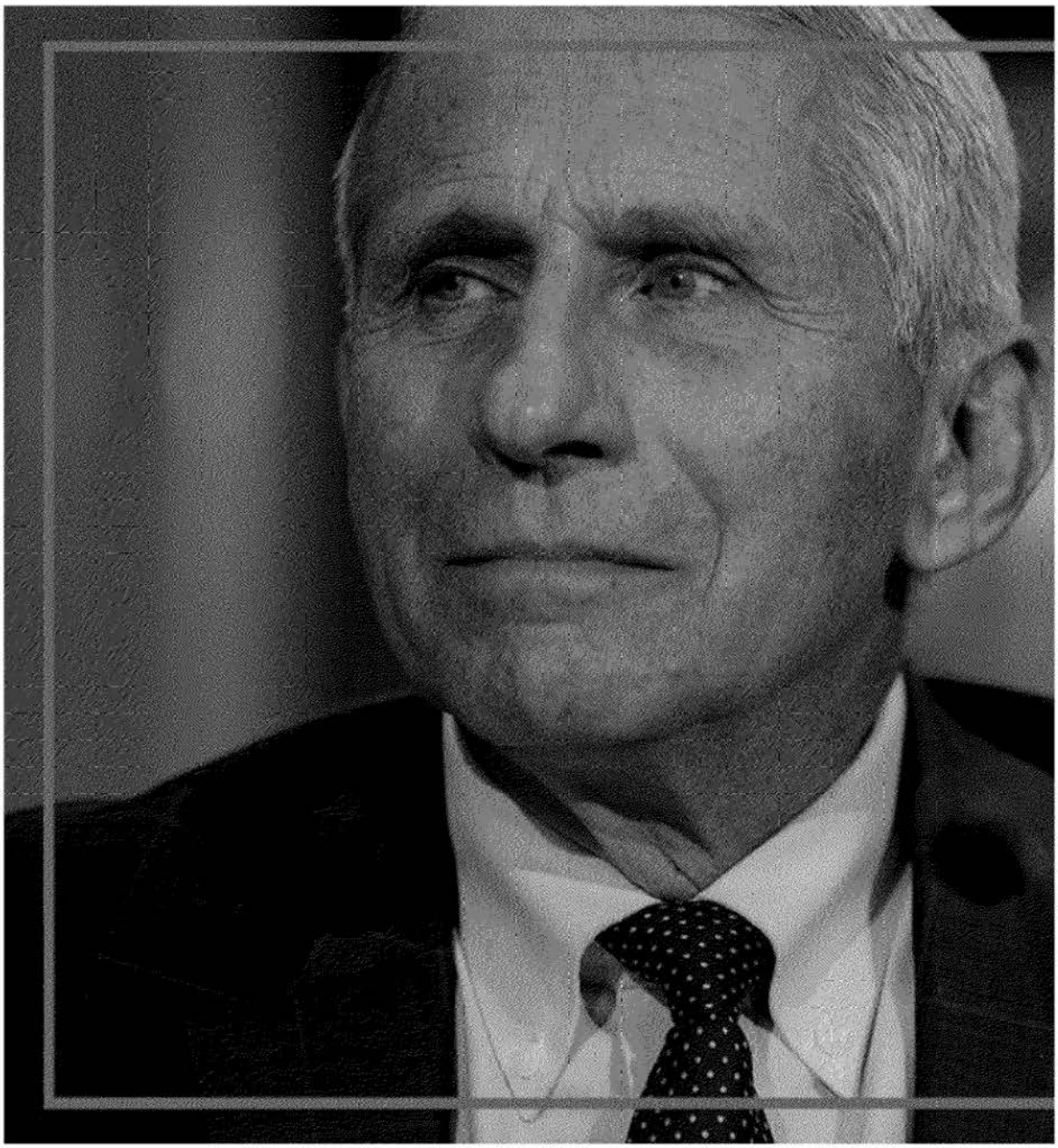
signs of rapid growth. "EcoHealth failed to report this finding right away," NIH deputy director Tabak later wrote in an October 2021 letter to James Comer, the ranking Republican member on the House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform.

None of this amounts to a smoking gun linking EcoHealth and the Wuhan institute to the origins of COVID, as the viruses involved were very different to SARS-CoV-2. And in a letter to Lauer and Tabak after the latter's communication with Comer, Daszak contested the conclusion that the experiment did show rapid viral growth and argued that EcoHealth had complied with its reporting requirements.

But it gave Lauer evidence that he was looking for. EcoHealth is now under audit from the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services, an independent watchdog that monitors fraud, waste, and other problems, as part of a review of the NIH and "selected grantees" initiated on June 11, 2021. Documents received by BuzzFeed News through its FOIA lawsuit, including a timeline of events put together by Lauer dated June 13, 2021, indicate that the suggestion for an OIG audit of EcoHealth came from the NIH, just days after Lauer sent his "Gift" email.

The NIH declined to discuss Lauer's email and timeline, saying in a statement: "NIH doesn't comment on internal deliberation of grant awards."

In December 2021, the White Coat Waste Project claimed a win from its activism around the EcoHealth grant when President Joe Biden signed the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act into law. It contained specific wording blocking the Department of Defense — which over the years has provided almost $40 million to EcoHealth — from supporting the nonprofit's research in China.



Stefani Reynolds / POOL / AFP via Getty Images
Anthony Fauci

The gain-of-function fight had also intensified the pressure on Fauci, who was by now a hate figure for many on the political right. In November 2021, he and Kentucky Republican Sen. Rand Paul clashed angrily in a Senate hearing, as Paul accused Fauci of changing the definition of gain-of-function and funding dangerous research in Wuhan. "He is egregiously incorrect," Fauci responded. In January, they locked horns in another hearing, featuring an extraordinary exchange in which Fauci accused Paul of jeopardizing his personal safety for political gain.

"What happens when he gets out and accuses me of things that are completely untrue is that all of a sudden that kindles the crazies out there, and I have threats upon my life, harassment

of my family and my children," Fauci said.

By the time of these acrimonious exchanges, the White Coat Waste Project had embarked on another campaign that made Fauci its main focus. In July 2021, the White Coat Waste Project launched its "BeagleGate" campaign, highlighting research on dogs funded by the NIAID, with a blog post headlined: "WCW Exposé: Fauci Spent $424K on Beagle Experiments, Dogs Bitten to Death by Flies."

The next month, the White Coat Waste Project accused Fauci of funding "beagle torture" in Tunisia, referring to a paper published in July 2021 investigating whether the biting sand flies that spread visceral leishmaniasis, a potentially fatal disease, preferred to feed on dogs already infected with the parasites that cause the condition.

The story really took off on Oct. 24, 2021, when 24 members of Congress from both parties, led by Rep. Nancy Mace, a Republican from South Carolina, wrote to Fauci protesting "costly, cruel, and unnecessary taxpayer-funded experiments on dogs." Fauci's nemesis, Rand Paul, wasn't among the signatories, but weighed in with a tweet touting the White Coat Waste Project's original blog post:

The Washington Post later reported that Fauci's office received 3,600 calls in 36 hours, causing his assistant to stop answering the phone for two weeks. The newspaper linked the onslaught to "a campaign by a little-known animal rights group called the White Coat Waste Project."

The NIAID tried to address the controversy, stating that it didn't actually fund the Tunisian beagle research paper — which in November 2021 was corrected to remove reference to a grant from the institute, which had been awarded to a researcher at Ohio State University for related work. "NIAID was listed as a courtesy because it had supported other leishmaniasis research in the past," a spokesperson for the university told BuzzFeed News. But that correction seemed only to give the White Coat Waste Project more ammunition. "Once again…color us unconvinced," it wrote in a later blog post disputing the NIAID's denial of funding the work.

The White Coat Waste Project's critics argue that its demonization of Fauci, seemingly calculated to channel existing right-wing anger with the government scientist seen as the public face of mask and COVID vaccine mandates, has taken animal activism into scary territory.

"They take a tiny sliver of truth, and then around that they build this highly emotional somewhat fictional narrative to build their case," Jim Newman, director of strategic communications with Americans for Medical Progress, which argues that animal experiments are essential to develop new treatments and vaccines, told BuzzFeed News. Animal activists have long been accused of cherry-picking facts and ignoring the goals of research to present animal experiments in the worst possible light. But portraying individuals as cruel villains in the current febrile political climate is "a very dangerous direction to be headed," Newman said.

"Of course, the pro-animal experimentation lobby hates that we hold government bosses accountable for funneling tax dollars to cruel and wasteful animal tests," Goodman said. "We generally don't run campaigns targeting individual taxpayer-funded animal experimenters to respect their privacy and because we question the approach's effectiveness, but federal agency bosses are public figures and fair game."

Threats to Fauci's life, which began well before the White Coat Waste Project's BeagleGate campaign, have been widely documented. Daszak, too, has faced security scares, including an incident in August 2020 when an envelope containing a mysterious white powder

reportedly turned up at his home. "I get death threats regularly and we get crank calls at home trying to keep us awake at night," Daszak told BuzzFeed News.

The White Coat Waste Project stresses that it opposes violence and issued a statement in October 2021 saying it had no quarrel with Fauci over his advice on COVID policies. "You could stand shoulder-to-shoulder with him on COVID response and go toe-to-toe with him on other issues," said Goodman, who makes no apology for the group's decision to make Fauci the focus of the BeagleGate campaign. "Because he became a household name as the pandemic progressed, sure, it created an opportunity to go after him for animal testing in a way that would really make waves."

As the White Coat Waste Project has seized its opportunities and gained a higher public profile, the group has itself come under scrutiny. In February, the Campaign for Accountability filed a complaint with the IRS and the Federal Election Commission, alleging that the White Coat Waste Project had coordinated with the White Coat Waste Political Action Committee, founded in 2017, in breach of regulations prohibiting tax-exempt nonprofits from engaging in political campaign activities.

In an interview with BuzzFeed News, Bellotti declined to answer questions about the political action committee, which he said was a separate organization. Goodman later sent a statement describing the Campaign for Accountability's complaint as a "politically-motivated, baseless, and frivolous attack," noting: "The WCW Project *does not* fund activities of the distinct, all-volunteer WCW PAC."

Despite the partisan dynamics that have driven the White Coat Waste Project's campaign against funding for the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Bellotti told BuzzFeed News that his group's goal remains finding ways to unite Democrats and Republicans on defunding animal experiments backed by the US government. "We didn't know when we launched this that it would get partisan in the way it did," he said.

The White Coat Waste Project's latest campaign, again tapping into concern about US taxpayer dollars going to the nation's most powerful adversaries, might just have broader political appeal. Less than a week after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it published a new blog post: "Breaking: WCW Discovers NIH Pays For Cruel Kitten Experiments…in Russia!" •

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Wed, 6 Jul 2022 10:36:54 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 6 Jul 2022 10:34:09 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Covid leaked from an AMERICAN lab, claims top US professor Jeffrey Sachs | Daily Mail Online
From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
To: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6) Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) Rich Roberts (b)(6)

Really shameful, both the BS reporting and Jeff Sachs desire to jump on this awful bandwagon. This will just lead to more confusion and more politics. China's Minister for Foreign Affairs, no less, has already made public statements about this specific video clip of Jeff Sachs. He points to US hypocrisy in accusing China of releasing a virus, when people like Jeff Sachs believe that either the US is involved or in fact the origin.

This is what happens when someone who doesn't understand the biological processes involved in disease emergence is hijacked by a group of politically-motivated ne'er-do-wells and encouraged to make public statements based on their lack of understanding.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: (b)(6)

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 3:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) David Morens < (b)(6) ; Gerald T Keusch (b)(6) >; Jeffrey Sturchio (b)(6) ; Rich Roberts < (b)(6)
Subject: Covid leaked from an AMERICAN lab, claims top US professor Jeffrey Sachs | Daily Mail Online

Speechless

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-10980715/Covid-leaked-AMERICAN-lab-claims-professor-Jeffrey-Sachs.html

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

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iPhone

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Date: Sun, 6 Mar 2022 10:41:14 PM -0500
Sent: Sun, 6 Mar 2022 10:41:07 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Music from my relatives in Ukraine
From: "Roberts, Rich" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; David Morens (b)(6)
CC: Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;
Attachments: Ukraine appeal - 181.pdf

Peter:

Your brother is a very talented violinist! Thanks for sharing. The current situation is heartbreaking and I think we all wish that more could be done to help.

In case you were not aware, Roald Hoffmann and I have organized a Nobel Laureates appeal for peace in Ukraine. The appeal is attached and the current list of signees (currently 181) can be found at https://nlcampaigns.org/ukraine.html Please circulate as you see fit, but especially to scientists in Russia, Ukraine and China.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 9:03 PM
To: David Morens (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: Music from my relatives in Ukraine

EXTERNAL SENDER

David – I'm very glad you spoke with Betsy McKay. Your talk of the Russian classics spurred me to share the following clips with you all. My father, who was Ukrainian, was conscripted by the Nazis when they invaded Ukraine early in WW2. He managed to escape, cross the frontline and hand himself over to the British, came to the UK as a prisoner of war, and eventually became a UK citizen and married by mom, who was English. My dad was very musical – taught me classical guitar, spoke 7 languages, played many instruments and sang in a Ukrainian choir in the UK. My younger brother became an opera singer and my dad's brother who stayed in Ukraine became a leading viola player and head of the Lviv Conservatory. We still have a lot of relatives in Ukraine, almost all of whom are professional musicians – my cousins are conductors, composers, opera singers. Their children are concert pianists, viola players, singers. Sadly, as of last week, they are now refugees and soldiers.

Here is my nephew Zenon, playing viola on these two youtube clips. He took up a rifle in 2014 during the Russian incursion in the East, then returned to performing. Last week he volunteered again, and is now fighting on the frontline North of Kyiv again – he was alive as of yesterday.
Here he is playing Bach: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbwzhEFiJMk
And a really technical piece "Gypsy Airs" by Sarasate: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0v8Jw5gbgQ

Here is his sister, my niece Sofiya, playing piano. She managed to get out on Day 1 of the invasion, escape over to Hungary and is now safely in Sweden with my brother's family: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbruWIGee3k

I also wanted to share this beautiful piece of Ukrainian music. It's called "Chuyesh Brati myi" or "Listen, my brother". I first heard this when we buried my father in Manchester and the remaining members of the choir he conducted at the time gathered around his graveside as we lowered him in and sang this in their classical Ukrainian voices. The song famously speaks of the cranes flying high in the sky as they return from their migration to their homeland near the Dniepr River. You can hear the choir singing the sound of the cranes "Cru, Cru, Cru!". The words say "Listen my brother to the sound of the cranes, Cru, Cru, Cru, as they return to their homeland. Myself, I shall die in this foreign land, never to see my homeland again"….
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRAUrKtu7ZM

Hope you enjoy these snapshots, and hope you're as moved as I always am with the last piece.

We're in touch with the rest of the family every day via Facebook and mobile phone. They're in the West of Ukraine and safe for now, but won't evacuate despite what looks clearly like a repetition of a Syria or Grozny type of annihilation, even my neice who has a 4 year old daughter – we're trying to persuade them to get out every day…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, March 3, 2022 9:10 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Story in the Intercept today

Peter, remember that the truth is on your side. Don't let anyone make you hide

I spoke to Betsy McKay of WSJ for 1 1/2 hours Tue. We totally bonded for the first half hour and after that had a good chat in which i really let it all hang out, including telling her that guys like Ebright were evil pieces of shit not to be listened to. Well, i didn't put it that way but i did spell it out to her that spenting even 1 second in Ebrightland was false equivalency

When she called i had taken the afternoon off for a mental heslth break and, with a double martini, was listening to Shostokovich's 13th symphony, Babi Yar, on my stereo. I mentioned that, and she gushed that she majored in Russian culture, lived in Moscow for 10 years, loved Shostokovich, and knew all about Babi Yar and Ukranian history. We spend the next 20 minutes discussing all the stuff I read as a kid like Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, and all the music of the "Mighty Handful", especially Rimsky and Mussorgsky. (It's on my bucket list to see all 17 Rimsky operas live or on DVD (some are not performed and not available on recordings), and i may be one of the few people in the world to have heard Mussorgsky's first opera Zhenit'ba (The Marriage), never performed live but privately recorded around 1950). I also told her of my work in Russia and experiences in Siberia.

Bottom line we hit it off, we spoke about you and EHA and especially the NIH situation. Later she sent me Russian news items about the recent Rusdian trashing of the Babi Yar memorial outside Kyiv. So.... I hope it will be a good piece she does, with my comments strictly on background.

I keep wondering how long itwill be until even the evil twits will realize that "there is no there there" and they are just embarrassing themselves. In the meantime, I say keep pushing with the knowledge and confidence that right is on your side. This too shall pass, and Dom Perignon will flow to the righteous. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Mar 3, 2022, at 20:32, Peter Daszak (b)(6) wrote:

Responding to your email below David, you're right about the best defense being offense. I end up going through a process with these attacks. First day I feel like giving up on science. Then after a while, sometimes a few days of moping around, I get my aggression back and start trying to find ways to counter. As a strategy, I'm gradually talking to a few of the nastier journalists who have been attacking us, and I'm working on approaching some of the Republicans who are trying to defund us, and will have a better chance of doing that if they win the mid-terms.

First attempt came this week when *The Intercept* told us they were planning a story and sent a list of ridiculous questions about some typos in our reports on the terminated R01 – the issues that the House E&C Republicans sent to NIH last week (attached). *The Intercept* has filed FoIAs on our NIH grants back to 2001 and is currently in court to challenge NIH about handing over information on FoIA requests. Their play is to file a story every time Republicans on the Hill rip into EcoHealth or NIH then report in a dramatic way without our side of the story, usually quoting Ebright and Larry Gostin. I spent an hour and a half answering their questions on zoom and explaining how every allegation levelled at EHA about our NIH work can be answered by understanding the process of doing normal science. They've now put a story out that is less damaging than we believe it would have been, and has them turning their ire a bit more onto NIH O/D rather than us – not great for that to happen, but better than just lots of innuendo about our motives. There's still plenty of mudslinging particularly from Ebright who believes the typos in our report represent "Serious violations". The story's here: https://theintercept.com/2022/03/03/wuhan- coronavirus-research-nih-ecohealth/

I'm also working with Jon Cohen (Science) and Betsy McKay (WSJ) to send them every document we receive from NIH O/D and our responses. Both seem to be building up to doing a story and both recognize that this is a load of garbage being churned up for political purposes.

Amusingly, I sent Jon Cohen the Intercept story and he said it broke the ultimate rule of journalism – it was too boring to reach the end.

By the way David – I removed Holly Irving from the email chain because it's a NIAID address and can be FoIA'd

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: David Morens (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 4:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6)
Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) Holly Irving [E] (b)(6)
Subject: Re: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

Peter and colleagues, this is all really horrible, but what else is new? I once advised you to read the Arthur Miller play The Crucible (or see the great film) and now i add: read the transcript of the trial of Jeanne d'Arc..... In terms of demagoguery and evil there is nothing new under the sun, and there will always be people who take pleasure in trying to destroy people who are their betters, especially their moral betters....

It will be small consolation to hear the following but in my face to face meeting with Tony this morning, he once again brought up, as he usually does, your plight (Peter) and bemoaned all the crap he and you and others are ensnared in. He seems not to believe it is all happening and today was particularly upset about continued drum beating about lab leaks, specifically mentioning one I won't name whose father is a noted NIH virologist. I won't repeat the expletives we exchanged. I am beginning to feel more and more like a therapist lately.... He doesn't know how to stop this, nor do I.

I have said this before, and you all have disagreed, maybe you are right, probably u are, but i sometimes think the best defense is a good offense. That's what we tried to do in our COVID origin paper in spring 2020, but obviously few listened. Since the facts are on our side, and since there is zero proof of a lab leak or engineering, it's always possible to ask the assholes: prove it or shut up. That they have no proof and no evidence, they have an Achilles heel that can be struck.

If this was about a person rather than a scientific fact, these guys would be in court for slander

Just keep hanging in there. I wish there was more i can do, and, if i get cut lose from NIH, there may be

david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Feb 24, 2022, at 16:00, Peter Daszak (b)(6) > wrote:

I'm glad you'll mention this to Randy. These particular politicians are willing to cast aspersions on anyone's character for political gain.

I'm also glad you're going to decline to sign the letter you attached. It seems Richard Ebright's dream is to have me up on the stand under oath with him doing the questioning. Of course, none of this would get to the bottom of anything, and it would just serve to drive more politics in the way of doing science.

The truth of all of this is that there is no real debate over the origins. A lab leak is a possible scenario, but extremely unlikely based on the zero evidence put forward by anyone. On the other hand, we now have 11 peer-reviewed or under-review papers (and counting) that point towards the natural origins. I've listed them out in the attached doc, as well as the lab leak papers I could find (all of which are opinion pieces of non-peer-reviewed).

The real debate is purely political - Republicans using this as a way to target NIH and just regurgitating fact-free innuendo-filled conspiracies with EcoHealth's work at the center. Richard Ebright, I hear, is working with Rand Paul and others to feed them these half-baked ideas and make them sound science-y enough to convince the public.

I can hear the villagers sharpening their pitchforks....

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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-----Original Message-----
From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: FW: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

Peter:

Sorry to hear about the latest attacks. Please don't let them get you down. Just recognize the loonies who send them for what they are.

I'll let Randy Schekman know he was included too. It is sad to see the lengths that people will go to for the sake of political points. Witness the latest nonsense in Ukraine.

I attach a document I just received from Ebright. Needless to say I won't be signing, but I hope to convince some others not to also.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----
From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Bloom, Barry R. (b)(6); Michael Imperiale (b)(6) >; Silja Vöneky (b)(6) mooc demic (b)(6) Nick Evans (b)(6) >; Michael Osterholm (b)(6) Lone Simonsen (b)(6) Edward Hammond (b)(6) >; David N. Fisman (b)(6) >; Arturo Casadevall (b)(6) >; Amir Attaran (b)(6) >; Alison Galvani (b)(6) >; Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Peter Hale (b)(6) >; Lipsitch, Marc (b)(6) >; David Relman (b)(6) >; (b)(6); Richard H. Ebright (b)(6) >

Cc: Laura H. Kahn (b)(6)
Subject: open letter: United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and policy specialists

EXTERNAL SENDER

All--I am writing to you as founding members of the Cambridge Working Group,

Dr. Laura Kahn of Princeton has prepared an open letter entitled "United States and the investigation of COVID origin—letter from American scientists and science policy specialists" (see attached).

If you would like to sign the letter, please reply to Dr. Kahn at (b)(6) or to me at (b)(6) with your name and current affiliation.

Thank you in advance.

RHE

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Date: Thu, 5 May 2022 10:39:59 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 5 May 2022 10:39:56 PM -0400
Subject: RE: More grist to the mill...
From: "Roberts, Rich" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) >; Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >;

Peter:

I will try to talk to her at some point, but I would really like to get a plan together first. While a large petition/statement with lots of signatures might be a good start, it is really the actions after that, which are likely to be key.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: Peter Daszak (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 8:41 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6) Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6) Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6) David Morens (b)(6) >; Aleksei Chmura (b)(6) >
Subject: More grist to the mill...

EXTERNAL SENDER

Re. your conversation with Marcia Nutt – she doesn't seem to understand exactly what you're proposing yet, but I really hope they will see this as more than just one scientist under a cloud of accusations. The NAM issue is about politicians going full-on against scientific research based on nothing more than a false narrative and conspiracy theory.

Just to add to your thoughts on how this is an attack on science, I read tonight that, incredibly, the Missouri Attorney General has sued Pres. Biden, Jen. Psaki, Anthony Fauci, NIAID, CDC and others for encouraging Facebook to block misinformation around Hunter Biden's laptop and the COVID-19 origins lab leak theory.

The lawsuit is here: https://ago.mo.gov/docs/default-source/press-releases/mo-la-v-biden-filed-petition.pdf?sfvrsn=3d20bca5_2

I don't know if I told you, but we are already fighting one lawsuit that accuses EcoHealth, me and my wife (!) of starting COVID and causing the covid disease that the lawyer who's suing us contracted:
https://www.america-times.com/batra-v-daszak-ecohealth-et-al-lawsuit-complaint-amended/

While we just missed being dragged into this new lawsuit, we do get a mention on page 18:

Clause 73 (page 18): *"On information and belief, Defendant Dr. Anthony Fauci, A senior federal government official, coordinating with others, orchestrated a campaign to discredit the lab-leak hypothesis in early 2020. As director of NIAID, Dr. Fauci had funded had funded risky "gain-of-function" research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology through intermediaries such as EcoHealth Alliance, headed by Dr. Peter Daszak. Thus, if the lab-leak theory were established, Dr. Fauci and Dr. Daszak could be potentially implicated in funding the research on viruses that caused the COVID-19 pandemic and killed millions of people worldwide."*

I believe this literally qualifies as an attack on science Rich.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 5:35 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T (b)(6); Hotez, Peter Jay (b)(6); Peter Daszak (b)(6)>; David Morens (b)(6); Aleksei Chmura (b)(6)
Subject: comments?

Jerry et al:

At least Marcia is engaged. Let's come up with a plan to pursue this.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
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USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: McNutt, Marcia K. (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 4:38 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Did you see this?

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich,

I have seen over the years many campaigns to try to get support for science. Some have failed, some have been successful.

The ones that failed were organized by research organizations, scientific societies, and scientists. They failed because the suggested to the intended audience that scientists were just another special interest group, pleading their own case for legitimacy and respect.

The ones that succeeded were organized by industry, the military, federal, state, and local leaders. They succeeded because these

groups could articulate the benefits to the economy and to societal well being from science. No one viewed this as a special interest maneuver.

Do you have different experiences?

Marcia

NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS
Dr. Marcia K McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Mailing Address | Physical location:
500 Fifth Street NW | 2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001 | Washington, DC 20418
(b)(6) (office) (b)(6) (cell)
NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS

On May 5, 2022, at 1:14 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Marcia:

I was not thinking of taking on this fringe group, precisely because of the "megaphone" effect. I was thinking of some much more general campaign throughout the US academic community to support science. I don't yet have a specific plan, but a strong statement from University Presidents, heads of scientific societies, Nobel Laureates etc. and a campaign to enlist ALL scientists to sign on might attract a lot of signatures and some good publicity. At the moment my thoughts are still forming, but I am becoming increasingly alarmed by the attacks and the lack of a clear response from our colleagues.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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USA
Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: McNutt, Marcia K. (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 3:59 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Did you see this?

EXTERNAL SENDER

The NAS is very involved in defending science. I'm just not sure what you want the NAS to do. If we take on White Coat Waste head on, we effectively give them a bigger megaphone for their views. $350M organizations don't come out ahead when they call out $1M organizations.

NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS
Dr. Marcia K McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Mailing Address | Physical location:
500 Fifth Street NW | 2101 Constitution Avenue NW
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NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS

On May 5, 2022, at 12:44 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Marcia:

Do I take your response to indicate that you don't think the NAS would get involved in helping to defend science?

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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USA
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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: McNutt, Marcia K (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 12:21 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Did you see this?

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear Rich,

The NASEM does have a number of reports on the use of animals in research already. I am not sure that what the White Coat Waste group is doing is actually illegal, and they seem to be a small player relative to PETA.

Honestly, I find it entirely two-faced that this group would enlist Republican congressmen to support animal welfare in research, when those same legislators are pushing for round ups of wild horses using helicopters so that ranchers can run more head of beef. At least laboratory animals are treated with anesthetic and their use is serving a purpose to advance human health. The same cannot be said for the wild horse roundups.

NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS
Dr. Marcia K McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Mailing Address | Physical location:
500 Fifth Street NW | 2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001 | Washington, DC 20418
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NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS

On May 5, 2022, at 8:48 AM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Marcia:

I don't know if you have seen this, but I am sure you are aware of the general problem.

https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/peteraldhous/white- coat-waste-anthony-fauci-nih-ecohealth-alliance-lab

It is illustrative of a very disturbing trend of constant attacks on science by a lot of Republicans in Congress. I have been following closely the attacks on Peter Daszak at EcoHealth Alliance. I organized the initial

support for him from US Nobel Laureate scientists. Things are just getting worse and I think it is high time we organized our scientific colleagues to counter this egregious behaviour. I was very disappointed that Victor Dzau didn't challenge the Republican efforts to ask the NAM to investigate Peter Daszak.

I welcome your thoughts on whether you feel this is something the National Academies should get involved in. I feel our very future is at stake here.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b)(6)

From: McNutt, Marcia K. (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 4:36 PM
To: Roberts, Rich (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Nobel Appeal on Ukraine

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks, Rich. I'm seeing if our International Secretary has the capacity to send this out.
COVID Advisory: I am more likely to be in CA (Pacific time) than DC (Eastern time)
NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS
Dr. Marcia K McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Mailing Address | Physical location:
500 Fifth Street NW | 2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001 | Washington, DC 20418
(b)(6) (office) (b)(6) (cell)
NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS

On Mar 1, 2022, at 1:06 PM, Roberts, Rich (b)(6) wrote:

Dear Marcia:

We have just launched a Nobel appeal for Peace between Russia and Ukraine. The text is attached. As of this writing we have 159 Nobel Laureates signed up, but a current list that will be regularly updated is available at https://nlcampaigns.org/ukraine.html

It would be greatly appreciated if you could advertise this as widely as possible. We are especially keen to make sure it reaches scientists in Russia, Ukraine and around the world. We also hope that China will take the message to heart and not try to ameliorate the sanctions that have been imposed on Russia.

Thanks for any help you can provide.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

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Tel: (b)(6)
Fax: (978) 412 9910
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<Appeal 3-1-22.pdf><159 Nobel Laureates.docx>

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Date: Mon, 4 Jan 2021 12:49:35 PM -0500
Sent: Mon, 4 Jan 2021 12:50:30 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Pandemic news David Rehman
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Thanks for the update. David Relman's comments were once again quoted by the NY Post and the Daily Mail yesterday in inflammatory garbage pieces designed to undermine the WHO team's efforts. Just unfortunate but completely predictable – he sought to write an opinion piece with the sole purpose of putting himself in the front of this BS controversy..I believe so he can 'heroically' 'help' to fix it down the line.

In the meantime I'm packing for my trip to Singapore tonight, then Wuhan tomorrow. Will send you both postcards…

If you'd like me to bring you back something, let me know. I'll be visiting a certain seafood market and can bring back some dried jellyfish if you like?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 11:40 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: FW: Pandemic news David Rehman



David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service

MORENS_SUBPOENA_005588
MORENS_NIH_013773
REL0000481072

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- [b6]

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From: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 11:29 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]
Subject: FW: Pandemic news David Rehman

fyi

From: Aileen Marty [b6]
Date: Monday, January 4, 2021 at 10:57 AM
To: Robert McCreight <[b6], Elin Gursky <[b6], Gerald Parker <[b6] Syra Madad <[b6], Don Donahue <[b6] STEVE CUNNION [b6]>, Jim Terbush <[b6] Andrew Ambler <[b6] <[b6], Peter Biggins <[b6], "Laura H. Kahn" <[b6] Kavita Berger [b6] Diane DiEuliis [b6], Kip Thomas [b6] Denise Baken [b6]>, Stephen Goldsmith <[b6] "Stiefel, David - OHS, Washington, DC" [b6]
Cc: Nicholas Eftimiades [b6], Rob Spalding [b6] Eneida Roldan <[b6] "Taubenberger, Jeffrey (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>, Mary Jo Trepka [b6]>, "Lednicky,John [b6]
Subject: RE: Pandemic news David Rehman

Thanks, Bob. I am disappointed in David Rehman's opinion piece.

At no point does David mention the SARS coronavirus's genome in Malayan pangolins (*Manis javanica*) at the

Guangdong wildlife rescue centre. That SARS virus not only has a relatively high similarity with the COVID-19 CoV Wuhan-Hu-1 sequence (Xiao et al., 2020) but the RBD is only one amino acid different from the SARS-CoV2 reported in Wuhan. While the data do not support the pangolin as a reservoir, these illegally trafficked illegal animals interact with poachers, and that opportunity for recombination and spillover cannot be excluded.

He also fails to mention the recently described Rc-o319 SARS coronavirus in Japanese *Rhinolophus cornutus* bats. The Japanese Rc-o319 SARS coronavirus, while more distant than RaTG13 SARS virus of *Rhinolophus affinis* provides another intriguing clue. Similarly, he does not mention the SARS coronavirus recently extracted from *Rhinolophus shameli* bats in Cambodia.

Further, he fails to mention the > 500 animal species that the FAO has shown to be susceptible to SARS-CoV2.

The truth is spillovers are a normal part of life. Pandemics are recurring themes in natural history.

After recognising SARS in 2003, many of us have done extensive research on various coronavirus. This work led to discovering **thousands** of new coronaviruses, including two seasonal, human, 'community-acquired' coronaviruses NL63 and HKU1. In fact, by 2007 coronavirus researchers noting the enormous reservoir of SARS-CoV viruses in horseshoe bats, the ease that coronavirus undergo genetic recombination, and the easy spillover to wild animals and at times to humans, **hauntingly predicted that SARS viruses were a ticking time-bomb ready to cause a much worse pandemic** (Cheng VCC, Lau SKP, et al., 2007)

The Wuhan market was likely not the original site for the spillover; it was merely an amplifying location that helped reveal this deadly virus's existence. Similar to the event that happened in June with the Beijing market.

This nasty pandemic was a natural event. It was predicted to happen. Folks like Gerry Paker (who you CC'd), Jeff Taubenberger, myself, and many others have predicted and warned about this for decades.

We should indeed seek out the source(s) of the current outbreak, but we should not fan the flames of conspiracy theory.

We in the USA could have done better with this pandemic. Instead, we botched the job. Science, public health, and common sense took a back-seat to ignorance, popularism, greed, and stupidity. Let's do better in 2021. Happy New Year, Aileen

Sincerely

Aileen M Marty MD, FCAP
Distinguished University Professor, Infectious Diseases, Dept of Translational Medicine, Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine
Laboratory Director and Clinical Consultant for the FIU-Health Auxiliary, High Complexity CLIA laboratory for COVID-19;
Director, FIU Health Travel Medicine Program and Vaccine Clinic Commander, Emergency Response Team Development
Professor, Voting Member, Board for the International Federation for Tropical Medicine;
11200 SW 8th St, AHC2 675; Miami, Florida, 33199
WHO Advisory Group on Mass Gatherings; (Risk Assessments, Command & Control, EID, Global Health Security)
b6 USA Office: b6

From: Robert McCreight b6
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 8:01 AM
To: Elin Gursky b6 Gerald Parker <gparker b6 Syra Madad b6
Don Donahue b6 >; STEVE CUNNION b6 ; Jim Terbush <
b6 >; Andrew Ambler b6 b6 ; Aileen Marty <
b6 Peter Biggins b6 k>; Laura H. Kann < b6 ; Kavita Berger <
b6 Diane DiEuliis b6 >; Kip Thoma b6 Denise Baken <
dbaken@shieldanalysis.com>; Stephen Goldsmith <swgoldsmith@fbi.gov>; Stiefel, David - OHS, Washington, DC <

b6
Cc: Nicholas Eftimiades b6 >; Rob Spalding b6
Subject: Re: Pandemic news soon??

Note: This message originated from outside the FIU Faculty/Staff email system.

Would commend your review of the OpEd by Dr David Relman of Stanford who has distinct views about the need to determine the actual origins of the COVID virus. [see attachment]

Robert McCreight
Adjunct Professor
George Mason University
Lecturer
National Defense University
cell b6
"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom...must undergo the fatigue of supporting it." Thomas Paine

"It is not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog that matters..".Mark Twain

On Sun, Jan 3, 2021 at 7:46 PM b6 wrote:

> In the year long struggle to confirm and clarify the true origins of the pandemic we have discovered varied theories about its beginnings. China has been less than helpful in this regard and there is plenty of news reporting that alleges a food market or a randomized bat virus with SARS properties is responsible As such theories circulate professionals and experts find a variety of ideas contending for respect adoption and promotion as the triggering event for COVID
>
> There is even the linguistic labeling of the virus conspicuously away from the 'Wuhan virus' terminology months ago to something very clinical neutral and detached like COVId 19. WHO and CDC seem equally mystified and consensus among experts about the pathogen remains elusive and contradictory in some cases. Ask experts if China has been honest and transparent about the genomic code of the virus Many will say yes— others will say no. This is a complex dilemma
>
> We are left wondering after 10 months of panic which is more important to onward public health — is it devising a vaccine? is It a therapeutic drug? A reliable genomic map of the virus ? Or is it enough to have an accurate comprehensive and truthful description and biological verification of its molecular signature? How important is to enjoy 98% certainty that we know the authentic origins of the virus? No ambiguity. No hidden facts— full transparency ?
>
> Now just days away from today we may find an answer to that question. How likely is it the answer is one we expect and need? The ability to blame or even suspect China for deliberate malevolent action regarding the virus rests on proof. How much and what kind of proof is enough? If China is guilty of releasing the pandemic on a unprepared world how would that be demonstrated? What would be required? Can this be shown? What kind of evidence is needed?
> Do we have that overwhelming proof?
>
> Opinion divided between engineered bio weapon or benign but nasty zoonotic leap from bats to humans. There is also the oft discredited market disease proximity theory Then there is the GOF theory wrapped around secretive Wuhan lab research where attenuated bio material was deliberately or carelessly allowed to migrate outside the confines of Wuhan. What notion seems most beneficial to Beijing? Of course we seek a medical and scientific answer. Not a political one carefully framed
> So we wait

In time we will know much more and the USA will carry the burden of convincing its own people and the world what specific theory appears to have the weight of evidence behind it Tragically this affirms the shortfalls we still have to overcome in mounting a robust bio forensic system to identify and validate future disease threats
Doubtful and derogatory media and rival nations will poke holes and seek to nullify findings. We will face disease threats again and we will urgently need the highest level of scientific confidence that a complex bio forensic architecture and system affords
For protective surveillance and bio defense reliable forensics systems are essential May the next several days enable a better and convincing verification of the pandemic's origins. Those seeking answers will demand to know more One day soon that may happen. Hopefully the wait is soon over

Sent from my iPhone

MORENS_SUBPOENA_005592
MORENS_NIH_013777
REL0000481072

Date:	Wed, 16 Jun 2021 7:10:29 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 16 Jun 2021 7:10:20 AM -0400
Subject:	Re: EcoHealth's scapegoating
From:	"Hotez, Peter Jay" [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6]
CC:	David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg

Yesterday I had to debunk Jon Stewart's recent lab leak claims comments, on TMZ of all places, and condemn Marjorie Taylor Greene yet again for her attacks on CNN Don Lemon. These are terrible attacks, really on not only EcoHealth but all US biomedical science. The NIH and all govt science agencies needs to understand that all of us are under threat. I will keep pushing.

Warmest Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: [b6]
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: [b6]
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
[b6]

Phone: [b6]



Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 16, 2021, at 12:29 AM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Please read the email from Research!America below, and my response. Rich kindly put me in touch with them to see if they can help EcoHealth right now with NIH. I'm extremely grateful for your help Rich, and for Ellie Dehoney contacting NIH, but the response is not good. I feel real jeopardy right now with Dr. Fauci & Francis Collins under attack, and people focusing on the idea that our public comments that a lab leak is extremely unlikely (which it is) have made us a target. What's made us a target is Trump canceling our grant, followed by a relentless 1.5 year attack by politically motivated actors and organizations. I'm worried that they've effectively won at this point. I can't speak out publicly, no one within the Federal Govt seems willing to defend us, and our funders are being pressured and will begin to withdraw.

Add to this today's news that the HHS Inspector General will be looking into the grant to see if it was managed correctly (it was), and further political action from Rep. Ernst, who's latching onto the idea that an organization with a suspended grant should be defunded of all federal funding and has a bill ready that will close us down - https://www.ernst.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2021/6/ernst- pushes-to-cut-off-u-s-taxpayer-funding-of-organizations-like-a-wuhan-lab-linked-nonprofit-that-disregard-federal-law.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 1:18 AM
To: 'Ellie Dehoney' [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]

Cc: 'Jessica Scott' [b6] 'Jacqueline Lagoy' <[b6]>
Subject: EcoHealth's scapegoating
Importance: High

Thanks for trying Ellie. We cut back on press interviews a couple of months ago, and haven't spoken to a major outlet in a few weeks. However, there are dozens of quotes from me over the past year and a half where I gave my opinion, based on deep knowledge of the facts, on the likely pathways of COVID's emergence. Unfortunately, we were the only US organization working in China to investigate coronavirus risk continually for the last 17 years, so the press came to us for answers. Add to that my misfortune on being asked by the WHO to help them on their COVID origins mission. I agreed, despite significant hardship, and now am being pilloried for reporting what we found. Our task on the WHO mission was to ascertain how likely each different pathway was, and that's where the quote probably comes from – we found it 'extremely unlikely' that it came from a lab, and published that in our report. Any good scientist worth their salt would have come to the same conclusion, and Dr. Fauci stated he believes it came from nature recently in Congress. The rationale is simple - there remains no evidence whatsoever for a lab leak, but substantial evidence for emergence via human-wildlife interactions. To be now effectively canceled, simply because logic doesn't fit people's politics is just cruel and the essence of an anti-science agenda.

I'm frankly devastated at the thought of our organization being made a scapegoat by the federal govt and its agencies. I've spent my whole career working on the origins of pandemics – it's our organization's mission. As you rightly stated, we raised the flag over and over again about the risk of these viruses emerging, as did our collaborators in China. We spoke to the White House, to the PPFST, to agencies like USAID, NIH, CDC, and to the WHO. Some listened, some funded us to do this work. Others did not. It seems that right now, our future is in the hands of NIH to defend us, and from what I'm seeing and hearing, they're protecting themselves at our expense. That's plain wrong. Someone needs to call this out, and help us, and right now I'm at a loss where to go.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Ellie Dehoney [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 9:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Alison Andre [b6]; Jessica Scott [b6]; Jacqueline Lagoy <[b6]>
Subject: RE: Peter Daszak

Hi Peter and Rich, I heard back from Mike Lauer and Larry Tabak; they have asked me/Research!America to please stay out of this. I don't know, but believe they feel as trapped as you feel, Peter, and that we can only make things worse.

MORENS_SUBPOENA_016648
MORENS_NIH_034792
REL0000481076

I read the recent NYT article in which you were quoted saying that it is unlikely COVID-19 originated at the lab. Several comments questioned why you were asked, which is a reasonable criticism of the NYT. The paper should not have asked you, or anyone who has a relationship with the lab, whether the lab could have been involved in any way. The NYT set you up. What choice did you have? Had you refused to comment, the NYT could well have noted your refusal in the article and that would have fed the beast; had you answered in any other way that you did, you would have been going against your own views, and you have too much integrity to do that).

Take or leave this advice, but in my opinion, should anyone ask you again to comment on anything having to do with the Wuhan Lab, you should say that you are not the judge or jury of an investigation that has nothing to do with EcoHealth's work with the Wuhan lab or any facet of your work. Your lab tries to stop the transmission of coronaviruses by researching animal to human transmission. You raised alarms bells about this type of transmission more than a decade ago, and your commitment to preventing pandemics has never wavered. As a matter of fact, that would be a good theme of an op ed. One thing the group of Nobel laureates could do is write an op ed that focuses on the costs of making a scapegoat of the very institute that sounded the alarm on the possibility of a global coronavirus pandemic. It's easy to demonize people and institutions; it's hard to fight global health threats. The federal government reports to the American public. The American public should demand that the federal government empower EcoHealth to prevent the next pandemic, not buy into any action by the federal government or the media to make a scapegoat of it.

Eleanor (Ellie) Dehoney
Vice President of Policy and Advocacy
Research!America
edehoney@researchamerica.org
d. b6 c. b6
www.researchamerica.org
<image001.jpg> <image002.jpg> <image003.jpg> <image004.jpg> <image005.jpg>

From: Ellie Dehoney
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2021 2:35 PM
To: 'Peter Daszak' b6 g >; Roberts, Rich < b6
Cc: Alison Andre b6 ; Jessica Scott b6 ; Jacqueline Lagoy < b6 >
Subject: RE: Peter Daszak

Very helpful! I am on the case. I have no idea what NIH will say, but I am going to make an ask.

Eleanor (Ellie) Dehoney
Vice President of Policy and Advocacy
Research!America
edehoney@researchamerica.org
d. b6 c. b6
www.researchamerica.org
<image001.jpg> <image002.jpg> <image003.jpg> <image004.jpg> <image005.jpg>

From: Peter Daszak [mailto: b6
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2021 2:16 PM
To: Ellie Dehoney < b6 ; Roberts, Rich < b6
Cc: Alison Andre < b6 ; Jessica Scott < b6 >; Jacqueline Lagoy < b6

MORENS_SUBPOENA_016649
MORENS_NIH_034793
REL0000481076

Subject: RE: Peter Daszak
Importance: High

Attached is some background information that I hope's useful.

1) A document that I update regularly to track all actions related to this issue. Please note this is highly confidential because it includes statements and details that have not been released publicly and that are the focus of an ongoing GAO investigation into political interference in agencies by the Trump administration, and may end up being part of a legal case or action.

The NIH grant that Trump terminated
Political activity of direct relevance to EHA's work
Successful applications of the work we've done in China (e.g. Remdesivir, other therapeutics/vaccines)

2) A URL of the video from a 2004 60 minutes piece where I raise the concern about potential future emergence of a SARS-related virus that spreads rapidly and causing widespread mortality in the process. It's why we were doing this work in China, and it's why it scored so highly in our renewal application – critical to our nation's health and national security. The comment begins at roughly the 12 mins 30 second mark.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1O79e2bwC8s

I looked again at that most recent E&C committee letter. None of the issues that they raise are of any real legal value, and we have arguments lined up for all of them that clearly show that what we did with our funding was legal, and of such value that we were strongly encouraged to renew, and received a top 3% score. It's really awful they're trying to muddy our name with this sort of innuendo.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Ellie Dehoney <b6
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 2:29 PM
To: Roberts, Rich <b6
Cc: Peter Daszak <b6; Alison Andre b6; Jessica Scott <b6; Jacqueline Lagoy b6>
Subject: RE: Peter Daszak

Terrific! Peter, it's nice to meet you, albeit virtually. I am adding my assistant, Jacqueline, to this email to help find 20 minutes for us to connect via zoom, if that works for you. I've also cc'd Jessica Scott to join the meeting.

MORENS_SUBPOENA_016650
MORENS_NIH_034794
REL0000481076

Eleanor (Ellie) Dehoney
Vice President of Policy and Advocacy
Research!America
b6
d. b6 c. b6
www.researchamerica.org
<image001.jpg> <image002.jpg> <image003.jpg> <image004.jpg> <image005.jpg>

From: Roberts, Rich [b6
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 1:57 PM
To: Ellie Dehoney [b6 >
Cc: Peter Daszak <b6 Alison Andre b6
Subject: Peter Daszak
Importance: High

Ellie:

Here is Peter's contact information. He would be happy to speak with you.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 12:39 PM
To: Roberts, Rich <b6
Cc: Alison Andre <b6
Subject: RE: Research!America
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks very much Rich, I'd be delighted to reach out to her. I have time to talk today, and any day next week.

Please send her my email address & contact number – just forward this email if you like. I've also copied my assistant Alison Andre on the phone and she will maintain the utmost discretion.

Peter Daszak
Email: b6
Cellphone: b6
Home: b6
Assistant (Alison Andre) b6

MORENS_SUBPOENA_016651
MORENS_NIH_034795
REL0000481076

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6
Subject: Research!America

Peter:

I spoke this morning with Ellie Dehoney from Research!America. I had contacted them because I thought they might be able to help get your NIH grant restored and also to seek their advice about how to try and combat the rhetoric surrounding the lab-leak hypothesis and its consequences for you. They have very good ties and insight into the politics in Washington and she would be very interested in helping. Would you have some time to speak with her? She would like to get educated on EcoHealth and the research you have done in the past and would plan on doing if the grant can be restored. She was also curious if you had reached out to your Senators, because she though they might be able to help. She apparently has good contacts with them.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

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Date: Tue, 5 Oct 2021 9:23:37 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 5 Oct 2021 9:21:54 PM -0400
Subject: The 'offending email' FW: Wuhan novel coronavirus - NIAID's role in bat-origin CoVs
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: David Morens <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

It's below.

I'll start sending you others later on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Alison Andre <b6>
Subject: RE: Wuhan novel coronavirus - NIAID's role in bat-origin CoVs

Great info, thanks. Tony doesn't maintain awareness of these things and doesn't know unless program officers tell him, which they rarely do, since they are across town and may not see him more than once a year, or less….

In reflecting on this, and in part from your work, many people have been saying since the beginning of MERS that these coronaviruses are just going to keep on emerging, and for reasons your whole group have been highlighting for years, the human animal interface, etc….. Assuming this current thing turns out well, this has to be a serious wake up call that we have to do much more

I WILL pass this on to Tony. He is overwhelmed with press calls and pressure from the Dept of HHS. I have never seen him so frazzled. Saturday night he sent me a one line email. "I am brain

dead". (Not for attribution or repeating!).

Interested in your feeling about where this is going. The experts buzzing around us are all over the map, between doomsday and not that big a deal, with everything in between.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2020 1:36 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Alison Andre [b6]
Subject: Wuhan novel coronavirus - NIAID's role in bat-origin CoVs
Importance: High

Hi David – Happy to have a phone call re. the Wuhan CoV, but just wanted to mentioned a few things for your information and hopefully to pass on to Tony Fauci for when he's being interviewed re. the new CoV:

NIAID has been funding coronavirus work in China for the past 5 years through an R01 to me (1R01AI110964: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"). That's now been renewed, with a specific focus that we identify cohorts of people highly exposed to bats in China, and work out if they're getting sick from CoVs. Erik Stemmy is the Program Officer (cc'd here). Collaborators include Wuhan Institute of Virology (currently working on the nCoV), and Ralph Baric. The results of our work to date include:

- Sampled 10,074 bats and ~2,000 other mammals at 47 sites across S. China

- Discovered 172 novel β-CoVs (52 novel SARSr-CoVs), >350 novel α-CoVs
- Discovered closest relative to Wuhan nCoV (92% homology)
- Discovered Swine Acute Diarrheal Syndrome Virus (SADS-CoV) killing >25,000 pigs in Guangdong Province (Published in Nature)
- Found SARS-related CoVs that can bind to human cells (Published in Nature), and that cause SARS-like disease in humanized mouse models.
- Found that clinical signs of bat SARSr-CoVs in mice were not prevented with a vaccine candidate against SARS-CoV, and were not treatable with most monoclonal therapies being developed
- Found serological evidence that 3% of people living at the wildlife-human interface in rural China are being exposed to these bat SARS-related coronaviruses

Also – FYI, prior to the R01, we worked under an R01 with Eun-Chung Park as Program Officer on viral discovery in bats, where originally identified SARS-CoV as having a likely origin in bats (published in Science)

As I mentioned, I'm now part of a group that's meeting by phone weekly with CEIRS to discuss the nCoV and Erik's part of that.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 1:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak; Ian Lipkin b6 Jon Epstein
Subject: RE: Wuhan virus

Thanks, the excitement never ends, right?

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520

MORENS_SUBPOENA_011544
MORENS_NIH_022346
REL0000476084

- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 12:57 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Ian Lipkin b6 ; Jon Epstein b6
Subject: RE: Wuhan virus
Importance: High

Yes – lots of information and I spoke with Erik Stemmy and Alan Embry yesterday before the news was released. Erik is my program officer on our coronavirus grant specifically focused on China.

I've been talking with reporters today and happy to fill you in on any further information…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. +1 b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2020 12:50 PM
To: W. Ian Lipkin ([b6]; Peter Daszak; Jon Epstein
Subject: Wuhan virus

Hi guys, do any of you have any inside info on this new coronavirus that isn't yet in the public domain? Or any thoughts?

TY,

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- [b6]
- [b6]

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Date: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 5:40:39 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 5:40:29 PM -0400
Subject: FW: Tony Fauci's comment
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: [b6] <[b6]>
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2020 9:25 PM
To: Erik Stemmy [E] [b6]; Emily Erbelding [E] [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmur [b6]
Subject: Tony Fauci's comment

We're all very delighted to see that Tony Fauci came out publicly with a comment that dispels the lab origin theory for COVID-19:

https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.businessinsider.com/fauci- throws-cold-water-conspiracy-theory-coronavirus-escaped-chinese-lab-2020-4%3famp

And here

https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/04/18/us- expert-says-coronavirus-not-developed-chinese-lab/

If you speak to him about this please pass on my personal thanks - it's extremely comforting to know that he's brave enough to stand up for the truth at this time.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

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Date: Sun, 27 Jun 2021 2:41:04 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 27 Jun 2021 2:40:51 PM -0400
Subject: Jeff Sachs.
From: Peter Daszak [redacted]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] Hotez, Peter Jay [redacted]
CC: David Morens [redacted] Rich Roberts [redacted] Robert Kessler [redacted]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [redacted]

Please see his email to me below, just now.

He's proposing I step off as a commissioner, recuse myself from the origins work and then am put on the one health part of the taskforce. He will also bring on biosafety people.

This would be seen widely as a further step down for me and is not acceptable in my opinion.

He's trying to bully me into a quick response.

I think he's trying to line this up as a done deal before his Wednesday morning call with the rest of the Commissioners.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Jeffrey Sachs [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:24 PM
To: Peter Daszak [redacted]
Cc: Ozge Karadag <[redacted]>; Bagenal, Jessamy (ELS-LOW [redacted]>; Yanis Ben Amor [redacted]
Subject: Continued work on the task force

Dear Peter,

I would like to pursue a way forward in which you would continue as a member of the task force to provide expertise and inputs on the One Health approach to pandemics, while you would step away from being a commissioner and would recuse yourself from the task force's work on the question of origins of SARS-CoV-2. Hume similarly would recuse himself from any work on the origins question. I will appoint a new acting chair or co-chairs of the task force following consultations with the task force.

I am proposing this two-track approach so that the controversies and issues surrounding your work do not envelope the Commission's work and its final report, while at the same time enabling you to contribute your considerable expertise and experience to the important issues of One Health and the ecology of emerging infectious diseases.

I hope that you find this approach to be satisfactory and reasonable under the circumstances. It is my deeply considered view on how to achieve several important objectives going forward.

I will move forward expeditiously on these issues one way or another, so I would deeply appreciate your timely response.

With best wishes,

Jeff

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Date: Fri, 28 May 2021 6:33:51 PM -0400

Subject: RE: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology

From: Peter Daszak <b6

To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 keusch, Jerry b6 Roberts, Rich b6

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.png

Sounds like good news to me. On a cynical note, I suspect HHS is doing this because they feel that Tony Fauci & Francis Collins are under pressure, and they don't want more mud to be slung around, even if it's mis-quoted, out-of-context garbage from our grants etc.

Frankly, I think it was prob a mistake to allow anything of EHAs to be FoIA'd in the first place, given that these conspiracy folks are just pulling things completely out of context and feeding them to people like Rand Paul and other nut-jobs. Again, it's a case of HHS, NIH not stepping up in anyway at all to defend an organization they fund that was already under attack thanks to their actions.

The US Right to Know chief was bragging on Twitter last week that they'd filed 70!! FoIA requests related to Wuhan, EcoHealth, NIH etc.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 2:55 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; keusch, Jerry b6 Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Fwd: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology

From our FOIA office. Not clear what it means.....d

-------- Forwarded Message --------

Subject: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Date: Fri, 28 May 2021 18:52:24 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
To: David Morens b6) <b6

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:39 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Importance: High

MORENS_SUBPOENA_012585
MORENS_NIH_023973
REL0000476114

From: Moore, Marg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:38 AM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Importance: High

FYI

From: Lampe, Karen (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:33 AM
To: NIH FOIA b6 Manheim, Marianne (NIH/NHLBI) [E] b6 hofield, Robin (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Moore, Marg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Milliard, Suzanne (NIH/NCI) [E] b6 eterson, Trevor (NIH/NEI) [E] b6 >; Blansfield, Earl (NIH/NICHD) [E] Webb, Ginger (NIH/NIDCD) [E b6 >; Stabile, Regina (NIH/NIEHS) [E Alberts, Lisa (NIH/NIMH) [E >; Glasford-Clarke, Margaret (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Woodson, Holly (NIH/OD/ORS) [E] b6 Thomas, Gina (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Cc: Garcia-Malene, Gorka (NIH/OD) [E b6 >; Bartok, Lauren (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 ; Yan, Hawyee (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Importance: High

Good morning all,

We have just received word from HHS Oversight via OGC that we should not release anything having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/WIV. We don't have any more information at the moment but hope to know more by Tuesday. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Karen E. R. Lampe, Ph.D.
Freedom of Information Office
National Institutes of Health
b6



Date: Thu, 29 Feb 2024 10:08:53 AM -0500
Subject: Fwd: WSJ/Nicolas Wade: Where Did Covid Come From?
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] peter hotez [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6];
Attachments: image001.jpg; image001.jpg

This stuff never freaking 'ends. dmm

From the cell phone of David Morensl

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]** [b6]
Date: Thu, Feb 29, 2024, 09:57
Subject: WSJ/Nicolas Wade: Where Did Covid Come From?
To:

Where Did Covid Come From?

New documents bolster the theory that it not only escaped from a laboratory but was developed in one.

By Nicholas Wade

Feb. 28, 2024 12:47 pm ET

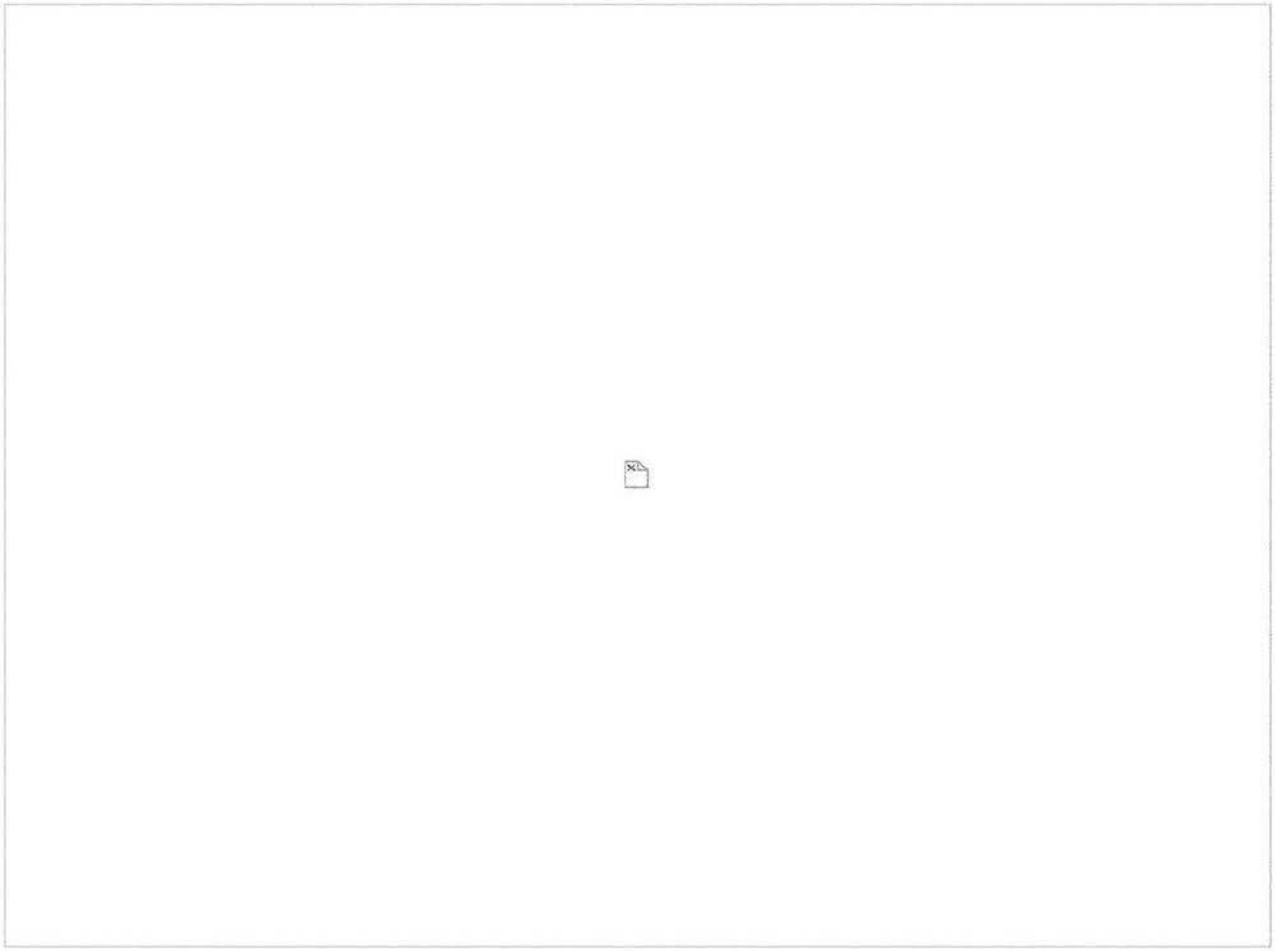

Illustration: Martin Kozlowski

In the four years since the SARS-CoV-2 virus was unleashed on the world, data have steadily accumulated supporting the hypothesis that it emerged from a laboratory. The latest information, released last month, makes a formidable case that the virus is the product of laboratory synthesis, not of nature.

This startling fact will probably take some time to sink into the national consciousness, given the mainstream media's sustained inability to report the issue objectively. Editors have failed to think beyond the extreme politicization that requires liberals to oppose the lab-leak hypothesis. Science journalists are too beholden to their sources to suspect that virologists would lie to them about the extent of their profession's responsibility for a catastrophic pandemic.

Here are some salient facts that haven't been clearly reported to readers of the mainstream press:

In March 2018 a team of American and Chinese virologists applied to the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, known as Darpa, seeking a $14 million grant to manipulate viruses related to SARS-CoV-1, the bat virus that caused a minor epidemic in 2002. Their goal was to identify bat viruses in Asia with the highest potential for jumping to people and to immunize bats so they wouldn't infect soldiers in the region.

The proposal for Project DEFUSE specified that the viruses' infectivity would be enhanced by inserting into them a genetic element known as a furin cleavage site. Depending on the starting viruses, this protocol could have produced SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, which has a distinctive furin cleavage site.

In 2022 three biologists, Valentin Bruttel, Alex Washburne and Antonius VanDongen, guessed that if SARS-CoV-2 had been generated in a lab by a standard method, it would have been assembled from six sections of lab-synthesized DNA with the help of a biological agent called BsmBI. On analyzing the virus's structure, they found evidence for the seams between sections and other distinctive marks of the assembly process.

Their paper was derided as "kindergarten molecular biology" by the virologists who are favorites of the mainstream press for their opposition to the lab-leak hypothesis. But a batch of documents reveal new details about the DEFUSE proposal and confirm that the three authors were on target. Emily Kopp of U.S. Right to Know obtained the documents through a Freedom of Information Act request from the Interior Department, having noticed that a researcher at the U.S. Geological Survey was a member of the DEFUSE team.

The new documents, which are background planning papers and drafts for the DEFUSE proposal, call for assembling SARS-like viruses from six sections of DNA, and include a cost estimate for purchase of the BsmBI restriction enzyme—exactly as the three authors had inferred. This clearly strengthens, perhaps conclusively, their contention that the virus is synthetic. Richard H. Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University, says it raises "to the level of a smoking gun" the genetic evidence that the virus was manufactured.

Other strong indicators of the virus's laboratory birth include the furin cleavage site, possessed by none of the other more than 1,500 members of its viral family with which in nature it might swap genetic material. The codons—"words" used by the genetic code to specify the units of proteins—that define the cleavage site are those preferred by humans, not coronaviruses, pointing to their likely origin in a lab kit. And whereas most viruses require repeated tries to switch from an animal host to people, SARS-CoV-2 infected humans out of the box, as if it had been preadapted while growing in the humanized mice called for in the DEFUSE protocol.

The authors of the proposal were a team led by Peter Daszak of the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, Shi Zhengli of the Wuhan Institute of Virology and Ralph Baric of the University of North Carolina. Although Mr. Baric is the leading expert on the technology, Mr. Daszak intended for much or most of the work to be done in Ms. Shi's laboratory, despite giving a different impression to Darpa. He writes in the recently discovered documents that "I do want to stress the US side of this proposal so that DARPA are comfortable with our team. Once we get the funds, we can then allocate who does what exact work, and I believe that a lot of these assays can be done in Wuhan."

Ms. Shi did most of her work with SARS-type viruses in the minimal-containment condition known as BSL2, whereas Mr. Baric, who regarded the viruses as seriously dangerous, worked in a more secure lab known as BSL3. Mr. Daszak noted that the lower-security labs would save money: "The BSL-2 nature of work on SARSr-CoVs makes our system highly cost-effective relative to other bat-virus systems." Mr. Baric replied to this comment that the viruses might be grown under BSL2 safety conditions in China, but "US researchers will likely freak out."

Mr. Daszak's EcoHealth Alliance last year asserted that the DEFUSE project was never implemented: "The proposal was not funded and the work was never done, therefore it cannot have played a role in the origin of COVID-19." But science is a competitive business. After Darpa turned down the DEFUSE proposal in February 2019, the researchers in Wuhan might have secured Chinese government funding and gone ahead by themselves. Viruses made according to the DEFUSE protocol could have been available by the time Covid-19 broke out, sometime between August and November 2019. This would account for the otherwise unexplained timing of the pandemic along with its place of origin. (Mr. Daszak, Mr. Baric and Ms. Shi didn't respond to emails seeking comment. Chinese officials have demanded that the U.S. "stop defaming China" by raising the possibility of a lab leak.)

One piece is missing from the puzzle—the identity of the parent viruses from which SARS-CoV-2 was derived. The Chinese authorities have rigorously suppressed all information about the viruses being kept in the Wuhan Institute of Virology. But the documentary and scientific evidence already assembled seems sufficient to understand the genesis of the pandemic that killed millions.

Mr. Wade is a former science editor of the New York Times.

You may also like

Wonder Land: Covid-19 disrupted people's private lives. Biden addressed concerns with a $6 trillion spending spree that's had little effect on them. Images: SMG/Zuma Press/AFP/Getty Images Composite: Mark Kelly

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Date: Wed, 20 Mar 2024 12:58:15 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 20 Mar 2024 12:56:37 PM -0400
Subject: Rand Paul at Senate Homeland Security and Govt Affairs Committee Hearing on FoIAs today
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: Roberts, Rich b6 Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
CC: b6 Keith Martin b6

There's a hearing today on "Govt. Records", but it's basically about FoIA, COVID origins and Fauci. Rand Paul's the ranking member driving this, but for some reason the Dems are letting him get his way. There are two witnesses, and one of them is Gary Ruskin from US Right to Know, who focused his opening remarks on COVID origins.

David – I expect you to be mentioned, as I do EcoHealth and myself.

Here's the video if you can stomach it… https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/hearings/reforming- federal-records-management-to-improve-transparency-and-accountability/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 11:29 AM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay b6 >; Peter Daszak < b6 g >; Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Cc: b6 >; Keith Martin b6
Subject: FW: Your article about the Covid-19 lab leak theory

FYI

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

Executive Assistant b6
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email b6

From: Hiltzik, Michael [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 11:21 AM
To: Roberts, Rich <b6
Subject: Re: Your article about the Covid-19 lab leak theory

EXTERNAL SENDER

Rich,

Thanks for the good word. I think I wrote about Sachs at some point in the past, but his aggressive ignorance on this topic continues to amaze, so maybe I should revisit the subject...

MH

Michael Hiltzik
Business Columnist
Los Angeles Times

b6
@hiltzikm
b6

Author: "Iron Empires: Railroads, Robber Barons, and the Making of Modern America"
Coming Soon: "Golden State," my new history of California

On Wed, Mar 20, 2024 at 8:01 AM Roberts, Rich b6 > wrote:

> Dear Mr. Hiltzik:
>
> Your article in today's LA Times is extremely thoughtful and absolutely on target. You are to be commended for saying it as it is. You might also have included Jeff Sachs, who is equally to blame for promoting a theory about the lab leak that has zero credible evidence.
>
> Thanks for your efforts!
>
> Rich Roberts

Sir Richard J. Roberts Ph.D. F.R.S.
1993 Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine
Chief Scientific Officer
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723 USA

Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

Executive Assistant: b6
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:24:34 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:23:52 PM -0400
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Angela Rasmussen says it all
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

David M. Morens, MD

b6

[b6]
[b6] [b6] [b6] (work)
[b6] [b6] [b6] (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message --------
From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>
Date: Tue, Aug 2, 2022 at 8:40 AM
Subject: Angela Rasmussen says it all
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: David Morens [b6]>, Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>, Roberts, Rich [b6]>, Jeff Sturchio [b6]>, Aleksei Chmura [b6]>

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftwitter.com%2Fangie_rasmussen%2Fstatus%2Fg&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850&sdata=QkxBHT%2FxziZuZB5eYnbj7J0tHCv92P1LDxKqh9Wkqw8%3D &reserved=0

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar

Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez

Skype: b6

Linkedin Peter Hotez

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&sdata=GKVF%2B86XBoyZJAoUcEkXS1N2OA%2B38zPmG%2FJNp7oPUnA%3D &reserved=0

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&sdata=awx%2FHgjxSTASRjmlY5W4zIvsHHU87Bpg%2BvDCUQYL7Qc%3D &reserved=0

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

b6

Phone: b6

Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Aug 1, 2022, at 2:31 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Peter Hotez just posted this article from The Hill.

Finally, a response from one Academic Society – Georges Benjamin from APHA, but again, it's not strong enough, not loud enough, and not enough people are listening I suspect. As Peter pointed out – where are the societies and the academies?

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fthehill.com%2Fpolicy%2Fhealthcare%2F35712gop-plots-fauci-probe-after-midterms%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850&sdata=kmtAc%2BlbReZeQH8mFA1%2BcdKhiPYjsuSgSXkH0LXvMo4%3D &reserved=0

HEALTHCARE

GOP plots Fauci probe after midterms

BY NATHANIEL WEIXEL - 07/25/22 5:25 AM ET

SHARETWEET

Congressional Republicans are eagerly floating investigations into Anthony Fauci and the Biden administration's response to the coronavirus pandemic if they win back control of the House or Senate in the midterm elections.

"One way or another, if we are in the majority, we will subpoena his records and he will testify in the Senate under oath," said Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who is in line to become the chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee if Republicans win the majority with the panel's current ranking member, Sen. Richard Burr

(R-N.C.), retiring.

Republicans have not been shy about launching probes into the U.S. response to the coronavirus pandemic, focusing on the origins of the virus and whether the federal government — and by extension, Fauci — helped fund controversial research that might have played a role in its creation.

While Republicans have been in the minority, those investigations have not gained much momentum. But with the majority, the GOP would have the authority to lob subpoenas at the administration to force it to hand over documents.

"If we win in November, if I'm chairman of a committee, if I have subpoena power, we'll go after every one of [Fauci's] records," Paul said earlier this year.

Public health experts said a hard look needs to be taken at the totality of the U.S. response to the pandemic across both the Trump and Biden administrations, but without getting into partisan finger-pointing.

"If you want to have a hearing, you need it to be a credible one. And that has to have a purpose. Other than going out to an 81 year old man," said Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association.

Benjamin has been among the health advocates pushing for an independent commission modeled on the 9/11 Commission to be formed to examine the pandemic response.

"It should be designed to actually get to the right answers. Until they do that, you know, they're going to continue to politicize it," Benjamin said.

Fauci is a career government official who has become a political lightning rod and a villain in the eyes of many on the right. Conservative media has painted him as a scapegoat for many of the nation's missteps over the pandemic.

Paul, a libertarian ophthalmologist, has repeatedly antagonized the nation's top infectious diseases doctor over the benefits of masks, vaccinations and the origins of COVID-19.

In March, Paul tried to attach to the pandemic relief bill a proposal eliminating Fauci's job and dividing it into three positions.

In the House, Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), who is in line to chair the House Judiciary Committee if Republicans win the majority, told The Hill that he sees no limits to what he wants to investigate about Fauci and the pandemic.

Like Paul, Jordan has pressed Fauci to answer questions about whether

his agency, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, funded "gain of function" research in China.

Jordan and Paul have long pushed the idea that COVID-19 escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, either because of an accident or because it was deliberately released, and that U.S.-funded research helped supercharge it into a much more dangerous and deadly version of the coronavirus.

Speaking to right-wing news outlet Just The News earlier this year, Jordan said he envisions that the investigation would aim to untangle "all the lies [and] the misinformation, the disinformation" allegedly spread by Fauci.

"That is because they knew from the get-go [coronavirus] came from the lab, likely came from a lab, gain-of-function likely done, and our tax dollars were used," Jordan said.

The U.S. intelligence community has ruled out the possibility that COVID-19 was a bioweapon developed by China, but beyond that the origins of the virus are unclear.

Some scientists have said the idea that it escaped from a lab needs further investigation but acknowledge that won't happen without China's help. Many others think that it spilled into the human population from animals sold in a Wuhan market.

Still, there is little evidence to suggest it was created in a lab or with funding help from the National Institutes of Health or Fauci.

Moody's: Schumer-Manchin deal will 'nudge' economy, inflation 'in the right direction'Hawley vows to vote 'no' on adding Sweden and Finland to NATO

Rupali Limaye, a health communication scholar at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, said a nakedly partisan investigation of Fauci would do even more damage to the fraying public trust in public health officials.

"I do think that public officials should be held responsible, you should be able to question and think critically about the recommendations that they have made, but it's also a slippery slope," Limaye said.

"Going down this slippery slope of continuing to have investigation after investigation after investigation is not in the best interest for anyone," Limaye said.

TAGS ANTHONY FAUCI ANTHONY FAUCI COVID-19 COVID-19 PANDEMIC JIM JORDAN JIM JORDAN NIH RAND PAUL RAND PAUL RICHARD BURR

The Hill has removed its comment section, as there are many other forums for readers to participate in the conversation. We invite you

to join the discussion on Facebook and Twitter.

Cheers,

Peter

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 3:22 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]>; 'David Morens' [b6]>; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]>; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]>; 'Jeff Sturchio [b6]
[b6]>
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' [b6] >
Subject: Now Fox News on Rand Paul's GoF hearing

…and here's Fox News…of course:

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.foxnews.com%2Fpolitics%2Frand-paul-vows-get-answers-covid-19-origins-gain-function-hearing&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850&sdata=oQo%2FoJZqAU3DroALQoiPPecW0m3qH79AvHudIrG6Y3s%3D &reserved=0

COVID-19 origins in gain-of-function hearing

Paul argues there is significant evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic originated in a Wuhan, China, lab

By Michael Lee | Fox News

BeyondWords

Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., announced the first ever hearing on gain-of-function research, which will be aimed at pinning down the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Throughout this pandemic, Dr. Rand Paul has led the effort to hold government officials accountable on the status of efforts being made to combat COVID-19, and the origins of this virus that has killed over 6 million people worldwide," a spokesperson for Paul told Fox News Digital. "This has been over a year-long process of getting Congressional Democrats to finally agree to a hearing, which will also be the first Congressional hearing on gain-of-function research. Dr. Paul looks forward to working with Subcommittee Chairwoman Hassan and hearing from expert witnesses during this critically important hearing that should've happened long ago."

The hearing, which is scheduled for Wednesday, comes a week after the

Kentucky senator attempted to pass an amendment to the CHIPS-Plus Act that would have banned U.S. funding of gain-of-function research in China, with Democrats objecting to the amendment despite it passing unanimously in an earlier version of the bill last year.

In remarks on the floor of the Senate last week, Paul argued that there was significant evidence that the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic could be traced to a lab in Wuhan, China.

RAND PAUL SENDS MESSAGE TO FAUCI: YOU'LL HAVE TO TESTIFY UNDER OATH IF GOP WINS

Sen. Rand Paul speaks during a COVID-19 federal response hearing on Capitol Hill. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

"Gain-of-function research enhances the severity or transmissibility of existing viruses that may infect humans," Paul said. "The dangers are so acute that from 2014-2017, the National Institutes of Health suspended funding for all gain-of-function projects… the emergence of COVID serves as a reminder that dangerous research conducted in a secretive and totalitarian country is simply too risky to fund."

Paul also sent a letter to the acting director of the National Institutes of Health, Lawrence A. Tabak, last week to demand the agency be more transparent on the origins of COVID-19, arguing that NIH has "repeatedly disregarded its responsibilities" under the Freedom of Information Act.

"Of particular concern is NIH's recent admission in Court that the agency is withholding portions of emails between employees because they 'could be used out of context and serve to amplify the already prevalent misinformation regarding the origins of the coronavirus pandemic,'" Paul said in the letter. "This suggests NIH is censoring the information it releases to the public about the origins of the pandemic."

Paul has had several clashes with public health officials throughout the pandemic, including several confrontations with Dr. Anthony Fauci, who currently serves as the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical adviser to President Biden.

Dr. Anthony Fauci responds to questions from Sen. Rand Paul at a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing on Capitol Hill. (Greg Nash-Pool/Getty Images)

Most recently, Paul told Fox News that Fauci would be forced to testify under oath regarding the pandemic if the Republican Party takes control of Congress after the midterm elections.

"If he's in public employment, we will subpoena him," Paul said. "He will have to appear and testify under oath. If Republicans take charge of the House or the Senate or both, he will have to testify under oath

because a million Americans died. And we want to know about was there a cover-up in trying to suppress any link to the lab in China?"

Michael Lee is a writer at Fox News. Follow him on Twitter @UAMichaelLee

Cheers,

Peter

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 3:15 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]; 'David Morens' [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'Jeff Sturchio [b6] [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' [b6]
Subject: Washington Examiner piece on Rand Paul's GoF hearing

The Washington Examiner is a pretty hard right-wing journal. Here's their story on the hearing on Wednesday, based on a press release from Rand Paul's office. Note that "Rand Paul will once again try to determine the origins of COVID-19"….I thought that was the job of scientific research?

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paul-to-lead-first-congressional-hearing-on-gain-of-function-research%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR3V-
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&sdata=xRvVMbYFEL5VhRvFhmnq5LKiqSyGFKqvPQpu9WA6oUg%3D &reserved=0

I agree with your point Rich – someone from the scientific community should be pushing back against all this - hearings about scientific research of any type should include people who actually have done that research, or can point to its proposed or actual value.

When I gave my keynote last week in front of a room of virologists, I pointed out to them that it's no good watching EcoHealth be attacked in the press about gain-of-function, and thinking 'glad that's not us' – you guys in the room are the ones actually doing viral research and they're coming for your funding next!

All this, of course, is done to undermine Fauci, undermine Biden, and try to win funding and votes – none of it is actually done to get to the bottom of COVID-19 origins, or protect people in any way…

OPINION

Rand Paul to lead first congressional hearing on gain-of-function research

by Christopher Tremoglie, Commentary Fellow

| July 29, 2022 04:35 PM

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On Aug. 3, Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) will once again try to determine the origins of COVID-19. Paul, ranking member of the subcommittee on emerging threats and spending oversight, will lead the first congressional hearing on gain-of-function research. This is an important matter that many Democratic politicians have largely ignored given the significance of the COVID-19 pandemic. Paul's office announced the hearing in a press release earlier this week.

"Gain-of-function research has historically been supported by tax dollars both domestically and internationally; as such, this hearing lies at the intersection of the subcommittee's two primary jurisdictional responsibilities — monitoring emerging threats and conducting oversight of federal spending," the press release states. "The dangers of this research are so acute that under President Barack Obama, the National Institutes of Health suspended funding for all gain-of-function projects until a risk assessment protocol could be developed for them. Gain-of-function research resumed in 2017, after a special committee review process was established to help manage these risks. However, serious questions remain about whether that protocol is sufficient to protect the U.S. and the world from the potential negative consequences of this research. Moreover, the debate over what gain-of-function research is and what it is not, is not settled."

Gain-of-function research has been hotly debated. In previous hearings regarding the pandemic, Paul and Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, have had contentious exchanges. In May 2021, the two verbally sparred over whether the National Institutes of Health funded gain-of-function experiments at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Paul claimed that "superviruses" were created. Fauci denied this and said such reports were "entirely and completely incorrect."

"The purpose of this hearing is to examine issues involving gain-of-function research, which attempts to enhance the severity and transmissibility of existing viruses that may infect humans or other mammals. Witnesses include Dr. Richard H. Ebright, Ph.D., Laboratory Director of Waksman Institute of Microbiology, Dr. Steven Quay, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer at Atossa Therapeutics, Inc., and Dr. Kevin M. Esvelt, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Media Arts & Sciences of MIT Media Lab," the press release says.

Much of the skepticism regarding NIH's role in the COVID-19 pandemic stems from a letter sent to Congress by Lawrence A. Tabak, a top NIH official. Tabak claimed that Fauci authorized NIH to fund EcoHealth Alliance to research the relationship between humans and bat-specific pathogens. In the letter, Tabak claimed that NIH failed to report results that revealed an increase in viral growth.

"These medical and scientific professionals will inform and educate lawmakers and the public on the myriad issues involving the risky, virus-enhancing research that is funded by taxpayer money," the press release says.

If proven true, it would be a black eye for NIH, Fauci, and federal government stewardship of taxpayer money.

Cheers,

Peter

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 11:47 AM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]; 'David Morens' [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' [b6]
Subject: update...

….and I apologize David – I've just noticed that the last email chain also had your (!) NIH email address on it…

I'm catching up on emails this week, having been out of the office, giving a keynote at a conference in Colorado – first in-person conference for me since March 2020.

It's been great to see the two papers published in Science, which by the way use data that the 'Joint WHO-China Study of the Animal Origins of COVID-19' first published in our report in March 2021. Despite the rhetoric since our WHO Wuhan work, these data were new, and were freely proffered by the China team. These data point clearly to the industrial-scale trade in farmed and wild-caught wildlife in China as the origins, something which China first publicly stated in Jan 2020, then announcing its goal of closing the wildlife farming industry, and the 14 million jobs it involved. The point here is that, while the lab leak accusers point to China as covering up so they don't get blamed for the pandemic, they had already done the opposite with the wildlife trade.

On other news – we are now trying to stave off efforts to defund us by working with a bi-partisan request from the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. We first heard from last Fall, and the letter came from the

Democrats, Sen. Ossoff's staff, saying they were a bi-partisan group. However, it's clearly being led by the Republicans (Senator Ron Johnson's staff), and they're pushing us to hand over emails and documents back to 2010 relating to any communications w/ federal agencies on a bunch of COVID and lab leak topics. Right now we're trying to slow down their efforts, and narrow their search, but they're harbingers of what we will likely see in November if the Republicans win the House – a bunch of requests to preserve documents, followed by Subpoenas in January/Feb, unless this topic becomes 'old hat'.

Cheers,

Peter

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&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d5850
&sdata=0Yg066OvsPJTXq%2FIejLFCyPdkiSdST8s33k2O2CZyp8%3D &reserved=0

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 11:20 AM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]; 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6]
Cc: 'David Morens' [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]
Subject: Upcoming hearing from a Senate Subcommittee on gain of function research

Dear all (David – I didn't cc Jeff Taubenberger because you've all been using his NIH address which would be subject to Congressional requests and to FoIA),

I just spotted this upcoming HSGAC Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight hearing on Wednesday, on one of the lab leaker's social media feeds.

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hsgac.senate.gov%2Fsubcommittees%2Fe
gain-of-function-research-what-the-pandemic-taught-us-and-where-do-we-go-from-here
&data=05%7C01%7Cdmorens%40niaid.nih.gov%7C8c37f13453d042f9f3bf08db8a0f5904%7C14b77578977342d585(
&sdata=n9%2BVg1LqqpbBJGuhQn9z6EN8TSDhnkXojm%2FDB2G4qbY%3D &reserved=0

The three speakers are all non-virologists, and have been attacking all research that tries to get to the bottom of COVID origins, unless it's pushing a China lab leak agenda.

Richard Ebright has been attacking EcoHealth's work ever since the pandemic as part of his long term criticism of recombinant virus technology. He was part of the Cambridge Group that ended up pausing recombinant viral research in the past, and is extremely vocal (and quite offensively) about our work, which he uses to try to leverage attacks against Dr. Fauci, NIAID, NIH in general.
Stephen Quay is pretty much on the edge of being a quack at this point having made many public statements about HIV inserts in the virus etc.
Kevin Esvelt is calling for research identifying viruses in wildlife as a way to get ahead of pandemics to be closed down, following his

criticisms of CRISPR etc.

It looks like this is another effort by Rand Paul to drum up some public interest from his base, perhaps?

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter:
CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.

Date: Sat, 20 Aug 2022 10:27:29 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 20 Aug 2022 10:26:44 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Continued NIH action - already leaked to the press
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: David Morens b6 Gerald T Keusch b6 Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
CC: Aleksei Chmura b6 >;
Attachments: image001.jpg; Lauer letter to b6

I found a copy on Twitter of Lauer's letter to Rep Comer yesterday – word doc attached, recreated using screenshot jpegs, so hope it works.

It's good that they're publicly stating we've cooperated with NIH – this is related to their continued series of letters about our other grants – making us jump through all sorts of hoops just to continue our work. At the same time, they're clearly trying to show the aggressive Republicans in Congress that NIH is going to crack down on miscreants such as us. Apparently, for at least the next 3 years we'll have to double up our reporting requirements, have no automatic carry over of unspent funds, and have to conduct 6 monthly onsite assessments of subcontractees. We've not been told all that yet by NIH, but no doubt there'll be another letter from Lauer on its way soon.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Saturday, August 20, 2022 10:06 AM
To: 'David Morens' b6 >; 'Gerald T Keusch' b6 >; 'Jeff Sturchio' b6 ;
'Roberts, Rich' b6 >; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6 >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 >
Subject: Continued NIH action - already leaked to the press
Importance: High

Here's the latest from NIH – as usual we received a Friday afternoon pdf letter from Michael Lauer that's full of legalistic language (attached). And as also 'usual', Lauer only sent this the same day he informed Republicans on an oversight committee, and either him or the Republicans then instantly made it public. There's already an article in the Washington Examiner about it (below)

They're basically terminating our subcontract to WIV because we were unable to get the lab notebooks they demanded (no surprise there, given the politics). They're also offering us the chance to renegotiate the grant. Sounds great, but by now of course the chances of any institution in China wanting to work with an organization targeted in this way are pretty slim. There's also the buried proviso that we have to arrange for 6-monthly inspections of our subcontractee's labs.

If we don't want to renegotiate, we have to bilaterally terminate.

After 2 and a half years of pressure from NIH, we're now back to where we were in April of 2020, when NIH informed us to suspend all work with WIV, but that we could carry on with the grant. This was then followed a few days later with full termination, then suspension with conditions, then more conditions, now this. Pretty depressing, awful, and utterly unnecessary.

Not sure what we'll do, but my gut feeling is we should continue and try to find a way forwards with other groups in China. It'll be a hard path, considering WIV are the premier bat virus group in China and our preferred partners, and the politics has made all of this completely toxic. But it's the honorable path, as a scientist, and I think we should at least try.

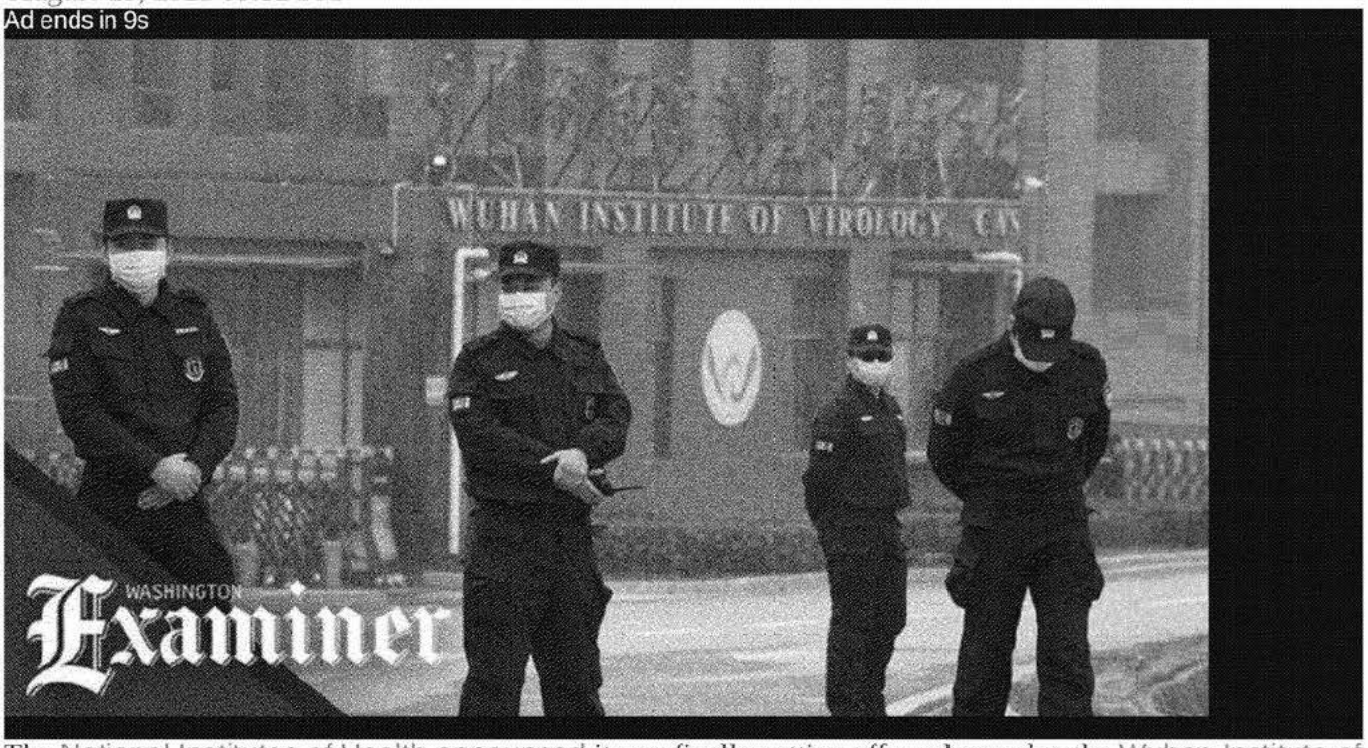
Here's the Washington Examiner article: https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/nih- ends-subaward-wuhan-lab-stonewalling

WUHAN LAB

NIH ends subaward to Wuhan lab after continued stonewalling

by Jerry Dunleavy, Justice Department Reporter |
August 19, 2022 08:21 PM

Ad ends in 9s



The National Institutes of Health announced it was finally cutting off a subaward to the Wuhan Institute of Virology after it continued to refuse to hand over key information about the coronavirus research it conducted with U.S. tax dollars.

NIH Deputy Director Michael Lauer made the revelation in a letter Friday to House Oversight Committee Republicans, in which he said the Wuhan lab had refused to turn over lab notebooks and electronic files connected to its research funded through an NIH subaward given to it by the U.S.-based EcoHealth Alliance.

But Lauer indicated the NIH may continue funding EcoHealth's controversial bat coronavirus research despite the group's documented noncompliance issues, its close links to the Wuhan virology institute, and its history of funneling hundreds of thousands of U.S. tax dollars to the Chinese lab.

"NIH … identified one non-compliance under the ... award that cannot be remedied with specific award conditions," Lauer said Friday. "NIH has requested on two occasions that EHA [EcoHealth Alliance] provide NIH the laboratory notebooks and original electronic files from the research conducted at the WIV [Wuhan

Institute of Virology]. To date, WIV has not provided these records."
Lauer added: "Today, NIH informed EHA that since WIV is unable to fulfill its duties for the subaward grant under R01AI110964, the WIV subaward is terminated for failure to meet award terms and conditions requiring provision of records to NIH upon request."

FBI INVESTIGATED NIH AWARD TO ECOHEALTH AND WUHAN [b6]

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence released an assessment in 2021 stating that one U.S. intelligence agency assessed with "moderate confidence" that COVID-19 most likely emerged from the Chinese government lab in Wuhan, while four U.S. spy agencies and the National Intelligence Council believe with "low confidence" COVID-19 most likely has a natural origin.
The NIH's Lauer also said Friday that the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which has been led by Dr. Anthony Fauci for decades, "will begin to engage with EHA to renegotiate the specific aims and objectives of the R01 grant without the involvement of WIV … in light of the cooperation from EHA and the substantial subsequent improvements in administrative processes that EHA demonstrated."
Rep. James Comer (R-KY), the ranking member on House Oversight, hammered the NIH over this.
"Terminating EcoHealth Alliance's partnership with the Wuhan Lab is the bare minimum," Comer said Friday. "It's unacceptable that the NIH continues to allow EcoHealth Alliance to receive taxpayer dollars even though it is confirmed EcoHealth violated the terms of its grant contract. EcoHealth conducted gain of function research on bat coronaviruses in Wuhan, knew about the Chinese Communist Party's coverup, and failed to inform the U.S. government."
Comer added: "EcoHealth's dangerous experiments in Wuhan and possible efforts to cover up any evidence may have started the pandemic. EcoHealth should not receive a penny of American taxpayer dollars for their gross mismanagement of Americans' hard-earned money."
The NIH had awarded EcoHealth with a grant dubbed "R01AI110964" years ago, and EcoHealth then doled out three research subawards, including one to the Wuhan lab.
"The research approved under this grant sought to understand how bat coronaviruses evolve naturally in the environment to become more transmissible to the human population," the NIH said Friday in defending the award. "This type of research is a critical part of pandemic preparedness."
The grant to EcoHealth was suspended by the NIH in June 2020 due to "grant administrative non-compliance concerns." EcoHealth was reprimanded by the NIH in October when the agency found that the organization delayed revealing that a U.S.-funded experiment conducted with the Wuhan lab determined that mice with implanted human cells became sicker with an engineered version of bat coronavirus. The NIH found more EcoHealth violations in January.
Republicans say the findings showed EcoHealth was funding risky gain-of-function research in China.
EcoHealth leader Peter Daszak was a longtime collaborator with the Wuhan lab who steered hundreds of thousands of dollars in NIH funding to the Chinese lab and was also a key World Health Organization-China joint study team member in early 2021.
Daszak dismissed the lab leak hypothesis in March 2021 when he admitted he took Wuhan lab workers at their word. Meeting minutes from discussions between lab scientists in Wuhan and the WHO-China COVID-19 origins joint study team reveal lab leak concerns were referred to as "myths" and "conspiracy theories."
An advisory group assembled by the WHO said in June that the lab leak hypothesis needed further study.
The NIH said Friday that the prior problems it had identified with EcoHealth's handling of its coronavirus grant included "inadequate oversight in monitoring the activities of its subawardees, failure to report subawards to the General Services Administration's Federal Subaward Reporting System, and errors in indirect rate charges."
But Lauer nevertheless said EcoHealth might again soon start receiving U.S. tax funding for its bat coronavirus experiments — just without the Wuhan lab's continued involvement.
The NIH had been run until recently by Dr. Francis Collins, while Fauci still leads NIAID.
Scientists consulting with the U.S. government early in the pandemic believed COVID-19 originating from a lab in Wuhan was possible or even likely, but emails show Fauci and Collins worked behind the scenes to shut the hypothesis down.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, August 9, 2022 9:46 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
>; Gerald T Keusch b6 Jeff Sturchio b6
Subject: Re: EcoHealth Alliance paper published tomorrow (Tuesday) showing very high rate of SARS-related CoV spillovers in Southeast Asia

Peter, can i share the proofs with Tony, confidentially of course? If not i will at least give him a heads up if that's ok

Also, correct me if i am wrong, but the 66k number is significantly higher than your previous estimate, right?

d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Aug 9, 2022, at 01:12, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:
>
> Some good news..
>
> Just letting you all know that our paper in *Nature Communications* will go live tomorrow at 11am: Sánchez *et al.* "*A strategy to assess spillover risk of bat SARS-related coronaviruses in Southeast Asia*". We used distribution data from bats known to host SARSr-CoVs, human population data, and serological testing results to estimate that a median of ~66,000 people are infected by bat-origin SARSr-CoVs in South and Southeast Asia each year. Obviously, this suggests spillovers are a daily occurrence in the region and would make any possibility of a lab leak pale into insignificance, given that 1) only a few dozen people work in labs or in the field on these viruses, 2) they all wear PPE as opposed to villagers hunting bats etc.
>
> Note that the analysis doesn't take into account people working in the wildlife trade because data are so patchy, but we do know that 14 million people worked in the wildlife trade in China alone before the outbreak, so that means human infections are probably even more common.
>
> I've attached the proofs here, and a press release, as well as an editorial I've published in our journal *EcoHealth* published by Springer. We also know that a story will appear in orrow about this. tomorrow about this.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Tuesday, August 9, 2022 12:54 AM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' b6; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6; Aleksei Chmura < b6 >; 'David Morens' b6; 'Gerald T Keusch' b6; Jeff Sturchio b6
Subject: RE: Reporter request for comment

Bizarre indeed, but this is how they do it – tangential links from you to your former postdoc to Zhengli to me, followed by accusations that you're linked to research which they (wrongly) claim is GoF, all used to try to undermine your appropriate pushback against all these other attacks.

It's exactly what the Union of Concerned Scientists called the 'disinformation playbook' that was used by big tobacco and anti-climate change activists (successfully I might add). https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/disinformation- playbook

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 8, 2022 4:16 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Gerald T Keusch [b6]
Subject: RE: Reporter request for comment

Peter:

Maybe you should suggest she talk to your lawyer (at her expense).

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: [b6]
email [b6]

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 8, 2022 4:02 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; David Morens [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Gerald T Keusch [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Reporter request for comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

This is crazy. How would I even do that? I don't work in those areas?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: b6
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Kopp <emily@usrtk.org>
Date: August 8, 2022 at 2:51:45 PM CDT
To: "Hotez, Peter Jay" <b6
Subject: Re: Reporter request for comment

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I'll also report that the paper you cofunded with EcoHealth Alliance dealt with rWIV1-SHC014S, a chimeric virus shown to be very dangerous to mice with human airway cells, which biosafety experts consider to be gain of function, and which is already under GOP congressional investigators' microscope. Were you aware of this? Should you have disclosed this to your followers on Twitter and The Lancet Commission?

Please clarify if this is incorrect.

Thank you,
Emily

On Mon, Aug 8, 2022 at 12:31 PM Emily Kopp <emily@usrtk.org> wrote:

> Putting this back at the top of your inbox. Since you've been tweeting about this issue, do you plan on replying?
>
> On Sun, Aug 7, 2022 at 2:32 PM Emily Kopp <emily@usrtk.org> wrote:
>
> > Dr. Hotez,
> >
> > I received an anonymous tip regarding an apparent conflict of interest relevant to your criticism of the GOP investigation into the possibility that a lab accident sparked the pandemic.

The tipster pointed out that your grant to develop a SARS vaccine was in part motivated by the possibility that a lab accident or bioterrorist attack could result in a SARS outbreak.

Questions:

1. Could you please clarify why you believe the lab origin theory of SARS-CoV-2 is ridiculous pseudoscience, even though you did research under the presumption that a SARS-like virus escaping from a laboratory was possible? Taxpayers devoted $1.6 million in funding toward that project - was it under pseudoscientific pretenses?

2. Could you clarify your involvement in this research project underwritten by both your grant and EcoHealth Alliance's controversial "understanding the risk of bat coronavirus emergence" grant? Do you have a personal or professional relationship with Shi Zhengli? What about Peter Daszak? Have you ever funded or co-funded research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology?

Thank you,

--
Emily Kopp
Reporter
U.S. Right to Know
Signal: b6 b6



Date: Tue, 7 May 2024 11:10:51 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 7 May 2024 11:10:42 PM -0400
Subject: New line of investigation from the SSCP
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6] Keith Martin [b6] David Morens [b6]
Attachments: 2024.05.07-SSCP-Letter-to-State-Department.pdf

The SSCP Republicans are now stating that there is "pertinent information in highly credible documents" from the State Dept, but these are classified and were redacted. They're claiming that they asked for a hearing with the State Dept before mine, but State Dept did not agree.

https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024.05.07-SSCP-Letter-to-State-Department.pdf

It's clear that this 'intel' could not possibly contain anything of any particular note, because if it did, the IC would have to change its conclusion that only 2 of the intelligence agencies believe COVID came from a lab, and with only low or moderate confidence, whereas 4 agencies had low confidence that it came from the wildlife markets, the other agencies failing to reach a conclusion.

The concerning thing of course is that they are trying to insinuate I'm linked to intelligence agencies in some way, both by asking multiple questions about this to me live in front of the public, and by putting my name and our organization's name in this letter. It's very damaging, because as our staff travels around the world there are conspiracies about the CIA and scientists, and this amplifies them.

Me and three others on our staff are already banned by the Russian Federation from entering Russia. My concern is that this could end up with me or one of our staff off to solitary confinement in one of the 40 countries we work with.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2024 2:25 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura < [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6]; Keith Martin [b6]; David Morens <
Subject: Re: More upsetting news for us at EcoHealth Alliance

The only person i have access to these days is Paul Friedrichs the White House pandemic coordinator. I'm wondering maybe you should contact Chuck Schumer?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6] | Phone: [b6] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
[b6]
iPhone

On May 7, 2024, at 1:22 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Yes – it would need to be from high up in USDA to say that 'hold on, these guys aren't debarred, and this is a political action, so please carry on the process of funding them'

The specific unit in USDA that's in charge of the funding process is NIFA (https://www.nifa.usda.gov/) which is the unit that oversees USDA research grants.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2024 2:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura b6; Gerald Keusch b6 Keith Martin b6 David Morens
Subject: Re: More upsetting news for us at EcoHealth Alliance

This is truly awful Peter, I'm so sorry. If there was to be an effective intervention who would do that? Would it be the White House with the Agrigulture Secretary?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

On May 7, 2024, at 10:25 AM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Just heard today that a 5 year $2.5 million award to analyze disease dynamics in wildlife farms in Southeast Asia we were in the process of finalizing with USDA via the NSF/NIH Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases program is now "impossible" for them to fund. We received a very high score on review, were told it was highly competitive, received notice from USDA that it was 'recommended for funding', and over the past few weeks met repeatedly with the program staff at USDA to finalize all the forms. They were communicating positively with us requesting further paper work as recently as last week, now suddenly we've been told the following:

"Good morning. I must bring you some unfortunate news. Due to unforeseen circumstances, it has become impossible for USDA NIFA to provide support for the project that we discussed. I have had to retract my recommendation. I apologize for the inconvenience this will have caused you."

We're trying to set up calls to find out more information, but it's well known that you don't have funding from an agency until the notice of award and that they can pull out for reasons like budget shortfalls etc. I doubt there's anything we can do. This is similar to an issue we had last year with an joint-PI NIH grant to Colorado State University with us having a substantial role and funding. The program officer spoke with the CSU PI and said they should reduce our budget because if we get 'debarred' NIH will lose its budget. We fought back, CSU scientists pushed back, and we got our Notice of Award.

It's just outrageous that the Republicans can de facto de-fund and organization on a whim. We are not debarred, and we're looking into the rules for debarment and this is normally for issues like fraud, criminal convictions related to grant management, tax evasion etc. I strongly doubt that we would be debarred over a late report that we have substantial evidence we tried to submit.

What worries me is that we are now going to have a multi-year impact on our organization, whether or not we are debarred, and whether or not we actually did anything wrong. I'm also devastated at the impact this will have on my reputation (already in tatters at this point) and my career.

Extremely upsetting and disappointing!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:04 PM
To: Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura < [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Keith Martin < [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: Re: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

As far as I can tell, this hearing has received zero national attention. No one beyond our small circle is talking about this

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: [b6]

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6] | Phone: [b6] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
[b6]
iPhone

On May 3, 2024, at 1:52 PM, Jeffrey Sturchio < [b6] wrote:

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All:

This is just Wenstrup and the Rs spiking the ball after a hearing in which they refused to let Peter answer the questions posed to him. All of the alleged "evidence" of EHA's supposed transgressions is based on misrepresentation and selective citation of the documentary evidence and false assumptions about the science involved (e.g., since when does a

Republican Congresswoman with an MBA and no scientific training get to decide what the definition of gain-of-function research should be?). The only people showing contempt for the American people on Wednesday were the members of Congress and staff who used this hearing as a vehicle to propagate a malicious political narrative that falsely and unfairly blamed Peter Daszak and EHA for research that never happened and outcomes that are chimerical figments of their imagination.

As ever,
Jeff

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 1:12 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Keith Martin [b6] David Morens [b6]
Subject: Re: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

This is the most awful piece I've seen yet - they say:

"**The Select Subcommittee will take further steps to address Dr. Daszak's contempt for the American people.**"

<image001.png>

Hearing Wrap Up: EcoHealth Alliance Should be Criminally Investigated, Formally Debarred - United States House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
oversight.house.gov

I am very worried for my future and the future of EcoHealth alliance right now. At best this will drive continued hate and death threats… at worst…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On May 2, 2024, at 10:00 AM, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:

Excellent article!

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6]

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 6:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] g >; Aleksei Chmura < [b6] >; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] >; Roberts, Rich < [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6]; Keith Martin [b6] David Morens [b6]
Subject: Post by Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD on X

EXTERNAL SENDER

Prof Peter Hotez MD PhD
@PeterHotez

Important article on yesterday's disgusting Stalinist show trial in the House of Representatives: The politicization of the pandemic continues - great writing as always from @hiltzikm @latimes latimes.com/business/story…

5/2/24, 5:50 AM

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

Date: Sat, 1 Jun 2024 3:29:27 PM -0400

Sent: Sat, 1 Jun 2024 3:29:17 PM -0400

Subject: RE: email from the National Academies to "discuss my service to NASEM" in light of the recent HHS decision

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]

To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Gerald Jerry Keusch [b6]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]>; Peter Jay Hotez [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>; Keith Martin [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]

Attachments: image001.png

Peter:

I would tell them to go to hell. Let them wait until you have had a chance to respond. At this point, they are trying to cover their asses instead of supporting one of their most stalwart members.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, June 1, 2024 1:39 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Gerald Jerry Keusch [b6]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Peter Jay Hotez [b6] David Morens [b6]>; Keith Martin [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Fwd: email from the National Academies to "discuss my service to NASEM" in light of the recent HHS decision

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear all,

As expected, rather than the academies coming to our rescue, they now want a "quiet chat"… no doubt I'll be urged to quietly step down from my current duties as chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats & member of the NASEM Standing Committee on Emerging Infectious Diseases and 21st Century Health Threats.

If this isn't McCarthyism, what is it?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Symmes, Gregory" b6
Date: May 31, 2024 at 3:57:55 PM EDT
To: "Daszak, Peter" b6 g >
Cc: "Wood, Tasha" b6
Subject: meeting request

Dear Dr. Daszak,

My name is Greg Symmes and I'm the Chief Program Officer of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. You may remember meeting me years ago during your service on the Committee to Advise the US Global Change Research Program, when I was executive director of the Academies' Division on Earth and Life Studies.

I'm reaching out to schedule a zoom call with you to discuss potential impact of the recent HHS decision on your service to the National Academies.

My executive assistant Tasha Wood will be in touch with your office to arrange a time for us to meet. Please let me know if there is someone in your office Tasha should work with to help with your schedule.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Best,
Greg Symmes

Gregory H. Symmes, Ph.D.
Chief Program Officer
Acting Chief Operating Officer
b6

NATIONAL ACADEMIES *Sciences Engineering Medicine*

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Date: Thu, 14 Mar 2024 5:55:09 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 14 Mar 2024 5:54:50 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Russian federation sanctions list
From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Alison Andre [b6]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] [b6] Keith Martin [b6] Soriano Osejo, Douglas [b6]>; Kathy Chase-Gaudreau [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

I guess you'll need to reconsider your summer vacation plans in Crimea. Seriously this is awful, I'm so sorry, Peter, Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: [b6]
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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6] | Phone: [b6] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
[b6]
iPhone

On Mar 14, 2024, at 4:46 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

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More on the sanctions list – apparently I'll be joining dignitaries who are already sanctioned by the Russian Federation like Obama, Sean Penn, Alexander Vindman, USAID Administrator Samantha Powers, and even some of the politicians who've been harassing EcoHealth Alliance, like Joni Ernst!

Rich – I know you're a Nobel Laureate, but have you yet been sanctioned by an authoritarian regime? Obviously it doesn't come with any actual benefits, and you do have to watch out for people with umbrellas, and hotel doors curiously unlocked etc.…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 4:23 PM
To: 'Alison Andre' <b6; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6 effrey Sturchio' <
b6 >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 'Roberts, Rich' b6 > b6
; 'Keith Martin' b6
Cc: 'Soriano Osejo, Douglas' <b6 'Kathy Chase-Gaudreau' <
b6 Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re. our next meeting.
Importance: High

I'm looking forward to this call – I have some information re. the political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance and myself that I'd like to talk about also and get your advice on – it'll take about 20 minutes, so if we set aside an hour that would be great.

As a teaser, and just to show you how bizarre things are these days, I found out (from the horrible lab leakers on Twitter) that the Russian Federation has today named me as one of the people on their latest "Sanctioned Individuals" list. We think it's related to the Ukraine Biolabs conspiracy that they've been promoting because 3 other EcoHealth staff are listed along with some former collaborators who actually worked with DTRA on Ukraine lab capacity.

Here's the link: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1938555/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Alison Andre b6 >
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 2:59 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 b6 ; Keith Martin b6
Cc: Soriano Osejo, Douglas b6 Kathy Chase-Gaudreau < b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Peter Daszak <
Subject: Re: Scheduling Coalition Catch Up Meeting

Dear All,

Thank you to those who filled out the meeting poll and sorry to send out a new one so soon. Next week wasn't the best for most of the group so I'm including a new poll for the week of March 25. Could you please take a moment to fill out this poll?

b6

Thank you,
Alison

On Tue, Mar 12, 2024 at 12:02 PM Alison Andre b6 wrote:

> Dear All,
>
> I'm hoping to schedule a meeting with the group sometime next week to share any recent updates since the last meeting. Could you please take a moment to fill in your availability below?
>
> b6
>
> Thank you,
> Alison
>
> --
> **Alison Andre**
> *Executive Assistant to the President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Ave, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018
>
> b6 irect)
> 1.212.380.4465 (fax)

www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

--

Alison Andre

Executive Assistant to the President

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1.212.380.4465 (fax)

www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Wed, 15 May 2024 4:56:51 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Wash Examiner: HHS suspends funding from organization that funded Wuhan virus research
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] peter hotez [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

From the cell phone of David Morens

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [C]** [b6]
Date: Wed, May 15, 2024, 16:54
Subject: Wash Examiner: HHS suspends funding from organization that funded Wuhan virus research
To:

HHS suspends funding from organization that funded Wuhan virus research

By Gabrielle M. Etzel

May 15, 2024 12:52 pm

.

The Department of Health and Human Services on Wednesday suspended all federal funding for the nonprofit research organization EcoHealth Alliance for misleading government agencies about their taxpayer-funded research project.

The announcement follows a long-term House investigation into EcoHealth's potential involvement in the origin of SARS-CoV-2. The organization came under intense scrutiny during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic for its coronavirus research projects conducted in Wuhan, China, funded by the National Institutes of Health.

HHS's Suspension and Debarment Official, Henrietta Brisbon, wrote to EcoHealth President Peter Daszak that the immediate suspension of funding for his organization is "necessary to protect the public interest and due to a cause of so serious or compelling nature that it affects [EcoHealth's] present responsibility."

Republicans on the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic issued a report earlier this month calling for the president of EcoHealth, Peter Daszak, to be stripped of his medical license and criminally investigated for allegedly misleading the federal government.

"EcoHealth Alliance and Dr. Peter Daszak should never again receive a single penny from the U.S. taxpayer," said Subcommittee Chairman Brad Wenstrup (R-OH). "Only two weeks after the Select Subcommittee released an extensive report detailing EcoHealth's wrongdoing and recommending the formal debarment of EcoHealth and its president, HHS has begun efforts to cut off all U.S. funding to this corrupt organization."

The Republican report and HHS documents outline that EcoHealth received National Institutes of Health funding in 2014 to conduct bat coronavirus research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, with the intention of creating chimeric coronaviruses to better understand natural emergence of viruses with pandemic potential.

Subcommittee evidence published this month found that EcoHealth submitted its Year 5 Report for National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases review two years late and violated grant terms by failing to report potentially dangerous research from the WIV to NIAID.

"These actions are wholly abhorrent, indefensible, and must be addressed with swift action. EcoHealth's immediate funding suspension and future debarment is not only a victory for the U.S. taxpayer, but also for American national security and the safety of citizens worldwide," said Wenstrup.

Suspension and debarment, which is the long-term prohibition of receiving of federal funds, is a primary public mechanism that "protects the federal government from fraud waste and abuse by using a number of tools to avoid doing business with non-responsible actors," according to the U.S. General Services Administration definition.

Although the suspension is immediate, a debarment period is established after a formal hearing process and is usually only three years in length depending on aggravating circumstances.

EcoHealth has been a major recipient of federal funds for global research projects for decades. Last month, the watchdog group White Coat Waste Project found that EcoHealth had been awarded $60 million in taxpayer funding since the start of the COVID-19.

The *Washington Examiner* asked EcoHealth for comment.

Disclaimer: Any third-party material in this email has been shared for internal use under fair use provisions of U.S. copyright law, without further verification of its accuracy/veracity. It does not necessarily represent my views nor those of NIAID, NIH, HHS, or the U.S. government.

Date: Fri, 21 Jul 2023 1:04:18 PM -0400
Subject: Fwd: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
From: David Morens b6
To: David Morens b6

David M. Morens, MD
b6
b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Peter Daszak b6
Date: Fri, Jul 1, 2022 at 9:36 AM
Subject: Sachs and Relman quoted again today
To: Roberts, Rich b6 >, Hotez, Peter Jay b6 >
Cc: Gerald T Keusch b6 >, Aleksei Chmura b6 >, David Morens b6 >, Jeffrey Sturchio b6 >

We've been fielding questions all week from a reporter at US Right to Know because they've FoIA'd another batch of emails. Here's an article today claiming that Ian Lipkin should have reported working with EHA as a 'Conflict of Interest' for his Nature Medicine paper with Kristian Andersen et al. back in Feb 2020.

Here's the link:
https://usrtk.org/biohazards-blog/anti-lab-leak-virologist-ecohealth-alliance-partner/

You'll be irritated to see quotes from Jeff Sachs and David Relman. Everyone seems happy with the idea that somehow collaborating with EcoHealth Alliance means you have a conflict of interest in this world of fake COVID origin stories.

The article is also utterly disingenuous in pretending it took a FoIA lawsuit to find out that Ian Lipkin collaborated with us. All it would

have taken is a 5 second Google Search.

Note also US Right to Know's motto: "Pursuing truth and transparency for public health".

PURSUING TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Virologist who tried to discredit the lab leak theory was once a 'partner' to EcoHealth Alliance

PrintEmailShareTweet

Posted on July 1, 2022 by Emily Kopp

Columbia University virologist Ian Lipkin has coauthored several articles with EcoHealth Alliance since 2011. (Photo credit: kris krüg)

A virologist who coauthored a paper marginalizing the lab leak theory did not disclose his ties to the research group at the center of it.

Director of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity Ian Lipkin has often worked with EcoHealth Alliance, a U.S.-based collaborator of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the group confirmed in an email.

EcoHealth Alliance listed Lipkin as a "partner" from 2012 to 2014, an archived version of the group's website shows. Lipkin has coauthored at least ten scientific papers with EcoHealth researchers from 2011 to 2021, EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak said in an email. These publications include a paper about novel coronaviruses EcoHealth and its partners sampled around the world.

EcoHealth Alliance hunts for novel viruses in wildlife and funds research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Lipkin did not disclose his partnership with EcoHealth in "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," a highly influential paper that states that COVID-19 arose from nature.

A central premise of that paper: COVID-19 is too dissimilar from viruses commonly employed in experiments to have spilled out of a lab.

"It is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus," the paper states. "The genetic data irrefutably show that SARS-CoV-2 is not

derived from any previously used virus backbone."

But Lipkin did not disclose his connection to a nonprofit that uncovers new and novel viruses. Some of those viruses were likely studied at its partnering lab in Wuhan, which housed one of the world's largest collection of bat coronaviruses.

Lipkin did not return several requests for comment.

At 5.7 million views, the Nature Medicine article may be one of the most widely read scientific papers in history — though the piece is formally a "correspondence."

David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist and emerging infectious diseases expert for the National Academies, said conflicts of interest are especially troublesome when writing on high profile issues.

"For any major, controversial issue, I believe that all of us have an even greater responsibility to reveal those conflicts upfront—and let others have an opportunity to judge what effect those conflicts might have had," said Relman.

Relman also called into question the logic of the paper's premise. The Wuhan Institute of Virology may have simply been experimenting with unfamiliar viruses. The disappearance of the lab's coronavirus sequence database in 2019 and the lab's history of gain-of-function experiments also weaken the claims of Lipkin and his coauthors, Relman said.

"The Proximal Origins paper is flawed in its assumptions, logic and the soundness of its conclusions. I was very surprised that it passed review at Nature Medicine," he said.

Columbia University Center for Sustainable Development Director Jeffrey Sachs — chair of The Lancet COVID-19 Commission — said the citation the authors used to prop up the paper's premise deserves more scrutiny.

"The Proximal Origins paper has no credibility," Sachs wrote in an email. "The paper's central claim — that SARS-CoV-2 is not related to viruses previously reported in laboratory research — offers as proof a footnote to a 2014 paper!"

"It ludicrously claims to debunk a 2019 lab emergence using a 2014 paper," he continued. "The paper offers no real evidence whatsoever against the possible lab origin of the virus, even though it claimed to do so."

Lipkin himself has since acknowledged the possibility that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was experimenting with unknown viruses, contradicting the popular paper he coauthored.

"If they've got hundreds of bat samples that are coming in, and some of them aren't characterized, how would they know whether this virus was or wasn't in this lab? They wouldn't," Lipkin said in an interview with the Washington Post last year.

But Lipkin has not disclosed his work with EcoHealth to reporters.

Nature Medicine, the journal that published the paper, defines a "competing interest" requiring disclosure as including "personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals" — paid or unpaid. A spokesperson for parent company Springer Nature did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

Lipkin's connection to a group at the center of lab leak suspicions is the latest revelation to cast doubt on the correspondence.

Significant questions remain. It's still unclear how the authors dispelled their own private concerns that the virus had been engineered within a couple of days.

For example, Lipkin privately voiced concerns to his coauthors about a "nightmare of circumstantial evidence" pointing to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Vanity Fair reported.

It's also unknown to what extent leaders of the National Institutes of Health, which funded the EcoHealth Alliance, may have shaped the paper.

Grant reports that led a reporter to the defunct link showing Lipkin's partnership with EcoHealth Alliance were obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Biohazards, Biohazards Blog Anthony Fauci, David Relman, EcoHealth Alliance, Ian Lipkin, Jeff Sachs, Kristian Andersen, Peter Daszak, proximal origin, Robert Garry, The Lancet's COVID Commission, Virologist, Wuhan Institute of Virology

0

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich b6 >
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6 Peter Daszak
b6 >
Cc: Gerald T Keusch b6 >; Aleksei Chmura
b6 >; David Morens b6 >;
Jeffrey Sturchio b6 >
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

What a joke – he should be locked up

Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs

240 County Road

Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA

Tel: b6

Fax: (978) 412 9910

email: b6

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 10:50 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Gerald T Keusch [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; David Morens [b6]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

EXTERNAL SENDER

Looks like Joe Rogan has gone full down the rabbit hole
https://twitter.com/skmorefield/status/1542497337171496961?s=21 &t=6w48UFQHdjizswS_RXhHfQ

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar

Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
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Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48

Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez

Like us on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

b6

Phone: b6

Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Jun 28, 2022, at 10:54 AM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Richard Horton already made a false statement about me to the House of Commons – saying that it took him a year to get me to fully disclose my conflicts of interests for the Lancet 'Statement of support' we wrote in Feb 2020. He referred to me as "that individual". De-humanizing and dishonest. So I doubt he'll intervene, but worth a shot.

By the way – here's today's gloating article by the "White Coat Waste" celebrating Republican congressional member Reschenthaler (PA) who has been doggedly pursuing our defunding for the last 2 years. The amendments do not actually make any iota of difference of course – No funds from DoD ever went to Wuhan either directly or through EcoHealth. But it does the job of painting us as an organization that should be attacked. Just as Sachs' Lancet Commission report will now do.

https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2022/06/24/progress- congress-defunds-wuhan-animal-lab-ecohealth-alliance/

PROGRESS! CONGRESS DEFUNDS WUHAN ANIMAL LAB, ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE

POSTED BY AMANDA NIEVES

24 JUNE 2022 | BLOG

Ever since White Coat Waste Project (WCW) first exposed that dangerous coronavirus experiments on animals at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) were funded by U.S. taxpayers, the idea that the coronavirus accidentally leaked from the lab and caused the COVID pandemic has gained international traction. Even the World Health Organization (WHO) — which once dismissed the theory — now says that the lab leak hypothesis deserves "further investigation."

Congress recognizes the threat posed by funding risky animal experiments at the notorious Wuhan lab, too. On Wednesday, June 22, the powerful House Appropriations Committee, which sets the budget for federal agencies, approved a White Coat Waste Project-endorsed amendment from Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA), banning any Department of Defense (DOD) funds from being spent at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The DOD, along with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and State Department, funded dangerous animal experiments at the Wuhan lab.

The committee also approved a second WCW-backed amendment from Rep. Reschenthaler, barring the DOD, for the second year in a row, from funding any work in China performed by the white coats at shady nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, which funneled tax dollars to the Wuhan lab. A majority of Americans, as well as the FBI and other experts, believe their gain-of-function experiments on animals could have caused the pandemic.

Rep. Reschenthaler, a Waste Warrior, has been a long-time ally of WCW, recently penning a joint op-ed in Newsweek with our founder and president Anthony Bellotti about our work together to investigate the lab leak hypothesis and hold government bureaucrats accountable.

The bill will soon head to the House for a vote, then the Senate. As it progresses, we will keep you posted; in the meantime, thank you to Rep. Reschenthaler, and other members of the Appropriations Committee, for protecting taxpayers, animals and public health!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 28, 2022 11:44 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Gerald T Keusch [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]>; Rich Roberts [b6]>
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs' comments RE: COVID-19 Commission: Need approval of minor edits after first peer review

It's beyond disgusting, hopefully Richard Horton intervenes

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar

Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of

Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez

Skype: b6

Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center:

Date: Thu, 19 Jan 2023 2:59:37 PM -0500

Sent: Thu, 19 Jan 2023 2:59:26 PM -0500

Subject: Re: Can we have a call to discuss how to build momentum to push back against the Republican's anti-science 'investigation' agenda?

From: Alison Andre [b6]>

To: Peter Daszak [b6]

CC: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] David Morens [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] >; Gerald Keusch [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Jeff Sturchio [b6] [b6]

Dear All,

Please take a moment to fill out your availability in the doodle poll below or feel free to reply to me with your availability.

[b6]

Thank you,
Alison

On Thu, Jan 19, 2023 at 12:48 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> Adding Peter's assistant Douglas Soriano.
>
> I also just heard from the FBI that yet another death list has been circulated with my name and EcoHealth's on it.
>
> Peter – you might also be interested in this effort from Texas State lawmaker Briscoe Cain: https://www.based-politics.com/2023/01/19/texas- calls-on-the-federal-government-to-investigate- covid/
>
> Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2023 10:43 AM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]; 'David Morens [b6]' [ ]
Rich Roberts [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]' [b6]; Jeff Sturchio ([b6] Alison Andre [b6]' < [b6]>
Subject: Can we have a call to discuss how to build momentum to push back against the Republican's anti-science 'investigation' agenda?
Importance: High

Happy new year everyone!

It's been a while since we all connected, and after a hectic build up to the holidays (I was on 3, multi-week trips

to Southeast Asia between Sept and Dec), I wanted to get back in touch with you and let you know what's happening. As you know, we received a letter from Reps. Comer and Jordan mid-December demanding documents and on-the-record interviews as part of their 'investigations' they're planning into COVID origins. The White House received similar letters demanding docs and interviews with the HHS Secretary, multiple people from NIH (incl. David Morens) and others. They pushed back because the Republicans weren't even in power, and we've now heard from the staffers that they're getting ready to send new letters over to us all. None of us are sure how actively or rapidly they'll get to their COVID investigation, or if this will involve public hearings. They've got a lot of other issues, and a priority to target Hunter Biden's laptop, as well as new issues like the debt ceiling and classified documents. However, we do expect that they will get to it eventually, and that the Republicans in the House will be aggressively targeting EcoHealth Alliance (and probably other organizations) with efforts to defund us.

This all adds to a growing anti-science movement that Peter Hotez has been highlighting in articles and online recently around COVID origins, the mask mandates, vaccine mandates and other anti-vaxx and 'anti-expert' type attacks. The Republicans will want to turn up the heat to keep all of this in the press so it helps them in their attacks on Biden, Fauci etc. It's pure politics, but has a real threat of damage to us, and to the research we all value. At the very least, we expect to see substantial efforts to legislate against so-called gain-of-function work, and **as of yet, zero pushback from the scientific community writ large – the societies, academies, universities**. The media are jumping in. Everyone wants to write an article about COVID origin and given the aggression on social media, these are being amplified rapidly and getting into the public eye. Just in the last couple of days:

- A long-winded whiny article from *The Intercept* about FoIA'd emails that basically show how scientists discussed the lab hypothesis early on, but David Relman (at the end of the article) claims shows they were rushing to judgement: https://theintercept.com/2023/01/19/covid- origin-nih-emails/

- Article from Washington Post that links Boston Univ's NEIDL's 'risky research' to Wuhan's 'risky research' and to the origin of COVID https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/01/18/lab- leak-theory-virologist/

- A report from the GAO yesterday that mildly criticizes NIH's oversight of Gain of Function review: https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao- 23-105455.pdf

- Three days ago a paper from North Carolina from a Republican perspective that criticizes Ralph Baric's lab.. https://www.carolinajournal.com/opinion/nc- can-be-a-leader-in-safe-biotech-research/

The problem I see is that the Republicans are getting what they want – keeping the lab leak hypothesis and anti-science sentiments in the mainstream press and setting the stage for the McCarthy-style witch hunts that Peter Hotez has been talking about. We are actively reaching out to Democrats in Senate and Congress to try to build up their energy to defend against this, but we are just one small organization, and I'm worried about how successful we can be. I've been talking with Jeff Sturchio about renewing our efforts to try and build a coalition to counter this, involving the societies, activist groups like Research! America, university coalitions like the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), ASTMH, APHA, NL Campaigns, The pandemic Action coalition, etc.

Will you all be willing to have a one hour call in the next week or two to do some initial brainstorming of this, namely:

- Who to involve
- How to go about setting up a 'coalition'
- What the goals should be, e.g. a position paper laying out reasons why research on pandemic prevention and preparedness is necessary, Op Eds, briefing notes, a website, visiting staffers on the Hill etc.
- How to do this without drawing political pressure

I'm cc'ing Alison Andre, who can work with your schedules to make this happen, and am really looking forward to talking with you all again.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Alison Andre

Executive Assistant to the President

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[redacted](direct)
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www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Sat, 27 Apr 2024 8:09:22 AM -0400

Subject: Re: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times

From: b6

To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6

CC: b6 Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich b6 b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 b6

Hi all, I Just had a good call with Michael Hiltzik, mainly off the record, but I gave him some quotes at the end along the lines of "It seems that NIH's actions are continuing the de facto blocking of our funding via administrative overreach.." or something less eloquent. He will allow me to check quotes. I also gave him the go ahead to excerpts from the emails and even publish the whole emails that detail the onerous oversight that NIH have been using to block our work, should he wish to. These have already been FoIA'd and are likely to be public very soon in any case.

He told me he will probably wait until after the hearing to see what happens there that can add to his story, but It does seem that he will be doing a story that directly critiques NIH's actions against EcoHealth, and that he believes are part of them trying to rationalize their initial termination under Collins, which I reminded him, our legal team contend was an illegal move. He asked for comment from Tabak and Lauer, and they responded with a single line along the lines "because this is the subject of ongoing compliance oversight, we cannot comment" or similar.

I spoke to Michael Hiltzik about what seems to be a sort of Troika at NIH – Francis Collins, Lawrence Tabak and Michael Lauer. Collins and then Tabak clearly have given the go-ahead on a number of issues to Lauer to do what he can with EcoHealth in a way that benefits NIH and avoids harassment from congress. This seems to mirror what Lauer has done with some Chinese American scientists who were accused of illicit financial activities, never shown to have committed any, but lost their jobs or privileges once Lauer called their Deans (see story in *Science* https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers).

He mentioned he had a good conversation with you also Jerry…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:37 AM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: [b6] 'Jeff Sturchio' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] g>; Aleksei Chmura [b6] John Feigelson < [b6]
Subject: RE: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

Thanks for the kind words Jerry.

Talking with Michael Hiltzik at 1pm and will be ready to fill him in on some of this, and point him to the Troika at the top of NIH (Collins, Tabak, Lauer) who's weak-willed kow-towing to the former president began all this with the termination of my grant 4 years and 2 days ago (not that I'm counting!!)…

I'll avoid the phrase "four more years" at this point, because I really think we do have another 4 years of crap to wade through…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:10 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] >; Jeff Sturchio [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] >; [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] ; John Feigelson < [b6] >
Subject: Re: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

It is absolutely awful Peter. But I expect your bravery in the face of adversity, and your insistence on clarity and truth, as David and Tony will echo it as well, will remain strong and in the end be the authentic and true of the fictional story they are trying to manufacture.

Jerry
Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 8:04 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] > wrote:

As they indicated on official twitter they want to "sell popcorn"

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: [b6]

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6] | Phone: [b6] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
[b6]
iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

I agree with that – the media are otherwise occupied.

That said, we're now hearing that the SSCP are considering sending us a subpoena today. We've spent the last few days turning over emails and documents, but they still want to get their 'angry letter/subpoena' story, so looks like more garbage coming our way.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 10:37 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Jeff Sturchio b6
>; Roberts, Rich Aleksei Chmura b6
John Feigelson b6
Subject: Re: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

It's just awful Peter, I'm so sorry, but if it's any consolation the press is busy with Trump hearings and the culture wars playing out on college campuses so there's a good chance that it won't be highlighted much in the mainstream media

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:

b6

iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 9:25 AM, Peter Daszak **b6** wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Dear all,

Just letting you know some of the damage that these political attacks on science have. As soon as the SSCP announced my hearing a few weeks ago, I noticed a significant increase in online death threats, both the number and severity of the threats. On Tuesday this week I received a death threat by mail at my house, and while I was in DC yesterday for a mock hearing, the local police received a notice that someone had killed a scientist and had his wife tied up in the basement at my house. It was a fake call but we ended up with 4 police cars, and detectives searching the house, and staying for the afternoon. We're expecting more of this and are tightening up security for the next couple of weeks at my house and in the office. We also have security lined up in DC where there is a real chance for harassment because they know I have to enter the building that morning. It's also a public building and people will be in the corridors as I enter the room.

In the meantime the SSCP seem happy to gin up their base with a Twitter 'countdown' to my hearing date, just like the buildup to the next season of "Game of Thrones" (below). This time they didn't use the popcorn icon – meaning 'bring your popcorn for this fun show' – as they did on previous countdowns to testimony. I wonder if that's because Peter Hotez called them out repeatedly?

Anyway – it looks like we're in for a rough couple of weeks. Sometime today or over the weekend, the SSCP tells us they'll release a (no doubt damning) report about EcoHealth Alliance, as well as the transcripion from my 9.5 hours interview I did with them in November. That will keep the Right wing press busy and get their supporters frothing at the mouth up to Wednesday..

Post

See new posts

Conversation

<image003.jpg>

Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

@COVIDSelect

In less than one week, EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak will appear before
@COVIDSelect
for a public hearing.
<image001.png>
COVID-19 origins
<image001.png>
Gain-of-function research

<image001.png>
Wuhan Institute of Virology
<image001.png>
Dr. Anthony Fauci…and more are on the table.

✔COVID-19 origins
✔Gain-of-function research
✔Wuhan Institute of Virology
✔Dr. Anthony Fauci

May 1, 2024 | 10:00am ET

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 11:34 PM
To: b6 Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]'Jeff Sturchio' <
b6 ; 'Roberts, Rich' b6 ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6] '
b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura[b6]; John Feigelson <
b6
Subject: Details and a link to my upcoming Public Hearing
Importance: High

Dear colleagues,

Sadly we're getting close to my upcoming public hearing with the SSCP. There are some details and a link below that you can use to watch it live on the day:
https://uspolitics.einnews.com/pr_news/706672646/hearing- advisory-ecohealth-alliance-president-dr-peter-daszak-to-testify-on-may-1

Hearing Advisory: EcoHealth

Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak to Testify on May 1

WASHINGTON — On May 1, 2024 at 10:00am ET, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic will hold a hearing titled, "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak." This hearing will examine EcoHealth Alliance's (EcoHealth) use of U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund dangerous gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology as well as hold Dr. Daszak publicly accountable for any and all discrepancies between his closed-door transcribed interview and available evidence. Prior to Dr. Daszak's public testimony, the Select Subcommittee will release the full transcript from Dr. Daszak's transcribed interview and publish a detailed report about EcoHealth's impact on the origins of COVID-19.

Read more about Dr. Daszak's upcoming hearing here.

WHAT: Hearing titled "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak"

DATE: Wednesday, May 1, 2024

TIME: 10:00AM ET

LOCATION: 2154 Rayburn House Office Building

WITNESS:

Dr. Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.

WATCH: The hearing will be open to the public and press and will be livestreamed online at https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/a-hearing-with-the-president-of-ecohealth-alliance-dr-peter-daszak/.

RSVP: Media must be congressionally credentialed and RSVP by Tuesday, May 1 at 5:00 PM ET.

###

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 6:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Jeff Sturchio < b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Now public that Tony Fauci will testify in front of SSCP on June 3rd

I do not I t have a date yet. My lawyer is ne
motivating with sscp

In the meantime, my law.yers have initiated a professional deep dive into my Gmail and Proton mail,and will turn that over to sscp. This will take some time. I doubt there is anything to find but of course. they will look for crumbs to blow up into mountains. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/24/24 17:33, Peter Daszak wrote:

> I've attached a pdf of the story in the Washington Post (it's behind a paywall) – also here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2024/04/24/fauci- congress-testimony-pandemic/.
>
> David – have your lawyers managed to get a date for you to testify yet?
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 9:15 PM
To: b6 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 'Jeff Sturchio' < b6 Roberts, Rich' b6 ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6 b6 >
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' b6 'John Feigelson' < b6
Subject: RE: Today's news...

By the way – Allegations that me sending information to David Morens is somehow corrupt are outrageous. Tony Fauci was busy working with the White House COVID taskforce at the time, trying to halt the worse pandemic since the 1918 influenza outbreak. I would have happy emailed him directly, but pretty sure he wasn't checking each of his 50,000 emails a day!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak b6

Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 8:10 PM
To: [redacted]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [redacted] 'Jeff Sturchio' < [redacted] 'Roberts, Rich' [redacted] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [redacted]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [redacted]; John Feigelson < [redacted] >
Subject: Today's news...

Had a very successful EcoHealth Alliance benefit last night – sorry some of you couldn't be there.

Michael Mann was our main honoree, and he was great! We raised well above our expectation – all critical to keeping us afloat given the increased pressure we're under right now.

Speaking of which – here's the latest attempt from the SSCP to smear David Morens, EcoHealth Alliance and others as being involved in a 'cover up'

https://nypost.com/2024/04/19/us- news/ex-fauci-adviser-shared-confidential-nih-info-with-ecohealth-about-covid-biosafety-levels-docs/

Basically, they've found an email from me to David, Jerry others when the allegations that EcoHealth expts were conducted at an insufficient BSL level first came out. Tony Fauci was interviewed and said that he would look into it. I sent David M. a review I'd done of the BSL rules for Bat CoVs in various countries, which clearly show that we were operating at the correct biosafety levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 7:16 AM
To: Peter Daszak [redacted] Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] Jeff Sturchio [redacted]; Roberts, Rich [redacted] Hotez, Peter Jay <

b6

Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6

Subject: Re: Testimony from Science Editor, Holden Thorp in front of the SSCP today

Peter, my thought is that it could have been worse, and he does blame Collins as well.... d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/16/24 20:59, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Unpleasant to see him criticize me and EcoHealth today, in a pretty shoddy attempt to curry favor with the SSCP:
>
> https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1780332154620092505
>
> Here's the text of the tweet:
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect
>
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
> @ScienceMagazine
> AGREES that EcoHealth Alliance may have misled the U.S. government about its highly controversial DEFUSE proposal — which some believe created a blueprint for COVID-19. WATCH
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
>
> You can see the video of him criticizing our work here:
>
> https://youtu.be/Oru0-fYGcJU
>
> The relevant section starts at 1hour, 31 minutes and 30 seconds into the video
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 3:22 PM
To: b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T b6 'Jeff Sturchio' b6 ; 'Roberts, Rich' b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 ; John Feigelson < b6
Subject: COVID Select Subcommittee subpoena to David Morens for correspondence etc.
Importance: High

Here is today's subpoena & a cover letter to David Morens from the SSCP for all correspondence with the following people, related to WIV, EcoHealth or COVID origins or "regarding or referencing the following people". He has to produce this by April 30th

No direct demand for public hearing has been made public yet.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 8:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Jeff Sturchio <b6>; Roberts, Rich <b6>; Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: Re: COVID select subcommittee is now threatening to call David in for a public hearing

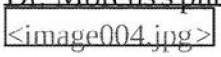
Guys,my lawyer called and i am to be subpoenaed to testify in public hearing on camera. They want me b4 Tony but after Peter. The Dems reached out to my lawyer and asked WTF is going on. Not sure why they don't know. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 16:12, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Here's the COVID committee (SSCP) threatening to call David in for a public hearing based on the emails they claim show that we all used gmail inappropriately (based on a Washington Examiner report today)…
>
> Tweet here: https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1778859503796056214
>
> Washington Examiner BS article here: https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/2964227/ecohealth-alliance-email-release-confirms-fauci-aide-used-private-account-discuss-covid/
>
> Full text of tweet:
>
> **Post**
> See new posts
> **Conversation**
> Pinned
> <image003.jpg>
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect
>
> <image001.png>
> BREAKING
> <image001.png>
> @EcoHealthNYC

President Dr. Peter Daszak CONFIRMS whistleblower allegations that Dr. David Morens — a top advisor to Dr. Fauci — used Gmail to hide COVID-19 information. We are beginning the process to secure Dr. Morens's public testimony.



From washingtonexaminer.com

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 Jeff Sturchio b6; Roberts, Rich < b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 b6
Subject: Re: My email to Michael Hiltzik with an EcoHealth Statement and Email release today

Again. this is excellent. We need more of these stand-up-to-bullies fusillades. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 11:20, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Please read the email I just sent to Michael Hiltzik. It has links to a statement from EcoHealth and the release of the full text (slight redactions) of emails that involve David and Jerry, and were reported in the NY Post and other Right wing outlets yesterday, amplified by Republicans on the COVID Committeee…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 11:19 AM
To: 'Michael Hiltzik' b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura b6 g)' < b6
Subject: EcoHealth Statement and Email release today has relevance to NIH and Michael Lauer issues
Importance: High

Good to talk with you yesterday Michael. We got more negative press yesterday, this time related to emails that allegedly show coverups and inappropriate behavior among scientists. The Republicans released only the subject line and addresses etc. (https://oversight.house.gov/release/wenstrup-reveals-emails-from-whistleblower-alleging-additional-attempts-by-fauci-advisor-to-subvert-transparency-about-covid-19-origins/), leading to BS stories in the usual right wing press. We released the full text of the emails today:

https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2024/04/ecohealth- alliance-releases-emails-that-are-the-subject-of-false-allegations-in-the-press

These are all from me to senior NIAID staffmember David Morens and former NIH Center Director Jerry Keusch, trying to make sense of the termination of our grant by Trump, and to find a way to get it reinstated. In the end NIH did reinstate the grant (May 2023). One of the chains shows emails that refer to the pressure from Michael Lauer, and the fact NIH instructed me not to talk with our program officer (Erik Stemmy) and direct all communications to Grants Management (Emily Linde). That was another highly unusual move from NIH and is part of the pattern that I was talking with you about.

Here is that particular set of emails: https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Emails- 01.pdf

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 6:01 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: Call tomorrow?

Absolutely. That time is good...I can call then...

MH

On Tue, Apr 9, 2024 at 2:59 PM Peter Daszak <

b6 > wrote:

Hi Michael – just following up on this – are you available tomorrow at 5:30pm my time, 2:30pm West Coast time?

I can send a zoom link or call my cellphone b6

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, April 7, 2024 9:34 AM
To: 'Michael Hiltzik' b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura b6 ; 'Alison Andre (b6
Subject: RE: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant
Importance: High

I have good answers for you on all of those – it's ugly and political. There are also others who are well-placed who you can talk with.

I can do Wednesday at 5:30pm my time if that works for you (2:30pm West Coast). I have other times as well… cc'ing Alison who will make sure we find a time that works.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2024 6:50 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant

Peter,

Let's set up a time to talk next week (Wednesday or later best for me). On first glance, it strikes me that I'm glad I'm not in the grants-application business, because the bureaucratic behavior here seems incomprehensible, at least to a layman.

What's the overarching theme in their relations with you? Is it pressure from the lab-leak crowd, the FOIAing from Tobias, which as far as I can tell has yielded nothing of any substance? A spillover from the Trump era?

I read the Science piece, which was thorough in detailing what was done to the Chinese researchers but silent on what provoked it....what was the question I was left with--Why did NIH do all this?

MH

On Sat, Apr 6, 2024 at 12:03 PM Peter Daszak < b6 > wrote:

> Hi Michael, I'm just contacting you off the record in case you or others are interested in reporting on what's going on at NIH with respect to EHA's grants. We were trying to deal with this

privately, without it becoming public, but we found out last week that some of our recent correspondence with Emily Erbelding asking for her help is in a batch of FoIA's emails that will be released to Jimmy Tobias in the next couple of weeks. Tobias is in the habit of simply dumping these on the internet, so we wanted to get these to a bona fide reporter before that happens.

As you probably know, our organization has been funded by NIAID for around 20 years, conducting successful research on emerging diseases, and working closely with communities, scientists and governments in emerging disease hotspot countries to try to reduce the risk of disease emergence. Prior to the termination of our R01 grant in April 2020 that would have had the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a subrecipient, we had never had any issues with NIH or NIAID, and had been lauded by program officers for our cutting edge research into viral emergence, and the many papers in Science, Nature, NEJM and others based on NIH funding.

After the termination of our grant, the HHS OIG was called in to audit our work and NIH's oversight. They reported back after an 18 month audit with recommendations for both us, and for NIH, most of which were minor and easily addressed. We rapidly complied and NIH's DFAS group confirmed that all audit findings were resolved. However, we continued to receive further actions from the Office of the Director (Michael Lauer, who *Science* wrote about re. NIH's actions on grantees with China connections https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers), and the NIH group that manages oversight (OPERA) directly under Michael Lauer. In April 2023, Michelle Bulls from Opera and Emily Linde from NIAID placed 4 Specific Award Conditions (SACs) on our grants. At the time, Michael Lauer had contacted Tufts University who oversaw our IACUC approvals to conduct wildlife sampling because EHA doesn't have an animal facility. This led to Tufts canceling our interinstitutional agreement. The only way for us to proceed was to request an Animal Welfare Assurance from OLAW (based at NIH), but this was denied because of these SACs. One of the SACs stated that all of our subcontracts must be reviewed and revised by NIH reviews. We worked extremely hard to rapidly respond (often within days) to every single request, despite many of them being contradictory or having no material impact on the contracts. In the original letter NIH set a deadline of September 2023 to resolve the SACs, which due to repeated delays by NIH grants management staff in responding to us, continued further requests and shifting of the goalposts means we still do not have resolution. Furthermore, grants management are now suggesting that we are beyond the period of work and our subcontractees won't be able to be reimbursed. Additionally, during the past 12 months, NIH has only

reimbursed EcoHealth for around $50K of the now nearly $2 million we are expecting and have expended.

As you can imagine, this puts us in a very difficult position, with institutions like UNC and Uniformed Services University likely to be outraged that their funding is threatened, and with us unable to do our work fully – work that has been reviewed, scored well, and is critical to pandemic prevention. We've tried every possible avenue to get a fair and reasonable rapid resolution. We've informed Emily Erbelding of these issues (hence the FoIA'd email), and Program staff at NIAID remain supportive of our work, but we still have no resolution. Every time we try to seek a meeting or resolution, we get a hard response from NIH that we're out of compliance and they set further deadlines and further minor issues for us to fix. Right now I believe we're probably in greater compliance with NIH rules and just about any other institution in the US, given the level of scrutiny we've gone through. I've attached some of the many recent letters between NIH OPERA, NIAID Grants managements and EcoHealth Alliance to give you an indication of the levels of detailed work that we've gone through to try and resolve these issues.

We don't know the reasons why this is happening – all our subcontracts prior to April 2023 covered every single requirement in NIH's grants management guidance, subrecipients had to sign that they would adhere to these. The stonewalling, and shifting of goalposts by NIH is linked to emails that they send us stating that we're 'delinquent' or 'out of compliance', or that they're 'concerned' etc. and seem to us designed ready to be FoIA'd (which they are being) or to be used when NIH has to show Congressional Republicans that EcoHealth is being treated in the way they are calling for. Meanwhile, important findings can't be reported, including a novel SARS-CoV-2 related virus able to bind well to human ACE2 that we have found in one of our country sites, but are now unable to publish because our subrecipient is concerned they don't yet have an approved contract. This is hurting our ability to conduct pandemic prevention work, and the US's ability to be informed about public health threats that could emerge and threaten our citizens.

If you want to report on this, I'm happy to talk on-the-record on some issues, and there are others who are aware of these problems that I can put you in touch with, including at NIH and senior people from outside.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date:	Wed, 3 Aug 2022 6:09:32 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 3 Aug 2022 6:09:25 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
From:	"Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>;
CC:	David Morens [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6] Jeff Sturchio [b6]>;
Attachments:	image001.png

Hi:

The mental health issues pertain to matters other than this. I have a good friend here at NEB, who knows Sonia very well. I will talk to her about a possible course of action to persuade Sonia to at least address the issue if she herself detects a decline.

I did speak to Ian Lipkin and he basically confirmed he didn't feel he could help other than to continue to sign on to his stated belief in the natural origin rather than the lab-leak theory.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
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Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 4:47 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]>
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I have to agree that Jeff doesn't come across to me as someone in decline, more that he's just bought into the conspiracy hook, line and sinker – I've seen this with other intelligent scientists or lay people. The lab leak story is beguiling in that it merges elements of China's authoritarian govt, people's lack of understanding of what's involved in cutting edge virology, and has a narrative that's been 2.5 years in development and fueled by hundreds of FoIA requests, and hundreds of nefarious stories.

Jeff is an economist, and therefore more comfortable with geopolitics than lab details or ecology. I doubt he's been in a Southeast Asian wildlife farm, wet market or bat cave. That's where the real gain of function is happening, and it's coughed up right into your face by the furry animals involved!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay <b6
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 4:34 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: David Morens <b6; Roberts, Rich <b6 Peter Daszak <
b6; Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Jeff Sturchio <b6
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs is at it again!

Unless she herself raises the issue about the state of his mental health, I think that gets really tricky. We know Jeff is being unreasonable in his position, and it's distressing to watch him hold onto it, but in my conversations with him he sounds otherwise fairly lucid. So while it certainly may be cognitive decline I would be hard pressed to say that's the basis from my conversations with him. Being a jerk can be a sign of dementia, but there may be other factors. Tough call

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Aug 3, 2022, at 3:23 PM, Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Hi Peter H,

The issue with Sonia is not Jeff's positions but his mental health and perhaps failing cognitive capacity. If there are early warning signs that she needs to recognize and then discuss with his primary care doc it may help to get the family involved in helping Jeff to acknowledge that something is not right and begin further assessments and maybe even interventions. No easy task for an ego like his - this would be an even worse blow than seeing his contemporary Joe Stiglitz and his junior Michael Kremer both receive a Nobel in economics - his Nobel.

That's separate for pushing back on his dogged attempt to push one perspective in an increasingly concrete and poorly supported by actual evidence manner.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 3, 2022, at 2:50 PM, Hotez, Peter Jay <b6> wrote:

A good reminder: never to go into battle with Ian, ridiculous. I doubt appealing to Sonia will

do much good, and I'm not sure any of the Columbia faculty see this as their fight? I think refuting Jeff point by point in a white paper is the way to go, perhaps one that could wind up in SCIENCE, unless you think it's already covered in your article Jerry. If not, Angela Rasmussen is probably the best qualified, I would be happy to work with her, if she were to take the lead. Just some thoughts, best, Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

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Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
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From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 1:38 PM

To: David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!

Rich and I have already spoken about my call with Ian. He feels there is nothing he can do. His concerns are the following, some of which he has made abundantly clear in various articles and interviews.

1. The viability of the lab-leak hypothesis is a self-imposed injury by scientists, pointing to the conversation between Jeremy Farrar, Francis Collins, Christian Andersen et al in February 2020, and the denial and then the FOIA.

2. Peter is conflicted (appearance, not necessarily reality) and should not have accepted appointment to the Lancet Commission, the WHO team etc. He (Ian) would not have if he had been asked.

3. There is no way to get Sachs to "stand down".

4. The two science papers by Worobey et al are "crap epidemiology".

There is no viable way for me to push any further with Ian. On the issue of the reputation of Columbia University I am thinking about contacting Waafa El-Sadr, Vince Racaniello, and the Nobel laureate economist Joe Stiglitz, all of whom I know well enough to contact. The secondary issue is Sachs' cognitive health, as he becomes ever more focused, concrete in his thinking, and unable to take in and evaluate new information. He is a broken record, for sure, very possibly because he is a record in the process of breaking. Are others concerned? Concerned enough to be in touch with and supportive of his wife and family be expressing concern for his public face, reputation, and legacy?

I'm thinking it over before doing anything more. Thoughts?

Jerry
-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:50 AM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay < [b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]; Jeff Sturchio <j [b6]
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs is at it again!

Also at Columbia is Steve Morse, who has been studying pandemic viruses since his days with Josh Ledeberg in the late 1980s.....

David M. Morens, MD
[b6]
[b6]
[b6] (work)
[b6] (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If

you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Wed, Aug 3, 2022 at 11:42 AM Roberts, Rich <b6 wrote:
>
> Jerry:
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>
> I can try Ian Lipkin too. He may be concerned about the general damage to science and to Jeff himself. One of Jeff's very good friends tells me that a lot of people who know him closely think he is going off the rails.
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>
>
> Rich
>
>
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> Richard J. Roberts
>
> New England Biolabs
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> 240 County Road
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> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
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> From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
> Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:37 AM
> To: Roberts, Rich b6 Peter Daszak
> b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
> Cc: David Morens b6 ; Aleksei Chmura
b6 Jeff Sturchio b6
> Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
>
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> EXTERNAL SENDER
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>
> You are right, but I doubt Columbia can do anything to stop a faculty member speaking on his own behalf from saying stupid things. What needs to happen is that the faculty at Columbia with the expertise also speak out against

his stupidity.
>
>
>
> For what it is worth I will follow up with Ian Lipkin (who probably won't be sympathetic) and Wafaa El-Sadr (who will be).
>
>
>
> Jerry
>
>
>
> From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
> Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:24 AM
> To: Peter Daszak <[b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T
> [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
> Cc: David Morens [b6]; Aleksei Chmura
> [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
> Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
>
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>
> Peter:
>
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>
> "Inaccuracies" is a very mild word for the statements he makes.
>
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>
> This just gets more disturbing by the day. I wonder how the administration at Columbia view this? Are they aware of the damage he is doing?
>
>
>
> Rich
>
>
>
> Richard J. Roberts
>
> New England Biolabs
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> 240 County Road
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> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
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> email: b6
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> From: Peter Daszak b6
> Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:05 AM
> To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
> Hotez, Peter Jay b6
> Cc: David Morens b6 ; Aleksei Chmura
> b6 ; Jeff Sturchio b6
> Subject: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
> Importance: High
>
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>
> EXTERNAL SENDER
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>
>
> I just saw this in Current Affairs. At least this is not a major daily broadsheet, but it's filled with inaccuracies again (some of them highlighted in the text below, in order of appearance).
>
>
>
> He responds to the two papers in Science this week by dismissing the scientists (all 20+ of them) as having already stated their opinions prior to the paper, so what they're doing is simply creating a narrative.
>
> He states that the work in our rejected DARPA proposal was underway and being promoted very actively – again simply not true as I've stated publicly – the grant was not funded and the work not done.
>
> He goes into details of our unfortunate conversations as he tried to remove me from the Lancet Commission. He implies I didn't share the details of my work in China with him prior to joining. This is not true – it's why he invited me to lead the taskforce.
>
> He accuses me of 'misdirection' re. the work I've done in China. Not sure how publishing it in dozens of papers and speaking about it daily at the beginning of the pandemic is somehow misdirecting.
>
> He follows a common theme from the lab leakers that we had 180 viral 'strains' in the lab. Not true – we had hundreds of short RdRp sequences (few hundred base pairs) PCR'd from bat samples – only 3 viral strains in culture. All of this publicly released, all of it repeatedly stated.
>
> He makes a demand for 'lab notebooks' again. This amplifies the aggressive FoIAs and congressional attacks against us. I already told him EHA doesn't have a lab and doesn't keep 'lab notebooks'. Good luck asking for these from China with this aggressive narrative.
>
> He outright accuses scientists arguing that the virus did not come from a lab as 'lying'.
>
> He follows another lab leak narrative of dismissing EcoHealth's work as simply being a 'marriage-maker' between US and China labs to shunt NIH money to China. I'm very proud of the fact that EHA's work over the last two decades has led to multiple papers in Nature, Science, and all other leading journals. You just don't end up being senior author on these papers by acting as a 'marriage maker', but dismissing our scientific status is part of the lab leak agenda to undermine science.

>
> He accuses me of 'not telling the truth'. No details of course!
>
> Accuses all the other Task Force members of hiding some alleged
> conflict of interest - that they are 'part of this thing', whatever
> that is
>
> Accuses the task force of trying to avoid looking into the lab leak even though he knew full well we had interviewed people like Relman, Ebright, Quay as part of our work and had stated publicly that we would look at all hypotheses re. COVID origins.
>
> He dodges the question on my alleged 'hiding pretty serious conflicts
> of interest' by saying he asked for my research proposals and I
> wouldn't hand them over on legal advice. What he failed to mention is
> the reason I gave him for this in an email – NIH had refused to make
> those proposals public under FoIA and had then been sued. If I then
> went against their direction I would run the risk of further grant
> terminations. That's what my lawyers advised and I have an
> organization to run, rather than undermine our funding base just
> because Jeff Sachs is inquisitive…
>
> Damagingly, he states that our rationale for hiding the truth is because we don't want to be guilty for millions of deaths. That is exactly the comment I get when people send me death threats (more every week now that these stories are in the news). It's a pretty straightforward incitement to violence for these people.
>
> He states that he doesn't trust scientists because we hide our work, when in fact we've published it in papers, and our proposals (even those that are not funded) are now public.
>
> He equates this work with nuclear weapons research
>
> He criticizes NIH for redacting 290 pages of attachments. Anyone who's bothered to look at that will see that NIH was circulating a DRAFT version of their COVID-19 research strategy that was released a few days later having been corrected and edited. It was simply an attachment to an email. There's no way that a govt agency should be circulating uncorrected versions of a strategic plan – that's just commonsense.
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> https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https- 3A__www.currentaffairs.org_2022_08_why- 2Dthe-2Dchair-2Dof-2Dthe-2Dlancets-2Dco&d=DwIGaQ&c=ZQs-KZ8oxEw0p81sqgiaRA&r=5LfYK49OliIsJzSnooAjOg&m=hPFWMEklFgm5H54jTvYTzCXGWKMPBxl03XCQ9TggM6ARK1vT3e4qNgSCrud5F2C5&s=hC16xyJYpKXkpxydEKvaynlBUG6T0PtpVcI- ZhW5pZI&e=
> vid-19-commission-thinks-the-us-government-is-preventing-a-real-invest
> igation-into-the-pandemic
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> Why the Chair of the Lancet's COVID-19 Commission Thinks The US
> Government Is Preventing a Real Investigation Into the Pandemic

>
> Prof. Jeffrey Sachs says he is "pretty convinced [COVID-19] came out of US lab biotechnology" and warns that there is dangerous virus research taking place without public oversight.
>
> Current Affairs
>
> filed 02 August 2022 in THE VIRUS
>
> Prof. Jeffrey Sachs is the Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University and the President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. He has also served as the chair of the COVID-19 commission for leading medical journal the Lancet. Through his investigations as the head of the COVID-19 commission, Prof. Sachs has come to the conclusion that there is extremely dangerous biotechnology research being kept from public view, that the United States was supporting much of this research, and that it is very possible that SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19, originated through dangerous virus research gone awry.
>
> Prof. Sachs recently co-authored a paper in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences calling for an independent inquiry into the virus's origins. He believes that there is clear proof that the National Institutes of Health and many members of the scientific community have been impeding a serious investigation of the origins of COVID-19 and deflecting attention away from the hypothesis that risky U.S.-supported research may have led to millions of deaths. If that hypothesis is true, the implications would be earth-shaking, because it might mean that esteemed members of the scientific community bore responsibility for a global calamity. In this interview, Prof. Sachs explains how he, as the head of the COVID-19 commission for a leading medical journal, came to the conclusion that powerful actors were preventing a real investigation from taking place. He also explains why it is so important to get to the bottom of the origins of COVID: because, he says, there is extremely dangerous research taking place with little accountability, and the public has a right to know since we are the ones whose lives are being put at risk without our consent.
>
> NATHAN ROBINSON:
>
> I want to quote something that you said recently:
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> "I chaired the commission for the Lancet for two years on COVID. I'm pretty convinced it came out of U.S. lab biotechnology, not out of nature, just to mention. After two years of intensive work on this. So it's a blunder in my view of biotech, not an accident of a natural spillover. We don't know for sure, I should be absolutely clear. But there's enough evidence that it should be looked into. And it's not being investigated, not in the United States, not anywhere. And I think for real reasons that they don't want to look underneath the rug, the statement."
>
> The statement that you made there is a controversial one. Just to read a couple of quotes from the New York Times in the last year:
>
> "In a review of recent studies and comparisons to other outbreaks, a group of virologists contends that there is more evidence to support a natural spillover from animals to humans."
>
> "Scientists released a pair of extensive studies over the weekend that point to a large food and live animal market in Wuhan, China, as the origin of the coronavirus pandemic."
>
> So I want to start by asking you just to tell us a little bit about the investigation that you were part of and what led you to think that what I just quoted is a misleading statement of the state of the evidence.
>
> JEFFREY SACHS:
>
> Well, the funny thing is those scientists who are saying that said the same thing on February 4, 2020, before they

had done any research at all. And they published the same statement in March 2020, before they had any facts at all. So they're creating a narrative. And they're denying the alternative hypothesis without looking closely at it. That's the basic point.

>

> Now, what is the alternative hypothesis? The alternative hypothesis is quite straightforward. And that is that there was a lot of research underway in the United States and China on taking SARS-like viruses, manipulating them in the laboratory, and creating potentially far more dangerous viruses. And the particular virus that causes COVID-19, called SARS-Cov-2, is notable because it has a piece of its genetic makeup that makes the virus more dangerous. And that piece of the genome is called the "furin cleavage site." Now, what's interesting, and concerning if I may say so, is that the research that was underway very actively and being promoted, was to insert furin cleavage sites into SARS-like viruses to see what would happen. Oops!

>

> Well, that is what may have happened. And what has been true from the start is that that very real possibility, which a lot of scientists know, has not been looked at closely, even though it's absolutely clear that it could have happened that way. They're not looking. They just keep telling us, "Look at the market, look at the market, look at the market!" But they don't address this alternative. They don't even look at the data. They don't even ask questions. And the truth is from the beginning, they haven't asked the real questions.

>

> But not quite the beginning. Because at the beginning, which we could date from the first phone call of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with a group of virologists on February 1, 2020, the virologists said "Oh my god, that is strange, that could well be a laboratory creation. What is that furin cleavage site doing in there?" Because scientists knew that was part of an active ongoing research program. And yet, by February 3, the same group is saying "No, no, it's natural, it's natural." By February 4, they start to draft the papers that are telling the public, "Don't worry, it's natural." By March, they write a paper—totally spurious, in my view—called the proximal origins paper that is the most cited bio paper in 2020. It said: it is absolutely natural. [Note: the paper's conclusion is "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."] But they didn't have any of the data that you read about in the New York Times. They didn't have any of this. They just said the labs weren't working on this alternative. But you know what, they don't know what the labs were working on, because they never asked, and NIH hasn't told us.

>

> ROBINSON:

>

> Let me ask you if we can distinguish between what we know for certain and what is speculative because we just haven't got the data. So we do know that there was—correct me if I'm wrong—research proposed that would have dealt with this category of viruses and would have modified them in ways that would have made them potentially more lethal. Do we know whether that kind of research was in fact actually ongoing somewhere?

>

> SACHS:

>

> We have enormous reason to believe that it was. And clearly, we haven't even asked that question. But we have a lot of reason to believe that it was, because the scientists that were doing that research loved that research. And they explained to us publicly why it's so important. And they wrote editorials about why this research must continue. And they made grant proposals saying that it should continue. And for those of us in the business of writing grant proposals, the fact that a particular grant proposal that's deeply troubling was turned down doesn't mean that it wasn't carried out afterwards. But where is NIH saying, "Yeah, that's an interesting question. Why don't we get the evidence?" It doesn't even ask that question.

>

> And the scientists like those that talk about the Huanan market, they don't even discuss that research that was underway. That is just misdirection, to my mind. It's like sleight of hand art. Don't look over there. Look over here. But we know that there was a tremendous amount of this research underway. We have interviews by the lead scientists. We have these research proposals. I know the intention of doing this research from discussions. I've read so many studies of the importance of this research claimed by the scientists. And yet I see NIH with its head in the ground. "Oh, no, nothing here to look at." And then I see the scientists. "Oh, nothing here to look at. We know it's

the market. Did we find an animal? No. Do we have an explanation of where that furin cleavage site came in? No. We don't have an explanation of the timing, which doesn't quite look right. Oh, but don't look over there, because there's nothing there, they keep telling us. Well, that's a little silly.
>
> So my point is, there is a huge amount of reason to believe that that research was underway. Because there are published papers on this. There are interviews on this. There are research proposals. But NIH isn't talking. It's not asking. And these scientists have never asked either. From the very first day, they have kept hidden from view the alternative. And when they discuss the alternative, they don't discuss the research program. They discuss complete straw men about the lab, not the actual kind of research that was underway, which was to stick furin cleavage sites into SARS-like viruses in a way that could have created SARS-Cov-2.
>
> What I'm calling for is not the conclusion. I'm calling for the investigation. Finally, after two and a half years of this, it's time to fess up that it might have come out of a lab and here's the data that we need to know to find out whether it did.
>
> ROBINSON:
>
> One of the things that struck me that I didn't know when I started writing about this and actually doing some some research is realizing that in the years leading up to the pandemic, there was a huge controversy about whether it was wise to modify viruses in the course of research in ways that could make a virus more infectious or more lethal. And some people were arguing that this kind of research was insane. And some people were warning that in the case of a lab accident—an accident, mind you, not as an intentional "bioweapon"—a simple human error could cause a real catastrophe.
>
> SACHS:
>
> That is exactly right. There were several kinds of experiments of manipulation of the genes of dangerous viruses. And this raised a lot of alarm. And there was actually a moratorium in 2014. But the champions of this kind of research pushed on, they applied for waivers, which they got, and finally the moratorium came off in 2017. And they said how important it is to do this dangerous kind of research, because they claimed, "Well, there are lots of viruses out there. And we don't know when they're going to become highly pathogenic, and we need to develop drugs and vaccines against a wide spectrum of them. So we have to test all these viruses that we can find, to see whether they have high spillover potential." But they weren't actually aiming to just test viruses that they were collecting in nature. They were aiming to modify those viruses. Because the scientists knew that a SARS-like virus without a furin cleavage site wouldn't be that dangerous. But they wanted to test their drugs and vaccines and theories against dangerous viruses. Their proposal was to take hundreds, by the way—or least they talked about in one proposal more than 180 previously unreported strains—and test them for their so-called "spillover potential." How effective would they be? And to look: do they have a furin cleavage site, or technically what's called a proteolytic cleavage site? And if not, put them in. For heaven's sake. My God! Are you kidding?
>
> Okay, but we didn't even ask the question from the first day: did you guys do that? Tell us what you did. Could you give us your lab notebooks? We're kind of curious. Instead, these people who are writing these New York Times articles right now and publishing these pieces about the market, from the first day—without asking about the experiments—they said, "Nope, it's natural." That's why I don't trust them. Because they've never looked at the alternative hypothesis. And their hypothesis has so many gaps, so many holes in it. But they don't even try to look at the alternative hypothesis.
>
> ROBINSON:
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> I think it's very important to make clear that the "alternative hypothesis" is mainly a hypothesis about an accident, and scientific hubris. It's important to distinguish the kooky theories from the incredibly plausible theories. Because what you're talking about is people who did not appreciate the dangers of what they were doing.
>

> SACHS:
>
> In fact, it's very interesting. The alternative that is the right one to look at is part of a very extensive research program that was underway from 2015 onward, funded by the NIH, by Tony Fauci, in particular NIAID [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases], and it was to examine the spillover potential of SARS-like viruses. The champions of this research explained in detail their proposals. But after the event, we'd never asked them, "So what were you actually doing? What experiments did you do? What do you know?" We somehow never asked. It was better just to sweep it under the rug, which is what Fauci and the NIH have done up until this point. Maybe they could tell us, "Oh, full exoneration," but they haven't told us that at all. They haven't shown us anything.
>
> So there's nothing "kooky" about it, because it's precisely what the scientists were doing. And then you can listen to the scientists on tape describing why they think the research program is so important, because they say these are dangerous viruses, and therefore we have to prepare broad spectrum vaccines and drugs. They explain it's not good enough to test one or two viruses. We have to test all of them. And then they came to realize, as I said earlier, that just having a SARS-like virus, if it doesn't have this piece of the gene, it's almost surely not going to be that effective. So they got around to the idea. "Well, let's put these in," if you can imagine that. To my mind, it's mind-boggling.
>
>
>
> But they were proud of this, because it's actually genius at a technological level. Can you imagine: you can take a sequence of letters, which defines the genome, you can recreate the virus just from the letters. You don't even have to have the biological virus in hand, you just need the sequence. Then you can say "I'm going to add these four letters RRAR, the furin cleavage site, or maybe it's eight, RRARSVAS, this is a sequence of eight amino acids—I'm going to stick it in there right at the S1 S2 junction of the spike protein, because I know from my research program that will make it more pathogenic, that is more disease-causing. And then I can see whether my drug candidates like remdesivir, or some other candidate works against it. That is their idea. There's nothing kooky about our claim: Hey, what were you doing? Because they told us that they wanted to do these projects. And they told us that they were wanting to do these projects in the months leading up to this outbreak. And then what is absolutely strange is that even though scientists knew right from the start, that is very weird to have that RRAR furin cleavage site in there—never saw that before in a SARS-like virus, and that that could well have come from a lab—hush, hush. Don't talk about it. Don't even discuss it. Just say right from the beginning: This is natural. Of course, it's natural. Everything else is kooky.
>
> So you saw a narrative being created. And the scientists are not acting like scientists. Because when you're acting like a scientist, you're pursuing alternative hypotheses. And the scientists just wrote recently an op-ed saying the only evidence that this came out of a lab that's been put forward is that it came in a city, Wuhan, where an institute was located. Well, that's a lie. That is not the only coincidence that leads to this theory. What leads to this alternative hypothesis is the detailed research program the NIH funded that was underway in the years leading up to the outbreak. So I see the scientists absolutely trying to create a narrative and take our eyes off of another issue.
>
> Now, again, let me emphasize, we don't have definitive evidence of either hypothesis. But what we do have is definitive evidence that officialdom has tried to keep our eyes away from the lab creation hypothesis.
>
> ROBINSON:
>
> You mentioned the lab in Wuhan. It's not just that there was a lab in Wuhan doing research on viruses. But there were ties between the lab and those pursuing this program. What do we know about the research that was actually occurring there?
>
> SACHS:
>
> We know that at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the scientists there had been trained by American scientists to

use advanced bioengineering methodologies. And in particular, we have scientists in North Carolina, Texas, and so forth who do this kind of research, believe in it, argue for it, and say that they don't want any regulations on it and so on. And they were in close contact with Wuhan Institute of Virology, and they were part of a joint research group that was stitched together by something called EcoHealth Alliance. And EcoHealth Alliance was the kind of marriage maker between the American scientists and the Chinese scientists. That was the vehicle for funding from the U.S. government, especially from the National Institutes of Health, and especially from Tony Fauci's unit, the NIAID. There were years of grants, there were grant proposals. We don't know exactly what was done. But we have enough reason to know that we should be asking exactly what was done. And we know definitively that from the beginning, NIH has been running from telling us what has been done. They're not telling us the truth, that they had reason to fear from the start that this came out of a lab. And that to this day, they have reason to suspect it, but they're not talking.

>

> ROBINSON:

>

> A shocking thing to me was that the head of the EcoHealth Alliance was on the World Health Organization team that actually investigated the origins of COVID and concluded that it wasn't the lab.

>

> SACHS:

>

> Well, more than that: I appointed him—this was Peter Daszak—I appointed him to chair the task force of the pandemic commission that I was running for the Lancet. And he headed a task force on the origins. I thought, naively at the beginning, "Well, here's a guy who is so connected, he would know." And then I realized he was not telling me the truth. And it took me some months, but the more I saw it, the more I resented it.

>

> And so I told him, "Look, you have to leave." And then the other scientists in that task force attacked me for being anti-scientific. And I asked them: "What are your connections with all of this?" They didn't tell me. Then when the Freedom of Information Act released some of these documents that NIH had been hiding from the public, I saw that people that were attacking me were also part of this thing. So I disbanded that whole task force. So my own experience was to witness close up how they're not talking. And they're trying to keep our eyes on something else. And away from even asking the questions that we're talking about. We don't have the answers. But we have good reasons to ask. And we have good reasons to know that NIH is not doing its job properly right now.

>

> ROBINSON:

>

> So you're saying that Daszak and others did not disclose to you pretty serious conflicts of interest? Since, on the hypothesis that it had something to do with this kind of research, that would have implicated Daszak himself in the origins of the crisis?

>

> SACHS:

>

> Well, he could have explained to me right from the beginning that there was a big research program and that they were manipulating the viruses, and here's how. He could have given me the research proposals. And when I asked him for one of the research proposals, he said, "No, my lawyer says I can't give it to you." I said, "What? You're heading a commission. We're a transparent commission. You're telling me your lawyer says you can't give me your project proposal." I said, "Well, then you can't be on this commission. This is not even a close call."

>

> But there were so many other things. He was just filled with misdirection. I don't know whether he understands or not, maybe he doesn't understand. But the things he said just were absolutely not right.

>

> ROBINSON:

>

> When people hear you say, "They're sweeping it under the rug, they don't want to look," one question that may come to their minds is "Well, why? Why would people not be interested in getting to the truth?" But the alternate

hypothesis from the natural spillover that you're talking about could have serious repercussions. It would implicate a lot of people in potentially millions of deaths. So there's a lot at stake here for the scientific community. Which explains why there would be an interest in directing people away from this possibility.
>
> SACHS:
>
> There are at least two reasons why they might be doing what they're doing. One is, as you say, the implications are huge. Imagine if this came out of a lab. And we have, by some estimates, about 18 million dead worldwide from this. That's not the official count. But that's the estimated excess mortality from COVID. Well, the implications of that—the ethical, the moral, the geopolitical—everything is enormous.
>
> But there's a second matter that is really important, too. One thing that is rather clear to me is that there is so much dangerous research underway right now under the umbrella of biodefense or other things that we don't know about, that is not being properly controlled. This is for sure. And that's happening around the world. And governments say "don't poke your nose into that." That's our business, not your business. But it's actually our business. It's our business to understand what is going on with this. This is not to be kept secret. We don't trust you.
>
> Let me put it this way: I don't trust them right now. I want to know. Because even what we know of the dangerous research is enough to raise a lot of questions of responsibility for the future. And to pose the question: "Hey, what other viruses are you guys working on? What should we know?" Because no matter what the truth is on SARS-Cov-2, what is pretty clear is we've got so much technological capacity to engineer dangerous pathogens right now. And a lot of that is being done. And it's classified. It's secret, and we don't know what it is. And I don't like that feeling at all. I don't recommend it for us and for the world.
>
> ROBINSON:
>
> Well, you've rather answered the question of why it's important to get to the bottom of this. Because one of the excuses you hear is, "Well, who really cares? Does it matter? It was an animal, it was a lab, whatever it is, it's here." But what you're saying is, "No, we actually need to know where this started." Because this isn't going to be the only one, whatever the origins are. And we don't want people to die from future viruses. This is critically important. If we're going to save millions of lives, we have to find out the answer.
>
> SACHS:
>
> I can tell you one thing that I've learned from talking to a lot of scientists in the last couple of years: the technological capacity to do dangerous things using this biotechnology is extraordinary right now. So I want to know what's being done. I want to know what other governments are doing, too, not just ours. I want some global control over this stuff.
>
> We've kind of understood the nuclear risk—even that, of course, is in a lot of ways hidden from view. But this is a clear and present risk. And there's reason to believe we're actually in the midst of it, not just hypothetically. So come on: it's time to open the books everywhere. It's time to find out. Maybe it was the marketplace. Maybe it wasn't a lab. But we need to get real answers, now. Not the kind of misdirection that's been going in since February 2020. Enough nonsense! Enough New York Times stories saying, "Oh, it's this, it's that," without looking closely at the very plausible laboratory hypothesis.
>
> ROBINSON:
>
> It seems from what you're saying that as the head of the Lancet's COVID-19 commission, you didn't feel you were able to get satisfactory answers or see the data you wanted. What kind of investigation do we need and who ought to do it?
>

> SACHS:
>
> The most interesting things that I got as chair of the Lancet commission came from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits and whistleblower leaks from inside the U.S. government. Isn't that terrible? NIH was actually asked at one point: give us your research program on SARS-like viruses. And you know what they did? They released the cover page and redacted 290 pages. They gave us a cover page and 290 blank pages! That's NIH, for heaven's sake. That's not some corporation. That is the U.S. government charged with keeping us healthy.
>
> What I found is that we have a lot of data which we're not finding right now. And I don't want to have to rely on FOIA and leaks, though those can be incredibly informative. I want clear, independent scientific investigation and transparency. One way to do this would be a bipartisan congressional oversight investigation that had subpoena power. Give us your lab records, your notebooks, your data files of virus strains, and so forth. There are many questions that we need independent scientists to define, to tell us exactly the kinds of information. But we know right now we're operating in an environment in which the government is working to hide the data that we need to make a real assessment.
>
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> Current Af
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> Cheers,
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> Peter
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> Peter Daszak
>
> President
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>
> EcoHealth Alliance
>
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
>
> New York, NY 10018-6507
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> USA
>

> Tel.: b6
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> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
>
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
>
>
> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
> pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Sun, 15 Aug 2021 1:25:58 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 15 Aug 2021 1:22:49 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Sunday Wash Post editorial
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

I don't buy the argument that he simply didn't say anything new. He knowingly gave space for the lab leakers to latch on to the 'field scientist' idea, which is never disprovable of course, but exactly as unlikely as any other lab pathway because 1) they wore PPE, 2) they tested all the samples and none had SARS-CoV-2, and 3) the bat-farmed wildlife-Huanan market is far more likely.

He shouldn't have said what he said to the press, and absolutely knew it would lead to this sort of crap in the US. I think it helps him and WHO look tougher on the lab leak stuff, and helps remove some political heat in the long run.

Very irritating considering the papers are linking and EcoHealth into all this as usual - it's just too easy for them. Sunday Times did another piece today and it's let to more vitriol on social media directly straight at EHA and me.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 10:32 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >
Subject: Sunday Wash Post editorial

Touting Embarek's supposed recantating. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 12:36:26 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 12:36:23 PM -0400
Subject: FW: We've lost two significant funders this week
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- [b6]v

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 8:40 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]>
Subject: Re: We've lost two significant funders this week

Peter, i had some long discussions with the Trop med folks today

They want me to write something, a follow up to what we did last july.

But they are 14 leaders not on the same page

I suggested a follo
w up one year later that does NoT emphasize rebutting the crazies but says here is what is needed now, urgently, and includes 5-10 things such ad 1 international open collegial collaboration
with China and other countries in the region, wider sampling/sequencing to look at the sarbecovirus universe, phylogenetics, serosurveys, etc.
Can you and your folks help me compile a list of top research priorities with supporting data?

I would also ask for good msps of Rhinolophus range separated by those species that are and are not enzootic for SARS-like viruses

ETc….

The focus would be : proactive. This is an emsrgrncy. Science needs to get cracking! What must me do asap? (Funding you, and then what?). d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 8, 2021, at 19:54, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:

Peter:

OK – let me know. Before I would write anything it would be good to know exactly what they are proposing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:16 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry < [b6]
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week

EXTERNAL SENDER

That's a very kind offer Rich. I think it might be very helpful with Gates right now.

Let me get more information from Jon Epstein who manages the grant and find out who you could reach out to potentially.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6
Keusch, Jerry b6
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week

Peter:

I would be happy to write to these funders if you think it might help

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 11:59 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Keusch, Jerry < b6 ; Roberts, Rich <
b6
Subject: We've lost two significant funders this week
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks for sharing.

We're getting mounting damage at EcoHealth. One of our corporate funders has pulled out because of the news (Swiss Re). They donated $30K per year and I talked with the senior execs about pandemic risk.

We heard today that our brand new 3-year Gates Foundation grant for One Health work in India will now be "re-assigned". They're telling us they'll still fund us, but I think they're just being polite. This is a loss of $500K per year.

I'm extremely worried right now. People's jobs, careers, reputations are on the line, not just mine – the Gates grant is Jon

Epstein's.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b6); Keusch, Jerry (b6 <b6>; Rich Roberts b6 b6
Subject: FW: Miami Herald [Opinion]: Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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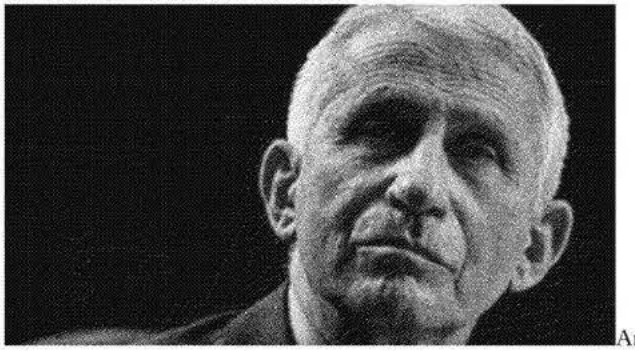
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:47 AM
Subject: Miami Herald [Opinion]: Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab

Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab | Opinion

BY ANDRES OPPENHEIMER
JUNE 08, 2021 09:13 AM,
UPDATED 19 MINUTES AGO


Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, says the coronavirus likely jumped species, from animal to human. *GETTY IMAGES*

Former President Trump, perhaps trying to divert attention from

his own disastrous handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, is now lashing out against Dr. Anthony Fauci for allegedly failing to seriously consider that the virus might have originated from China's Wuhan lab, rather than from an animal's transmission to humans.

But judging from what Fauci told me in a June 4

interview, the most respected U.S. infectious diseases expert has not yet seen any convincing evidence that the virus may have escaped from a Chinese lab.

Fauci, who heads the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and is a top medical adviser to President Biden, said, “It is more likely” that

—
much
like
SARS,
ebola,
influenza
and
HIV
—
COVID-
19
“originated
from
an
animal
reservoir
and
jumped
species
to
humans.”
He
added,
“There’s
the
possibility
that
it
came
from
the
lab,
but
I
believe
that
that’s
a
much
less
likely
possibility.”

In the interview, scheduled to be aired Sunday , June 13 n “Oppenheimer Presenta” on CNN en Español, Fauci said that it’s “important” to try to find out the exact origin of the pandemic, so that we can prevent it from happening again.

Biden
has
asked
U.S.
intelligence
agencies

to investigate the origins of COVID-19 and come back with a report before the end of August.

Asked how the investigation into the source of the virus should be conducted, Fauci said that the World Health Organization has indicated that it will go back to China to continue its investigation.

"I think it needs to be done in a collegial way, with the collaboration of the Chinese scientists, because you're going to have to have cooperation and do it in a

way
that
you
can
best
get
the
information,"
he
said.

Regarding
his
emails
obtained
by
BuzzFeed
and
the
Washington
Post
through
the
Freedom
Of
Information
Act,
Fauci
told
me
that
his
critics
"cherrypick
things
out
of
context"
when
they
claim
that
he
knew
more
than
he
was
saying
publicly
about
the
possibility

that
the
virus
came
out
of
a
Chinese
lab.

Stressing
that
he
never
totally
discarded
the
lab
theory
—
though
he
never
thought
it
was
a
major
possibility
—
Fauci
added
that,
“I
think
what
has
increased
is
the
interest,
not
necessarily
the
evidence.”

Right-
wing
media
have
had
a
field

day with the Fauci emails, claiming that he was alerted about the "lab theory" early on and allegedly failed to take it seriously. Much of their claims are based on a Jan. 31, 2020, email, in which infectious-disease expert Kristian Andersen wrote to Fauci that some of the virus' features "[potentially] looked

engineered."

But what most right-wing media fail to mention is that, a few weeks later, Andersen concluded, upon further investigation, that the "lab theory" was implausible. So the criticism that Fauci was wrongfully hiding the "lab theory" from the public does not hold up.

Of course, Trump now is trying to paint Fauci as the culprit for the fact that America holds the world's record for COVID-19 deaths in absolute numbers. In a mass email on June 3, Trump claimed that "President Trump was right about the China Virus coming

from the Wuhan Lab," and suggested that Fauci was defending China.

But, until we see any hard evidence that COVID-19 emerged from the Wuhan lab, Trump's accusations should be seen as just another attempt to bypass science and divert public attention from the COVID-19 deaths caused by his failure to

tackle
the
pandemic.

Remember,
Trump
knew
early
on
that
COVID
would
be
deadly
—
he
is
on
tape
telling
author
Bob
Woodward
this
in
February
2020
—
but
chose
to
lie
to
the
American
people
for
fear
that
it
would
ruin
his
re-
election
chances.
What's
more,
Trump
consistently
refused
to
wear

a mask or preach social distance, as scientists were recommending.

As I wrote at the time

Trump neglected his main duty — to protect the American people.

Granted, investigations into the origins of COVID-19 are justified and should continue. And there's no question that China's dictatorship is responsible for

its
delay
in
alerting
the
world
about
the
deadly
virus
as
soon
as
it
started.

But
barring
solid
evidence
that
the
virus
originated
from
a
Chinese
lab,
Trump
remains
the
villain
—
and
Fauci
the
hero.

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Date: Fri, 26 Apr 2024 3:24:20 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 26 Apr 2024 3:24:09 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times
From: Keusch, Gerald [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [redacted]
CC: Roberts, Rich [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] [b6] Jeff Sturchio [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; John Feigelson [b6]

I did put him on to Lauer and the Thousand Talents purge, including Lauers glee over the number of US and Chinese scientists caught in the web. I also notedand the shock Collins and Tabak exhibited when the ACD members read their statement and how quickly they ended the day one meeting after that. He has now seen the transcript and asked Lauer and Tabak to comment on it but of course no real response on that either.

I met my former fellow Claire Panosian Donavan for breakfast this morning. She just interviewed Peter Hotez for ASTMH which will be published soon in the journal. She said Phil Rosenthal would be very positive if some of us wrote an updated perspectives piece although I know that takes to time to write well and credibly. Claire suggested we be in touch with Don McNeil who recently left The NY Times due to rather flimsy racist allegations to talk about the current situation as he might have some ideas about how to get attention to our perspective. She offered to introduce me if that would be helpful. We should consider it as a group or I could just do it myself.

I must say I am looking forward to what Michael Hiltzik puts out after the hearing because there may some really wacky stuff coming out of some of the committee members.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 26, 2024, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Really appreciate your email Rich – it's pretty ugly right now, but I'm so busy dealing with this garbage that in a weird way you don't have time to get upset about it.
>
> I'll probably be crying into my cornflakes on the morning of May 2nd after my Salem Witch Trial.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 2:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Gerald b6; Hotez, Peter Jay < b6
Cc: b6; Jeff Sturchio b6 b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 John Feigelson b6
Subject: RE: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times

Peter:

I'm glad he is doing this. I feel very upset about what is happening to you and your family. The sooner these Republicans are voted out of office the better. It is quite unconscionable what they are doing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) b
Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 1:56 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: b6; Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich b6 b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 John Feigelson < b6
Subject: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times

EXTERNAL SENDER

Hi all, I Just had a good call with Michael Hiltzik, mainly off the record, but I gave him some quotes at the end along the lines of "It seems that NIH's actions are continuing the de facto blocking of our funding via administrative overreach.." or

something less eloquent. He will allow me to check quotes. I also gave him the go ahead to excerpts from the emails and even publish the whole emails that detail the onerous oversight that NIH have been using to block our work, should he wish to. These have already been FoIA'd and are likely to be public very soon in any case.

He told me he will probably wait until after the hearing to see what happens there that can add to his story, but It does seem that he will be doing a story that directly critiques NIH's actions against EcoHealth, and that he believes are part of them trying to rationalize their initial termination under Collins, which I reminded him, our legal team contend was an illegal move. He asked for comment from Tabak and Lauer, and they responded with a single line along the lines "because this is the subject of ongoing compliance oversight, we cannot comment" or similar.

I spoke to Michael Hiltzik about what seems to be a sort of Troika at NIH – Francis Collins, Lawrence Tabak and Michael Lauer. Collins and then Tabak clearly have given the go-ahead on a number of issues to Lauer to do what he can with EcoHealth in a way that benefits NIH and avoids harassment from congress. This seems to mirror what Lauer has done with some Chinese American scientists who were accused of illicit financial activities, never shown to have committed any, but lost their jobs or privileges once Lauer called their Deans (see story in *Science* https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers).

He mentioned he had a good conversation with you also Jerry…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:37 AM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald' b6; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Cc: b6 'Jeff Sturchio' b6; 'Roberts, Rich' b6

b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6 ; John Feigelson <

Subject: RE: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

Thanks for the kind words Jerry.

Talking with Michael Hiltzik at 1pm and will be ready to fill him in on some of this, and point him to the Troika at the top of NIH (Collins, Tabak, Lauer) who's weak-willed kow-towing to the former president began all this with the termination of my grant 4 years and 2 days ago (not that I'm counting!!)…

I'll avoid the phrase "four more years" at this point, because I really think we do have another 4 years of crap to wade through…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:10 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 ; b6 Jeff Sturchio <
b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura <
b6 >; John Feigelson b6
Subject: Re: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

It is absolutely awful Peter. But I expect your bravery in the face of adversity, and your insistence on clarity and truth, as David and Tony will echo it as well, will remain strong and in the end be the authentic and true of the fictional story they are trying to manufacture.

Jerry
Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 8:04 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay <b6> wrote:

As they indicated on official twitter they want to "sell popcorn"

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: b6

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

> On Apr 26, 2024, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <b6g> wrote:
>
> I agree with that – the media are otherwise occupied.
>
> That said, we're now hearing that the SSCP are considering sending us a subpoena today. We've spent the last few days turning over emails and documents, but they still want to get their 'angry letter/subpoena' story, so looks like more garbage coming our way.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 10:37 AM
To: Peter Daszak < b6
Cc: b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; Jeff Sturchio < b6 Roberts, Rich < b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 John Feigelson < b6
Subject: Re: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

It's just awful Peter, I'm so sorry, but if it's any consolation the press is busy with Trump hearings and the culture wars playing out on college campuses so there's a good chance that it won't be highlighted much in the mainstream media

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: b6

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 9:25 AM, Peter Daszak [redacted] > wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Dear all,

Just letting you know some of the damage that these political attacks on science have. As soon as the SSCP announced my hearing a few weeks ago, I noticed a significant increase in online death threats, both the number and severity of the threats. On Tuesday this week I received a death threat by mail at my house, and while I was in DC yesterday for a mock hearing, the local police received a notice that someone had killed a scientist and had his wife tied up in the basement at my house. It was a fake call but we ended up with 4 police cars, and detectives searching the house, and staying for the afternoon. We're expecting more of this and are tightening up security for the next couple of weeks at my house and in the office. We also have security lined up in DC where there is a real chance for harassment because they know I have to enter the building that morning. It's also a public building and people will be in the corridors as I enter the room.

In the meantime the SSCP seem happy to gin up their base with a Twitter 'countdown' to my hearing date, just like the buildup to the next season of "Game of Thrones" (below). This time they didn't use the popcorn icon – meaning 'bring your popcorn for this fun show' – as they did on previous countdowns to testimony. I wonder if that's because Peter Hotez called them out repeatedly?

Anyway – it looks like we're in for a rough couple of weeks. Sometime today or over the weekend, the SSCP tells us they'll release a (no doubt damning) report about EcoHealth Alliance, as well as the transcripion from my 9.5 hours interview I did with them in November. That will keep the Right wing press busy and get their supporters frothing at the mouth up to Wednesday..

Post

See new posts

Conversation

<image003.jpg>

Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

@COVIDSelect

In less than one week, EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak will appear before
@COVIDSelect
for a public hearing.
<image001.png>
COVID-19 origins
<image001.png>
Gain-of-function research
<image001.png>
Wuhan Institute of Virology
<image001.png>
Dr. Anthony Fauci ...and more are on the table

✔COVID-19 origins
✔Gain-of-function research
✔Wuhan Institute of Virology
✔Dr. Anthony Fauci

May 1, 2024 | 10:00am ET

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 11:34 PM
To: b6; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]; 'Jeff Sturchio' < b6; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6 b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura < b6; John Feigelson < b6
Subject: Details and a link to my upcoming Public Hearing
Importance: High

Dear colleagues,

Sadly we're getting close to my upcoming public hearing with the SSCP. There are some details and a link below that you can use to watch it live on the day:
https://uspolitics.einnews.com/pr_news/706672646/hearing- advisory-ecohealth-alliance-president-dr-peter-daszak-to-testify-on-may-1

Hearing Advisory: EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter

Daszak to Testify on May 1

WASHINGTON — On May 1, 2024 at 10:00am ET, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic will hold a hearing titled, "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak." This hearing will examine EcoHealth Alliance's (EcoHealth) use of U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund dangerous gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology as well as hold Dr. Daszak publicly accountable for any and all discrepancies between his closed-door transcribed interview and available evidence. Prior to Dr. Daszak's public testimony, the Select Subcommittee will release the full transcript from Dr. Daszak's transcribed interview and publish a detailed report about EcoHealth's impact on the origins of COVID-19.

Read more about Dr. Daszak's upcoming hearing here.

WHAT: Hearing titled "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak"

DATE: Wednesday, May 1, 2024

TIME: 10:00AM ET

LOCATION: 2154 Rayburn House Office Building

WITNESS:

Dr. Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.

WATCH: The hearing will be open to the public and press and will be livestreamed online at https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/a-hearing-with-the-president-of-ecohealth-alliance-dr-peter-daszak/.

RSVP: Media must be congressionally credentialed and RSVP by Tuesday, May 1 at 5:00 PM ET.

###

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 6:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay < [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Now public that Tony Fauci will testify in front of SSCP on June 3rd

I do not I t have a date yet. My lawyer is ne
motivating with sscp

In the meantime, my law.yers have initiated a professional deep dive into my Gmail and Proton mail,and will turn that over to sscp. This will take some time. I doubt there is anything to find but of course. they will look for crumbs to blow up into mountains. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/24/24 17:33, Peter Daszak wrote:

> I've attached a pdf of the story in the Washington Post (it's behind a paywall) – also here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2024/04/24/fauci- congress-testimony-pandemic/.
>
> David – have your lawyers managed to get a date for you to testify yet?
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 9:15 PM
To: b6 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 'Jeff Sturchio' b6 'Roberts, Rich' b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' b6 ; 'John Feigelson' < b6
Subject: RE: Today's news...

By the way – Allegations that me sending information to David Morens is somehow corrupt are outrageous. Tony Fauci was busy working with the White House COVID taskforce at the time, trying to halt the worse pandemic since the 1918 influenza outbreak. I would have happy emailed him directly, but pretty sure he wasn't checking each of his 50,000 emails a day!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak b6 g >

Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 8:10 PM
To: [redacted] 'Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] 'Jeff Sturchio' [redacted] 'Roberts, Rich' [redacted] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < [redacted]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [redacted] John Feigelson < [redacted]
Subject: Today's news...

Had a very successful EcoHealth Alliance benefit last night – sorry some of you couldn't be there.

Michael Mann was our main honoree, and he was great! We raised well above our expectation – all critical to keeping us afloat given the increased pressure we're under right now.

Speaking of which – here's the latest attempt from the SSCP to smear David Morens, EcoHealth Alliance and others as being involved in a 'cover up'

https://nypost.com/2024/04/19/us- news/ex-fauci-adviser-shared-confidential-nih-info-with-ecohealth-about-covid-biosafety-levels-docs/

Basically, they've found an email from me to David, Jerry others when the allegations that EcoHealth expts were conducted at an insufficient BSL level first came out. Tony Fauci was interviewed and said that he would look into it. I sent David M. a review I'd done of the BSL rules for Bat CoVs in various countries, which clearly show that we were operating at the correct biosafety levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 7:16 AM

To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Jeff Sturchio [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay
[b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Testimony from Science Editor, Holden Thorp in front of the SSCP today

Peter, my thought is that it could have been worse, and he does blame Collins as well.... d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/16/24 20:59, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Unpleasant to see him criticize me and EcoHealth today, in a pretty shoddy attempt to curry favor with the SSCP:
>
> https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1780332154620092505
>
> Here's the text of the tweet:
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect
>
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
> @ScienceMagazine
> AGREES that EcoHealth Alliance may have misled the U.S. government about its highly controversial DEFUSE proposal — which some believe created a blueprint for COVID-19. WATCH
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
>
> You can see the video of him criticizing our work here:
>
> https://youtu.be/Oru0-fYGcJU
>
> The relevant section starts at 1hour, 31 minutes and 30 seconds into the video
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 3:22 PM
To: [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] Jeff Sturchio' [b6] Roberts, Rich' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; John Feigelson < [b6]
Subject: COVID Select Subcommittee subpoena to David Morens for correspondence etc.
Importance: High

Here is today's subpoena & a cover letter to David Morens from the SSCP for all correspondence with the following people, related to WIV, EcoHealth or COVID origins or "regarding or referencing the following people". He has to produce this by April 30th

No direct demand for public hearing has been made public yet.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 8:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T < b6 Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich < b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 b6
Subject: Re: COVID select subcommittee is now threatening to call David in for a public hearing

Guys,my lawyer called and i am to be subpoenaed to testify in public hearing on camera. They want me b4 Tony but after Peter. The Dems reached out to my lawyer and asked WTF is going on. Not sure why they don't know. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 16:12, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Here's the COVID committee (SSCP) threatening to call David in for a public hearing based on the emails they claim show that we all used gmail inappropriately (based on a Washington Examiner report today)…
>
> Tweet here: https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1778859503796056214
>
> Washington Examiner BS article here: https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/2964227/ecohealth-alliance-email-release-confirms-fauci-aide-used-private-account-discuss-covid/
>
> Full text of tweet:
>
> **Post**
> See new posts
> **Conversation**
> **Pinned**
> <image003.jpg>
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect

<image001.png>
BREAKING
<image001.png>
@EcoHealthNYC
President Dr. Peter Daszak CONFIRMS whistleblower allegations that Dr. David Morens — a top advisor to Dr. Fauci — used Gmail to hide COVID-19 information. We are beginning the process to secure Dr. Morens's public testimony.
<image004.jpg>

From washingtonexaminer.com

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T < b6 ; Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich < b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 g >; b6
Subject: Re: My email to Michael Hiltzik with an EcoHealth Statement and Email release today

Again. this is excellent. We need more of these stand-up-to-bullies fusillades. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 11:20, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Please read the email I just sent to Michael Hiltzik. It has links to a statement from EcoHealth and the release of the full text (slight redactions) of emails that involve David and Jerry, and were reported in the NY Post and other Right wing outlets yesterday, amplified by Republicans on the COVID Committeee…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Peter Daszak [b6]>
> **Sent:** Friday, April 12, 2024 11:19 AM
> **To:** 'Michael Hiltzik' [b6]
> **Cc:** 'Aleksei Chmura [b6])' <
> b6
> **Subject:** EcoHealth Statement and Email release today has relevance to NIH and Michael Lauer issues
> **Importance:** High
>
> Good to talk with you yesterday Michael. We got more negative press yesterday, this time related to emails that allegedly show coverups and inappropriate behavior among scientists. The Republicans released

only the subject line and addresses etc. (https://oversight.house.gov/release/wenstrup- reveals-emails-from-whistleblower-alleging-additional-attempts-by-fauci-advisor-to-subvert-transparency-about-covid-19-origins/), leading to BS stories in the usual right wing press. We released the full text of the emails today:

b6 alliance-releases-emails-that-are-the-subject-of-false-allegations-in-the-press

These are all from me to senior NIAID staffmember David Morens and former NIH Center Director Jerry Keusch, trying to make sense of the termination of our grant by Trump, and to find a way to get it reinstated. In the end NIH did reinstate the grant (May 2023). One of the chains shows emails that refer to the pressure from Michael Lauer, and the fact NIH instructed me not to talk with our program officer (Erik Stemmy) and direct all communications to Grants Management (Emily Linde). That was another highly unusual move from NIH and is part of the pattern that I was talking with you about.

Here is that particular set of emails:
https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Emails- 01.pdf

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 6:01 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6

Subject: Re: Call tomorrow?

Absolutely. That time is good...I can call then...

MH

On Tue, Apr 9, 2024 at 2:59 PM Peter Daszak < b6 >rote:

> Hi Michael – just following up on this – are you available tomorrow at 5:30pm my time, 2:30pm West Coast time?
>
> I can send a zoom link or call my cellphone b6
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Peter Daszak [b6]
> **Sent:** Sunday, April 7, 2024 9:34 AM
> **To:** 'Michael Hiltzik' [b6]
> **Cc:** 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; 'Alison Andre (b6)
> **Subject:** RE: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant
> **Importance:** High
>
> I have good answers for you on all of those – it's ugly and political.

There are also others who are well-placed who you can talk with.

I can do Wednesday at 5:30pm my time if that works for you (2:30pm West Coast). I have other times as well… cc'ing Alison who will make sure we find a time that works.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2024 6:50 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant

Peter,

Let's set up a time to talk next week (Wednesday or later best for me). On first glance, it strikes me that I'm glad I'm not in the grants-application business, because the bureaucratic behavior here seems incomprehensible, at least to a layman.

What's the overarching theme in their relations with you? Is it pressure from the lab-leak crowd, the FOIAing from Tobias, which as far as I can tell has yielded nothing of any substance? A spillover from the Trump era?

I read the Science piece, which was thorough in detailing

what was done to the Chinese researchers but silent on what provoked it....what was the question I was left with--Why did NIH do all this?

MH

On Sat, Apr 6, 2024 at 12:03 PM Peter Daszak < b6 wrote:

> Hi Michael, I'm just contacting you off the record in case you or others are interested in reporting on what's going on at NIH with respect to EHA's grants. We were trying to deal with this privately, without it becoming public, but we found out last week that some of our recent correspondence with Emily Erbelding asking for her help is in a batch of FoIA's emails that will be released to Jimmy Tobias in the next couple of weeks. Tobias is in the habit of simply dumping these on the internet, so we wanted to get these to a bona fide reporter before that happens.
>
> As you probably know, our organization has been funded by NIAID for around 20 years, conducting successful research on emerging diseases, and working closely with communities, scientists and governments in emerging disease hotspot countries to try to reduce the risk of disease emergence. Prior to the termination of our R01 grant in April 2020 that would have had the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a subrecipient, we had never had any issues with NIH or NIAID, and had been lauded by program officers for our cutting edge research into viral emergence, and the many papers in Science, Nature, NEJM and others based on NIH funding.
>
> After the termination of our grant, the HHS OIG was called in to audit our work and NIH's oversight. They reported back after an 18 month audit with recommendations for both us, and for NIH, most of which were minor and easily addressed. We rapidly complied and NIH's DFAS group confirmed that all audit findings were resolved. However, we continued to receive further actions from the Office of the Director (Michael Lauer, who *Science* wrote about re. NIH's actions on grantees with China connections https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers), and the NIH group that manages oversight (OPERA) directly under Michael Lauer. In April 2023, Michelle Bulls from Opera and Emily Linde from NIAID placed 4 Specific Award Conditions (SACs) on our grants. At the time, Michael Lauer had contacted Tufts University who oversaw our IACUC approvals to

conduct wildlife sampling because EHA doesn't have an animal facility. This led to Tufts canceling our interinstitutional agreement. The only way for us to proceed was to request an Animal Welfare Assurance from OLAW (based at NIH), but this was denied because of these SACs. One of the SACs stated that all of our subcontracts must be reviewed and revised by NIH reviews. We worked extremely hard to rapidly respond (often within days) to every single request, despite many of them being contradictory or having no material impact on the contracts. In the original letter NIH set a deadline of September 2023 to resolve the SACs, which due to repeated delays by NIH grants management staff in responding to us, continued further requests and shifting of the goalposts means we still do not have resolution. Furthermore, grants management are now suggesting that we are beyond the period of work and our subcontractees won't be able to be reimbursed. Additionally, during the past 12 months, NIH has only reimbursed EcoHealth for around $50K of the now nearly $2 million we are expecting and have expended.

As you can imagine, this puts us in a very difficult position, with institutions like UNC and Uniformed Services University likely to be outraged that their funding is threatened, and with us unable to do our work fully – work that has been reviewed, scored well, and is critical to pandemic prevention. We've tried every possible avenue to get a fair and reasonable rapid resolution. We've informed Emily Erbelding of these issues (hence the FoIA'd email), and Program staff at NIAID remain supportive of our work, but we still have no resolution. Every time we try to seek a meeting or resolution, we get a hard response from NIH that we're out of compliance and they set further deadlines and further minor issues for us to fix. Right now I believe we're probably in greater compliance with NIH rules and just about any other institution in the US, given the level of scrutiny we've gone through. I've attached some of the many recent letters between NIH OPERA, NIAID Grants managements and EcoHealth Alliance to give you an indication of the levels of detailed work that we've gone through to try and resolve these issues.

We don't know the reasons why this is happening – all our subcontracts prior to April 2023 covered every single requirement in NIH's grants management guidance, subrecipients had to sign that they would adhere to these. The stonewalling, and shifting of goalposts by NIH is linked to emails that they send us stating that we're 'delinquent' or 'out of compliance', or that they're 'concerned' etc. and seem to us designed ready to be FoIA'd (which they are being) or to be used when NIH

has to show Congressional Republicans that EcoHealth is being treated in the way they are calling for. Meanwhile, important findings can't be reported, including a novel SARS-CoV-2 related virus able to bind well to human ACE2 that we have found in one of our country sites, but are now unable to publish because our subrecipient is concerned they don't yet have an approved contract. This is hurting our ability to conduct pandemic prevention work, and the US's ability to be informed about public health threats that could emerge and threaten our citizens.

If you want to report on this, I'm happy to talk on-the-record on some issues, and there are others who are aware of these problems that I can put you in touch with, including at NIH and senior people from outside.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Tue, 20 Jul 2021 4:46:45 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 20 Jul 2021 4:42:02 PM -0400
Subject: Harold Varmus has been spotted in CT!
From: Peter Daszak [redacted]
To: Roberts, Rich [redacted b6] Keusch, Gerald T [redacted b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [redacted b6]
CC: David Morens [redacted b6]>; Robert Kessler [redacted b6]

One of my Board members, Amy Attas, who's a veterinarian to the pets of people like Mike Bloomberg's wife, Elton John etc. goes to a monthly lunchtime talk series near her summer home in CT (I think). Harold Varmus spoke there a couple of Sunday's ago. Amy asked the first question along the lines "I'm on the Board of an organization working to prevent pandemics..what are the best strategies to prevent the next COVID?" His response: "Is that EcoHealth Alliance?" "If so, what they're doing is exactly what should be done..." He then rolled off a series of key goals to prevent pandemics.

Amy was delighted, and a number of other donors expressed an interest. Please pass on my regards and gratitude to Harold – this is exactly the sort of word of mouth endorsement we need right now, rather than the other sort we're getting from Fox News!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Roberts, Rich [redacted b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted b6] Peter Daszak [redacted b6] g >; Hotez, Peter Jay [redacted b6]
Cc: David Morens [redacted b6] Robert Kessler [redacted b6]
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

I haven't heard anything from Harold recently.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6; Peter Daszak b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I totally agree with you that Tony was remarkable. I sent him a one word email, Bravo, and copied it to Patty Conrad so maybe he will see it as evidence of the support he has from the responsible scientific community.

Thanks for the response regarding the CNN reporters. I'll keep that in mind when I do talk to them and consider whether speaking with you might help them distinguish between good science and crap. I have no doubts about your expertise in science and knowing the difference between, well, good science and crap.

Harold is rather quiet – any sense of what he is up to?

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:50 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6; Peter Daszak b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

Tony was excellent in confronting Paul! It's high time that these senators are told the truth directly.

As for speaking with the reporters, in general I am always prepared to do that, but in this particular case I don't feel my credentials are necessarily the best when dealing with specifics. I have very much been an onlooker and not directly connected to any of the research itself. Peter Hotez and Peter D. are clearly much better informed and have the appropriate expertise. There are plenty of authors on the recent Lancet piece that would be good to include. I am happy to speak as an outsider, but would not want to be considered a knowledgeable expert.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6

Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] g >; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] ; Robert Kessler < [b6]
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had a long talk with two CNN International reporters who are preparing a story essentially on the politics and the misinformation about the origins controversy. I was talking to them off the record but I decided they were legitimately exploring the issues and would likely be a voice of reason if they were given the necessary space to build their case and it was eventually shown.

I mentioned Peter Hotez to them, among some others, and while I mentioned Peter D as well I also said you were under constant attack and it might well be better to allow others to take up the fight on your behalf. GOF and the Goffers were part of the chat. I have agreed to be interviewed on the record and potentially to do a video session as they were potentially interested in using some of that as part of the report. Rich, I didn't specifically mention your name, but if you would be willing to speak with them I can do that when I next connect.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:30 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens < [b6] ; Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Tony Fauci's testimony today
Importance: High

I'm delighted to see Tony Fauci fighting to let everyone understand clear line between what is gain-of-function (work EcoHealth does NOT do), and what is not Gain of function (work EcoHealth did do with Wuhan).

It's a shame it will generate publicity, but he did this so well today that I'm hoping it might help get rid of the willful misinformation the Republicans are engaging in…

Here's a news piece on it https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/563874- fauci-paul-doesnt-know-what-hes-talking-about-and-i-want-to-say-that , and there's some pretty exciting video to watch. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFoaBV_cTek

Well done David on your briefing and practice runs!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: My AMA podcast on the origins of COVID19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14 &feature=youtu.be

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

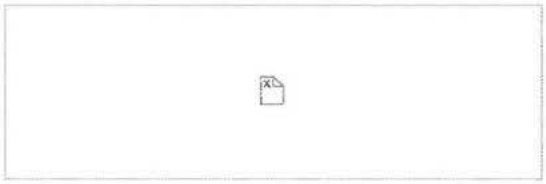
Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a 'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora <b6>
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков <b6>; Leendertz, Fabian <b6>; Peter Daszak <b6>; LeendertzF <b6>; Keith Hamilton <b6>; John Watson <b6>; DEBBICHE, Hassene <b6>; Thea Kølsen Fischer <b6>; BAERT, Primaël <b6>; SHEATH, Danny <b6>; Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) <b6>; STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan <b6>; DRURY, Patrick Anthony <b6>; Ken Maeda <b6>; M.P.G. Koopmans <b6>; <b6> Hayman, David <b6>; IVANOVIC, Dragana <b6>; Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Farag <b6>; Dominic Dwyer <b6>
Cc: RYAN, Michael J. <b6>; Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria <b6>; BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim <b6>
Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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<C.L.28.2021 (Origins of SARS-CoV-2).pdf>

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Date: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 5:47:03 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 5:46:59 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]

Even more than I could have hoped for. That's great to hear.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 4:52 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Great news, and i think you are probably exactly tight about Tony. Just a bit ago, I got a call from Rich saying he had just talked to Harold, who went into a bit of a tirade about Francis, I omit the colorful language here, and said he, Harold, would call Tony next week

Rich also said he would be advising Peter to stay away from the press, as that may be fanning the flames with the nutters. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 22, 2021, at 16:40, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> Thanks for doing this David. I suspect that deep down Tony is not naïve, but that he likes to keep a calm and in control public persona.
>
> The optimal way to reach him will be through Harold Varmus, and its good Rich agreed to be in touch with him. I'm purposely not including Rich on this note because I don't want to be seen as pressuring him further. I think he will follow up, he has as good a connection to Harold as I do, and if necessary I will follow up. Harold has consistently stayed in the background when I have asked him about doing certain things or writing certain commentaries etc. but he has not been reluctant to speak rather frankly about Francis and the Lauer affair when he believed it was necessary or he was directly approached by the reporters at Science, for example. I did try to get Jon Cohen and Meredith Wadman moving on a new article but as you know they both declined at this point because it was not news. I think that was a cop out decision, and depending on what Rich has to day I might just copy Harold on that and see if he is willing to contact them because they will most likely have a different response to him than to me.
> We just have to stay on this, not panic, and not waiver from the ultimate goal. Timing is always critical. So is the messenger. Lander may be the right person, and Harold has indicated to me that he has been in contact with Eric on this issue.
>
> Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 3:24 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler < [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 22, 2021, at 15:06, David Morens [b6] wrote:

Hi Jerry and colleagues, just spent 40 minutes on Zoom with Tony and one of two possibilities: either we are all unnecessarily alarmed, or else he is not taking the threats seriously

He said repeatedly, in a low key jocular way, that no one could mess with him or niaid since we haven't done anything wrong, apparently not counting as "messing with us" the fact that we had an important research project terminated in an unprecedented manner for political reasons.

He also repeated alot of macho comments about how there is always a guy with an AR-15 right outside his door (true, and sometimes two other armed secret service guys) and everywhere he goes outside the office he has at least two bodyguards, also true...9

I hope he is right that the wackos won't gain any further traction, but i am not so sure. For one thing, there was huge collateral damage a few years back with the H5N1 gain of function mess. It is true that neither Tony nor other NIH staff got into any trouble, but thousands of professional hours were wasted over several years time and, far more importantly, the research moratorium, which went in for years, caused labs across the country to close, or move into other areas, caused lab people on grants to lose their jobs, and grad students to lose their dissertation work and postdocs to lose their projects. It was a mess that ought not to be forgotten

If i had to bet, i would guess that beneath Tony's macho I-am-not-worried reaction he really is concerned. And whatever the case he should be very concerned about what happened to Peter, to our research portfolio in an extremely important area, and to scientific independence

He did not know about either the Miller Commission or the letter from Rep Rogers which i emailed to him on gmail later

I also commented that Lauer's letters to you Peter, and the Rogers letter to you, had alot of overlap and seemed to reflect input of at least one scientist, whether or not one of our grantees. In other words, i feel that regarding those letters someone or someones are working in cahoots with the politicians who wish to do harm to NIH He didn't seem particularly troubled by that.

In the end he said thanks for filling me in and asked me to call him on his private cell phone (which is what i normally do anyway) if i hear anything that might be important

So, i am not sure where things stand. I absolutely DO feel that it would be a good thing if one of you luminaries were to approach him and try to make sure he understood what is going on out there, and perhaps discuss what the larger community of scientists can do to lock arms in unity and push back. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:24, David Morens [b6] wrote:

Thanks, Jerry, i will let you know how it goes, although he may not indicate to me his next steps. The way it works with us is that he tries to never ask me things directly, like ask for my advice on what to do, but rather does alot of homework ahead of time, figures out what i am likely to say, then HE tells ME what he thinks so that i can confirm it. Yes, we all have our peculiarities, but as long as the machine runs smoothly its ok

I DO know that he has great respect for Harold, and i think also admires Harold's charge-ahead no-BS style, which is the opposite of Tony's extreme caution. So i have little doubt that he would welcome that kind of help. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:09, Keusch, Gerald T < b6 wrote:

David,
Thanks for the note, and I recognize what you say is what I know about Tony. He is a remarkable person, but like all of us he isn't perfect. I think your strategy to lay out the issues and let him run with it to decide what can be effectively addressed and with what strategy.

Rich's suggestion to talk to Harold is on track, and it would be great Rich if you were to do that. I know that they have a very close and positive history of working together, that Harold is very strategic in his thinking, he prefers to work in the background (something I have confirmed multiple times this past year as I have asked for his advice on things I could take on), and that he will be really frank in talking to Rich. Harold has very recently told me that he has worked closely with Rich on a number of issues related to the concerns we all have.

Let us know how the chat goes tomorrow. I think you have the right perspective heading in to it, and lots of good information at your fingertips.
Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:33 PM
To: David Morens [b6 m >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6 ; Robert Kessler < b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Hi:

If I am to do something I would talk to Harold first. I'll see what he has to say as a possible path forward.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 Roberts, Rich b6 ; Robert Kessler b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

EXTERNAL SENDER

Jerry, The way it works with Tony, at least at my level, is you can't suggest he do anything. If you do, he won't do it on principle. The trick is to make him think of doing something himself, and then he will ask you to help him do it

My strategy tomorrow is to tell him that alarming things are at work, to the point that many scientists (our grantees and others) have become increasingly worried and are looking for the way forward. In that context i will share with him verbally Peter's information, and offer to get to him any of the materials he wants to see, or connect him directly with Peter, who he very much respects

I have not heard that he has engaged Harold, or the National Academies, or the professional societies, although i might not know if he did. He is very much a loner about things like this. He prides himself on being like teflon, but I am worried that he may not be as invulnerable as he may think

Our Chief of Staff, Greg Folkers (who has Masters degrees in both journalism and PH), is among the only folks here, partly excepting Cliff Lane, in whom Tony confides when the subject is difficult or personal, only rarely to me.... and Greg told me today that he thinks Tony is getting worried that the brown stuff is about to hit the fan, and that he may have become a major target

There is very little i can do to help because i am a mere scientist, not a NL, or member of the NAM, or head of a prestigious society (the only kinds of people Tony will usually engage with, as he is very proud).

So if he doesn't become more proactive, what remains is for scientists and science orgs at the very highest level to come together forcefully to push back against the craziness

Who would be willing to approach him directly and "talk turkey"? Harold? Rich? You? Victor? A couple of you?

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 15:01, Keusch, Gerald T b6 wrote:

> Tony will be well aware of this kind of push back. That's not the issue for you tomorrow. Its really how to get the scientific societies engaged once again in the campaign for clarity and resolution of the breech in integrity and the grants management beginning a year ago.
>
> Maybe there would be a moment to suggest that he talk to Harold

Varmus about strategy?

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 2:57 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura <
[b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Jerry, i am traveling without much news access, but this is really depressing. My concern has grown to alarm and i am afraid to think what comes next

We seem to have arrived at that Orwellian point where all investigations of important matters have to exclude participation of the subject experts, since being a subject expert is disqualifying on the grounds that all expertise is inherently biasing.

Before George Orwell, we had Lewis Carroll telling us this. We are in grave danger of going down-the-rabbit-hole-with-Alice.....
D
Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 14:36, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

The COVID Commission Planning Group includes people like Mike Osterholm. I don't put him into the category of Lipsitch, but am I missing something here? He was one of the people on the Biden COVID task force I talked to in December-January about the shattered integrity at the level of NIH/OD. He didn't say much to me, and I didn't take that as a signal that he was on the darker side of the divide.

I saw the results of a focus group of Trump supporters reported on today:
https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/04/20/vaccine-hesitant-republicans/ A bit of text in this report is about Tony.

"Every participant said they preferred hearing from politicians over the medical expert, who has been pilloried by conservative media for months over his coronavirus warnings. The data have shown that unfortunately Dr. Fauci has been politicized, and we need different messengers, because even the right messages coming from the wrong messengers aren't always helpful," Castrucci said, noting his foundation's polling [de Beaumont

Foundation] found Americans trust their personal doctors more than the government's top infectious-disease doctor".

This is the fundamental problem we have, as the politicians will only use this as an echo chamber to amplify their support from their public supporters and constituents. It does point back to the scientific societies which have weighed in previously, but no more impact than we have had as individuals. It doesn't stop this approach, its just that we need some deus ex machina to help us. Is that going to be Eric Lander? What's happening with his approval? I haven't heard much of late.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 12:41 PM
To: David Morens [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Rich Roberts [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Aleksei Chmura [b6] >
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
Importance: High

Thanks for the email David - comments below. Also please see the attached word doc with links to some of the political actions that I'm concerned about. Tell Tony that this is very early days, with most of these coming from the Right, and many that can be headed off at the pass by positive outreach to Democrats, which I believe people will be doing.

I've also put in a link to the new " Covid Commission Planning Group (Covid CPG)" that has no official role from USG, but boldly states as its core mission "to prepare the way for a National Covid Commission". Members include David Relman & Marc Lipsitch and I have heard from many on the conspiracy theory chatter networks online that this will focus partly on advocating for reduction in biosafety labs, viral work in wildlife, and gain-of-function.

Please feel free to share any docs that I've sent to you, with Tony. Hopefully you can do that in a way that avoids FoIA, and if not possible, just show him stuff on screen share on Zoom.

Please also see comments below...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ;Gerald Keusch b6 ;Rich Roberts b6 ;Robert Kessler b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Peter, i am on leave in Florida for my granddaughters graduation from Florida State

Tomorrow at 130 i will be having a zoom call with Tony to tip him off on some of the info you sent in your recent email

I want to be sure about what info or docs you would or would not want me to share
[Peter Daszak:] Any and all

Other than what i see on tv, the jousting with Rand Paul and Jim Jordan, for example, i do not know how much of this Tony is aware of. To my knowledge he doesn't share it with anyone up here

I think issues he will be most concerned about are not your grant, although i add i am sure he would do anything he could to restore the funds and get the hellhounds of your back, but rather 1) the possibility that people like Rep Rodgers and her committee are about to turn up the heat and put Tony, personally, in their crosshairs, and 2) the possibility the NIH funded scientists or other esteemed scientists, are in cahoots with politicians wanting to attack him or niaid
[Peter Daszak:] agreed

As background, we all went through the original version of this crap about 10 years ago with the original GOF attacks surrounding H5N1. As Tony's scientific advisor, i spent much of the year, along with Jeff T, helping brief him and get him up to speed, which he did. At the time, David Relman, who had been one of Tony's favorites, was leading the charge, and we all wondered why a young guy with so much promise would choose demagoguery over science. Lipsitch was only a minor player at that time, but relished his attack role and seem to become more alarmist as time went on. Now these guys are in the NAM. How did that happen???? Ebright has always been a crackpot, in the mold of Peter Duseberg, remember him?, and no one took him seriously except some of the press who didn't know any better

[Peter Daszak:] I had the unfortunate issue of voting on Marc Lipsitch's membership of NAM. He's an accomplished scientist. He's also very opinionated, arrogant and pushy on whatever issue he believes in. I voted on his science acumen.

I was unclear from your email on a couple points you might clarify. Obviously the Rodgers letter asking you to produce all those dox not only overlaps with the Lauer letter to you, but could not have been written without the help of a virologist.
[Peter Daszak:] I have it on good authority (Ebright's Twitter account) that he was involved. They are also getting pressured from Jamie Metzl who's working with the internet conspiracy networks actively to promote their "Research"

Actually, given that there are a few points in the letter that someone knowledgable about coronavirus virology would have corrected, my suspicion is that the letter was put together with the help of a legitimate scientist who needs to do more homework on coronaviruses.
[Peter Daszak:] you're right..! Metzl isn't a virologist, neither's Ebright. The internet 'researchers' are led by a banker and some junior scientists, many from human genetics, mol boil world.

Do you agree, and do you think that person was Ebright? Do you think Relman, Lipsitch, Imperiale, or other current or former grantees might have been involved?

I am not sure we ever funded Ebright, but we did fund the others. I would like to think that Relman et all are only mouthing off to the press, but do you think there is more to it than that, eg, that any of them are working with the politicians?
[Peter Daszak:] David Relman is talking with reporters a lot about this, including casting aspersions on my motives for speaking out about this virus emerging via wildlife-to-human spillover (he's quoted as saying my motives are to protect the research I've been doing and reputations of our collaborators). Ebright is very actively (and obnoxiously) critical on social media calling me a 'Grifter' on a weekly basis and promoting unsubstantiated arguments for a lab leak. I had to look up what 'grifter' meant at first...

Your earlier comments about this proposed investigative committee, and the possible role of these folks in it, are alarming. Can you be more specific about where this stands and what is being done to forward it and to squelch it?
[Peter Daszak:] Nothing's being done to squelch it, and neither should it be - there will be other committees that also pop up. My concern is their bold claim that they're laying the groundwork for a 9/11 type commission (and have a 9/11 commission person involved). It may be that just by saying that a lot, and having well known people involved, they end up forming one. They're clearly politically connected and are advocating for this politically. Jerry and I also proposed this in our paper published in Health Affairs, but we assumed this would be led by NAM or some other well-respected institution.

When i speak with Tony i do not want to step into the politics of all this, as that's not my job and he wouldn't want me to. If he needs further info it might be best to connect you two, in an off the record manner. Would that be OK? We are getting FOIA'd non stop, so it's most important that Tony not have anything on the record that could come back to bite
[Peter Daszak:] Totally agree. Tell him I'm happy to speak with him at any

time and will do so in a way that's not FoIA-ble. One thing I could do is either on a zoom call or by sending you a document, is lay out responses to the Mendendez questions so that the arguments are known and well-supported. For example, everyone's saying that this is a 'gain-of-function' issue, but actually that's not the case - we worked on bat viruses, not human pathogens. The expts produced loss of function, not gain of function, all appropriate conditions and approvals were demonstrably checked and correctly answered.

Finally, i didn't read all of the Menendez bill-in-committee, which is longer than Les misérables, but what's the gist? Do you think that in their zeal to take a hard stance against the PRC, these Democrats are purposely, or accidentally, getting sucked into the evil-WIV scenario? Is there real danger here?
[Peter Daszak:] The Menendez bill is the only one that stands a chance so far of becoming law because it's bipartisan. The WIV, gain-of-function stuff is thrown in as a very small part of it. The draft wording only calls for a report from NIH after 180 days on these issues, and they are easily addressed. However, if it does pass and the anti-China mood hardens in the US, it may end up with calls to testify and the Republicans may use that to undermine NIH, and in particular Tony, given the rabid GoF myth they've been building.

Anything you think might be helpful, I'd appreciate

TY, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Disclaimer

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Date: Sun, 28 Apr 2024 2:07:52 PM -0400
Subject: Fw: Re: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times
From: b6
To: David Morens b6

I did put him on to Lauer and the Thousand Talents purge, including Lauers glee over the number of US and Chinese scientists caught in the web. I also notedand the shock Collins and Tabak exhibited when the ACD members read their statement and how quickly they ended the day one meeting after that. He has now seen the transcript and asked Lauer and Tabak to comment on it but of course no real response on that either.

I met my former fellow Claire Panosian Donavan for breakfast this morning. She just interviewed Peter Hotez for ASTMH which will be published soon in the journal. She said Phil Rosenthal would be very positive if some of us wrote an updated perspectives piece although I know that takes to time to write well and credibly. Claire suggested we be in touch with Don McNeil who recently left The NY Times due to rather flimsy racist allegations to talk about the current situation as he might have some ideas about how to get attention to our perspective. She offered to introduce me if that would be helpful. We should consider it as a group or I could just do it myself.

I must say I am looking forward to what Michael Hiltzik puts out after the hearing because there may some really wacky stuff coming out of some of the committee members.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 26, 2024, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>
> Really appreciate your email Rich – it's pretty ugly right now, but I'm so busy dealing with this garbage that in a weird way you don't have time to get upset about it.
>
> I'll probably be crying into my cornflakes on the morning of May 2nd after my Salem Witch Trial.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 2:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak < b6 ; Keusch, Gerald < b6 Hotez, Peter Jay < b6
Cc: b6 Jeff Sturchio b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 John Feigelson b6
Subject: RE: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times

Peter:

I'm glad he is doing this. I feel very upset about what is happening to you and your family. The sooner these Republicans are voted out of office the better. It is quite unconscionable what they are doing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 1:56 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: b6 ; Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich < b6
b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6 >; John Feigelson <
b6
Subject: Interview with Michael Hiltzik of the LA Times

EXTERNAL SENDER

Hi all, I Just had a good call with Michael Hiltzik, mainly off the record, but I gave him some quotes at the end along the lines of "It seems that NIH's actions are continuing the de facto blocking of our funding via administrative overreach.." or something less eloquent. He will allow me to check quotes. I also gave him the go ahead to excerpts from the emails and even publish the whole emails that detail the onerous oversight that NIH have been using to block our work, should he wish to. These have already been FoIA'd and are likely to be public very soon in any case.

He told me he will probably wait until after the hearing to see what happens there that can add to his story, but It does seem

that he will be doing a story that directly critiques NIH's actions against EcoHealth, and that he believes are part of them trying to rationalize their initial termination under Collins, which I reminded him, our legal team contend was an illegal move. He asked for comment from Tabak and Lauer, and they responded with a single line along the lines "because this is the subject of ongoing compliance oversight, we cannot comment" or similar.

I spoke to Michael Hiltzik about what seems to be a sort of Troika at NIH – Francis Collins, Lawrence Tabak and Michael Lauer. Collins and then Tabak clearly have given the go-ahead on a number of issues to Lauer to do what he can with EcoHealth in a way that benefits NIH and avoids harassment from congress. This seems to mirror what Lauer has done with some Chinese American scientists who were accused of illicit financial activities, never shown to have committed any, but lost their jobs or privileges once Lauer called their Deans (see story in *Science* https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers).

He mentioned he had a good conversation with you also Jerry…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:37 AM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald' b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Cc: b6 'Jeff Sturchio' b6 ; 'Roberts, Rich' b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 ; John Feigelson < b6
Subject: RE: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

Thanks for the kind words Jerry.

Talking with Michael Hiltzik at 1pm and will be ready to fill him in on some of this, and point him to the Troika at the top of NIH (Collins, Tabak, Lauer) who's weak-willed kow-towing to the former president began all this with the termination of my grant 4 years and 2 days ago (not that I'm counting!!)…

I'll avoid the phrase "four more years" at this point, because I really think we do have another 4 years of crap to wade through…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Keusch, Gerald b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:10 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 >; Jeff Sturchio < b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 >; John Feigelson b6
Subject: Re: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

It is absolutely awful Peter. But I expect your bravery in the face of adversity, and your insistence on clarity and truth, as David and Tony will echo it as well, will remain strong and in the end be the authentic and true of the fictional story they are trying to manufacture.

Jerry
Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 26, 2024, at 8:04 AM, Hotez, Peter Jay b6 wrote:
>
> As they indicated on official twitter they want to "sell popcorn"
>
> **Peter Hotez**, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: b6

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

I agree with that – the media are otherwise occupied.

That said, we're now hearing that the SSCP are considering sending us a subpoena today. We've spent the last few days turning over emails and documents, but they still want to get their 'angry letter/subpoena' story, so looks like more garbage coming our way.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 10:37 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Jeff Sturchio < b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 ; John Feigelson b6
Subject: Re: Security concerns re. upcoming Public Hearing

It's just awful Peter, I'm so sorry, but if it's any consolation the press is busy with Trump hearings and the culture wars playing out on college campuses so there's a good chance that it won't be highlighted much in the mainstream media

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: b6

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
IPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 9:25 AM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

CAUTION: **This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Dear all,

Just letting you know some of the damage that these political attacks on science have. As soon as the SSCP announced my hearing a few weeks ago, I noticed a significant increase in online death threats, both the number and severity of the threats. On Tuesday this week I received a death threat by mail at my house, and while I was in DC yesterday for a mock hearing, the local police received a notice that someone had killed a scientist and had his wife tied up in the basement at my house. It was a fake call but we ended up with 4 police cars, and detectives searching the house, and staying for the afternoon. We're expecting more of this and are tightening up security for the next couple of weeks at my house and in the office. We also have security lined up in DC where there is a real chance for harassment because they know I have to enter the building that morning. It's also a public building and people will be in the corridors as I enter the room.

In the meantime the SSCP seem happy to gin up their base with a Twitter 'countdown' to my hearing date, just like the buildup to the next season of "Game of Thrones" (below). This time they didn't use the popcorn icon – meaning 'bring your popcorn for this fun show' – as they did on previous countdowns to testimony. I wonder if that's because Peter Hotez called them out repeatedly?

Anyway – it looks like we're in for a rough couple of weeks. Sometime today or over the weekend, the SSCP tells us they'll release a (no doubt damning) report about EcoHealth Alliance, as well as the transcripion from my 9.5 hours interview I did with them in November. That will keep the Right wing press busy and get their supporters frothing at the mouth up to Wednesday..

Post

See new posts

Conversation

<image003.jpg>

Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

@COVIDSelect

In less than one week, EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak will appear before
@COVIDSelect
for a public hearing.
<image001.png>
COVID-19 origins
<image001.png>
Gain-of-function research
<image001.png>
Wuhan Institute of Virology
<image001.png>
Dr. Anthony Fauci ...and more are on the table.

✔COVID-19 origins
✔Gain-of-function research
✔Wuhan Institute of Virology
✔Dr. Anthony Fauci

May 1, 2024 | 10:00am ET

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 11:34 PM
To: b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 'Jeff Sturchio' < b6 'Roberts, Rich' b6 ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6 b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 John Feigelson < b6 >
Subject: Details and a link to my upcoming Public Hearing
Importance: High

Dear colleagues,

Sadly we're getting close to my upcoming public hearing with the SSCP. There are some details and a link below that you can use to watch it live on the day:
https://uspolitics.einnews.com/pr_news/706672646/hearing- advisory-ecohealth-alliance-president-dr-peter-daszak-to-testify-on-may-1

Hearing Advisory: EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak to Testify on May 1

WASHINGTON — On May 1, 2024 at 10:00am ET, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic will hold a hearing titled, "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak." This hearing will examine EcoHealth Alliance's (EcoHealth) use of U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund dangerous gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology as well as hold Dr.

Daszak publicly accountable for any and all discrepancies between his closed-door transcribed interview and available evidence. Prior to Dr. Daszak's public testimony, the Select Subcommittee will release the full transcript from Dr. Daszak's transcribed interview and publish a detailed report about EcoHealth's impact on the origins of COVID-19.

Read more about Dr. Daszak's upcoming hearing here.

WHAT: Hearing titled "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak"

DATE: Wednesday, May 1, 2024

TIME: 10:00AM ET

LOCATION: 2154 Rayburn House Office Building

WITNESS:

Dr. Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.

WATCH: The hearing will be open to the public and press and will be livestreamed online at https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/a- hearing-with-the-president-of-ecohealth-alliance-dr-peter-daszak/.

RSVP: Media must be congressionally credentialed and RSVP by Tuesday, May 1 at 5:00 PM ET.

###

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: b6
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 6:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak [redacted]>; Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] Jeff Sturchio [redacted]; Roberts, Rich [redacted]>; Hotez, Peter Jay < [redacted]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [redacted]
Subject: Re: Now public that Tony Fauci will testify in front of SSCP on June 3rd

I do not I t have a date yet. My lawyer is ne
motivating with sscp

In the meantime, my law.yers have initiated a professional deep dive into my Gmail and Proton mail,and will turn that over to sscp. This will take some time. I doubt there is anything to find but of course. they will look for crumbs to blow up into mountains. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/24/24 17:33, Peter Daszak wrote:

> I've attached a pdf of the story in the Washington Post (it's behind a paywall) – also here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2024/04/24/fauci- congress-testimony-pandemic/.
>
> David – have your lawyers managed to get a date for you to testify yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak [b6 g >
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 9:15 PM
To: [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' <[b6] 'Jeff Sturchio' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < [b6] [b6] [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' <[b6] 'John Feigelson' < [b6]
Subject: RE: Today's news...

By the way – Allegations that me sending information to David Morens is somehow corrupt are outrageous. Tony Fauci was busy working with the White House COVID taskforce at the time, trying to halt the worse pandemic since the 1918 influenza outbreak. I would have happy emailed him directly, but pretty sure he wasn't checking each of his 50,000 emails a day!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 8:10 PM
To: [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Jeff Sturchio' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < [b6] [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] John Feigelson < [b6]

Subject: Today's news...

Had a very successful EcoHealth Alliance benefit last night – sorry some of you couldn't be there.

Michael Mann was our main honoree, and he was great! We raised well above our expectation – all critical to keeping us afloat given the increased pressure we're under right now.

Speaking of which – here's the latest attempt from the SSCP to smear David Morens, EcoHealth Alliance and others as being involved in a 'cover up'

https://nypost.com/2024/04/19/us- news/ex-fauci-adviser-shared-confidential-nih-info-with-ecohealth-about-covid-biosafety-levels-docs/

Basically, they've found an email from me to David, Jerry others when the allegations that EcoHealth expts were conducted at an insufficient BSL level first came out. Tony Fauci was interviewed and said that he would look into it. I sent David M. a review I'd done of the BSL rules for Bat CoVs in various countries, which clearly show that we were operating at the correct biosafety levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 7:16 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Jeff Sturchio b6; Roberts, Rich b6; Hotez, Peter Jay
b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Testimony from Science Editor, Holden Thorp in front of the SSCP today

Peter, my thought is that it could have been worse, and he does blame Collins as well.... d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/16/24 20:59, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Unpleasant to see him criticize me and EcoHealth today, in a pretty shoddy attempt to curry favor with the SSCP:
>
> https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1780332154620092505
>
> Here's the text of the tweet:
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect
>
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
> @ScienceMagazine
> AGREES that EcoHealth Alliance may have misled the U.S. government about its highly controversial DEFUSE proposal — which some believe created a blueprint for COVID-19. WATCH
> <image001.png>
> <image001.png>
>
> You can see the video of him criticizing our work here:
>
> https://youtu.be/Oru0-fYGcJU
>
> The relevant section starts at 1hour, 31 minutes and 30 seconds into the video
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 3:22 PM
To: [b6] 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Jeff Sturchio' <j [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; John Feigelson < [b6]
Subject: COVID Select Subcommittee subpoena to David Morens for correspondence etc.
Importance: High

Here is today's subpoena & a cover letter to David Morens from the SSCP for all correspondence with the following people, related to WIV, EcoHealth or COVID origins or "regarding or referencing the following people". He has to produce this by April 30th

No direct demand for public hearing has been made public yet.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and

promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 8:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 Jeff Sturchio <[b6]>; Roberts, Rich < b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] b6
Subject: Re: COVID select subcommittee is now threatening to call David in for a public hearing

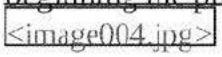
Guys,my lawyer called and i am to be subpoenaed to testify in public hearing on camera. They want me b4 Tony but after Peter. The Dems reached out to my lawyer and asked WTF is going on. Not sure why they don't know. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 16:12, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Here's the COVID committee (SSCP) threatening to call David in for a public hearing based on the emails they claim show that we all used gmail inappropriately (based on a Washington Examiner report today)…
>
> Tweet here: https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1778859503796056214
>
> Washington Examiner BS article here: https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/2964227/ecohealth-alliance-email-release-confirms-fauci-aide-used-private-account-discuss-covid/
>
> Full text of tweet:
>
> **Post**
> See new posts
> **Conversation**
> Pinned
> <image003.jpg>
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect
>
> <image001.png>
> BREAKING
> <image001.png>
> @EcoHealthNYC

President Dr. Peter Daszak CONFIRMS whistleblower allegations that Dr. David Morens — a top advisor to Dr. Fauci — used Gmail to hide COVID-19 information. We are beginning the process to secure Dr. Morens's public testimony.



From washingtonexaminer.com

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 Jeff Sturchio < b6 Roberts, Rich < b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 >; b6
Subject: Re: My email to Michael Hiltzik with an EcoHealth Statement and Email release today

Again. this is excellent. We need more of these stand-up-to-bullies fusillades. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 11:20, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Please read the email I just sent to Michael Hiltzik. It has links to a statement from EcoHealth and the release of the full text (slight redactions) of emails that involve David and Jerry, and were reported in the NY Post and other Right wing outlets yesterday, amplified by Republicans on the COVID Committeee…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 11:19 AM
To: 'Michael Hiltzik' b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura b6 >
Subject: EcoHealth Statement and Email release today has relevance to NIH and Michael Lauer issues
Importance: High

Good to talk with you yesterday Michael. We got more negative press yesterday, this time related to emails that allegedly show coverups and inappropriate behavior among scientists. The Republicans released only the subject line and addresses etc. (https://oversight.house.gov/release/wenstrup- reveals-emails-from-whistleblower-alleging-additional-attempts-by-fauci-advisor-to-subvert-transparency-about-covid-19-origins/), leading to BS stories in the usual right wing press. We released the full text of the emails today:

https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2024/04/ecohealth- alliance-releases-emails-that-are-the-subject-of-false-allegations-in-the-press

These are all from me to senior NIAID staffmember David Morens and former NIH Center Director Jerry Keusch, trying to make sense of the termination of our grant by Trump, and to find a way to get it reinstated. In the end NIH did reinstate the grant (May 2023). One of the chains shows emails that refer to the pressure from Michael Lauer, and the fact NIH instructed me not to talk with our program officer (Erik Stemmy) and direct all communications to Grants Management (Emily Linde). That was another highly unusual move from NIH and is part of the pattern that I was talking with you about.

Here is that particular set of emails:
https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Emails- 01.pdf

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 6:01 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Subject: Re: Call tomorrow?

Absolutely. That time is good...I can call then...

MH

On Tue, Apr 9, 2024 at 2:59 PM Peter Daszak < b6 > wrote:

Hi Michael – just following up on this – are you available tomorrow at 5:30pm my time, 2:30pm West Coast time?

I can send a zoom link or call my cellphone b6

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g >
Sent: Sunday, April 7, 2024 9:34 AM
To: 'Michael Hiltzik' < b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b6 >; 'Alison Andre (b6 >
Subject: RE: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant
Importance: High

I have good answers for you on all of those – it's ugly and political. There are also others who are well-placed who you can talk with.

I can do Wednesday at 5:30pm my time if that works for you (2:30pm West Coast). I have other times as well… cc'ing Alison who will make sure we find a time that works.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: b6
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2024 6:50 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant

Peter,

Let's set up a time to talk next week (Wednesday or later best for me). On first glance, it strikes me that I'm glad I'm not in the grants-application business, because the bureaucratic behavior here seems incomprehensible, at least to a layman.

What's the overarching theme in their relations with you? Is it pressure from the lab-leak crowd, the FOIAing from Tobias, which as far as I can tell has yielded nothing of any substance? A spillover from the Trump era?

I read the Science piece, which was thorough in detailing what was done to the Chinese researchers but silent on what provoked it....what was the question I was left with--Why did NIH do all this?

MH

On Sat, Apr 6, 2024 at 12:03 PM Peter Daszak < b6 wrote:

> Hi Michael, I'm just contacting you off the record in case you or others are interested in reporting on what's going

on at NIH with respect to EHA's grants. We were trying to deal with this privately, without it becoming public, but we found out last week that some of our recent correspondence with Emily Erbelding asking for her help is in a batch of FoIA's emails that will be released to Jimmy Tobias in the next couple of weeks. Tobias is in the habit of simply dumping these on the internet, so we wanted to get these to a bona fide reporter before that happens.

As you probably know, our organization has been funded by NIAID for around 20 years, conducting successful research on emerging diseases, and working closely with communities, scientists and governments in emerging disease hotspot countries to try to reduce the risk of disease emergence. Prior to the termination of our R01 grant in April 2020 that would have had the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a subrecipient, we had never had any issues with NIH or NIAID, and had been lauded by program officers for our cutting edge research into viral emergence, and the many papers in Science, Nature, NEJM and others based on NIH funding.

After the termination of our grant, the HHS OIG was called in to audit our work and NIH's oversight. They reported back after an 18 month audit with recommendations for both us, and for NIH, most of which were minor and easily addressed. We rapidly complied and NIH's DFAS group confirmed that all audit findings were resolved. However, we continued to receive further actions from the Office of the Director (Michael Lauer, who *Science* wrote about re. NIH's actions on grantees with China connections https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers), and the NIH group that manages oversight (OPERA) directly under Michael Lauer. In April 2023, Michelle Bulls from Opera and Emily Linde from NIAID placed 4 Specific Award Conditions (SACs) on our grants. At the time, Michael Lauer had contacted Tufts University who oversaw our IACUC approvals to conduct wildlife sampling because EHA doesn't have an animal facility. This led to Tufts canceling our interinstitutional agreement. The only way for us to proceed was to request an Animal Welfare Assurance from OLAW (based at NIH), but this was denied because of these SACs. One of the SACs stated that all of our subcontracts must be reviewed and revised by NIH reviews. We worked extremely hard to rapidly respond (often within days) to every single request, despite many of them being contradictory or having no material impact on the contracts. In the original letter NIH set a deadline of September 2023 to resolve the SACs, which due to

repeated delays by NIH grants management staff in responding to us, continued further requests and shifting of the goalposts means we still do not have resolution. Furthermore, grants management are now suggesting that we are beyond the period of work and our subcontractees won't be able to be reimbursed. Additionally, during the past 12 months, NIH has only reimbursed EcoHealth for around $50K of the now nearly $2 million we are expecting and have expended.

As you can imagine, this puts us in a very difficult position, with institutions like UNC and Uniformed Services University likely to be outraged that their funding is threatened, and with us unable to do our work fully – work that has been reviewed, scored well, and is critical to pandemic prevention. We've tried every possible avenue to get a fair and reasonable rapid resolution. We've informed Emily Erbelding of these issues (hence the FoIA'd email), and Program staff at NIAID remain supportive of our work, but we still have no resolution. Every time we try to seek a meeting or resolution, we get a hard response from NIH that we're out of compliance and they set further deadlines and further minor issues for us to fix. Right now I believe we're probably in greater compliance with NIH rules and just about any other institution in the US, given the level of scrutiny we've gone through. I've attached some of the many recent letters between NIH OPERA, NIAID Grants managements and EcoHealth Alliance to give you an indication of the levels of detailed work that we've gone through to try and resolve these issues.

We don't know the reasons why this is happening – all our subcontracts prior to April 2023 covered every single requirement in NIH's grants management guidance, subrecipients had to sign that they would adhere to these. The stonewalling, and shifting of goalposts by NIH is linked to emails that they send us stating that we're 'delinquent' or 'out of compliance', or that they're 'concerned' etc. and seem to us designed ready to be FoIA'd (which they are being) or to be used when NIH has to show Congressional Republicans that EcoHealth is being treated in the way they are calling for. Meanwhile, important findings can't be reported, including a novel SARS-CoV-2 related virus able to bind well to human ACE2 that we have found in one of our country sites, but are now unable to publish because our subrecipient is concerned they don't yet have an approved contract. This is hurting our ability to conduct pandemic prevention work, and the US's ability to be informed about public health threats that could emerge and threaten our citizens.

If you want to report on this, I'm happy to talk on-the-

record on some issues, and there are others who are aware of these problems that I can put you in touch with, including at NIH and senior people from outside.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date:	Thu, 19 May 2022 4:59:45 PM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 19 May 2022 4:57:48 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article
From:	"Hotez, Peter Jay" [b6]
To:	Roberts, Rich [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6];
CC:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6];
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg; image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg

How could PNAS publish this crap?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: [b6]
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: [b6]
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6]
Phone: [b6]
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 3:54 PM, Roberts, Rich [b6]> wrote:

Peter:

As you say more nonsense. My opinion of Sachs is waning rapidly.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Looks like Sachs has been taken down yet another rabbit hole by a scientist at Columbia (Harrison) who doesn't work in the field, and is just plain wrong. It's the old Furin cleavage site hypothesis again, without any new data or evidence. Of course, that's their point – the lack of evidence means we're all hiding information and need to be hung, drawn and quartered.

They've published an opinion piece in PNAS (attached) and there's this article in 'The Intercept'. Ebright is quoted, of course!

https://theintercept.com/2022/05/19/covid- lab-leak-evidence-jeffrey-sachs/

All this will be put straight into the subpoena letters that we've been told by Democrat staffers to expect to arrive in Jan/Feb 2023 when the Republicans take over the house (their words, not mine).

Blue/Bloomberg via Getty Images

JEFFREY SACHS PRESENTS EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE LAB ORIGIN OF COVID-19

An article in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences calls for an independent investigation of information held by U.S.-based institutions that could shed light on the origins of Covid.



Sharon Lerner
May 19 2022, 4:00 p.m.

IN AN ARTICLE published Thursday, economist Jeffrey Sachs called for an independent investigation of information held by U.S.-based institutions that could shed light on the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic. Writing in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Sachs and his co-author, Neil Harrison, a Columbia University professor of molecular pharmacology and therapeutics, said that federal agencies and universities possess evidence that has not been adequately reviewed, including virus databases, biological samples, viral sequences, email communications, and laboratory notebooks. Sachs and Harrison also highlighted a tantalizing scientific detail that may be an indication that SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes Covid-19, originated in a laboratory: a sequence of eight amino acids on a critical part of the virus's spike protein that is identical to an amino acid sequence found in cells that line human airways.

Sachs and Harrison are hardly the first to suggest that SARS-CoV-2 might have been created in a lab. Since its genetic sequence was first published in February 2020, scientists have puzzled over the furin cleavage site, an area on the virus's spike that allows it to be broken apart by a protein on the membrane of human cells and makes the coronavirus particularly dangerous to people. Once split, the virus releases its genetic material into the cell and reproduces. While all viruses work by attaching themselves to cells, breaking apart, and releasing their genetic material, SARS-CoV-2 is the only one of its class, sarbecoviruses, to use this particular mechanism to do so.

As with past discussion of a possible lab origin of SARS-CoV-2, this latest theory has already been met with considerable pushback. Even some scientists who are open to the idea that a lab accident could have sparked the pandemic remain unconvinced by the particular trail of evidence laid out by Sachs and Harrison.

The journal article offers a scientific road map for how this unusual sequence of amino acids could have made its way into the furin cleavage site, or FCS, of the virus. Sachs and Harrison acknowledge that the sequence could have arisen naturally. But they also lay out another possibility: that scientists might have purposefully inserted this particular string of amino acids into a bat coronavirus in the course of their work. They focus particularly on scientists who submitted an unfunded grant proposal to a division of the Defense Department called the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, laying out plans to insert a furin cleavage site into a bat coronavirus.

"We do not know whether the insertion of the FCS was the result of natural evolution — perhaps via a recombination event in an intermediate mammal or a human — or was the result of a deliberate introduction of the FCS into a SARS-like virus as part of a laboratory experiment," Sachs and Harrison write. "We do know that the insertion of such FCS sequences into SARS-like viruses was a specific goal of work proposed by the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership within a 2018 grant proposal ("DEFUSE") that was submitted to the US Defense Advanced Research Projects (DARPA)."

EHA is a reference to EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit research group based in New York City that has received more than $118 million in grants and contracts from federal agencies. WIV, or the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is a Chinese research organization that collaborated with EcoHealth Alliance in the past and was listed as a subcontractor on the DARPA grant. UNC is mentioned because Ralph Baric, a molecular biologist at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, was to have conducted part of the work pitched to DARPA. The grant proposal touted Baric's "two-decade track record of reverse engineering [coronavirus] and other virus spike proteins."

The intent of the DARPA proposal was to prevent emerging pathogenic threats, but the work, if conducted, could have created a novel virus capable of infecting humans. "We will introduce appropriate human-specific cleavage sites and evaluate growth potential in [a type of mammalian cell commonly used in microbiology] and [human airway epithelial cell] cultures," the proposal stated.

Several scientists interviewed about the DARPA proposal in September told The Intercept that scientists often begin research before seeking funding and thus that

some of the experiments described in the proposal could have already been completed. But when asked about that possibility in an interview, Peter Daszak, the president of EcoHealth Alliance, rejected it: "The DARPA proposal was not funded. Therefore, the work was not done. Simple."

A Rational Choice

As Sachs and Harrison note, the part of a protein on the cell membrane that shares its amino acid sequence with the bat coronavirus is critical for lung function. Known as an epithelial sodium channel-alpha, or ENaC-alpha, it is found in human airway cells, as well as in human kidneys and colons. Intriguingly, like SARS-CoV-2, ENaC-alpha, which facilitates the absorption of fluid in cells, is also activated by the unusual furin cleavage site. Harrison, a physiologist affiliated with Columbia's Department of Molecular Pharmacology and Therapeutics, studies ion channels, the larger category to which ENaC-alpha belongs.

Other scientists have already pointed out the match between the amino acid series in the furin cleavage site of SARS-CoV-2 and the ENaC-alpha found in human airways. In 2020, a team from the biomedical company Nference suggested that the overlap between the virus and the sequence found in human lungs is part of the reason that Covid-19 is so damaging to the respiratory system. Those scientists described the sequence as having evolved naturally.



The Coronavirus Crisis

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Sachs and Harrison, in contrast, suggest that researchers may have inserted the string of amino acids into a bat coronavirus precisely because of its known importance to lung function. "For a research team assessing the pandemic potential of SARS-related coronaviruses, the FCS of human ENaC — an FCS known to be efficiently cleaved by host furin present in the target location (epithelial cells) of an important target organ (lung), of the target organism (human) — might be a rational, if not obvious, choice of FCS to introduce into a virus in order to alter its

infectivity, in line with other work performed previously," they write.

Such a choice, they point out, would have been in keeping with another viral research project on which EcoHealth Alliance, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and UNC's Baric collaborated: a 2014 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases that involved increasing the transmissibility and pathogenicity of bat coronaviruses.



Ralph Baric. a researcher at the University of North Carolina's Gillings School of Global Public Health, in Chapel Hill, N.C., on Feb. 14, 2020.

Photo: Christopher Janaro/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Growing List of Coincidences

The intriguing theory of viral engineering hinges on two observations: that the amino acid sequences match and that experts in both the ENaC-alpha furin cleavage site and the insertion of genetic sequences into bat coronaviruses happen to work at the same academic institution: the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Baric, whose work aims to prevent and create treatments for viral outbreaks, has previously inserted segments of DNA and RNA into viruses and created an infectious clone of SARS using his own patented "No See'm" method of inserting genetic materials without a trace. He has also collaborated on coronavirus research with scientists from a center for lung studies at UNC-Chapel Hill who are knowledgeable about ENaC-alpha. In one 2016 study, the scientists created a new virus using the spike of a bat coronavirus that had been isolated and characterized by the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The experiment found that the new virus "replicated efficiently" in human airway cells that were cultured in a lab.

In another paper, published a year earlier, Baric, along with the Wuhan Institute of Virology's Shi Zhengli and a lung expert UNC-Chapel Hill's lung institute, described creating a hybrid virus using a SARS-like virus from a bat and a "mouse-adapted" coronavirus. The new virus caused mice to get sicker than those exposed to the original virus. The goal of these experiments was to prepare for the possibility that a virus might jump naturally from animals to humans, as SARS had in 2003. But even before the pandemic, the experiment drew criticism from other scientists, who were concerned because the researchers had created a virus that was able to spread in humans.

Sachs and Harrison note that the scientists who co-authored the DARPA grant proposal would have been aware of research on coronavirus furin cleavage sites, including one 2006 experiment in which a furin cleavage site was inserted into a coronavirus. "The research team would also have some familiarity with the FCS sequence and the FCS-dependent activation mechanism of human ENaC, which was extensively characterized at UNC," they write.

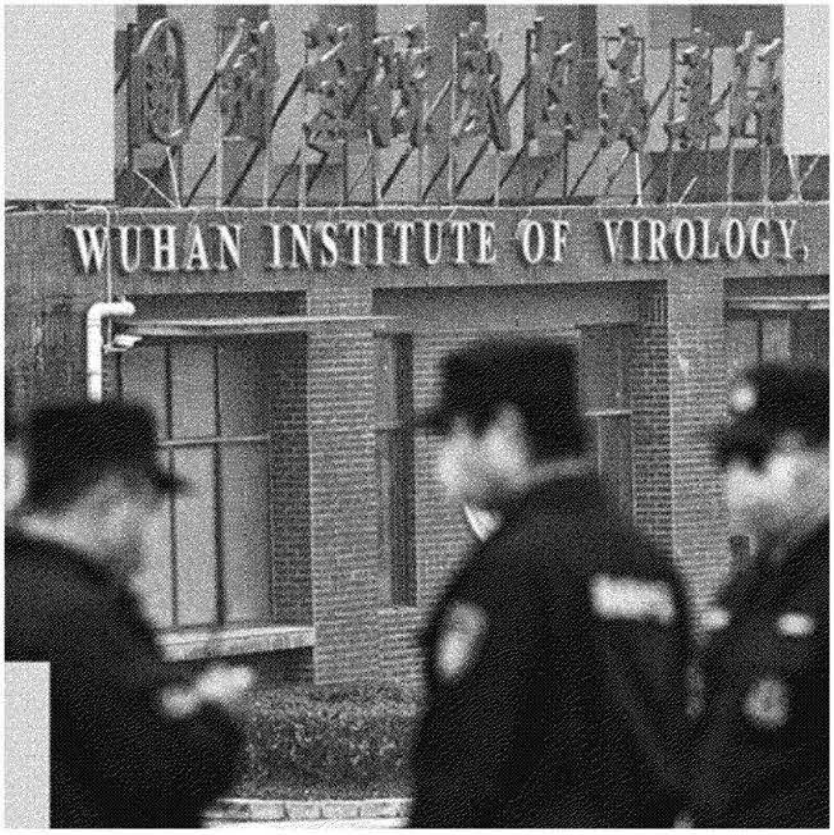
"The list of coincidences is getting verrrrrrrrrrry long."

Still, both the overlap in the amino acid sequence and the fact that experts in the furin cleavage site of the ENaC-alpha and insertion of genetic material into bat coronaviruses work at the same university could be coincidental, as Harrison and Sachs acknowledge. Some virologists, though, say that the coincidence strains

credulity.

"Could be," Richard Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University, wrote in an email to The Intercept when asked about the possibility that these things are both chance occurrences. "But the list of coincidences is getting verrrrrrrrrry long."

Ebright, a vocal proponent of the lab-leak theory whom Harrison and Sachs thank "for helpful commentary on the manuscript," spelled out some of the other Covid coincidences that he considers questionable, including its initial outbreak in a city that, well before 2019, had already been pegged as a biosafety risk. Ebright also noted Wuhan's 1,000-mile distance from the nearest wild bats that carry the type of SARS-related coronaviruses that caused the pandemic. And he pointed to the particular coding of the amino acids in the furin cleavage site of SARS-CoV2.



Related

The Lab-Leak Theory Is Looking Stronger by the Day. Here's What We Know.

"The sequence encoding the FCS of the pandemic virus contained two consecutive CGG arginine codons," Ebright explained in his email. (A codon, or a combination of three nucleotides, supplies the genetic code for a single amino acid, though most amino acids can be represented by multiple different codons. Each nucleotide is represented by a letter — for RNA, either A, C, U, or G.) "This codon usage is

unusual for a natural bat SARS-related coronaviruses (for which fewer than 1 in 30 arginine codons are CGG) but is optimal for humans (for which most arginine codons are CGG codons)."

Still, Ebright said that at first he didn't see the identical amino acid sequences as particularly suspicious. "I had known for more than a year that there was a perfect match to an eight-amino acid sequence present in human ENaC. What I had not known was that the sequence was known to be a functional furin cleavage site and that it was a sequence extensively studied at UNC," he said. "The crucial point that the ENaC sequence was a known functional site, not just that there happens to be a match to a protein that happens to be in humans. … That suddenly turned it from what I thought to be largely irrelevant to being a logical and obvious choice to proceed."

Ralph Baric and the University of North Carolina did not immediately respond to requests for comment.



The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, on June 24, 2021.

Photo: Kyodo via AP Images

Name Calling

Other scientists dismiss the idea that the ENaC sequence might have been purposefully inserted into a coronavirus. Scientists who are already convinced that the new coronavirus emerged naturally are unlikely to be persuaded by Sachs and Harrison's article, which appears in the opinion section of the esteemed journal. Over the past year, many scientists involved in the debate over the origins of the pandemic have settled into an increasingly acrimonious, coarse, and unyielding

opposition.

Some proponents of the natural origin theory became particularly dismissive of those open to the possibility of a lab leak after the February release of two pre-print studies mapping the early spread of the virus at the Huanan market in Wuhan. Angela Rasmussen, one of a team of virologists who worked on the project, described it on Twitter as "dispositive evidence of a zoonotic origin" that will "drive those with personal interest in the lab leak hypothesis out of their goddam minds." In another tweet, Rasmussen referred to proponents of the lab-leak theory as a "pack of ghouls, who through gullibility, stupidity, & conspiracist thinking have decided this is their thing despite zero expertise."

Although the pre-prints had not been peer-reviewed and may have simply illustrated the spread of the virus rather than its original outbreak, the New York Times ran a front-page story about them that quoted an epidemiologist as saying that the origins debate "has been settled with a very high degree of evidence." The story, which was announced by a push notification from the paper, also noted a lack of direct evidence for a lab leak.

Meanwhile, Kristian Andersen, another co-author of the pre-prints and a virologist at the well-regarded Scripps Research Institute, used the "poop" emoji to criticize a deeply researched article by Katherine Eban about EcoHealth Alliance. On Twitter, Andersen tarred Eban, New York Times columnist Zeynep Tufekci, and others reporting on biosafety issues that could have led to the release of SARS-CoV-2 as "deep in conspiracy theories" and on the other side of "a clear split" from journalists who dismiss the possibility of a lab origin, whom Andersen referred to as "science-based."

Even some scientists who have been vocal about the possibility that the pandemic may have been sparked by research have expressed skepticism about the theory suggested by Harrison and Sachs. "I'm sure that these authors believe in their own hypothesis and arguments, but to me, it's not one that is particularly convincing," said Alina Chan, a scientist who laid out a number of possible routes for how the coronavirus might have emerged through research-related incidents in her recent book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19."

"There's no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses."

While she is open to the possibility that the furin cleavage site might have been purposefully inserted into the coronavirus, Chan said there was no reason to think

that researchers would mine humans for such material. "These scientists literally had access to hundreds of SARS-like viruses and sequences," said Chan, referring to the vast collection of coronaviruses from bats and other animals that researchers amassed at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. "There's no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses."

Jack Nunberg, a virologist at the University of Montana, was also not immediately persuaded by the theory of engineering suggested by Sachs and Harrison. "It's possible," Nunberg said of the idea that the ENaC segment was inserted into a bat coronavirus as part of research designed to gauge the pandemic potential of a virus. "But I don't find their evidence on ENaC compelling because furin cleavage sites have a lot of common amino acids, and therefore it may just have happened by chance."

Others say that the article adds noteworthy information to the public conversation about the origins of the pandemic. "The defenders of the natural origin indicate that the virus on which this type of experiment could have been done — the backbone — has never been published and that specialists in the furin cleavage sites would have chosen a more commonly used furin cleavage site like RARR rather than PRRAR. The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article contradicts this argument and indicates that specialists knew that the RRAR'SVAS site was efficiently cleaved by furin," Etienne Decroly, director of virology research at the Aix-Marseille Université in France, wrote in an email to The Intercept.

Decroly added, "It is impossible to decide on the basis of the information currently available and it is urgent that the WHO Special Advisory Group for the Origins of Novel Pathogens investigate this question."

On the suggestion of an investigation, Nunberg is in agreement. "You can't argue with that," he told The Intercept. "Who's going to argue for burying one's head in the sand?"

For their part, Sachs and Harrison emphasize that they're not saying laboratory manipulation was involved in the emergence of the pandemic virus, only "that it could have been." They also give a nod to other possibilities, including that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker. Rather than argue that any of these conceivable scenarios happened, they present the clues of the matching amino acid sequences to argue for an independent and transparent scientific investigation of the U.S.-based evidence related to the origins of the virus.

Among the institutions that Sachs and Harrison list as possibly having "knowledge of the detailed activities that were underway in Wuhan and in the United States" are

the National Institutes of Health; the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which has provided grant funding to EcoHealth Alliance; the Department of Homeland Security; DARPA; the U.S. Agency for International Development, which funded the $200 million PREDICT program that catalogued potential pandemic viruses; and the University of California, Davis, which participated in that program.

The authors suggest that EcoHealth Alliance and UNC may have particularly important untapped resources. "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the US and China, has not been disclosed for independent analysis," they write. "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, including the full array of viruses collected from the field and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, remains unknown."



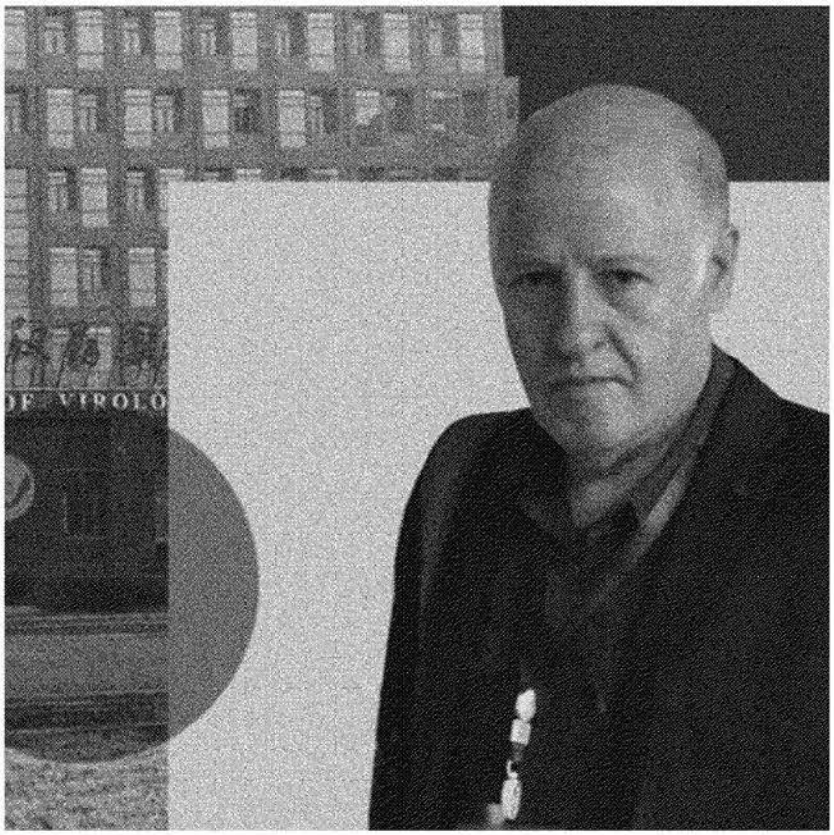
Peter Daszak, one of the members of the World Health Organization team investigating the origins of the Covid-19, on a balcony at a hotel in Wuhan, China, on Feb. 6, 2021.

Photo: Hector Retamal/AFP via Getty Images

A Reversal

The publication in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences marks a reversal of sorts for Sachs, the chair of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission who, in November 2020, appointed Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, to lead a task force to investigate the origins of the pandemic. Earlier that year, Daszak had signed on to a public statement published in The Lancet on behalf of scientists

who said they "condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin."



Related

Peter Daszak Answers Critics and Defends Coronavirus Research

Yet that early certainty about the pandemic's origins — and the sense of shared civic responsibility among members of the Lancet task force — soon disintegrated. In February 2021, emails revealed that Daszak coordinated the public statement in The Lancet tamping down suspicions of a lab leak. And by June 2021, Sachs was expressing his openness to the possibility of a lab origin, writing that NIH-funded research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology "deserves scrutiny under the hypothesis of a laboratory-related release of the virus." Three months later, he disbanded the task force that had been organized to "carefully scrutinize the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus" in the hopes of preventing future disease outbreaks, explaining that he had concerns that several members of the commission had conflicts of interest because of their ties to EcoHealth Alliance.

After leading the mainstream scientific inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, Sachs is now skewering it. "A steady trickle of disquieting information has cast a darkening cloud over the agency," he and Harrison write of the NIH, going on to accuse the entire federal government of not doing enough to explore the possible

role of its grantees in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 and investigate "overlooked details" such as the matching amino acid sequences.

Noting that the NIH has insisted that "the pandemic virus could not have resulted from the work sponsored by" the agency, Sachs and Harrison write that "blanket denials from the NIH are no longer good enough."

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 8:15 PM
To: David Morens b6
Cc: Peter Daszak < b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio < b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 Roberts, Rich < b6
Subject: Re: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

It's all so convoluted I can even understand it. We'll see if they pick Mary Klotman from Duke to be next NIH Director. I know her quite well, her husband is Baylor President and my boss.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 11, 2022, at 6:39 PM, David Morens b6 wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Yes, i know. I fail to understand why our nih leaders keep forming circular firing squads. one thing is for sure: in recent times nih has suffered abysmal leadership

It wasn't like that in the Varmus years. He didn't suffer any political fools no matter how high up, and was comfortable giving them all a big middle finger. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 11, 2022, at 18:37, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

This is an utterly ridiculous set of BS. Jesse Bloom is the person driving it – he buys into the lab leak theory and found that some folks from WIV uploaded partial genomes early on, then added a bunch of more complete ones, and asked for the partial sequences to be removed. Absolutely normal, but he's trying to turn it into a 'mystery'.

Of course, NIH makes it all worse by not releasing emails, redacting critical parts of them, and failing to explain why they follow the wishes of the submitter re. Genbank. It's perfectly logical really – if NIH now starts releasing sequences you as a submitter asked them to remove for whatever reason, submitters will think twice about using Genbank. We already have China working with its own database and all this BS will make them twice-shy about submitting.

Even worse, Tabak now says that 'don't worry, we still have the data on back up tapes' so everyone now knows that NIH keeps the stuff you thought they agreed to delete, and no doubt has already handed it over to the FBI and the CIA.

It's a conspiracy, wrapped within an enigma, encapsulating a riddle….

PS – heres a cracker of an email from an NIH press office (?) person at O/D ripping into a journalist (Carl Zimmer) who wanted information on the 'missing' china sequences. Now it turns out that US submitters also deleted early COVID genomes…even more reason for the public to not trust scientists…:

From: Myles, Renate (NIH/OD) [E]
To: Carl Zimmer; Wojtowicz, Emma (NIH
Cc: Fine, Amanda (NIH/OD) [E]; Virginia
Subject: RE: FW: Query from New York Time:
Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 4:49:00 I

Hi Carl:

I saw your story. Just noting that it isn't a my
was withdrawn. Also, it didn't disappear; it v
I know that Dr. Bloom is making the mystery
reporters not hype language.

Also, just to clarify, NLM conducted an analy
packages were withdrawn upon request of t
included one requested by the submitter fro
the U.S.

Thanks,
Renate

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 5:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6 ; peter hotez < b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Fwd: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 (work)
(cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** b6
Date: Wed, May 11, 2022 at 4:54 PM
Subject: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists
To: David Morens b6

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 4:12 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <

NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov >; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov >
Subject: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

By
Steven Nelson
May 11, 2022 3:47pm



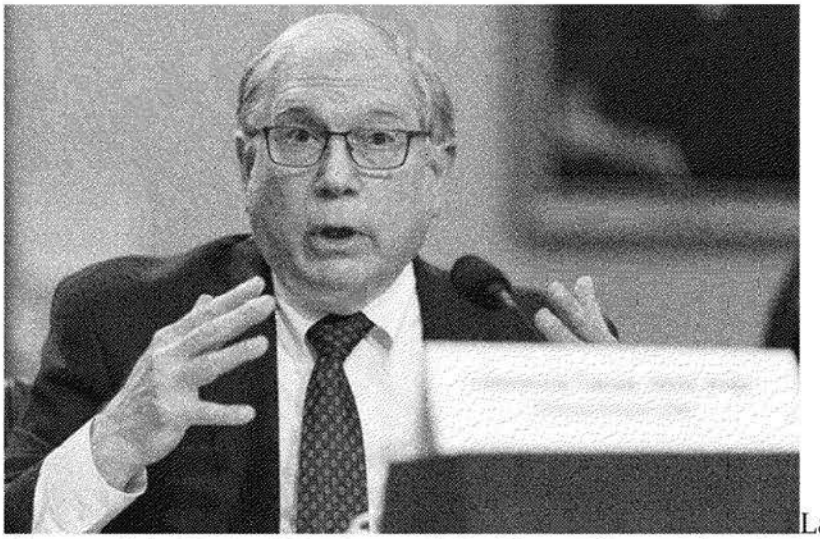
National Institutes of Health acting director Lawrence Tabak confirmed to lawmakers Wednesday that US health officials concealed early genomic sequences of COVID-19 at the request of Chinese scientists — but insisted the data remains on file.

Tabak told a House Appropriations subcommittee that the NIH "eliminated from public view" the data from the pandemic epicenter in Wuhan, China, before adding that researchers can still access it via an archaic "tape drive."

Vanity Fair recently reported that the information was hidden in response to a request from Chinese scientists, despite potentially resolving whether the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology or passed naturally from animals to humans.

Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Wash.) asked Tabek to explain why US officials would comply with such a request.

"There's no question that the communication that we had about the sequence archive — Sequence Read Archive — could have been improved. I freely admit that," Tabek said. "If I may, the archive never deleted the sequence, it just did not make it available for interrogation."


Lawrence Tabak, acting director of the National Institutes of Health, testifies on May 11. Jacquelyn Martin/AP

"So wait, you have the information still?" Beutler followed up.

"We have the information … Anybody who submits to the Sequence Read Archive is allowed to ask for it to be removed," Tabak explained. "And that investigator did do that. But we never erase it."

"So you don't have the information anymore?" Beutler asked.

"We do. We never erase the information. We keep it," Tabak clarified.

"So they were able to withdraw public viewing of it?" the congresswoman followed up.

"That's correct," he said.

"OK, so researchers can apply to the NIH and get the information from you?" Beutler asked.

"In the way that it was originally eliminated from public view, it was withdrawn, and that's the most difficult for people to access," Tabak replied. "The error that was made, and we found this out after a review of all of our processes, was it should have been suppressed. The distinction being that if it's withdrawn, it is kept archivally on a tape drive — old technology, but that's how it's done. But when it is withdrawn, it can still be accessed by accession number, and so researchers are able to access that information."



Security personnel keep watch outside Wuhan Institute of Virology during the visit by the World Health Organization on Feb. 3, 2021. Thomas Peter/REUTERS

"So the information is still there?" Beutler summed up.

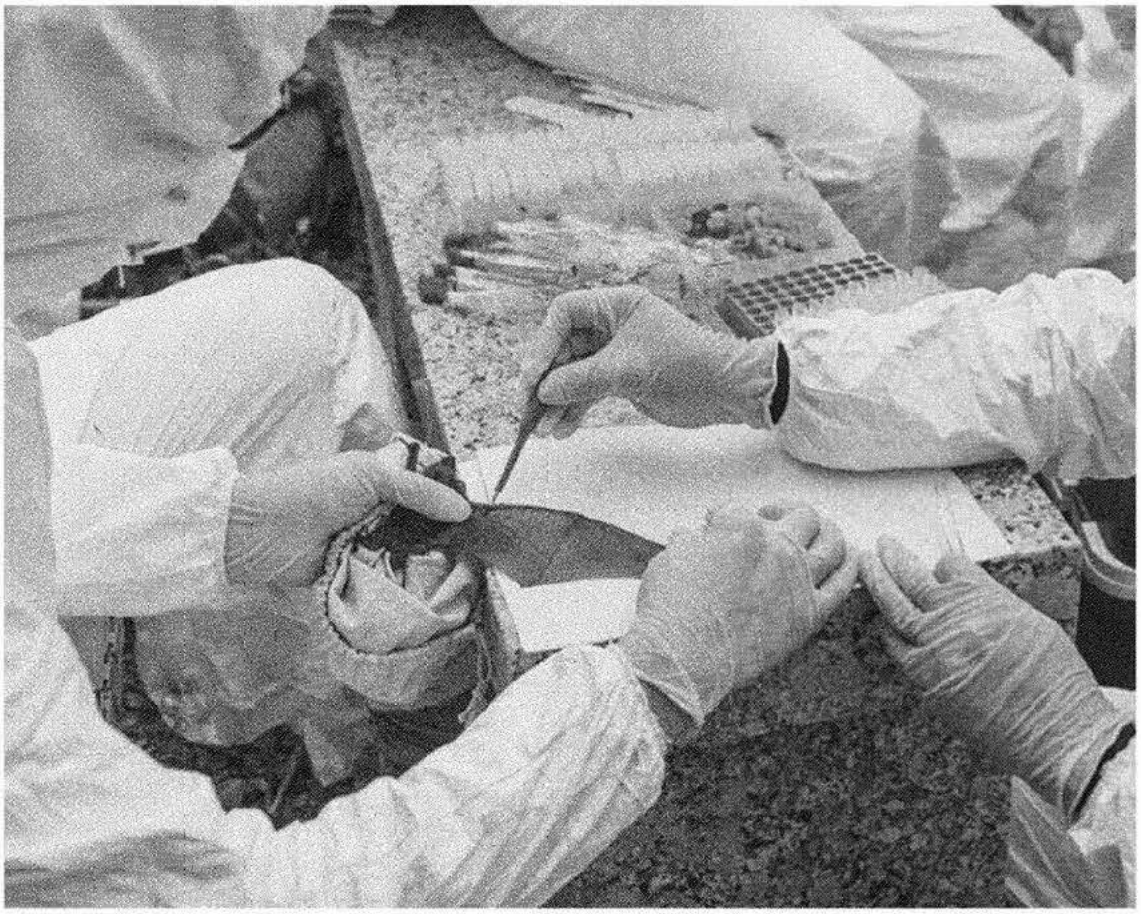
"That's correct. The information was never lost," Tabak repeated.

In a March 31 article, Vanity Fair reported that evolutionary biologist Jesse Bloom discovered last year that early COVID-19 sequences had disappeared from a federally run data repository.

When Bloom raised the issue, he was reportedly ganged up on by a group of researchers assembled by then-NIH Director Francis Collins and infectious disease institute head Dr. Anthony Fauci.

Bloom shared a draft academic paper with Collins and Fauci, who allegedly objected on a June 2021 Zoom video conference to Bloom's description of Chinese scientists "surreptitiously" removing the sequences. Fauci said the word was "loaded" and implied a coverup, the report said.

Evolutionary biologist Kristian Andersen, who was selected to participate on the call by Collins, allegedly told Bloom that the Wuhan team had a right to claw back early pandemic information and that it was unethical for Bloom to question it.

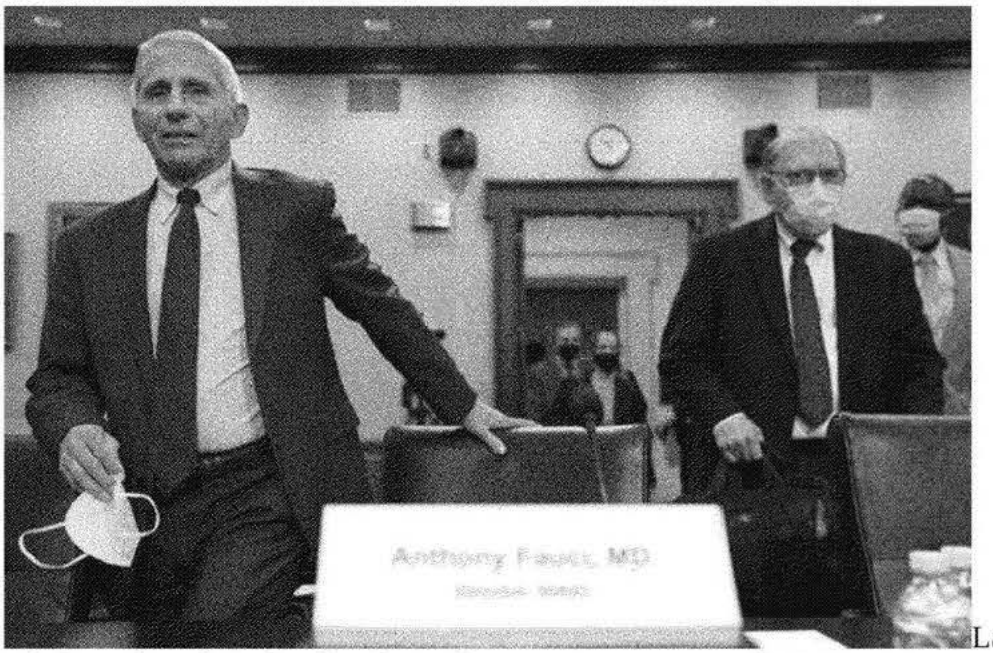


Tabak noted that while the request for information to be removed was honored, it was not erased fully.ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE

Andersen allegedly went so far as to offer to delete Bloom's article from a "preprint" server "in a way that would leave no record that this had been done."

China's government has refused to cooperate with an international investigation of the origins of the pandemic. The COVID-19 virus has killed about 1 million Americans since March 2020 and caused massive social, economic and educational disruptions.

The US intelligence community said in an August report that it's possible the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, calling the theory one of two "plausible" explanations along with natural transmission from animals.



Lawrence Tabak confirmed Wednesday that early genomic sequences of COVID-19 were concealed at the request of Chinese specialists. Jacquelyn Martin/AP

President Biden rarely speaks publicly about wanting China to be transparent about the origins of the pandemic. Former President Donald Trump, by contrast, has demanded that China pay $10 trillion in reparations.

The Biden administration is considering undoing some of Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods "separately" from US pressure for coronavirus transparency, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told The Post on Monday.

Documents published in September by The Intercept revealed that US health officials indirectly funded so-called "gain of function" research at the Wuhan lab — including the modification three bat coronaviruses distinct from COVID-19 and the discovery that they became much more infectious among "humanized" mice when human-type receptors were added to them.

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EcoHealth Alliance, is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.

Date: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 7:06:44 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 7:06:35 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.
From: "Rasmussen, Angie" b6
To: Edward Holmes b6 >;
CC: Garry, Robert F b6 David Morens b6 Jason Gale b6 Peter Daszak b6 >; b6

Hooper is basically the original lab leaker, so this tracks.

Incidentally if anyone is in need of a bitter laugh, check out the "About Edward Hooper" section of that website.

As the weeks and months passed after the Royal Society meeting, it became increasingly clear that a carefully-organised whitewash was being carried out, partly by the original vaccinators (who had, among other things, leant on witnesses to change key aspects of their stories), and partly by well-meaning research scientists who firstly were unwilling or unable to imagine that their peers might not be telling the truth, and secondly could not countenance the possibility that their own work of the last ten years might be erroneous.

Stung by this realisation, I decided that I had no alternative but to continue my independent investigation into the origins of the pandemic.

This dude's complete lack of self-awareness and apparent unshakeable confidence that his hypothesis is correct without a shred of affirmative evidence and a mountain of data suggesting otherwise is matched only by his contemporaries Wade, Chan, Ridley, Birrell, et al.

Angie

Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
University of Saskatchewan
Office: b6 b6
She/her
www.vido.org

On Aug 17, 2021, at 4:43 PM, Edward Holmes b6 wrote:

CAUTION: External to USask. Verify sender and use caution with links and attachments. Forward suspicious emails to phishing@usask.ca

And just to complete the circle, Hooper has weighed in on COVID origins. Have a wild guess if he thinks there has been a conspiracy:

http://www.aidsorigins.com/covid- 19-and-the-origins-of-aids-debate/

http://www.aidsorigins.com/blunders- and-blunderbusses/

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T + b6
E b6

On 18 Aug 2021, at 8:36 am, Garry, Robert F <b6> wrote:

Yes – Eddie and I have had some remembrances of our separate interactions with Hooper. There are a lot of parallels.

The current batch of Lab Leakers are giving Hooper a run for the money in the crazy Department.

I have nothing at all against people writing books [like Hooper or Sir Jeremy for that matter], but it's not a coincidence that several of the most annoying Lab Leakers are attempting to selling books.

b

From: David Morens <b6>
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 5:20 PM
To: Edward Holmes <b6>
Cc: Jason Gale <b6>, Peter Daszak <b6>, Robert Garry <b6> <b6> <b6>
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

mber Nick was fired from the New York Times
and has a history of controversial stuff including truly appalling neo-eugenics crap.
Sadly, he has even influenced Don McNeil, another great journalist also fired from the NYT. I have always admired Don, a protege of sorts of the NyT's Larry Altman, but even he fell under the crazy spell

I greatly admire highly intellectual journalists as a whole, but as a group they seem to have a tenfency to go off the deep end

Is there something about this era? Did aliens put crazy-drugs in our drinking water???

Anyone remember Edward Hooper and The River, a best seller of 20+ years ago in which the author impugned, harassed, and nearly drove to the grave one of virology's heros, the late Hilary Koprowski. All from a cockamamie book length best selling slander that Hilary started the AiDS epidemic with 1950s polio vaccine trials

I knew Hilary well, the tragedy of slander by smart and smarmy journalists is real

You cannot make this shit up!!!!!

Something is very, very wrong about the interface between science and science journalism. Jason, we need folks like you to take note and follow breadcrumbs out of this forest. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens

On Aug 17, 2021, at 17:34, Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:

It really doesn't get much lower than Wade. It really doesn't.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

On 18 Aug 2021, at 7:00 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Please let me know when you can share it under embargo. I know Science goes mental when their own journos don't get stuff first. But it's helpful to have the luxury of time to properly read papers without the haste to get something out ASAP. JG
----- Original Message -----
From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
To: JASON GALE, [b6]
CC: [b6]
[b6]
At: 08/18/21 00:51:28 UTC+10:00

Add to that a preprint we'll be posting next week that suggests 50,000 – 400,000 people are actually infected by bat SARSr-CoVs in SE Asia each year, and a comment from the international members of the WHO team that'll be in Nature this week or next.

As long as these articles keep up their 'drip, drip' with actual new data and analyses, all the lab leak hypothesis has is re-hashing of the same innuendo-filled vitriol.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:30 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: [b6] [b6]; [b6]
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

Thanks Peter,

Totally agree that It's quite sad to see the attacks on scientists and science from Wade. It's the very basis for the "lab leak" hypothesis, so no surprise.

Wade is old enough to know this, but anyone that thinks that Jeremy Farrar and Tony Fauci are part of the "problem" has literally [in the case of Tony] not been paying attention for 50 years.

Looking forward to Wade and his ilk going ballistic as two new papers favoring natural origin appear shortly in *Cell* and *Science*.

Bob G.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 7:40 AM
To: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6], Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: "[b6] [b6]", "[b6]", Robert Garry [b6] [b6]
Subject: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Nicholas Wade's at it again – another miserable innuendo-filled attack on science and the process by which scientists email, talk and come to decisions. Nothing new of course, just trash journalism published in a pseudo-scientific journal. Pretty shameless smear on some of us – no facts of course, no sue-able accusations, just snipey comments and excerpts from Social Media. It's as if we can't now be scientists and actually colleagues who break bread and share a glass any more.

https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/how- covid-19s-origins-were-obscured-by-the-

east-and-the-west/

The irony is in the ending – he claims the lab leak is an albatross hanging around China's neck that they won't be able to shake off until they open up the lab videos, books, freezers etc. The truth is his and others continued attacks are what put the albatross there in the first place. Does anyone really believe that if China gave access to all the above and no further evidence was found, that these folks would simply say "OK, it wasn't a lab leak after all"!!!

Cheers,

Peter

How COVID-19's origins were obscured, by the East and the West

By Nicholas Wade | August 17, 2021

Error! Filename not specified. A bus carrying a team of experts from the World Health Organization departs an airport in Wuhan on Jan. 14, 2021, after arriving in the Chinese city to investigate the origins of the coronavirus pandemic. That investigation is widely seen as having been obstructed by Chinese authorities. (Photo by Kyodo News via Getty Images)

Some 20 months after the Covid-19 pandemic first broke out, its origins remain obscure. A vigorous campaign of concealment by the Chinese authorities is the principal reason. But China received considerable help, strange to say, from senior medical research officials in the United Kingdom and United States who mishandled and effectively derailed the initial inquiry into the virus's origins.

The mishandling began at a pivotal teleconference held on February 1, 2020. The organizer was Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, a large medical research charity in London. News of the conference emerged with the release this June of emails from the office of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Farrar supplied further information in his book *Spike*, published on July 22.

The conference was held to discuss the unanimous view of a group of virologists that the SARS2 virus had been manipulated in a lab. Yet within a few days of the meeting, the virologists abruptly reversed their conclusion. The meeting's participants were later involved in two letters to scientific journals that stated the virus must have emerged naturally and that condemned any suggestion of manipulation as a conspiracy theory. These two letters, to *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*, shaped the views of the mainstream media for more than a

year.

Error! Filename not specified. Letters published by *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* in early 2020.

Even today, no one can say for sure whether the SARS2 virus emerged naturally or escaped from a lab. Much less could anyone have been sure back then. If the conferees had stuck to known facts, they would have left the question open to the two hypotheses, and the full exploration of the virus's origins might not have been sidetracked for over a year.

More significant, the Chinese government would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to manipulate the World Health Organization (WHO) into setting terms of reference that favored China's obstructive goals and kept WHO inspectors who visited China this February from accessing records vital to understanding the origin of the pandemic. China now insists those terms of reference cannot be changed, blocking further investigation into the origin of the SARS2 virus. "The two groups that produced the infamous letters in *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* paved the way for the Chinese government and helped enormously to facilitate all of that," says Milton Leitenberg, an arms control expert at the University of Maryland. The reversal of the virologists' conclusion about SARS2's artificial origin is thus a matter of some significance.

At 10:32 p.m. on the evening before the February 1 conference, Fauci had received an electrifying memo from Kristian G. Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research institute in California. Andersen reported that the virus seemed to be man-made. "The unusual features of the virus make up a really small part of the genome," he wrote, referring presumably to a genetic component known as a furin cleavage site, which greatly enhances the virus's infectivity, "so one has to look really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentially) look engineered."

Error! Filename not specified. A key email from Kristian Andersen to Anthony Fauci.

Andersen went on to note that "after discussions earlier today, Eddie, Bob, Mike and myself all find the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory"— meaning that, in their unanimous view, the virus didn't come from nature. "Those opinions could still change," Andersen added. Eddie is Edward C. Holmes of the University of Sydney. Bob is Robert F. Garry of Tulane University. Mike is Michael Farzan at Scripps Research.

The message sent Fauci into a whirlwind of activity. "You will have tasks today that must be done," he emailed his deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, two hours later at 12:29 am on February 1. One of these urgent tasks evidently concerned NIAID funds that had been passed, via the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, to Zhengli Shi, China's leading bat virus expert, at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci was doubtless anxious to check whether his agency's funding of Shi's work had complied with US law, which banned funding gain-of-function research from 2014 to 2017 and required it be reported to a government panel thereafter. "Gain of function" refers to research in

which a pathogen's ability to cause disease is enhanced. Auchincloss replied a few hours later that efforts were underway to ascertain "if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Meanwhile Farrar, who had independently heard of the Andersen team's conclusion from Holmes, says in *Spike* that he arranged a teleconference set for 7 p.m. London time, convenient for both Washington and Australia, where Holmes was based.

The participants included Fauci and possibly his nominal boss, Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health. (Farrar says in *Spike* that Collins was present, but Collins's name is not on the list of invitees in the Fauci emails.) Officials on the UK side were Farrar and Patrick Vallance, the chief scientific adviser to the UK government. The others were mostly virologists, including Andersen, Holmes, and Andrew Rambaut of the University of Edinburgh.

Far from being selected at random, the conferees were associated through a complicated web of relationships, a sort of virologists' old boy network that included senior medical officials in China. Farrar was well acquainted with George Fu Gao, the head of China's counterpart of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has described Gao as an "old friend," who in fact had called a month earlier, on December 31, 2019, to tell Farrar about the initial cases in Wuhan of what turned out to be Covid-19. Farrar says in his book *Spike* that on the weekend of the teleconference, he called another highly placed Chinese official, Chen Zhu, China's minister of health from 2007 to 2013, to tell him of "rumours that the novel coronavirus could be the result of a lab accident." As for Holmes, he has published many papers both with Farrar and with Gao and has been a guest professor at Gao's CDC from 2014 until 2020.

Because of these varied connections, it seems likely that Chinese authorities knew about the conference almost from the moment it occurred and, if so, would have had the opportunity to influence deliberations that followed it.

At the conference there was a notable imbalance of power between the virologists and the officials. Fauci and Farrar together control a large portion of the funds available for virological research in the Western world. A virologist keen to continue his career would be very attentive to their wishes. Two of the conference participants had multimillion-dollar grant proposals under final review with NIAID at the time of the call.

Almost all references to what was discussed at the teleconference have been redacted from the Fauci emails under exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act. The conference would doubtless have included explanation from Andersen and Holmes as to why they had concluded the previous evening that the virus had been altered through laboratory manipulation. "Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call," Farrar writes in one of the Fauci emails.

RELATED:

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of

Error! Filename not specified. A Jeremy Farrar email about the teleconference.

Whatever was said at the meeting, it was followed by a remarkable and almost immediate about-face. By at most three days later, Andersen had executed a 180 degree turn in his views about the virus. In an email of February 4, 2020 to Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, which had directed NIAID funds to Shi, Andersen wrote, "The main crackpot theories going around at the moment relate to this virus being somehow engineered with intent and that is demonstrably not the case." The email was obtained by U.S. Right to Know, an investigatory group.

Participants have not explained what was said at the meeting or found in the days immediately following it to induce the change of mind. Media offices at the Wellcome Trust and NIAID declined to comment on this article. Andersen, Holmes and Rambaut did not reply to emails seeking an account of the reversal.

Farrar, not Fauci, seems to have been the leader in the teleconference's deliberations. "This is not my area of expertise so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy," Fauci wrote on February 13 to a CDC official. US officials were not to take the lead in this pivotal inquiry.

Error! Filename not specified. Fauci's "leaving it all to Jeremy" email.

Farrar had a direct hand in the two letters that went out to the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*. He was a signatory of the *Lancet* letter, a draft of which Daszak, the organizer of the letter, began circulating just five days after the conference. The letter sought to squelch all discussion of the possibility that the virus had escaped from a lab by deriding it as a conspiracy theory. When Daszak wrote an article in the *Guardian* elaborating on the same theme, Farrar promoted it with a tweet, saying "as always worth reading @PeterDaszak."

Farrar also recruited the five authors who drew up the *Nature Medicine* letter, his spokesman told the writer Ian Birrell. (The spokesman referred to the *Lancet* letter but evidently meant the *Nature Medicine* letter, which has five authors.) The *Nature Medicine* letter, accepted on March 6 and published on March 17, 2020, presented a detailed and influential case that the virus had emerged naturally from animals. Its authors were Andersen, Rambaut, W. Ian Lipkin, Holmes and Garry.

In his book *Spike*, Farrar portrays the events between the February 1 conference and publication of the two medical journal letters as a judicious process in which he held an agnostic view and played no role other than asking questions. "On a spectrum if 0 is nature and 100 is release—I am honestly at 50!" Farrar says he emailed to Fauci and Collins a day after the conference. But if that were honestly so, he fails to explain his switch from 50 to 0 when signing the *Lancet* letter a few days later.

According to *Spike*, it wasn't until March, "after the addition of

important new information, endless analyses, intense discussions and many sleepless nights" that Andersen and his four fellow virologists "were ready to pronounce on the origins of the novel coronavirus." Why then was Andersen, the virologists' leader, ready to pronounce just 3 days after the conference that lab release was a conspiracy theory? Farrar's account does not match with the available facts.

Nor does Andersen's. In a June interview with the *New York Times,* he painted a picture that includes a change of mind on the possible engineering of the virus "in a matter of days, while we worked around the clock," and then that quick reversal being buttressed by drawn-out research.

"This is a textbook example of the scientific method, where a preliminary hypothesis is rejected in favor of a competing hypothesis as more data become available and analyses are completed," he said in a statement released by Scripps Research after his Jan 31 email to Fauci had become public. "I cautioned in that same email that we would need to look at the question much more closely and that our opinions could change within a few days based on new data and analyses—which they did," Anderson said in the *New York Times* interview. In that same interview, he also said that "more extensive analyses, significant additional data and thorough investigations to compare genomic diversity more broadly across coronaviruses led to the peer-reviewed study published in *Nature Medicine*."

These later data and analyses would not have been available three days after the conference, the date of Andersen's volte-face email to Daszak. And they would not have been available to Farrar as he signed the *Lancet* letter, which was published just 17 days after the teleconference.

More puzzling is Andersen's statement that in his preliminary studies "the genome of RaTG13, a SARS-related coronavirus found in bats, wasn't yet available." In fact its full sequence had been deposited by Shi in a data bank on January 24, 2020, a week before Andersen's report to Fauci, and Farrar says in *Spike* that he had seen the sequence by the time of the conference. RaTG13 is the closest known relative of SARS2, and the fact that it lacks the furin cleavage site found in SARS2 would have been a major reason for the Andersen group to suppose that this genetic element had been inserted into SARS2 in a lab.

Given his role in leading the February 1 teleconference, in presiding over the virologists' 180 degree change of views, and in arranging or influencing the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* letters, Farrar was evidently the driving force of the campaign to persuade the public that the SARS2 virus could not possibly have leaked from a lab. This was an unfortunate position for any scientist to take, given that he was assuring the public of something he could not be sure was true. Farrar now says in *Spike* that, although natural emergence is more likely, "nobody is yet in a position to rule out an alternative." But his campaign sought very vigorously to do exactly that. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that

COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," Farrar and his cosignatories wrote in the *Lancet* on February 18, 2020. This lapse in scientific judgment reflects also on the other senior participants in the conference who saw what was happening but apparently took no steps to insist that scientific truth should take precedence over unjustifiable professions of certainty.

RELATED:

Caltech's David Baltimore discusses the debate over origins of SARS-CoV-2

The decision to quash any notion of lab escape seems to have brought relief all round. At least until the tide of opinion began to change a year later, Fauci and Collins didn't have to endure unpleasant questions about why they had been funding hazardous research in minimally safe conditions at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Daszak emailed Fauci after a White House press briefing on April 17. In August 2020 the NIAID announced it would award $82 million over five years to 10 participants in its new network for detecting infectious diseases. Among the lucky winners: Daszak, Andersen, and his associate Robert Garry.

The perturbing lab leak theory raised by Andersen and his colleagues on January 31, 2020 had been safely laid to rest. Farrar and his colleagues had succeeded in the one goal also pursued by the autocrats in Beijing, that of suppressing discussion of whether the SARS2 virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab.

Beijing's way of squelching inquiry about the virus was, unintentionally, somewhat more obvious than the methods used in London. Chinese authorities tried so hard to stamp out information about the virus's origin that they left a rather clumsy trail of footprints pointing to where they didn't want people to go.

One of the more informative suppressions of data was the closure of China's main database on bat and other viruses. Zhengli Shi, China's leading expert on bat coronaviruses, told the BBC that it was taken off line because of numerous hacking attempts. It's conceivable that in January 2020, after the pandemic broke out, people without authorized access might have tried to hack into the database. But in fact the database went off line on September 12, 2019. Who would have wanted to hack into a bat virus database back then? More likely, that is the date at which Chinese authorities realized they had a virus escape problem.

In February of last year, President Xi referred to the need to ensure biosafety and biosecurity, and the Chinese Communist Party followed by tightening up their biosafety rules in October 2020, accelerating a long planned revision. "To me, the fact that the CCP enacted a major series of laboratory biosafety regulations this past

year is an indication that China's political leadership believes that a lab accident is likely to have caused the pandemic," says a biosurveillance expert who has monitored China's disease outbreak reporting for the past two decades.

Major clues as to what happened are evident in Shi's various pronouncements about the virus. The omissions and untruths in these statements are specific enough to outline the very body of facts the censors have sought to conceal.

Error! Filename not specified. Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli spoke about SARS during a Yixi event (comparable to a TED talk) on June 23, 2018. (Yixi video)

In looking at Shi's questionable statements, it's only fair to keep in mind that they may have been compelled. Her train of deceptions began immediately after the genetic sequence of the SARS2 virus was published on January 10, 2020, by Yong-zhen Zhang of Fudan University, against the wishes of Chinese authorities who subsequently closed his lab for a time. Where did this strange new virus come from? Shi wanted or was told to establish SARS2's pedigree as a bat virus, with an ancestry analogous to that of SARS1, the bat virus that caused an epidemic in 2002. In an important paper published on February 3, 2020, Shi reported that the genome of SARS2 is 96 percent similar to that of a bat virus, RaTG13, "which was previously detected in [the bat species] *Rhinolophus affinis* from Yunnan province."

Shi neglected to mention a salient difference between the two viruses, namely that SARS2 possessed a furin cleavage site and RaTG13 did not. Alina Chan, of the Broad Institute in Cambridge, has likened the omission to describing a unicorn by reporting all its horse-like features, but neglecting to mention the horn. Evidently the Chinese authorities were highly sensitive to the furin cleavage site's presence.

Shi also failed to say when and where she had discovered the RaTG13 virus, surely important data for the closest known relative of SARS2. In fact, she had found RaTG13 in 2013, in an abandoned mine in Tongguan—the same place where six miners had fallen sick the year before. At that time, she analyzed just one of its genes and reported the virus under another name, BtCoV/4991. Daszak, the holder of her NIAID grant, told the London Times, perhaps on misinformation from Shi, that the virus was then thrown in a freezer and forgotten about until 2020. This was untrue—the virus was of much greater interest. Shi had analyzed its full genome, probably by 2018, but did not publish it. It was only when she needed a bat virus pedigree for SARS2 that Shi released information about the virus, which she now renamed RaTG13. The fact that BtCoV/4991 and RaTG13 were one and the same was discovered by Monali Rahalkar and Rahul Bahulikar, two internet-sleuthing researchers in Pune, India.

It's not acceptable practice among scientists to report something already published under a different name as if were new. Shi's February paper had the goal of portraying SARS2 as just another bat

virus while concealing the true provenance of its closest known relative—a cave known to harbor lethal viruses.

When RaTG13's connection to the Tongguan mine was pointed out, Shi still tried to conceal the lethality of the mine's bat viruses, saying the miners had died of a fungus infection. This untruth was corrected when a master's thesis by a Chinese doctor, Li Xu, was unearthed by the internet sleuth who calls himself TheSeeker268. The thesis reported that the miners had died of a SARS-related virus with symptoms identical to those of Covid-19 and with CT scans similar to those of Covid patients. The only evident difference between that virus's effects and those of SARS2 is that the miners' virus was not readily transmissible from one person to another.

The specificity of what Shi's statements concealed—the furin cleavage site, RaTG13's identity with BatCoV/4991, the latter's origin in the mine where six miners were infected, the death of the three miners from infection by a virus with symptoms very similar to those of SARS2—all point to the involvement of these elements in a scenario the Chinese authorities are determined to cloak. That scenario may have been the storage or generation of the SARS2 virus in Shi's lab from one of the many viruses recovered from the Tongguan cave.

The Chinese government's persistent stonewalling and Shi's pattern of evasions do not amount to proof that the SARS2 virus escaped from her lab. But they seem less like the actions of innocent people and more like attempts to cover up a fatal accident, one that has caused the deaths of maybe 10 million people and counting.

Perhaps proof will one day emerge that the virus emerged naturally. If not, the likelihood that SARS2 escaped from a researcher's laboratory is an albatross that will hang round China's neck in perpetuity. China's only hope of release from this terrible encumbrance lies in opening its laboratory doors and either establishing its innocence or admitting its fateful error.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 6:26 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: [redacted] Garry, Robert F [redacted]
Subject: RE: feedback on wild animals

Jason, not sure whose office politics is worse, but there is many a day I'd rather be in Australia, even if I had to drink that awful beer Fosters. (To quote Grouco Marx as he help up a glass of questionable beer: "last time I saw something like this, they had to shoot the horse")…. But I do have fond memories of Australia, and two of my closest freiends, both ex-students of mine, are out in Perth, the only large city there (if oy can call it that) I have never been, although it's high on my bucket list if this damn pandemic ever ends. He's an American public health physician and she's an Australian-Tongan PhD virologist, both wondeful smart people.

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David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
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- [redacted]assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

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error, please erase all copies of the message and its attachments and notify us immediately.

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From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] Garry, Robert F [redacted b6] >;
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Thanks, David.
I just got off a video conf call with the current editor in NY (the one asking all the latest questions). He's very nice and I feel like he gets its. He thinks it's a fascinating story.
Problem we have in journalism is that there are some people who aren't interested in actual journalism and telling stories; they want to climb to the top and manage people. I rejected the latter route 10 years ago, but am so grateful that I still get to meet so many remarkable people, visit cool places and see all aspects of humanity.
A difficulty working for a NY-based organization is that it's assumed that all the best people are in NYC, so being in Melbourne (where I need to be to be close to my kids in Adelaide), is that folks consider Australia a backwater and, by association, I mustn't be all that important/valuable. But my new role as "global biosecurity czar" is helping somewhat.
Ahhhhh... Office politics!

From: [redacted b6] At: 08/15/21 09:03:03 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: [redacted b6]
[redacted b6]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

> Jason, all I can say is that it must be harder to be a journalist than a scientist…. I had no idea someone at your level would get pushed back.
>
> Usually i get from one to 4 reviewer responses to a ms. and three of those are out to lunch. Occasionally i get a reviewer who really understands the work: half of those are helpful, the other half are trashers.

Maybe it's like being in the government where i am: there is endless push back, but the push-backers are brainless idiots who don't know what they are talking about.

Do you ever get to a point where the editors leave you alone on the science? Or do they all think they are science geniuses? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 14, 2021, at 16:05, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) [b6] wrote:

Thanks, Bob. In journalism, getting to the truth even when it's genuinely and actively pursued, can be a tortuous process!
----- Original Message -----
From: Robert F Garry [redacted]
To: JASON GALE, [redacted] b6 [redacted],
At: 08/15/21 01:45:11 UTC+10:00

Looking forward to this important article. Truth is stronger than fiction.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) < j.gale@bloomberg.net >
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:41 AM
To: [b6] < [b6] [b6] [b6] > [b6] >; [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6]
Subject: Fwd:Re:feedback on wild animals

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Hi guys, in case you have nothing better to read over the weekend, this is some of the dialog I am having with editors in the U.S. Essentially, my response to questions from editor #6.
I thought I could claim victory when it looked like the story could be published this morning, but the editor of Businessweek objected and thinks he can make it better with another revision and an ETA of Tuesday. Sigh.
Jason

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
At: 08/14/21 16:36:58 UTC+10:00
To: Cristina Lindblad (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , Eric Gelman (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: Joel Weber (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:feedback on wild animals

Hi.
Thanks for the feedback and the questions, which I have tried to answer in detail.
It's often easier to have a conversation over Nexi or the phone to explain nuanced information, or details that are clear to me, but might not be to someone coming at this fresh, but that's tricky with the time difference.
When you look back at what's happened here, it seems that in trying to deflect blame for the pandemic, which became increasingly vicious as the cataclysmic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded around March-April 2020, China tried to conceal a very obvious, very plausible source of the pandemic: it's flourishing wildlife trade (worth about $90 billion in 2016).
It was an obvious cause of the pandemic because an almost identical scenario triggered an international outbreak caused by a very similar coronavirus (SARS) in 2003-04. But in attempting to cover up the wildlife trade, and making like there were never any wild animals being sold in Wuhan's wet markets, things began to backfire on China; questions were raised about the nearby lab studying these coronaviruses. The more geopolitical, heated and vicious the arguments and accusations became, the less cooperative China became. In response, the more intent/adamant some groups have become in their belief that China is covering up a lab-leak. It's become a vicious circle. If China isn't coming clean on the wild animals, what else is it trying to hide?? China's

defensiveness means we may never get the cooperation needed to find the answers. If China had been honest and transparent about the wild animals in the wet markets, it might not be in this mess now.

Anyway, here are my response to your queries in green.

By the way, I wonder if the current headline:
Delayed Paper Gives Credence to Wuhan Market Covid Origin Story
doesn't convey much more than what we had 2 months earlier when we reported Xiao's findings: China Markets Sold Mink, Civets, Stoking Natural Origins Theory
Perhaps Obscured China Paper Scuppered Chance to Trace Covid Origins
would hits "China", "Covid" and "Origins" in a way that won't alienate people who already believe it was a lab-leak

<><><><>

According to the report, minks, civets, raccoon dogs and other mammals known to harbor coronaviruses were sold in plain sight for years in shops across the city, including the now infamous Huanan wet market, to which many of the earliest Covid cases were traced. The evidence collected over 30 months by **Xiao Xiao** a I'D NAME HIM HERE [[i don't know that naming a researcher no one has ever heard of adds much]]researcher working at a lab affiliated with China's Ministry of Education was hastily drafted into a manuscript and submitted to a scientific journal [Joel, we cannot name the first journal they delivered it to because the authors decline to give us the name, saying it may affect their future chances of being published] in February 2020, just weeks before the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

<><><><>

While the study received wide attention when it was eventually released by a different publisher [Publisher (Springer Nature) and publication (Scientific Reports) are different. Might add confusion DO YOU WANT TO ADD NAME HERE?], its long and torturous journey to publication gave **Chinese officials an opportunity to weave alternative narratives in which the virus may have come from abroad, even from a U.S. Army biological research facility**. [the stuff in bold is not contested and we go on to show how that happened, documenting with links when available]I TWEAKED WORDING HERE BUT THIS STILL ISN'T QUITE RIGHT. IF THE REPORT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED EARLIER CHINESE OFFICIALS COULD STILL HAVE DONE WHAT THEY DID—THEY COULD HAVE JUST SAID THE REPORT WAS SHODDY, OR WHATEVER, AND THEY ALSO COULD HAVE JUST IGNORED IT. I disagree. The evidence that Xiao et al provide was meticulously documented and supported by photographs that would have been difficult/impossible for China to dismiss (as older published photos and media reports had been). What's more, Newman understands that Xiao collected blood-sucking ticks from the wild animals he studiously cataloged. His frozen tick samples could be tested for blood/antibodies/virus, which could be extremely helpful in identifying infected species PRIOR to December 2019. The WHO team knew nothing of this, so couldn't have asked China for this research or any results, had they actually done the research. The delay in the publication of Xiao's paper delayed the evidence that there were live animals sold in the Huanan market. The WHO researchers couldn't have asked about tests on wildlife that ostensibly were never there. Likewise, Chinese authorities couldn't have done the tests on animals that didn't exist. The

problem is that in January and February 2020, it was widely assumed the animals HAD been there and that the necessary tests and tracing of animals (the sampling of animals on farms they were raised on, testing of farm workers, animal hunters, transporters and traders **had all been done** by researchers in China -- the very things that ultimately led to the discovery of the origins of SARS and of MERS viruses. **None of these things were done** (or at least, there is nothing publicly available to show that they were done) **because the animals "weren't there"**. Now that we all know they were there, China as lost considerable face. The issue has become so political than there is much less/?no willingness to cooperate and conduct the additional research that the WHO-led team recommended. Ideally, Xiao's ticks should be studied, but it's doubtful that will now happen (I wouldn't be surprised if he's been ordered to incinerate them!) Hope this is clear.

<><><><><>

An international team of experts convened by the WHO traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to seek answers—a trip that might have yielded different results if the scientists had known about the work of Xiao Xiao, a virologist whose roles straddled epidemiology and animal research at the government-funded Key Laboratory of Southwest China Wildlife Resources Conservation and at Hubei University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.'MIGHT HAVE YIELDED DIFFERENT RESULTS' SEEMS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. WHAT RESULTS DID IT YIELD? I'D CUT THIS GRAF
As mentioned above, the WHO-convened team of researchers was told by market authorities, vendors and regular market visitors that there were no live animals sold in the Huanan market. That undermined completely the premise that the

Huanan market was the kind of place where live animals from different species are stacked in cages, with urine and fecal material drips from one cage to the one below it, where there are splatters of blood and guts from animals, and lots of potential for the spread of diseases from one species to another (including Homo sapiens). Instead, the market (and one other one known to have been selling live wild animals in 2019) was presented as selling only frozen wild animals and aquatic species and things unlikely to be the source of SARS-CoV-2. The WHO researchers were told there were frozen ferret badgers and other wildlife found in freezers. Some of the carcasses actually came from Yunnan, the province where the closest coronavirus related to SARS-CoV-2 was found in bats -- thus establishing a potential route from Yunnan to Wuhan in wildlife. That was actually important. When the researchers showed their Chinese counterparts photos of caged raccoon dogs taken in the Huanan market by Prof. Edward Holmes five or six years earlier, they were told by Chinese scientists that the photos may have been faked, and that the market had ceased selling such live animals anyway. The WHO researchers saw no evidence (empty cages, animal pelts, etc) to dispute what the Chinese scientists told them, although they did smell "animals" -- but were told they were smelling rotten meat, sewage etc. Three people associated with the WHO-led mission told me that they didn't believe the information they were given by anyone associated with the market. But since there was no evidence to the contrary, they were unable to push the Chinese scientists further on this. T**he fact that the mission concluded that frozen, not live wild animals were sold in the market undermined the thesis that Covid resulted from an animal spillover**. And the absence of strong evidence pointing to a spill

over from wild animals to humans made the lab-leak theory look, in relative terms, more plausible.

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Six months and two revisions later, the journal's publishers rejected the paper. "They did not think it would have widespread appeal," says Newman, who declined to name the publication [do you want us to say why he won't name it? I don't think it's necessary . There's no upside for scientists to make a publisher look bad (most journals are published by a handful of publishers)] "It caused us, especially our Chinese co-authors, concern that these data would not be taken seriously."

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The manuscript underwent a third revision to include data on China's pangolin trade networks (an earlier study, later contested, had implicated pangolins in the virus's spread to humans)WHO ASKED THAT THIS INFO BE INCLUDED? (I did, because we're trying to explain here why WHO missed the significance of Xiao's evidence. The WHO was slammed by other papers being submitted PLUS Xiao's paper had a weird title. That title seemed relevant to the authors back in January-February 2020, when pangolins were considered a possible SARS-CoV-2-spreading culprit. But in October 2020, pangolins were off the hook, so the title would have seem irrelevant/unimportant at first glance at WHO). It was then sent to the online journal *Scientific Reports* .

<><><><><><>

The China-based researchers had reason to be cautious. In February 2020, the China Center for Disease Control (CCDC lets not use "CCDC". It's not commonly used like the U.S.

"CDC" is, and it's going to force readers to go back and figure out what the "CCDC" is) prohibited scientists working on Covid-relate

<><><><><><><>

~~CCDC~~ Disease detectives arriving from Beijing (think this makes it clear that these are China's disease "feds" arriving) on the first day of 2020 ordered environmental samples to be collected from drains and other surfaces at the market. Some 585 specimens were tested, of which 33 turned out to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. “All current evidence points to wild animals sold illegally,” China CDC Director George Gao and colleagues wrote in the agency’s weekly bulletin in late January. All but two of the positive specimens came from a cavernous and poorly-ventilated section of the market’s western wing, where many shops sold animals.

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~~The information void kindled a raging political debate that’s already caused a trade war between China and Australia, as nations~~ demand to know ~~how Covid emerged.~~
Australia in April 2020 called for a global inquiryinto the origins of the pandemic, including China’s handling of the initial outbreak. Days later, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo used part of his Earth Day message to call on China to close its wet markets to “reduce risks to human health inside and outside of China.”

Based on a discussion today with someone with knowledge of the WHO-led mission to Wuhan in Jan-Feb 2021, a significant catalyst for China's defensiveness is the emergence of **claims for reparations** that extended from the finger-pointing at China's wet markets. These surfaced in April 2020, and have continued as recently

as June 2021 (when Trump pushed for it again at a rally in the Midwest)

SO IS THIS THE POINT AT WHICH CHINA, WHICH SEEMINGLY ACCEPTED THE WET MARKET HYPOTHESIS, BEGAN TRYING TO CREATE A DIFFERENT NARRATIVE? (I think it was incremental. I believe China was embarrassed that its citizens were still buying wild animals in wet markets to eat -- a well-known hazard for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago. But that embarrassment/humiliation morphed into rigid denial and obfuscation when governments began openly blaming the Chinese Communist Party and agitating for China to pay reparations for the pandemic. See these clips:

- USA Today: Blame the Chinese Communist Party for the coronavirus crisis: Coronavirus crisis proves communism is still a grave threat to the entire world. If Beijing had just been honest, the pandemic could be preventable. April 5, 2020
- Yahoo News: More than half of Americans think China should pay coronavirus reparations, poll shows April 9, 2020
- Voice of America: Americans Join Coronavirus Lawsuit to Make China Pay April 10, 2020
- Washington Post Opinion: China must pay reparations to Africa for its coronavirus failuresApril 16, 2020
- Reuters: In a first, Missouri sues China over coronavirus economic losses April 22, 2020
- Washington Post: Missouri is suing China over the coronavirus pandemic. It's the latest conservative gambit, April 22, 2020
- New York Post: Top German paper demands $165 billion coronavirus

reparations from China April 22, 2020

- Attorney General Fitch Prepares to Sue China on Behalf of Mississippians April 22, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump on U.S. Seeking Compensation From China Over COVID-19: 'We Have Not Determined the Final Amount' April 28, 2020
- The Guardian: Trump says China could have stopped Covid-19 and suggests US will seek damages April 28, 2020
- Intelligencer: Trump Thinks He Can Make China Pay for the Virus Like Mexico Paid for the Wall, April 30, 2020
- Washington Post: U.S. officials crafting retaliatory actions against China over coronavirus as President Trump fumes April 30, 2020
- Lawfare: Does China Really Owe the World Trillions of Dollars? May 7, 2020
- Fortune: Trump's demand that China pay coronavirus reparations evokes an ugly history May 8, 2020
- South China Morning Post: Why China won't be paying the West coronavirus reparations any time soon May 15, 2020
- Deccan Herald, India: Abhijit Bhattacharyya | Why China needs to pay reparations to the world June 4, 2020
- Why calls for reparations from China for coronavirus are an unfeasible distraction June 9, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump Demands China 'Pay Reparations' for COVID, Says $10 Trillion Not Enough June 12, 2021

In response, Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied "wildlife wet markets" existed in the country. Government researchersCAN WE BE MORE SPECIFIC? Twenty-two researchers from mostly nationally-funded laboratories (I think it's the

Chinese equivalent of the NIH in the U.S.) and institutes attached to the Chinese Academy of Sciences) now dismiss the market hypothesis completely. “SARS-CoV-2 could not have possibly evolved in an animal market in a big city and even less likely in a laboratory,” they wrote in a paper released last month ahead of publicationWHERE/WHENWILL IT BE PUBLISHED? It was released as a "pre-print" on a Chinese academic repository ahead of publication that appears to be managed/owned by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Papers are usually released in pre-print form before they have been accepted for publication or peer-reviewed as a way of expediting public access to the information. In this case, there is no information to suggest if, where or when the paper will be published.

<><><><><><><><><>

A more recent paperBY WHOM? (China CDC's Gao and eight other scientists mostly from the Chinese of Academy of Sciences' institutes) contends that the virus may have been imported from multiple locations worldwide, including parts of Europe where mink are raised in areas inhabited also by horseshoe bats known to harbor coronaviruses. “The official narrative changed not because the evidence changed,” says Robert Garry, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Tulane University’s School of Medicine in New Orleans “A spillover from a wet market was what caused SARS, and, embarrassingly for China, those wet markets were never shut down.” Garry is the co-author of one of the earliest papers on the origins of Covid but wasn’t involved in the research on Wuhan’s markets.

<><><><><><><><><>

I DON’T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT POINT THIS GRAF IS TRYING TO MAKE. This is

intended to demonstrate the kind of gaslighting that has occurred. Some of the WHO-led researchers are veterinarians and zoologists -- they know what animals smell like, and could smell their lingering presence a year later, but were told essentially that it was impossible that they were smelling animals because **there "were no live animals there"**.) The researchers noted a mixed smell of animals and disinfectant in some areas of the market, but they were told by the market's manager that they were probably smelling the lingering stench of rotten meat and sewage, according to a joint WHO-China report. [should we add "according to Laing Wannian etc here? Liang Wannian was the leader of the Chinese research team collaborating jointly with the WHO-led research team. The source for the above description are in the annexes to the official joint WHO-China report released at the end of March 2021.]

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Earlier the same day, the international research team visited Wuhan's larger Baishazhou market, where Xiao had regularly surveyed two sellers of live wild animals. Yet the group was told only frozen food, ingredients, and kitchenware were on offer there. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist who led the Chinese experts collaborating with the WHO-convened team, says his group had no knowledge of Xiao's data either. [if the above information on what the delegation saw all comes from this same source, maybe we should include his name higher up (The source for the description of what the origins researchers saw on Jan. 31, 2021, comes from the official 120-page joint WHO-China report and its 193-page annexes, not from Liang. Since we are essentially accusing China of concealing the information that Xiao

documented, we asked Liang at a press conference in late July 2021 when the Chinese team first knew about Xiao's findings -- that the Huanan market and three others in Wuhan were selling live animals permissive to SARS-CoV-2 infection -- and what research China has done subsequently as a follow-up on this information? Liang gave a very long-winded response in Chinese in which he said essentially "we didn't have that information in January-February 2021 when the research team was in Wuhan". I think it's important we keep this to demonstrate that we have tried to ascertain what China knew/has done and have given the Chinese researchers the opportunity to respond. In addition, I have emailed China CDC Director George Gao at least twice and not received any response.]

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Among the earliest clusters of infections recorded in Wuhan, one involved three Covid cases among staff working at a stall in Huanan. One of the employees, a 32-year-old who fell ill on Dec. 19, traded goods back and forth between the Huanan and Baishazhou markets.
WHERE DOES THIS FACT COME FROM? NOT THE REPORT, RIGHT? WHEN DID IT FIRST BECOME KNOWN? This information was from the joint WHO-China report released in March 2021, however, the WHO-led researchers went to the Baishazhou market more as a demonstration by the China team of what a perfectly functioning large food market looks like. The WHO-led team was oblivious to Xiao's research that showed there were at least two stalls in Baishazhou that had been selling live wild animals for human consuption. So this detail and its significance was lost on the WHO researchers at the time.)

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A confirmed case linking two markets that sold wild animals is “very intriguing,”says Stephen Goldstein, a research associate in evolutionary virology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. But tracing any contact the employee might have had with infected wildlife is impossible now that the animals are long gone.WOULD TIMELY PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT HAVE CHANGED THIS? It's unlikely that Xiao et al's paper would have been *published* soon after It was drafted in February 2020, but it could have been *released* as a pre-print ahead of publication and peer-review that same month. That would have **confirmed** what almost everyone had suspected: that there **was** a flourishing wildlife trade in Wuhan that provides a plausible pathway by which coronavirus-infected wildlife from Yunnan and beyond could have introduced the virus to the city, sparking the Covid outbreak. It's also possible that swift recognition of these potential wild-animal vectors could have allowed scientists to test them for the virus and for antibodies against the virus while they were still alive (perhaps not the ones from Huanan, but wildlife in the three other Wuhan markets). Because of the statements the Chinese authorities had been making in January and February that strongly supported the animal spill over theory, it was assumed that this research was being done. Of course, the pandemic was raging then, so it would have been challenging. But, because of the denial by Chinese researchers that wild animals were being sold in Wuhan wet markets before the pandemic, there was never that level of follow up. At least, if there was, it was never made public.)

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“It seems to me, at a minimum, that local or regional authorities kept that informationWHAT INFORMATION? (

that Wuhan had a flourishing live wild animal business going on in its wet markets before the pandemic) quiet deliberately," Goldstein says. "It's incredible to me that people theorize about one type of cover-up, but an obvious cover-up is staring them right in the face."

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<Mail Attachment.png><Mail Attachment.png><Mail Attachment.jpeg><Mail Attachment.png>

Date:	Wed, 23 Jun 2021 10:24:21 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 23 Jun 2021 10:21:42 AM -0400
Subject:	Peter Hotez' articles...
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >; Alison Andre [b6]
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; The Antiscience Movement Is Escalating, Going Global and Killing Thousands - Scientific American.pdf; COVID vaccines_ time to confront anti-vax aggression.pdf; JCI - America's deadly flirtation with antiscience and the medical freedom movement.pdf

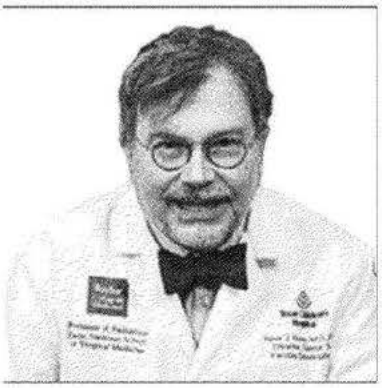
I printed them as a pdf – attached to this email.

The only one that didn't work is the Daily Beast article below:

The Unique Terror of Being a COVID Scientist After Jan. 6

THE NEXT WAR

It's no coincidence that one of the first guilty pleas in connection with the Capitol riot was of an anti-vaxxer.



Peter J. Hotez

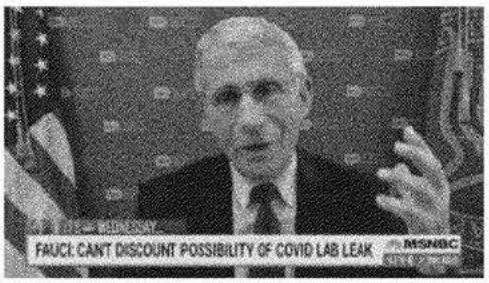
Updated Jun. 21, 2021 4:43AM ET / Published Jun. 21, 2021 3:35AM ET

Alex Wong/Getty

Being a scientist was not exactly fun during the height of the coronavirus pandemic in America. But somehow, even as cases and deaths are way down in the United States, the attacks on us are worse than ever.

Take Anthony Fauci, a punching bag for the far right since the earliest days of the outbreak. The "Fire Fauci Act," a twisted piece of legislation first introduced by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene in April, gained additional Republican support this past week, now reaching at least a dozen House members.

That leaders of the GOP would go out of their way to reduce Dr. Fauci's salary to zero and ultimately force his retirement must be examined for what it really is. This is no simple beef with someone who was frequently targeted by the administration and its allies under Donald Trump. It is, instead, a piece of a much larger and systematic anti-science project on the far right, one that is increasingly hard to separate from the Stop the Steal myth powering the right-wing fringe.



The attacks accelerated in the first half of 2020, when the Trump White House embarked on a deliberate anti-science disinformation campaign. The explicit language both from the president and his staff members: COVID-19 was a hoax, or else the death toll was a result of causes other than the virus. Hospital admissions reflected a catch-up in elective surgeries, and social distancing was discouraged in favor of promoting ridiculously low benchmarks for herd immunity. In response, many red-state governors prematurely relaxed social distancing and mask measures, stoking terrible waves of COVID-19 across southern states in the summer and the Midwest in the fall of 2020. Thousands lost their lives.

Also in the mix was the outrageous White House conspiracy that the Chinese Communist Party ignited the epidemic in the U.S, possibly by sending infected people into our country. Trump suggested he would fire Fauci—who he said disagreed with his Chinese travel ban—after the election, unleashing a steady stream of similar calls.

But it did not stop there. Dr. Peter Daszak, just to take one example—the head of the non-profit EcoHealth Alliance—has been routinely hounded by right-wing media as part of their fixation on the (still unresolved) Wuhan Lab Leak hypothesis. GOP Rep. Mike Gallagher has outrageously

gone so far as to suggest Daszak may have conspired to block a fair probe of what happened. Scripps Research Institute virologist Kristian Andersen has had to deactivate his Twitter account due to similar aggression.

I'm also personally threatened by emails, phone calls, and on social media for my views on vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccinations. They mostly have far-right and even white nationalist leanings, telling me about impending attacks from "patriots," some imbued with Nazi imagery. As one colleague eloquently said to me recently in a text: "It's like a slow moving train coming right for us. We have more lethally armed extremists in the U.S. than anywhere, and GOP members of Congress are whipping them up right now."

I agree with Dr. Fauci when he says that these personal attacks represent an assault on American science. But this targeting has even greater implications.

In the early 20th century, the Russian writer Maxim Gorky once commented that "without science, democracy has no future." Josef Stalin understood this well and banished scientists to die or face execution in gulags during the time of the Great Purge of the 1930s, and in years afterwards. Stalin saw scientists as a threat to his ability to maintain the [redacted] as a totalitarian state. Purging scientists was on his critical path to total control. It's why also similar authoritarian government-led attacks on scientists are now happening in Brazil, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

In their quest to reassert political dominance in the aftermath of the disaster that was Jan. 6, ranking members of the GOP, including House Republicans, feel a need to target us. They are almost certainly aware that their public statements represent dog whistles to thousands of armed individuals linked to far-right extremism. It's no coincidence that one of the first guilty pleas in connection with the Capitol riot involved someone carrying an anti-vaxxer propaganda sign. Ultimately, the far-right hunt for biomedical scientists represents an essential element for totalitarian control that goes back almost 100 years.

In this context, moral courage and standing up for democratic values demands that the American people throw their full support behind scientists and scientific institutions. To do otherwise is to capitulate to the forces of insurrection.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 9:52 AM
To: Roberts, Rich b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; David Morens b6; Aleksei Chmura b6; Alison Andre b6
Cc: Peter Daszak
Subject: Re: HOTEZ EDITS ADDITIONS ATTACHED Notes from Today's call

Ok I can copy paste it on paper and send

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
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Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 23, 2021, at 8:49 AM, Roberts, Rich b6 wrote:

Peter:

Still no luck.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
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Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 9:48 AM
To: Roberts, Rich < b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; David Morens < b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Alison Andre < b6
Cc: Peter Daszak <
Subject: Re: HOTEZ EDITS ADDITIONS ATTACHED Notes from Today's call

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https://www.thedailybeast.com/the- unique-terror-of-being-a-covid-scientist-after-january-6

If not, will see what I can do

Others should also work

https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the- antiscience-movement-is-escalating-going-global-and-killing-thousands/

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-01084-x

https://www.jci.org/articles/view/149072

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
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University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 23, 2021, at 8:42 AM, Roberts, Rich { b6 } wrote:

Peter:

Do you have pdf's of the articles you wrote? The Daily Beast article is behind a paywall.

Rich

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USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 9:36 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Roberts, Rich < b6 David Morens b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura < b6 Alison Andre b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Subject: Re: HOTEZ EDITS ADDITIONS ATTACHED Notes from Today's call

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter, I've made track changes and additions, ATTACHED. Many thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine

Health Policy Scholar

Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor

Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano

b6

Phone: b6



From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 22, 2021 11:36 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Roberts, Rich b6; Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>; David Morens b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Alison Andre b6
Subject: Notes from Today's call

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Thanks very much for spending time today on "Countering COVID-19 Anti-Science Attacks".

I've written up notes, with a first shot at a paragraph description of a meeting, and who put their hand up to contact whom.

All good movements need a name. I think "Committee to counter the anti-science movement (CASM)" is a good start…Certainly feels like a Chasm's opening up before our feet these days…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date:	Thu, 21 Sep 2023 4:05:47 PM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 21 Sep 2023 4:05:39 PM -0400
Subject:	FW: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction
From:	"Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6] [b6];
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; 07 26 2023 to jh Morens notes on searching for requeted covid materials.pdf

David Morens

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service (ret.)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520

- [b6] (assistant: Sherri DePollar)
- [b6] [b6] [b6]
- [b6]

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2023 3:46 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: FW: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

David Morens

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service (ret.)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520

Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Sherri DePollar)
- b6
- b6

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 1:04 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] <b6>; Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

David Morens

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service (ret.)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 assistant: Sherri DePollar)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 12:59 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] <b6>; Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Jill, I sent those to you in the original batch, two pages of handwritten notes. They include everything the SSCP asked for, plus the additional names you asked me to search on top of that, plus hard copy stuff I had saved from the time and are stored in my office or hall file cabinets.

I'll resend them to you in a minute

d

David Morens

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service (ret.)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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- b6 (assistant: Sherri DePollar)
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From: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 10:57 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

David,

NARA has requested a copy of your notes of what you searched for in your gmail account and other records. You mention hand-written notes of what you looked for – can you please provide a copy of those notes or any other information documenting what you searched for?

Thanks,
Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, August 31, 2023 3:03 AM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] b6; Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Jill, yes I have been finding stuff, less on my own emails but by contacting folks outside nih who I mailed or they mailed me. I am still trying to assemble all this stuff and figure out how to deal with the issue that as before the folks outside NIH don't want to send me their emails and have them end up in the press, as happened at the beginning of all this. Especially as a lot of these emails are very long threads. With lots of people and lots of subjects. But I am thinking about this as I find stuff piece by piece.

In the meantime, I have retained Mr. Belevetz as counsel, and he has already contacted Mr. Benzine of the Select Subcommittee and said he wanted to connect with David Langford too. He probably has by now. In the meantime he asked me to not communicate with anyone involved in the matter, although he didn't specifically say NIH folks. He also asked me to try to find

various things similar to what you have asked me to find, plus additional things, and I am working on that too. There is a lot of overlap so that when I find something it might be things that both him and you have asked for, plus related things that no one asked for, but that I think are possibly relevant.

All of the people in what we fancifully called Peter's support group (i.e., Daszak, Hotez, Keusch, Roberts, Sturchio and Chmura) said they recall me repeatedly or on at least several occasions asking them to keep gmail and email separate, i.e., to keep the personal stuff off of my NIH email, and none remember a single instance of me doing or trying to do NIH business on gmail, and some have emails that bear upon this.

About your second question, I am not sure I fully understand when you asked exactly what I searched for. Do you mean the search that ended up in the stuff I sent you between 7/21 and 7/26? If that is the case, I believe I sent you everything related to my search strategy re gmail, phone texts, and hard copy documents, including all of the names on yours and the SSCP lists as well as the list of additional names you sent me separately, including a list of how many "hits" I found for each person, with the caveats that some were redundant (same emal trail for more than one person) and the whole email trail that was attached to the one that lit up, providing extra emails you didn't specifically ask for. There was just no time to go over all of the long threads and attachments. If something is missing I can send it again because I have notes on everything.

David

David Morens

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service (ret.)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 b6 b6 (assistant: Sherri DePollar)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 1:11 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

David, I just wanted to follow up on this to see whether you obtained any supporting documentation.

In addition, can you send a list of what exactly you searched for in your gmail and forwarded to your government account beyond the list of names we provided in the thread below?

Thanks,
Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, August 24, 2023 3:23 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Re: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

OK, thanks, that's helpful

Although i don't know that any of these folks have kept such emails, i know they would remember it, and would be willing to search and try to find them

Also, i feel certain they would be willing to email me/you about their recollections, which i expect will jibe with mine. In fact, after it became known in late 2022 that the Subcommittee was interested in getting info from a whole list of NIH people, among others, both Peter Daszak and Jerry Keusch said or emailed to me, separately, on at least a few occasions, that they wished they had paid more attention to my requests to keep personal stuff off of govt emails

I forgot to mention that Peter told me that he had gotten into the habit of sending emails to both my govt email and gmail at the same time, further confusing things. Since the set up IT put on my iphone doesn't distinguish whether an email coming in to me, or going out from me, is email or gmail, the only way i know is that if i get two identical emails in quick succession, or if i go into the folders and examine them.

The "support group" for Peter H and Peter D consists of them, Jerry Keusch, who you knew as FIC director, and now co managing the BSL4 lab at Boston U (the NEIDL), Jeff Sturchio, i think former medical director of Merck, now doing something else which i am blanking on, Rich Roberts, virologist and Nobel laureate, myself, and EcoHealth Chief of Staff Alexei Chmura. These are all good people and will have alot of knowledge of my communications with them

Just to repeat, some of the correspondence about this should be on our servers even if i can't find them all, buti can't access that stuff myself. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 24, 2023, at 14:52, Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

Yes, anything that will support your statement . If you are able to have one or more of the recipients forward you the email string if any still have in their possession that may be helpful.

Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, August 24, 2023 11:19 AM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 >
Subject: Re: Follow-up Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Jill, before i start looking, can you be more specific about what i should search for? It seems like there are several different things. I am thinking you mean emails i sent them asking them to stop sending personal stuff to my govt email and send to gmail instead?

Not sure if i still have such emails but since our emails are saved forever per David Awwad, there should be more than one in the system

Also, this morning i got a call from Jeff Taubenberger about something else and i asked him what he remembered of this. The answer was quite a bit, as i asked him too, separately from the others, to keep email and gmail separate as appropriate. He says he will look and see if he has emails from me about that, but both he and i remember these discussions were verbal as we speak or meet almost daily

That got me to thinking that whatever i can or can't find on my email, the recipients may have retained them, these recipients being what the friends called the "support group" for Peter Daszak and Peter Hotez, who were recipients of the most worrisome death threats, and very rarely, surely less than 5 times, included Eddie Holmes, who was also receiving death threats

These science "support group" friends were a core group of 7 people, occasionally one or more added for specific reasons, all but me non government scientists. They will certainly remember me asking them repeatedly, and may have emails to document that

I could contact them, or should i not do that at this time?

david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 23, 2023, at 14:54, Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

David,

In follow up to your email below, do you have any email correspondence in your possession that supports the following statement from your July 21, 2023, email below?

> *I have never done nih business on my gmail account. The misunderstanding of the subcommittee comes, I believe, from one facetious joking email I sent to a group of scientists-friends trying to support our colleagues (Daszak, Holmes, Rasmussen, and a few others, and by default Tony) who were being stalked and threatened with death by organized groups of people who believed scientists created the pandemic. The goal of these networking emails was to support these scientists, who are my friends and who were living in literal terror. However, since this wasn't really government business, and contained a lot of dark humor, and I knew that my emails had been and would be foia'd, potentially allowing their private worries to become public, I kept repeatedly trying to get them to stop sending stuff to my govt email.*

If so, please forward that entire string of emails to your NIH account as soon as possible and confirm that you have done so.

Thanks,
Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2023 2:08 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] [b6] Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < [b6]
Subject: RE: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Thanks, Jill, this is helpful.

Just to clarify, I have never done nih business on my gmail account. The misunderstanding of the subcommittee comes, I believe, from one facetious joking email I sent to a group of scientists-friends trying to support our colleagues (Daszak, Holmes, Rasmussen, and a few others, and by default Tony) who were being stalked and threatened with death by organized groups of people who believed scientists created the pandemic. The goal of

these networking emails was to support these scientists, who are my friends and who were living in literal terror. However, since this wasn't really government business, and contained a lot of dark humor, and I knew that my emails had been and would be foia'd, potentially allowing their private worries to become public, I kept repeatedly trying to get them to stop sending stuff to my govt email.

I noticed that on my list of 24 people, at least 9 are people with whom I have published scientific papers, 4 of those on COVID issues, so there will be a lot of emails about that, 100% on email.

Regarding the list you sent, I have already made a similar list from a combination of memory and all of the names on the 10 papers ID'd by the subcommittee. Probably 95+ percent of all of my correspondence with them will be in email, not gmail, and what's in gmail will be them sending my stuff and me not replying.

I didn't know about the 7 year thing but I recall that a couple years ago or so David Awwad told me that all my emails lived on the servers forever.

OK, focusing on my gmail now. The only other thing is my govt phone but I doubt there is anything on that. That should be easy to check…

TY,

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service (ret.)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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From: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2023 12:55 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 ; Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

David, please see responses in yellow below.

In addition, I would suggest looking at the individuals listed below, to identify, who if any, you have corresponded with, in conducting NIH business via your personal accounts.

a. Anthony Fauci

b. Francis Collins
c. Lawrence Tabek
d. Hugh Auchincloss
e. Cliff Lane
f. David Morens
g. Ping Chen
h. Ian Watson
i. Andrew Pope
j. Victor Dzau
k. Robert Redfield
l. Michael Lauer - NIH Employee
m. David Christian Hassell
n. Jeremy Farrar
o. Robert Garry
p. Michael Farzan
q. Edward Holmes
r. W. Ian Lipkin
s. Andrew Rambaut
t. Peter Daszak
u. Aleksei Chmura
v. Kevin Olival
w. Christian Drosten
x. Ron Fouchier
y. Marion Koopmans
z. Michael Worobey
aa. Jonathan Pekar
bb. Florence Debarre
cc. Angela Rasmussen
dd. Ralph Baric
ee. James LeDuc
ff. Shi Zhengli

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2023 10:45 AM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]; Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < [b6]
Subject: Re: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Jill, Mason is setting up my work station now, so i am over in B31 because we dont get a wifi signal over there

i did about an hours worth of hard copy searching earlier including printing out all ten of the documents requested. Some of them i recognize and at least one i probably sent sn emsil about, that was the Jerry Keusch paper, which i though was great and recall congratulating him on it

I also looked at the list of authors on those ten papers and compiled a sublist of all of those i might have corresponded with in the past, so that i can sesrch for emails to or from. The list is quite long but i don't expect to find much except for Peter Daszak and Jerry Keusch, two old friends who i have been regularly in touch with for years

Regarding a list of things i might have deleted, for both my email and gmail there isn't any one thing i remember deleting, just my daily or frequent getting rid of emails. That would include some but not all of my emsils to and from all the folks named above. Most of my deletions are from inbox and sent mail, once i have read them to make sure i got the info. Emails that i have transferred to a folder , eg, regarding a manuscript, should still be there

Policy dictates that emails are retained by CIO/CIT for seven years from the date of deletion; therefore CIT can recover all items deleted from an NIH account.

One further thing that is a bit puzzling. The subcommittee has not asked anything about the published manuscript on the origin of covid 19 that i led, and which was available in spring 2020 and published in July. That was one of the most forceful and reasoned of the early papers that said the virus could only have come from a bat. At least 2-3 of the 9 co authors on that paper are on the list of authors of other papers the subcommittee requests. Should i send the emails with these authors which were about our paper even though they were not requested? Sounds like a semantic question, but the info base for all of us was pretty much the same, and all of the pspers published around that time came to pretty much the same conclusion. I am thinking to err on the side of over rather than under identifying emails and stuff

I agree that over identifying is better – I would include anything COVID related..

Finally, i am still a little unclear, should i be focusing how on finding gmails and sending to email, or the infinitely larger amount of stuff already in email that will take alot of time to identify? d

When you say "stuff already in email", do you mean in your government email? You should be focusing on correspondence in gmails or any other personal email accounts or any other text messaging or social media that were used to conduct and/or communicate NIH business and forwarding that to your NIH account.

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jul 21, 2023, at 09:58, Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

David,

If you forward emails from your gmail to your NIH account, NIH will be able to access them.

For pdfs and word documents, you can email to your government account with an subject line that denotes the contents and how it relates to the request.

As a reminder, you have also been requested to provide a detailed list (to me via email) of any communications that were deleted – see original memo for what to include in that list.

Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 20, 2023 4:14 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] [b6] Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < b6
Subject: RE: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

OK, thanks, then in that case maybe I will try to come in tomorrow, TY

<image001.gif>

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 b6 b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, July 20, 2023 3:51 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6 ; Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < b6 Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

David, IT is able to assist you tomorrow (Friday 7/21) if you would like to come in then. Mason Fletcher is your point-of-contact.

I am trying to get clarification about your other questions.

Thanks,
Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, July 20, 2023 12:50 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] b6 Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < b6
Subject: Re: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Thanks Jill,

i have a few questions.... see below

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jul 20, 2023, at 11:45, Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

David,

For the memorandum, you should be able to sign digitally with your PIV card using Adobe – I'm sure IT can assist with that.

OK, i will ask IT how to do that

You may come into the office to go through your files, but please notify me in advance of what days you plan to come in. I know you need to come in to deal with your computer – please let me know what day you plan to do this.

I had hoped to come in yesterday or today, but IT told me on both days that until further notice they cannot help me. And since my computer system in my office is apparently completely dead, I dont want to come in unless i can get something done

All of my hard copy files regarding all things covid are in my office in building 33. By chance, a month or so ago i spent a full day semi-organizing those and they are in maybe 5-6 3 inch binders plus maybe several up to 2 foot high stacks, only loosely organized Most of those are either pdfs of published scientific papers or printouts from Greg's news feeds, but there could be a handful of emails too. So i should be able to go through all of that in 1/2 a day, and am very doubtful there is anything in there of importance

Electronic versions of files are preferred as much as possible. The memo requests that you forward emails from your gmail to your government email, so no need to print those. Likewise, electronic files that you have can be emailed to your government account. For files that only exist in paper version, the preference would be to scan those and email to your government email.

Jill, a couple of clarifications here. Do you mean that anything i find in my gmail i just forward to my email and then what? NIH sends it all, or goes over it, or I do?

To be on the safe side should i for example forward to my email everything referring to or from/to the authors of the documents noted, which would save time in having to read endless pages of stuff that probably isnt relevant, or look only for specific things requested. For example, there maybe emails on which i was copied along with an author on one of those documents, but i didn't do anything about it. In otherwords should i cast a very wide net?

By other electronic files do you mean things like pdfs or word docs?

Regarding things that only exist in paper versions i dont expect to find any or at least very few, but scanning those should be easy, and then email to my nih nih email, right?

TY, david

Jill

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2023 5:19 PM
To: Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: Gibson, Anthony (NIH/OD) [E] [b6] Green, Christine (NIH/OD) [E] < [b6]
Subject: Re: Notification and Action: NARA Allegations of Unauthorized Records Destruction

Jill, i have received this memorandum but as i am at home without a printer, is there a workaround way to sign it?

With respect to the NARA requests, the only way to fully respond is to go through documents which are at work, which isn't possible if i cannot go in to work

As I have said, to the best of my knowledge, i have never in my 25 years at nih generated or worked on a record that would go to NARA, so it would be helpful to get a better idea of what i should be looking for and how can i be sure that the documents i have are or are not nara documents

A couple years ago David Awwad told me that all of our emails whether in our computer files or deleted can be retrieved by IT so is this something they can do? I have no way of retrieving the estimated million or more emails i must have deleted over the years

I have many hardcopy files that i can check but it will take time

Regarding all the 10 listed papers I have no memory of any of them with the possible exception of one called "proximal origins". I got that paper off pub med last week but didn't recognize that i had ever seen it before. If i did, it will be in my hard copy files since i have not pitched any of them. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jul 19, 2023, at 16:52, Harper, Jill (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:
>
> Dr. Morens,
>
> Please find attached memorandum regarding NARA allegations of unauthorized records destruction. Please review, sign to acknowledge receipt, return the signed memo to me, and take appropriate actions.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Jill R. Harper, Ph.D.
> Deputy Director for Science Management, and Executive Officer
> NIAID/NIH/DHHS
> Bldg. 31, Room 7A24, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> Phone: [b6]
> [b6]
> Pronouns – she, her, hers *(why?)*

Date: Wed, 26 May 2021 2:39:19 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments: image003.gif; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg

I was just talking about that statement with a couple of our Board members. My view is this is Biden's way of punting it down the road for 90 days, hoping the hype dies down, and hoping something shifts the narrative. He looks like he's doing something, while everyone knows that the US intelligence agencies are unlikely to get any more clarity in the meantime.

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening. That's a direct

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:09 PM
Subject: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

1 hour ago - World

Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins



Zachary Basu



Photo: Win McNamee/Getty Images

President Biden announced Wednesday he has asked the U.S. intelligence community to "redouble their efforts" to investigate the origins of the coronavirus and provide a report within 90 days that "could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion."

Why it matters: The debate over the origins of COVID-19 has been reinvigorated in recent days by previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, that three researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology fell ill enough to be hospitalized in November 2019.

The state of play: Biden said in a statement that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" for the origins of the virus — one, that it emerged from human contact with an infected and animal, and two, that it was the result of an accidental laboratory leak.

- A joint team from the World Health Organization and China issued an inconclusive report in March that described the so-called lab-leak theory as "extremely unlikely."
- But the report has been criticized by the U.S. and WHO leadership for its methodology and lack of transparency from the Chinese government, and top U.S. officials have called for a new investigation.

What they're saying: Biden said the U.S. intelligence community's current position is that "while two elements in the IC leans toward the former scenario and one leans more toward the latter – each with low or moderate confidence – the majority of elements do not believe there is sufficient information to assess one to be more likely than the other."

- "I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said in a statement.
- "As part of that report, I have asked for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for China. I have also asked that this effort include work by our National Labs and other agencies of our government to augment the Intelligence Community's efforts. And I have asked the Intelligence Community to keep Congress fully apprised of its work."

Our thought bubble: Whether COVID-19 ultimately originated in an animal or in a lab, the bulk of the evidence is in China, which limits what the U.S. can find out. But Biden's statement underscores the fact that this debate will not end any time soon, and that the U.S. could ramp up pressure on China to cooperate.

Go deeper: The COVID lab-leak theory goes mainstream

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Date: Sun, 18 Apr 2021 11:59:43 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 18 Apr 2021 11:57:25 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Update re. House Energy & Commerce Committee Minority Leaders letter to EcoHealth Alliance - Request for help, advice.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]

Thanks David and I understand that political outreach is off the table for you.

Please have a word in Tony's ear – the right wing media and the anti-GMO (left wing) groups clearly have Tony as an ultimate target.

Re. Jeff Taubenberger – I'll reach out to him this week and I'll also start talking with some of the society presidents who spoke out about the termination of our grant last year.

Re. Op Eds and articles – these all help because what we need are voices other than me speaking up – I'm too easy to criticize at the moment.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, April 18, 2021 1:51 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: Update re. House Energy & Commerce Committee Minority Leaders letter to EcoHealth Alliance - Request for help, advice.

Peter, this is 4+ alarming, but I really don't know what to do. High-ranking politicians are out of my league, never mind that in my job (as a non-political appointee) I am not supposed to be involved in anything political. This is not said to beg off, but to simply say let me know what I can do within the framework I can operate.

As I have said, I have come to the conclusion that now is the time for scientists to become proactive and call out

these people. How to do that? Do you agree and, if so, what avenues are best, individually and collectively? I can write scientific papers, op-eds, stuff like that, and I can continue to discuss this in talks I give, also reach out to other like minded scientists.

A small thing, but I would suggest putting Jeff Taubenberger in the loop, as he went through this a decade ago when his lab reconstructed the 1918 influenza virus. He is still on various death lists for that, and he and I discuss your situation several timkes a week; he is absolutely following this with alarm and and horror. He miught have some insights, having dealth with all 3 of the top goons, Ebright, Relman and Lipsitch, plus a few others like Mike Imperiale, a decade ago.

Also, I wonder if Tony knows all of the things you relate in your email. Probably yes, as he tries to be in the loop and is in his new official WH role. But if not, he might need a heads up.

david

On 4/18/2021 1:11 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Dear All,
>
> Just letting you know that I'm tracking what's being about the letter I received on Wednesday from Republicans on the Energy & Commerce Committee. I've not responded to it, and have a query in with our lawyers to make sure I don't have to. The people who believe COVID may have begun as a lab leak are openly expressing delight at this political action. This includes Richard Ebright from Rutgers who appears to have been partly involved in pushing this. He says this is the first necessary step to bring EHA, NIH, Fauci, DoD & others in front of Congress to answer for our role in potentially starting COVID.
>
> It's clear that on the Republican extreme right side, this is part of an effort to bring Tony Fauci into the crosshairs also – they repeatedly comment that I'm small potatoes and the real target is Dr. Fauci, specifically around the false premise that EHA was funded on his direction (it wasn't), so we could fund Gain-of-Function work in China (we did not), so he could get round the Govt rules on pausing GoF work (not relevant at this time). All of these are demonstrably false, but the 34 questions above are not designed to get to the truth of the origins – just to continue building a conspiratorial narrative that targets our work and Dr. Fauci.
>
> Importantly, I've now sent copies of my response to Michael Lauer to Democrat staffers at the House Committee on Science, Space, Technol. This committee oversees scientific research at a bunch of agencies (NSF, DHS), and the OSTP. The Chair of this committee wrote a letter to Azar under Trump criticizing the NIH decision. One of the members (Marc Veasey) is the person who asked Tony Fauci about the rationale for termination where Tony said "They asked us to cancel it" while testifying. I'll be working with this committee (hopefully) to build up some support to fight back.
>
> I'm also going to reach out to the Majority leaders on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce to get their support, and I think I now need to start actively reaching out to political leaders to provide a counter to these attacks. This is particularly important given the collaboration among Richard Ebright, David Relman, and Marc Lipsitch, who are likely to continue confusing the issue by touting links among the origins of COVID, Gain-of-Function, and the work EHA was doing in China. None are causally connected, but that won't stop them.
>
> I saw one worrying little comment from Richard Ebright that there is interest from the Majority on one committee. The Committee of most relevance would be the one that oversees NIH, which I believe is Energy & Commerce, but I wonder which other Committee's would be engaged, maybe House Committee on Foreign Affairs https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_Committee_on_Foreign_Affairs#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20Hous , or the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate_Committee_on_Foreign_Relations – which already has some nonsense about COVID-19, NIH, WHO and our work in a bill currently going through committee in the "Risch-Menendez Strategic Competition with China" Act https://www.axios.com/senate-china-bill-474f96f1-467b-4c02-ab6e-1084ca73b158.html (I've attached it here – Section 214 page 118).
>
> Do any of you know key people in these two committees? Is there any strategy here for you to reach out to societies, science leaders? I can see these people lining up to basically attack our science institutions and undermine our work to defeat pandemics. They're calling to defund EcoHealth Alliance, defund all work discovering viruses in wildlife, defund biosafety labs – and that's just the nice people. The death threats, hopes I'll commit suicide, calls for War Crimes tribunals

continue and I regularly report them to the FBI. These are not my real concern though – they're just individuals looking for a cause to fight. The big concern for me is political efforts to interfere with science, and I think these are just getting started.

Any advice welcome. I think the scientific community needs to start pulling together to fight back because there is a lot of momentum with these groups promoting a lab-origin to COVID, and they're really just beginning to turn this into political action.

Cheers,

Peter

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Date: Thu, 8 Jul 2021 1:17:29 PM -0400
Subject: RE: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.png

Really disappointed they gave space to this scheister – he's been trolling the internet darkweb with lab leak theories for at least a year.

Peter Hotez commented that BMJ has been putting out anti-vaxx articles too recently…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:03 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; [b6]
Subject: FW: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

David

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:43 AM
Subject: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

BMJ 2021; 374 doi: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n1656 (Published 08 July 2021) Cite this as: BMJ 2021;374:n1656 Paul D Thacker, investigative journalist
- *Madrid*

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The theory that SARS-CoV-2 may have originated in a lab was considered a debunked conspiracy theory, but some experts are revisiting it amid calls for a new, more thorough investigation. **Paul Thacker** explains the dramatic U turn and the role of contemporary science journalism

For most of 2020, the notion that SARS-CoV-2 may have originated in a lab in Wuhan, China, was treated as a thoroughly debunked conspiracy theory. Only conservative news media sympathetic to President Donald Trump and a few lonely reports dared suggest otherwise. But that all changed in the early months of 2021, and today most outlets across the political spectrum agree: the "lab leak" scenario deserves serious investigation.

Understanding this dramatic U turn on arguably the most important question for preventing a future pandemic, and why it took nearly a year to happen, involves understanding contemporary science journalism.

A conspiracy to label critics as conspiracy theorists

Scientists and reporters contacted by *The BMJ* say that objective consideration of covid-19's origins went awry early in the pandemic, as researchers who were funded to study viruses with pandemic potential launched a campaign labelling the lab leak hypothesis as a "conspiracy theory."

A leader in this campaign has been Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance, a non-profit organisation given millions of dollars in grants by the US federal government to research viruses for pandemic preparedness.[1] Over the years EcoHealth Alliance has subcontracted out its federally supported research to various scientists and groups, including around $600 000

(£434 000; €504 000) to the Wuhan Institute of Virology. [1]

Shortly after the pandemic began, Daszak effectively silenced debate over the possibility of a lab leak with a February 2020 statement in the *Lancet*.[2] "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that covid-19 does not have a natural origin," said the letter, which listed Daszak as one of 27 coauthors. Daszak did not respond to repeated requests for comment from *The BMJ*.

"It's become a label you pin on something you don't agree with," says Nicholas Wade, a science writer who has worked at *Nature*, *Science*, and the *New York Times*. "It's ridiculous, because the lab escape scenario invokes an accident, which is the opposite of a conspiracy."

But the effort to brand serious consideration of a lab leak a "conspiracy theory" only ramped up. Filippa Lentzos, codirector of the Centre for Science and Security Studies at King's College, London, told the *Wall Street Journal*, "Some of the scientists in this area very quickly closed ranks."[3] She added, "There were people that did not talk about this, because they feared for their careers. They feared for their grants."

Daszak had support. After he wrote an essay for the *Guardian* in June 2020 attacking the former head of MI6 for saying that the pandemic could have "started as an accident," Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust and co-signer of the *Lancet* letter, promoted Daszak's essay on Twitter, saying that Daszak was "always worth reading."[4]

Daszak's behind-the-scenes role in orchestrating the statement in the *Lancet* came to light in November 2020 in emails obtained through freedom of information requests by the watchdog group US Right To Know.

"Please note that this statement will not have EcoHealth Alliance logo on it and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization or person," wrote Daszak in a February email, while sending around a draft of the statement for signatories.[5] In another email, Daszak considered removing his name from the statement "so it has some distance from us and therefore doesn't work in a counterproductive way."[6]

Several of the 27 scientists who signed the letter Daszak circulated did so using other professional affiliations and omitted reporting their ties to EcoHealth Alliance.[3]

For Richard Ebright, professor of molecular biology at Rutgers University in New Jersey and a biosafety expert, scientific journals were complicit in helping to shout down any mention of a lab leak. "That means *Nature*, *Science*, and the *Lancet*," he says. In recent months he and dozens of academics have signed several open letters rejecting conspiracy theory accusations and calling for an open investigation of the pandemic's origins.[7][8][9]

"It's very clear at this time that the term 'conspiracy theory' is a useful term for defaming an idea you disagree with," says Ebright, referring to scientists and journalists who have wielded the term. "They have been successful until recently in selling that narrative to many in the media."

The *Lancet*'s editor in chief, Richard Horton, did not respond to repeated requests for comment but, after *The BMJ* had sent him questions, the *Lancet* expanded Daszak's conflicts of interest on the February statement and recused him from working on its task force looking into the pandemic's origin.[10][11]

The *Lancet* letter ultimately helped to guide almost a year of reporting, as journalists helped to amplify Daszak's message and to silence scientific and public debate. "We're in the midst of the social media misinformation age, and these rumours and conspiracy theories have real consequences," Daszak told *Science*.[12] Months later in *Nature*, he again criticised "conspiracies" that the virus could have come from the Wuhan Institute of Virology and complained about "politically motivated organisations" requesting his emails.[13]

That summer *Scientific American*, one of the oldest and best known popular science magazines in America, published a complimentary profile of Daszak's colleague, Shi Zhengli, a centre director at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which has been funded by EcoHealth Alliance.[14]

EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology earned additional sympathetic reporting after the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) cancelled its grant to EcoHealth Alliance in April last year—allegedly on President Trump's order—because of its ties to Wuhan, a decision protested by 77 Nobel laureates and 31 scientific societies.[15] (The NIH has subsequently awarded EcoHealth Alliance new funding.)

Efforts to characterise the lab leak scenario as unworthy of serious consideration were far reaching, sometimes affecting reporting that had first appeared well before the covid-19 pandemic. For example, in March 2020 *Nature Medicine* added an editor's note ("Scientists believe that an animal is the most likely source of the coronavirus") to a 2015 paper on the creation of a hybrid version of a SARS virus, co-written by Shi.[16]

Wade explains, "Science journalists differ a lot from other journalists in that they are far less sceptical of their sources and they see their main role as simply to explain science to the public." This, he says, is why they began marching in unison behind Daszak.

The U turn

By the end of 2020, just a handful of journalists had dared to seriously discuss the possibility of a lab leak. In September, *Boston* magazine reported on a preprint that found the virus unlikely to have come from the Wuhan seafood market, as Daszak has argued, and that it seemed too well adapted to humans to have arisen naturally. However, the story failed to garner much attention, similarly to a little noticed investigative report by the Associated Press in December that exposed how the Chinese government was clamping down on research into covid-19's origins.

In January this year, *New York* magazine ran a sprawling story detailing how the pandemic could have started with a leak from

the lab in Wuhan. The hypothetical scenario: "SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes covid-19, began its existence inside a bat, then it learned how to infect people in a claustrophobic mine shaft, and then it was made more infectious in one or more laboratories, perhaps as part of a scientist's well-intentioned but risky effort to create a broad-spectrum vaccine." Scientists and their media allies swiftly criticised the article.

But mainstream outlets from the *New York Times* to the *Washington Post* are now treating the lab leak hypothesis as a worthy question, one to be answered with a serious investigation. In a recent interview with the *New York Times*, Shi denied that her lab was ever involved in "gain of function" experiments (box 1) that enhance a virus's virulence. But the newspaper reported that her lab had been involved in experiments that altered the transmissibility of viruses, alongside interviews with scientists who said that far more transparency was necessary to determine the truth of SARS-CoV-2's origins.17

Box 1

What is "gain of function" research?

After two teams genetically tweaked the H5N1 avian flu virus in 2011 to make it more transmissible in mammals, biosafety experts voiced concerns about "gain of function" research—experimental research that involves altering microbes in ways that change their transmissibility, pathogenicity, or host range.

In the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* in 2012, Lynn Klotz predicted an 80% chance that a leak of a potential pandemic pathogen would occur sometime in the next 12 years. Two years later a Harvard epidemiologist, Marc Lipsitch, founded the Cambridge Working Group to lobby against such experiments.

At that time, three safety lapses involving dangerous pathogens led to a safety crackdown at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lipsitch later argued in 2018 that the release of such a pathogen would "lead to global spread of a virulent virus, a biosafety incident on a scale never before seen."

Gain of function research was briefly paused because of these concerns, although critics debate as to when it restarted. For more than a decade, scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology have been discovering coronaviruses in bats in southern China and bringing them back to their lab for gain of function research, to learn how to deal with such a deadly virus should it arise in nature.

The closest known relative of the SARS-CoV-2 virus was found in a region of China almost 1000 miles from the Wuhan Institute of Virology—yet the pandemic apparently started in Wuhan. Biosafety experts have noted that lab leaks are common but rarely reported, as hundreds of lab accidents had happened in the US alone.27

RETURN TO TEXT

Two major events are probably responsible for the media's change in tune. First, Trump was no longer president. Because Trump had said that the virus could have come from a Wuhan lab, Daszak and others used him as a convenient foil to attack their critics. But the framing of the lab leak hypothesis as a partisan issue was harder to sustain after Trump left the White House.

Second, after months of negotiation the Chinese government finally allowed the World Health Organization to come to Wuhan and investigate the pandemic's origin. But in January 2021 WHO, which included Daszak on the team, returned with no evidence that the virus had arisen through natural spill-over.18 More worryingly, members were allowed only a few hours of supervised access to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

The White House then released a statement making clear that it did not trust China's propaganda denying that the virus could have come from one of the country's labs. "We have deep concerns about the way in which the early findings of the covid-19 investigation were communicated and questions about the process used to reach them," said the statement. "It is imperative that this report be independent, with expert findings free from intervention or alteration by the Chinese government."

The following month the *Washington Post* editorial board called for an open and transparent investigation of the virus's origins, highlighting Shi's experiments with bat coronaviruses that were genetically very similar to the one that caused the pandemic.19 It asked, "Could a worker have gotten infected or inadvertent leakage have touched off the outbreak in Wuhan?" The *Wall Street Journal*, citing a US intelligence document, recently reported that three Wuhan Institute of Virology researchers were admitted to hospital in November 2019.20

To follow any US financial ties and to better understand how the pandemic started, Republicans have launched investigations of government agencies that fund coronavirus research, and one investigative committee has sent a letter to Daszak at EcoHealth Alliance demanding that he turn over documents. Meanwhile, Senate Republicans and Democrats have started to discuss an independent investigation of the virus's origins.

A hard truth to swallow

The growing tendency to treat the lab leak scenario as worthy of serious investigation has put some reporters on the defensive. After Robert Redfield, former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, appeared on CNN in March, *Scientific American*'s editor in chief, Laura Helmuth, tweeted, "On CNN, former CDC director Robert Redfield shared the conspiracy theory that the virus came from the Wuhan lab." The following day, *Scientific American* ran an essay calling the lab leak theory "evidence free." And a week later a *Nature* reporter, Amy Maxmen, labelled the idea that the virus could have leaked from a lab as "conjecture."

Helmuth did not respond to questions from *The BMJ*.

Some media outlets have attempted to justify their past reporting about the lab leak hypothesis as simply a matter of tracking a "scientific consensus" which, they say, has now changed. *Vox* posted an erratum noting, "Since this piece was originally published in March 2020, scientific consensus has shifted."

The "scientific consensus" argument does not sit well with David Relman, a microbiologist at Stanford University, California. "We can't even begin to talk about a consensus other than a consensus that we don't know [the origins of SARS-CoV-2]," he recently told the *Washington Post*.[21]

A year lost

While the narrative took months to change in the media, several high profile intelligence sources had treated the lab leak theory seriously from early on. In April 2020, Avril Haines joined two other former deputy directors of the Central Intelligence Agency to write an essay in *Foreign Policy* asking, "To what extent did the Chinese government misrepresent the scope and scale of the epidemic?"[22] A week later, one of the former intelligence officials who wrote that essay gave similar quotes to *Politico*.
Ignoring these early warnings led to a year of biased, failed reporting, says Wade. "They didn't question what their sources were saying," he says of the reporters who helped to sell the conspiracy theory narrative to the public. "That is the simple explanation for this phenomenon."

An impartial, credible investigation?

As the news media scramble to correct and reflect on what went wrong with nearly a year of reporting, the episode has also highlighted quality control issues at the ubiquitous "fact checking" services.
Prominent outlets such as *PolitiFact*[23] and FactCheck.org[24] have added editor's notes to pieces that previously "debunked" the idea that the virus was created in a lab or could have been bioengineered—softening their position to one of an open question that is "in dispute." For almost a year Facebook sought to control misinformation by banning stories suggesting that the coronavirus was man made. After renewed interest in the virus's origin, Facebook lifted the ban.[25]
Whether a credible investigation will be made into the lab leak scenario remains to be seen. WHO and the *Lancet* both launched investigations last year (box 2), but Daszak was involved in both, and neither has made significant progress.
Box 2

Timeline

2019

September Weeks before the pandemic erupts, Jeremy Farrar (Wellcome Trust) and Anthony Fauci (US National Institutes of Health; NIH) help oversee a World Health Organization report highlighting an "increasing risk of global pandemic from a pathogen escaping after being engineered in a lab"
November Three researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology are admitted to hospital, says a previously undisclosed US intelligence document reported by the *Wall Street Journal* on 23 May 2021
31 December China notifies WHO of "cases of pneumonia of unknown aetiology" in Wuhan City

2020

1 February Jeremy Farrar holds a teleconference with Anthony Fauci and others to discuss the outbreak's origins
6 February A commentary from Chinese researchers based in Wuhan, arguing that "the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan," is posted and later removed from ResearchGate (the user account "Botao Xiao" is also deleted)
19 February An open letter is published in the *Lancet* from 27 scientists including Peter Daszak and Jeremy Farrar, who "strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that covid-19 does not have a natural origin"
19 February*Science* magazine reports: "Scientists 'strongly condemn' rumors and conspiracy theories about origin of coronavirus outbreak," quoting Daszak as saying, "We're in the midst of the social media misinformation age, and these rumors and conspiracy theories have real consequences, including threats of violence that have occurred to our colleagues in China."
22 February*New York Post* publishes an article by a China scholar arguing that "coronavirus may have leaked from a lab"—subsequently censored by Facebook
6 March Kristian Andersen (Scripps Research Institute) thanks Jeremy Farrar (Wellcome), Anthony Fauci (NIH), and Francis Collins (NIH) "for your advice and leadership as we have been working through the SARS-CoV-2 'origins' paper." The paper is published on 17 March in *Nature Medicine* and states, "Our analyses clearly show that SARS-CoV-2 is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated virus."
24 April NIH abruptly cuts funding to EcoHealth Alliance, allegedly on President Trump's order
28 April Three former US intelligence agents write in *Foreign Policy* asking whether the virus emerged from nature or escaped from a Chinese lab
21 May*New York Times* depicts the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a victim of "conspiracy theories"
27 May*Nature* reports the lab leak hypothesis as "coronavirus misinformation" and "false information"
8 June The science magazine *Undark* reports that the lab leak is a conspiracy theory "that's been broadly discredited"
30 December Associated Press investigation finds documents from March 2020 showing how Beijing has shaped and censored research into the origins of SARS-CoV-2

2021

February Facebook places warning on an article by Ian Birrell about the origins of covid-19. Facebook says that these warnings reduce article viewership by 95%
13 February Jake Sullivan, US national security adviser, expresses "deep concerns" about WHO's covid-19 investigation, calling on China to be more transparent

March *Washington Post* calls for serious investigations of the lab leak hypothesis
30 March WHO releases a report on its investigation into the origins of covid-19, listing the lab leak as least likely of the possible scenarios considered. Hours earlier, WHO's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, acknowledged that the lab leak hypothesis should "remain on the table" and called for a more extensive probe
30 March The US, Australian, Japanese, Canadian, UK, and other governments express concern over WHO's investigation and call for "transparent and independent analysis and evaluation, free from interference and undue influence"
26 May Facebook lifts its ban on posts referencing the lab leak hypothesis
RETURN TO TEXT
In recent weeks, several high profile scientists who once denigrated the idea that the virus could have come from a lab have made small steps into demanding an open investigation of the pandemic's origin.
The NIH's director, Francis Collins, said in a recent interview, "The Chinese government should be on notice that we have to have answers to questions that have not been answered about those people who got sick in November who worked in the lab and about those lab notebooks that have not been examined." He added, "If they really want to be exonerated from this claim of culpability, then they have got to be transparent."26
But the nature of this investigation has still not been decided.

Footnotes

- Competing interests: I am paid by various media outlets for journalism stories and consult part time for a non-profit institute focused on brain disorders. I run a newsletter called the *Disinformation Chronicle*.
- Provenance and peer review: Commissioned, not externally peer reviewed.

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https://bmj.com/coronavirus/usage

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Date: Sat, 25 Sep 2021 9:03:29 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 25 Sep 2021 9:03:27 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Peter Daszak b6; Roberts, Rich b6; Robert Kessler b6

Thanks David,

I will plan on doing that. I have a call with Richard Horton at noon to discuss whether the Lancet will appoint us a Working Group reporting directly to the Lancet. He was prepared to do that, extracted a promise from Jeff he wouldn't be out in the public space after he altered the Commission website, and asked up to develop a proposal. We did and listed all 12 of the task force members as the new Working Group. With the WSJ piece and other media vehicles picking up on it we are not inclined to give one inch and it will be all 12 of us or none of us. We are still holding our public voice silent, but the issue is not if but when, and then what we will say.

What I want to talk to Tony about is the amendment to defund EHA in the defense appropriation bill passed by the House. I am sure staff were largely unaware. Just like I expect Richard Horton to stand on the side of scientific integrity so too must the NIH, and it is time for Francis Collins to set the record straight - Peter and EHA did nothing wrong, their science was important and helped the world prepare for the emergence of COVID rather than being responsible for it happening. I think Tony can speak to Francis - who probably won't be listening - but even more important to Biden, his senior staff, and to Eric Lander.

Long story short is I can call Tony in the 1:30-2:30 time frame. If you can let him and his secretary know that would be great. Is that still Patty Conrad because she will most likely recognize my name.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens b6 >
Sent: Saturday, September 25, 2021 4:08 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 >
Subject: Re: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate

Jerry, i would call him on his land line at work on Monday. b6 b6 b6 and his assistant Kim will answer. I can give her a heads up of who you are and that u will be calling.

In a pinch i can give you his cell phone, but there is a sort of rule that us piss-ons shouldn't give it out. Although i sm sure he would be fine

But as he is so swamped all the time, i think the land line call is best, so that he will know in advance that you are going to call. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 25, 2021, at 15:59, Keusch, Gerald T b6 wrote:

>
> David. What's the best way for me to contact Tony. I don't know what he could achieve in trying to get Collins to do what is right here but he can have a lot of influence on Biden and Eric Lander. I will raise what our mutual mentor, Shelly Wolff, would have done - make it clear this is egregious and get the Govt to do what is right.
>
> Jerry
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
>> On Sep 25, 2021, at 11:50 AM, David Morens [b6] > wrote:
>>
>> Peter, sorry for not replying earlier I was in a sort of urgent
>> situation and was tied up the whole past two days.
>>
>> First, it is hard to believe this passed or will be allowed to stand,
>> I suspect most Democrats and Republicans didn't even know about it
>> because some staffer sneaked it in. Also, and I dread appearing
>> charitable, I doubt even most Republicans would want this.
>>
>> beyond that, the law prevents me from doing anything about it other
>> than fume, so please accept my sympathetic fuming and hope that this
>> will die a rapid death. d
>>
>>
>> David M. Morens, MD
>> [b6]
>>
>>
>>
>> [b6]
>> [b6] [b6] [b6] (work)
>> [b6] [b6] [b6] (cell)
>>
>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash,
>> which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
>> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
>>
>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
>> NIAID address
>>
>>> On Sat, Sep 25, 2021 at 9:30 AM Peter Daszak
>>> [b6] > wrote:
>>>
>>> Jerry – this is very good to hear. Yesterday was a very worrying day. If this amendment becomes law, we will have to lay off staff and basically close down. It penalizes us for something that we didn't do, without due process. It sets a terrible precedence for congress members ability to shut down a non-profit or a university's line of research based on rumor and hearsay. It's also based on a falsehood that there is any evidence that the virus came out of a lab, of course.
>>>
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>>> There's a lot of drum-banging going on out there, and the attacks on us continue. We're trying to do the

right thing by keeping quiet and not talking to the press, but this also means they have a field day at our expense when every rumor or hyped-up article comes out.
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance
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>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>>> Tel.: b6
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>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation

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>>> From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:05 PM
>>> To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens
>>> [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]
>>> Cc: Robert Kessler <[b6]
>>> Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> I'm going to contact my congressional representative and senators, and Tony Fauci and Victor Dzau as well.
>>>
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>>> If Rich gets in touch with Harold that could help some, at least with Eric Lander who sits in the cabinet and has the ear of the White House leadership.
>>>
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>>>
>>> Jerry
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>>>
>>> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
>>>
>>> Professor of Medicine
>>>
>>> Associate Director
>>>
>>> National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
>>>
>>> Boston University, Boston MA 02118
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> From: Peter Daszak <[b6]
>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:31 PM
>>> To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T
>>> [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
>>> Cc: Robert Kessler [b6] >
>>> Subject: FW: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>> Importance: High
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>>>
>>> Dear Robert, David, and Jerry,
>>>
>>>

>>>
>>> Sorry to send this, but please read the email below and you'll see that a bill filed by a Republican congressman from PA then became a single line amendment attached to the Defense Appropriations bill, and actually passed the House last night.
>>>
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>>>
>>> We're very worried here because we rely on Federal funding and this puts our organization in great threat. Any advice is welcome. We're reaching out to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, but I'm really worried that if they are too busy to get involved for a small non-profit with no political clout, we'll be drummed out of business.
>>>
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>>>
>>> If you have colleagues who know how to deal with this sort of issue, and are willing to help, we would be extremely grateful for any advice, suggestions and support. I realize you've all spent social and political capital helping our organization since we were first targeted by Pres. Trump, but this is truly an existential threat to us, considering 80-90% of our budget is from federal grants and contracts.
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>>> Cheers,
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>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> From: Peter Daszak [redacted]>
>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:11 PM
>>> To: 'Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)'
>>> [redacted]>; 'Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)'
>>> [redacted]
>>> Cc: Aleksei Chmura[redacted]; Robert Kessler
>>> [redacted]; Jeff Sturchio [redacted]
>>> [redacted]>
>>> Subject: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed
>>> by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>> Importance: High
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>>> Dear Jamison and Gilbert,
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>>>
>>> You were kind enough to talk with us a couple of months ago about attacks on our New York City-based 501c3 non-profit from the hard right wing regarding the work we've done in the past trying to protect us from new emerging diseases coming out of China and other hotspots. As you remember, this work was largely funded by NIH, DoD and USAID and has become a target for Republican-led attacks on the Biden administration.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> We're very concerned that one of the House Republicans, Congressman Reschenthaler, filed a bill titled HR591 "Defund EcoHealth Alliance Bill" in Jan. 2021 and managed to get this attached as Amendment 148 to the National Defense Authorization Act (HR 4350). The five other co-sponsors are all Republicans: Van Drew, Perry, Harshbarger, Keller, and Budd: https://rules.house.gov/bill/117/hr- 4350. The House passed the NDAA last night (https://armedservices.house.gov/ndaa) and unfortunately this Amendment is now progressing with it.
>>>
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>>>
>>> EcoHealth Alliance is a non-profit based in Midtown Manhattan that employs around 50 people whose jobs depend on the funding we receive each year. If this amendment continues forwards, we stand to all lose our jobs and close down the organization. This amendment is based on a false premise that our organization acted wrongly and was involved in the origin of the COVID pandemic. In fact it's the opposite, we worked with federal approval to help protect US citizens against this and other pandemic risks. If passed, it would penalize

an organization doing public good, without any due process or consideration of the facts. Also of great concern is that this amendment would set a precedent that any single member of Congress can specifically block funding to an organization or institution through a simple amendment, bypassing all political norms.
>>>
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>>>
>>> We are urgently hoping that you will be able to make Sen. Gillibrand aware of our issue and move to strike out this amendment at the first possible opportunity. We are at this point very worried for our staff, and our work around the world protecting the US against the next pandemic.
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>>> Yours sincerely,
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>>> Peter
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>>> Peter Daszak
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>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
>>> Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 10:46 AM
>>> To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>> [b6]>; Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)
>>> [b6]
>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura
>>> [b6]>; Robert Kessler
>>> [b6]>
>>> Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>>
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>>>
>>> That would be perfect. It'll be me, our chief of staff Aleksei Chmura, and our Communications Director Robert Kessler.
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>>> Thanks for making time!
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>>> From: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>> b6 >
>>> Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 8:42 AM
>>> To: Peter Daszak b6 Ruiz, Gilbert
>>> (Gillibrand) b6 >
>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll b6 >; Aleksei Chmura
>>> b6 >; Robert Kessler
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>>> Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
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>>> Happy to chat. Would Monday at 2:30pm over zoom work for you all?
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>>> From: Peter Daszak b6
>>> Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 3:38 PM
>>> To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>> b6 >
>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll b6 >; Aleksei Chmura
>>> b6 >; Robert Kessler
>>> b6
>>> Subject: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>> Importance: High
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>>> Dear Brooke,
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>>>

>>> I hope you don't mind me contacting you directly – I was given your email address by my colleague Dennis Carroll.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> As you may know, I'm the President of EcoHealth Alliance, based here in NYC, and also Chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats and member of the National Academy of Medicine. I mentioned the latter, because I received a very kind letter from Senator Gillibrand when I was voted onto the NAM a couple of years ago – it's now framed on my wall!
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> You may have heard our organization's name (EcoHealth Alliance) and mine being mentioned in the press recently in the general discussion of identifying the origins of COVID-19. For the last 17 years, we've worked closely with colleagues in China to get ahead of emerging viruses, including by collaborating with their premier virologists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Unfortunately, this work has become a very public target politically following over a year of conspiracy theories online that have now gone mainstream about the possibility COVID emerged as a leak from a biosafety laboratory in Wuhan. This was amplified a few weeks ago with testimony by Dr. Fauci and the release of FoIA'd emails that have put our organization in the cross-hairs of efforts to attack the current administration. This includes proposals by some minority members for bills that would significant harm our international work to prevent pandemics, as well as directly defund our organization.
>>>
>>>
>>>
>>> I've attached a letter in Lancet that came out last week that helps provide some context of the way this issue is being viewed by serious scientists, but as you can imagine we're worried about the impact on work that we believe is critical to preventing future pandemics. I wondered if you would be interested in my giving you a short briefing on this issue, to explain in more detail what the evidence behind these theories is, and to get your take on the political issues we are concerned about?
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Date: Sat, 20 Mar 2021 1:20:45 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 20 Mar 2021 1:20:41 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 20, 2021, at 1:12 AM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

EXTERNAL SENDER

Good idea Rich,

My meeting is on Friday 26th. I'll send you the slide deck the night before – it will be modified from the talk I gave to you and can then be shared (I'll have to delete a couple of slides first).

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 12:36 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens < [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

Peter:

After you make your presentation would there be some material that I can share with the NLs? I want to bring them up-to-date on what has been happening.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 12:31 AM
To: Roberts, Rich b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; David Morens b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

EXTERNAL SENDER

I really appreciate this Rich and although it's disheartening to see the deflection, I think it's important that the NIH Director doesn't only receive the Republican attacks and realizes there are others out there that still care about political interference with the process of freely engaging in funded scientific research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 11:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; David Morens < b6

Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

Peter:

Thanks for sharing this. It is very discouraging to see these kinds of attacks continuing and very disturbing that Dave Relman is involved.

I am attaching an email I received on Wednesday from Francis in response to a letter I had sent to him (at the bottom of the thread). While at least he responded to this one it was merely a deflection.

As for another investigation, hopefully you will be able to convince them that it would be a huge waste of time and money. Unless the Chinese undergo a complete about turn, they are not going to be cooperative in any additional way over and above their response to the WHO investigation.

If you see any additional way in which I might help please do let me know.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 9:08 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

This letter from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce was filed yesterday. I don't know what normally happens with this, but I'm assuming NIH will respond and I won't have to do anything. Note that Dr. Relman is cited and center, and I believe he's agitating to head up an inquiry from the NASEM. I've thought this for a long time after he approached me a couple of times a year ago to inquire about my work in China.

This letter is part of a barrage of daily attacks at this point. Today, the US Right to Know filed a FoIA at Erasmus Univ Netherlands where Marion Koopmans (also on the WHO mission) works, for emails to me and the WHO people, adding to multiple broadsheet articles over the past week from WSJ and less sophisticated right wing papers. I don't know if they can FoIA a foreign Univ, but I've now got to spend hours of my time with their lawyers and ours to find out.

On the good side, I was asked to brief staffers at the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, which I'm assuming will be a positive experience, and I'm reaching out to the State Dept and NSC to offer briefings on WHO findings ahead of the report. Additionally, 60 minutes is doing a piece on the report and interviewed me, but I suspect they're going to dwell on the lab release hypothesis.

Meanwhile, I'm drafting a response to the 10 conditions from Collins & Lauer and will have a draft within a few days for your comments if that's ok. Given Biden's theatrical show at the China summit today, I don't hold up much hope that this sort of aggression is going to dissipate quickly…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Tue, 25 May 2021 8:09:01 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 25 May 2021 8:08:59 AM -0400
Subject: Fwd: WaPo: Timeline: How the Wuhan lab-leak theory suddenly became credible
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
To: Gerald Keusch [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.jpg

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
Date: May 25, 2021 at 07:41:25 EDT
Subject: WaPo: Timeline: How the Wuhan lab-leak theory suddenly became credible

Timeline: How the Wuhan lab-leak theory suddenly became credible



By
Glenn Kessler
The Fact Checker
May 25, 2021 at 3:00 a.m. EDT

The source of the coronavirus that has left more than 3 million people dead around the world remains a mystery. But in recent months the idea that it emerged from the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) — once dismissed as a ridiculous conspiracy theory — has gained new credence.

How and why did this happen? For one, efforts to discover a natural source of the virus have failed. Second, early efforts to spotlight a lab leak often got mixed up with speculation that the virus was deliberately created as a bioweapon. That made it easier for many scientists to dismiss the lab scenario as tin-hat nonsense. But a lack of transparency by China and renewed attention to the activities of the Wuhan lab have led some scientists to say they were too quick to discount a possible link at first.

Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) from the start pointed to the lab's location in Wuhan, pressing China for answers, so the history books will reward him if he turns out to be right. The Trump administration also sought to highlight the lab scenario but generally could only point to vague intelligence. The Trump administration's messaging was often accompanied by anti-Chinese rhetoric that made it easier for skeptics to ignore its claims.

As a reader service, here is a timeline of key events, including important articles, that have led to this reassessment. In some instances, important information was available from the start but was generally ignored. But in other cases, some experts fought against the conventional wisdom and began to build a credible case, rooted in science, that started to change people's minds. This has led to renewed calls for a real investigation into the lab's activities before the coronavirus emerged.

Early speculation

Dec. 30, 2019: The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission issues an "urgent notice" to medical institutions in Wuhan, saying that cases of pneumonia of unknown cause have emerged from the city's Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market.

Jan. 5, 2020: Earliest known tweet suggesting China created the virus. @GarboHK tweeted: "18 years ago, #China killed nearly 300 #HongKongers by unreporting #SARS cases, letting Chinese tourists travel around the world, to Asia specifically to spread the virus with bad intention. Today the evil regime strikes again with a new virus."

Jan. 23: A Daily Mail article appears, headlined: "China built a lab to study SARS and Ebola in Wuhan — and U.S. biosafety experts warned in 2017 that a virus could 'escape' the facility that's become key in fighting the outbreak."

Jan. 26: The Washington Times publishes an article with the headline: "Coronavirus may have originated in lab linked to China's biowarfare program." An editor's note is added March 25: "Since this story ran, scientists outside of China have had a chance to study the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They concluded it does not show signs of having been manufactured or purposefully manipulated in a lab."

Jan. 26: A study by Chinese researchers published in the Lancet of the first 41 hospitalized patients In Wuhan who had confirmed infections found that 13 of the 41 cases, including the first documented case, had no link to the seafood marketplace that originally was considered the origin of the outbreak.

Jan 30: Sen. Tom Cotton, speaking at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, says: "This coronavirus is a catastrophe on the scale of Chernobyl for China. But actually, it's probably worse than Chernobyl, which was localized in its effect. The coronavirus could result in a global pandemic." He adds: "I would note that Wuhan has China's only biosafety level-four super laboratory that works with the world's most deadly pathogens to include, yes, coronavirus."

Feb. 3: WIV researchers report in the journal Nature that the novel coronavirus spreading around the world was a bat-derived coronavirus. The report said SARS-CoV-2 is 96.2 percent identical at the whole-genome level to a bat coronavirus named RaTG13. (This is roughly equivalent to the difference in the genomes of humans and orangutans.)

Feb. 6: Botao Xiao, a molecular biomechanics researcher at South China University of Technology, posts a paper stating that "the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan." He pointed to the previous safety mishaps and the kind of research undertaken at the lab. He withdrew the paper a few weeks later after Chinese authorities insisted no accident had taken place.

Feb. 9: In response to criticism from China's ambassador that Cotton's remarks are "absolutely crazy," the senator tweets : "Here's what's not a conspiracy, not a theory: Fact: China lied about virus starting in Wuhan food market. Fact: super-lab is just a few miles from that market. Where did it start? We don't know. But burden of proof is on you & fellow communists. Open up now to competent international scientists."

Feb. 16: Cotton, in response to a Washington Post article critical of him, offers four scenarios on Twitter: "1. Natural (still the most likely, but almost certainly not from the Wuhan food market) 2. Good science, bad safety (e.g., they were researching things like diagnostic testing and vaccines, but an accidental breach occurred). 3. Bad science, bad safety (this is the engineered-bioweapon hypothesis, with an accidental breach). 4. Deliberate release (very unlikely, but shouldn't rule out till the evidence is in). Again, none of these are 'theories' and certainly not 'conspiracy theories.' They are hypotheses that ought to be studied in light of the evidence."

Scientists respond

Feb. 19: A statement is published in Lancet by a group of 27 scientists: "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that covid-19 does not have a natural origin," the statement says. Scientists "overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife." The statement was drafted and organized by Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance, which funded research at WIV with U.S. government grants. (Three of the signers have since said a laboratory accident is plausible

enough to merit consideration.)

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March 11: Scientific American publishes a profile of virologist Shi Zhengli, who heads a group that studies bat coronaviruses at WIV. "I had never expected this kind of thing to happen in Wuhan, in central China," she said. If coronaviruses were the culprit, she remembers thinking, "Could they have come from our lab?" The article said that after the virus emerged, Shi frantically went through her own lab's records from the past few years to check for any mishandling of experimental materials, but she "breathed a sigh of relief when the results came back: none of the sequences matched those of the viruses her team had sampled from bat caves." She told the magazine: "That really took a load off my mind. I had not slept a wink for days."

March 17: An analysis published in Nature Medicine by an influential group of scientists states: "Although the evidence shows that SARSCoV-2 is not a purposefully manipulated virus, it is currently impossible to prove or disprove the other theories of its origin described here. However, since we observed all notable SARS-CoV-2 features, including the optimized RBD [receptor- binding domain] and polybasic cleavage site, in related coronaviruses in nature, we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."

The intelligence community weighs in

March 27: A Defense Intelligence Agency assessment on the origin of the coronavirus is updated to include the possibility that the new coronavirus emerged "accidentally" due to "unsafe laboratory practices."

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April 2: David Ignatius, writing in The Washington Post, notes: "The prime suspect is 'natural' transmission from bats to humans, perhaps through unsanitary markets. But scientists don't rule out that an accident at a research laboratory in Wuhan might have spread a deadly bat virus that had been collected for scientific study."

April 14: Josh Rogin, writing in The Post, reveals that in 2018, State Department officials visited the WIV and "sent two official warnings back to Washington about inadequate safety at the lab, which was conducting risky studies on coronaviruses from bats. The cables have fueled discussions inside the U.S. government about whether this or another Wuhan lab was the source of the virus — even though conclusive proof has yet to emerge."

April 22: Yuri Deigin, a biotech entrepreneur, in a long and detailed post on Medium, reviews "gain-of-function" research undertaken at the lab and concludes that "from a technical standpoint, it would not be difficult for a modern virologist to create such a strain" as the new coronavirus. He adds: "The opposite point is worth repeating too: the inverse hypothesis about the exclusively natural origin of the virus does not yet have strong evidence either."

April 24: Under pressure from the White House, the National Institutes of Health terminates the grant to EcoHealth Alliance that funded study of bat coronaviruses at WIV.

April 30: President Donald Trump tells reporters: "You had the theory from the lab. … There's a lot of theories. But, yeah, we have people looking at it very, very strongly."

May 3: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says in an interview with ABC News: "There's enormous evidence that that's where this began. … Remember, China has a history of infecting the world, and they have a history of running substandard laboratories. These are not the first times that we have had the world exposed to viruses as a result of failures in a Chinese lab."

New evidence emerges

July 4: The Times of London reports that a virus 96 percent identical to the coronavirus that causes covid-19 was found in an abandoned copper mine in China in 2012. The bat-infested copper mine in southwestern China was home to a coronavirus that left six men sick with pneumonia, with three eventually dying, after they had been tasked with shoveling bat guano out of the mine. This virus was collected in 2013 and then stored and studied at WIV.

July 31: Science magazine publishes an interview with Shi Zhengli of WIV. She said it was impossible for anyone at the

institute to have been infected, saying "to date, there is 'zero infection' of all staff and students in our institute." She added: "President Trump's claim that SARS-CoV-2 was leaked from our institute totally contradicts the facts. It jeopardizes and affects our academic work and personal life. He owes us an apology." In the interview, she admitted that some coronavirus research was conducted at biosafety level 2, not the more restrictive BSL-4.

Nov. 17: An influential paper written by Rossana Segreto and Yuri Deigin is published: "The genetic structure of SARS-CoV-2 does not rule out a laboratory origin." The paper noted that "a natural host, either direct or intermediate, has not yet been identified." It argues that certain features of the coronavirus "might be the result of lab manipulation techniques such as site-directed mutagenesis. The acquisition of both unique features by SARS-CoV-2 more or less simultaneously is less likely to be natural or caused only by cell/animal serial passage." The paper concluded: "On the basis of our analysis, an artificial origin of SARS-CoV-2 is not a baseless conspiracy theory that is to be condemned," referencing the Lancet statement in February.

Nov. 17: WIV researchers, including Shi, post an addendum to their Feb. 3 report in Nature, acknowledging that RaTG13, the bat coronavirus closely associated with the coronavirus, was found in a mine cave after several patients had fallen ill with "severe respiratory disease" in 2012 while cleaning the cave.

Jan. 4, 2021: New York magazine publishes a lengthy article by Nicholson Baker, who reviews the evidence and concludes the lab-leak scenario is more compelling than previously believed.

Jan. 15: Days before Trump leaves office, the State Department issues a "fact sheet" on WIV that states: "The U.S. government has reason to believe that several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019, before the first identified case of the outbreak, with symptoms consistent with both covid-19 and common seasonal illnesses. … The WIV has a published record of conducting 'gain-of-function' research to engineer chimeric viruses. But the WIV has not been transparent or consistent about its record of studying viruses most similar to the covid-19 virus, including 'RaTG13,' which it sampled from a cave in Yunnan Province in 2013 after several miners died of SARS-like illness."

Jan. 20: Joe Biden becomes president.

Feb. 9: A joint report by the World Health Organization and China declares: "The findings suggest that the laboratory incident hypothesis is extremely unlikely to explain introduction of the virus into the human population."

Feb. 11: WHO Secretary General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus refuses to rule out the lab-leak scenario. "Some questions have been raised as to whether some hypotheses have been discarded," he said. "I want to clarify that all hypotheses remain open and require further study."

Feb. 19: National security adviser Jake Sullivan issues a statement about the WHO report: "We have deep concerns about the way in which the early findings of the COVID19 investigation were communicated and questions about the process used to reach them. It is imperative that this report be independent, with expert findings free from intervention or alteration by the Chinese government. To better understand this pandemic and prepare for the next one, China must make available its data from the earliest days of the outbreak."

March 22: The Australian newspaper reports: "Wuhan Institute of Virology researchers working on corona-viruses were hospitalized with symptoms consistent with covid-19 in early November 2019 in what U.S. officials suspect could have been the first cluster."

May 5: Former New York Times science reporter Nicholas Wade, writing in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, reviews the evidence and makes a strong case for the lab-leak theory. He focuses in particular on the furin cleavage site, which increases viral infectivity for human cells. His analysis yields this quote from David Baltimore, a virologist and former president of the California Institute of Technology: "When I first saw the furin cleavage site in the viral sequence, with its arginine codons, I said to my wife it was the smoking gun for the origin of the virus. These features make a powerful challenge to the idea of a natural origin for SARS2."

May 14: Eighteen prominent scientists publish a letter in the journal Science, saying a new investigation is needed because "theories of accidental release from a lab and zoonotic spillover both remain viable." One signer is Ralph Baric, a virologist who worked closely with Shi.

May 17: Another former New York Times science reporter, Donald G. McNeil Jr., posts on Medium: "How I Learned to

Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory." He quotes W. Ian Lipkin of Columbia University — who had signed the March 2020 letter in Nature Medicine — as saying his mind had changed in light of new information.

Attachment B: Focused list of Allegations and List of Supporting Documents

The NAM received a letter (Attachment A) alleging that Dr. Daszak has violated the NAM's Code of Conduct. Pursuant to the NAM's Policy and Procedures on Violations of the Code of Conduct, the NAM Assessment Panel recommended to the Conduct Review Committee, a formal review focused on the following list of allegations:

1. "Dr. Daszak's Pattern of Uncooperative Conduct (Attachment A, pages 2-3) "...a larger pattern of behavior unbecoming of a NAM member." "By shielding his conflicts of interest..."

2. "Dr. Daszak's Contrary Conduct to Scientific Process and Open-Mindedness" (Attachment A, pages 3-7)
   a. "...Dr. Daszak instead proceeded to conceal his role as the facilitator so the letter would appear as 'simply a letter from leading scientists' to 'avoid the appearance of a political statement.'"
   b. "Further, Dr. Daszak concealed from the scientists that his motivation to write the letter was actually at the request of his collaborators in China..."
   c. "Related to investigating the WIV, Dr. Daszak declared 'I have no conflicts of interest.' Yet in his NIH grant documents, he described his collaborations with Dr. Shi and with the WIV as 'Dr. Daszak has had inter-institutional contractual agreements with the Wuhan Institute of Virology for over 13 years.'"

3. "Dr. Daszak's Responsibility for EcoHealth's Questionable Financial Reporting" (Attachment A, pages 7-8) "...EcoHealth under Dr. Daszak's direction was delinquent for many years and inaccurate on its financial reporting requirements involving the NIH grant it used to pass subawards to the WIV...These reports were submitted only after NIH instructed it to do so in an April 2020 email followed by a July 8, 2020, letter of suspension...effectively hiding EcoHealth's funding to WIV from the public for at least a year."

4. "Dr. Daszak's Inaccurate Statements about the WIV" (Attachment A, pages 8-9) "Dr. Daszak's assertion that the WIV did not have dead or live bats is concerning because, based on his 15-year history of collaboration with the WIV and his lead role on projects and his grant documents, there is reason to believe he knew the facts and made inaccurate statements to mislead the public."

5. "Dr. Daszak Withheld Research Plans to Insert Furin Cleavage Site into Bat Coronavirus" (Attachment A, pages 12-13). "Dr. Daszak's credibility has been undermined by the recent whistleblower disclosure of his bat coronavirus research project rejected proposal he submitted in March 2018 to Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), entitled *Project DEFUSE: Defusing the Threat of Bat-borne Coronaviruses."*

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REL0000480359

The following is a list of supplemental documents reviewed in focus by the Conduct Review Committee.

- EcoHealth grant documents (Allegation letter, Reference item 54); available at https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/

- Page 260-311 excerpts of the 'the Biohazard FOIA Maryland Emails contributed by U.S. Right to Know, (Nov. 18, 2020)' (Allegation letter, Reference item 18-22); available at https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard_FOIA_Maryland_Emails_11.6.20.pdf

- (Allegation Letter, Reference item 48) Energy and Commerce Republicans, Letter to NIH, COVID-19 Origins Investigation (June 10, 2021) available at https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/06.10.21-Letter-to-NIH-Director-Collins.pdf

- NIH's letter to the Energy and Commerce Committee Republican leaders (Allegation Letter, Reference item 66) (Oct. 20, 2021) available at https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/energy-commerce-gop-leaders-statement-on-documents-released-by-the-nih/

- EcoHealth Alliance Year Five progress report, attached as part of the NIH letter. (Allegation Letter, Reference item 66) available at https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/energy-commerce-gop-leaders-statement-on-documents-released-by-the-nih/

- NIAID webpage on SARS COV-2 Bat Coronavirus Research (public on NIAID website and available at https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/origins-coronaviruses

- (Allegation Letter, Reference item 71) DRASTIC RESEARCH. The DEFUSE PROJECT Documents, The DRASTIC Team (Sept. 21, 2021) available at https://drasticresearch.org/2021/09/21/the-defuse-project-documents/

MORENS_SUBPOENA_006947
MORENS_NIH_015970
REL0000480359

Date: Thu, 15 Jul 2021 1:43:20 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 15 Jul 2021 1:40:04 PM -0400
Subject: Best thing I've heard on COVID origins for many months
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] peter hotez [b6]

Here's a great video from Peter where he goes into detail on how you balance different hypotheses on the origins. Perfect delivery. Factually correct. Great bowtie as always….

Please enjoy and circulate to colleagues…

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:37 PM
To: David Morens [b6] 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] peter hotez [b6] **b6**
Subject: Confidential: WHO DG Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2
Importance: High

David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a 'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the

current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков b6; Leendertz, Fabian b6; Peter Daszak < b6 >; LeendertzF b6; Keith Hamilton b6 John Watson b6; DEBBICHE, Hassene b6 Thea Kølsen Fischer < BAERT, Primaël b6; SHEATH, Danny b6; Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) b6; STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan b6 DRURY, Patrick Anthony < b6 ; Ken Maeda b6; M.P.G. Koopmans b6 < b6 ; Hayman, David b6; IVANOVIC, Dragana < b6 >; Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Farag b6 Dominic Dwyer b6
Cc: RYAN, Michael J. b6 Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria b6; BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim b6
Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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Date: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 4:38:30 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 4:38:27 PM -0400
Subject: RE: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6]>;
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

David:

That is exactly why someone knowledgeable – and able to explain the difference between useful and deliberately dangerous gain-of-function – needs to engage with the press. I know that Ebright and some of the others have quite rational concerns about gain-of-function that deliberately tries to make more dangerous pathogens.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 4:32 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]>
Subject: Re: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Rich, part of the problem is that "gain of function" is a meaningless term used by science-bashers Every vaccine that was ever made after cowpox was adapted to tissue culture or eggs or something, and such adaptation is literally a gain of function, but also a loss of function, since viral adaptations almost always incur fitness penalties. GOF is a pejorative term used to slander important research. As Peter knows, the so-called GoF research conducted with colleague Ralph Baric led to the antiviral drug remdesivir, hardly a terrorist accomplishment. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 7, 2021, at 16:11, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:
>
> Peter:
>
> I have no expertise in this area, but if you know of experts who might be able to speak convincingly please let us know. Perhaps, we can persuade them to get involved.
>
> Is there anyone who can state definitively that there was no gain-of-function research underway at the Wuhan Institute. I know this is something that drives Ebright and others to try and shut down research.
>
> Rich
>
> Richard J. Roberts

New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 11:25 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Jerry < b6
Subject: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just read your email about being allowed to do interviews on the WHO report David. Interesting and disappointing. Clearly the issue of COVID origins is not the political problem – it's the WHO report that's the problem. It's quite telling really, that the Biden Admin decided the WHO report would be a political football and therefore NSC/White House agenda, not a scientific issue and therefore NIH/NIAID agenda.

This is a symptom of a bigger issues – over the last 2-4 weeks, all of the allies who would normally talk to reporters about the science have either been silenced/sidelined, or are following a political agenda, e.g. the White House, the WHO Director-General (who single-handedly threw the whole WHO expert team under the bus), the former CDC director, and now NIAID – all following the political line.

The attacks reached a crescendo over this same period with daily op-eds in NY Post, WSJ, Daily Caller and other Right Wing papers bleeding over into CNN and even NPR. My Board are now beginning to get concerned and this puts me personally in a very difficult position – it's a risk to my job, my family's security, and my career. It's not a real problem yet – if the attacks die down a bit (which I believe they will), and if my Board continue to support me (I believe they will), the long game will win out.

But at this point I'm reaching out to call for help! Can we line up some allies who will help speak publicly about the science here on wildlife-to-human spillover vs. lab leak? Critically, there is still no evidence at all that a lab leak occurred, there is also no evidence at all that EcoHealth (or NIAID) funded or supported Gain-of-function work in China. Likewise, stories about EcoHealth 'hiding' DoD funding, being funded by China, not clearly indicating the source of funding on all public documents, etc. etc. are false and/or misleading. Still, the damage is being done and I'm worried that today the momentum is with the conspiracists.

Any and all ideas are welcome – ASTMH, NAM, NASEM, others?

Jerry – what about reaching out to Benjamin Corb and others?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6; Keusch, Jerry b6; Peter Daszak <b6>
Subject: Fwd: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Guys, see below..... The Biden admin apparently won't let any of us at NIH, including Tony, discuss the WHO report....

On the surface this sounds bad, but there is the possibility they just want one org to manage the message because they are trying to put out a fire. Or am I just Pollyanna? d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview
Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 17:43:09 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
To: David Morens b6



David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: NIAID OCGR NSWB <NIAIDOCGRNSWB@mail.nih.gov >
Subject: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens –

For your awareness (and in case she also reaches out to you directly), Mariana Lenharo followed up today on her request to speak with you or another NIAID expert about the WHO report, which as you know came out today. We've been asked to refer requests for comment about the report to the National Security Council, and we will be directing her there.

Best,
Hillary

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Thanks for the background! Once we know what the WHO report says, we'll be better poised to make decisions about how to handle requests to discuss it… as you note, it is a bit of a hot issue.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:46 AM
To: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

That's fine, although I think she wants me because I spoke to her before, and because I published the major paper dealing with it, along with Breman at FIC and ex-FIC director Keusch, and other authors.

Also, just off the record, we may want to not give this to Tony as he has been unfairly criticized over some of the issues. It could be a hot subject for him….d

---

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens,

Thanks for sending. I'll write back to this reporter and ask her to send a fresh request to the press office once the WHO report is available – we can at that time better assess whether it makes sense for you or another NIAID expert to speak with the media about it.

Best,
Hillary

Hillary Hoffman, Ph.D., Writer/Editor
Office of Communications and Government Relations, NIAID, NIH
5601 Fishers Lane #6G38
Rockville, MD 20852
b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:26 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Mariana Lenharo b6
> **Date:** March 16, 2021 at 18:21:42 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Subject: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview**
>
> Dear Dr. Morens,
>
> I hope you are doing well. It's been a few months since we spoke for the article on the origins of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Now, as the WHO mission to study the origins of the virus is about to publish their report, I'm planning to write a new article on the topic to analyze the mission's conclusions.
>
> I was wondering if you would be available for a new interview on this topic once the full report is published (it should be either this week or the next one).
>
> I'm very interested to get a sense of how the scientific community is evaluating the mission's effort into finding the origin of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Thank you so much,
>
> **Mariana Lenharo**
> Science and Health Journalist
> T. + b6
> Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Wed, Oct 21, 2020 at 11:02 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Thanks, you did a great job!
>
> David
>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- [b6]

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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 9:18 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

The story for which I interviewed you was published this morning. Here is the link:
https://elemental.medium.com/why- covid-19s-origin-story-is-still-a-mystery-46b0b336f122

Thank you again for the collaboration and I hope to be able to interview you again for future stories.

Kind regards,

Mariana

On Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:07 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

> I will be at [b6] [b6] [b6], my cell…. ty
>
> David
>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Mariana Lenharo b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Thank you, Dr. Morens. How about we schedule the call for tomorrow, Wednesday, at 12:30?

Should I reach you at your office number b6 b6 b6

Thank you very much!

Best,

Mariana

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:04 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Mariana, it looks like I have tomorrow from about 1215 to 130
>
> Late Thu might work after 4 or 5, not sure when earlier meeting will be done.
>
> Friday looks good except about 1 to about 4

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:37 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

Thank you so much for getting back to me. I have a pretty open schedule in the next few days. These are the times I'll be available:

Wednesday: anytime after 8 am
Thursday: from 8 am to 9 am OR anytime after 1 pm
Friday: from 8 am to 3 pm

Please let me know if any of those work for you and how would you prefer to be contacted at that time.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist

T. b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:03 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 > wrote:

> Hi Mariana,
>
> Our media office indicated you would like to speak to me at some point this week. Let me know when. I am always busy and moving between various offices and meetings, bu5t I do have spaces of free time here and there. In general, mid afternoons, eg, from 130 until 330 or later, are not good….
>
> TY
>
> David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Mariana Lenharo b6
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 2:50 PM

To: NIAID NEWS (NIH/NIAID) <NIAIDNEWS@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Hello!

My name is Mariana Lenharo, I'm a science and health journalist and I'm working on a story about the work of scientists investigating the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic. This story will be published in Elemental (https://elemental.medium.com/), a Medium publication focused on science-backed health coverage.

As I was reading about this topic, I came across this very interesting article, "The Origin of COVID-19 and Why It Matters" and I'd love to interview one of the authors, Dr. David M. Morens. This would be a 20-30-minute interview by phone/skype/zoom preferably this week. Please let me know if you think this would be possible.

Thank you very much!

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

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Date:	Fri, 21 Jan 2022 4:40:33 PM -0500
Sent:	Fri, 21 Jan 2022 4:39:04 PM -0500
Subject:	FW: Article about our correspondence with NIH on the terminated-now-suspended grant
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Jeff Sturchio [b6] David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.gif; image004.gif; image005.gif; image007.gif; image008.jpg; image009.gif; image010.jpg

These Intercept reporters foia'd our lawyer's correspondence with NIH regarding the terminated-now-suspended R01.

Here's the article that came out of that. It's not that bad and in some places paints a picture of an organization doing its best to get on with science. I think the nay-sayers will continue to think we're acting disingenuously, and the supporters will continue to think we're being harassed, so in that sense, no harm done. Here's the link, and the full article pasted below. I recommend you look at the link because it provides a link to the FOIA'd documents also.
https://theintercept.com/2022/01/20/coronavirus- research-china-ecohealth-fbi/

FBI SOUGHT DOCUMENTS RELATED TO U.S.-FUNDED CORONAVIRUS RESEARCH IN CHINA

New records from the National Institutes of Health detail internal conversations involving the EcoHealth Alliance's research in Wuhan.



Mara Hvistendahl, Sharon Lerner
January 20 2022, 5:42 p.m.

THE FBI SOUGHT National Institutes of Health grant documents covering bat coronavirus research in Wuhan in spring 2020, according to emails obtained by The Intercept. The emails, released through ongoing litigation between The Intercept and the NIH, detail internal NIH conversations involving the New York-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, which collaborated with the Wuhan Institute of Virology on research. The emails also contain previously unreported requests the agency made of EcoHealth Alliance as a condition for restoring a grant funding its research. While unable to provide some of the information requested by the agency, Peter Daszak, EcoHealth's besieged president, fought fiercely to save the grant.

The new information gives an unprecedented window into the high-profile tussle

between EcoHealth Alliance and the NIH, and underscores the agency's tenuous grasp of the biosafety protocols in place in its research projects, even with a project that has since come under scrutiny for a possible link to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"There doesn't seem to be transparent and accessible record-keeping of incident reporting," said Filippa Lentzos, co-director of the Centre for Science and Security Studies at King's College London, after viewing some of the emails. "That is very worrying and underscores the need for an overhaul of biosafety oversight in the United States."

The correspondence contains letters going back to April 2020, when Trump administration officials were blaming the Wuhan Institute of Virology, without sufficient evidence, for causing the pandemic. On April 17, President Donald Trump was asked in a press conference about the NIH grant to EcoHealth Alliance, under which the Chinese lab was a partner. He responded, "We will end that grant very quickly." Two days later, Michael Lauer, NIH deputy director for extramural research, informed Daszak that the agency was suspending grant funds to the Wuhan Institute of Virology and instructed his group to cease providing grant money to the institute. On April 24, according to a letter included in the new communications, Lauer followed up with the news that the NIH was terminating the entire grant because it did not "align with the program goals and agency priorities." He told EcoHealth Alliance officials that nearly $370,000 needed to be remitted back to the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, with their access to the remaining grant funds restricted "effective immediately." (Politico reported the existence of the letter that same month, and Science later published an excerpt of it.)

The confrontation earned Daszak sympathy in the press and from other scientists. NIH officials, meanwhile, refuted the possibility of a lab origin, at least in public. It would later be revealed, however, that in February 2020 NIAID Director Anthony Fauci and then-NIH Director Francis Collins had privately consulted with prominent scientists who had seriously considered the possibility of a lab origin for the pandemic, and that two months later some leading researchers still believed a lab accident was possible. "Wondering if there is something the NIH can do to help put down this very destructive conspiracy," Collins wrote in an email to Fauci in late April, in reference to a Fox News segment mentioning the lab-origin hypothesis. While a handful of biosafety experts had openly called for scrutinizing the NIH's funding of EcoHealth Alliance, their entreaties were largely drowned out by political wrangling.

MOST READ

Congressional Democrats Join Republicans to Undermine Biden Administration's Surprise Medical Billing Rule

Austin Ahlman

[redacted]

Trump Campaign Embraces "Blacks for Trump" Founder Who Belonged to Violent Cult

Robert Mackey

[redacted]

UAE Adviser Illegally Funneled Foreign Cash Into Hillary Clinton's 2016 Campaign

Matthew Cole

Trump officials had reportedly instructed U.S. intelligence agencies to search for evidence linking the Wuhan lab to the pandemic. Trump's interest appeared to be scapegoating China, and officials in his administration homed in on sketchy evidence from Wuhan. But the emails obtained by The Intercept indicate that the FBI looked where biosafety experts had suggested they should: at EcoHealth Alliance's NIH grant, though it's unclear what prompted the FBI's request for information. On May 22, 2020, Ashley Sanders, an officer with the NIH's Office of Management Assessment, emailed FBI agent David Miller under the subject line "FW: Grant Questions – FBI Inquiry – 1-R01AI110964-01 – 2-R01AI110964-06": the numbers the NIH had assigned to the grant and its renewal.

The correspondence suggests that NIH administrators provided Miller with detailed information about the grant. "In preparation for our call on Tuesday, Erik (cc'd) has provided responses to your initial questions below," Sanders wrote, referring to Erik Stemmy, a program officer for the grant. The several pages of text that follow are redacted, except for the title of an attachment that includes the grant number and "SF424." The SF 424 is a detailed NIH form that grant applicants must submit.

From: Sanders, Ashley (NIH/OD) [E]
To: Miller, David A. (NK) (FBI)
Cc: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]; Shannon, Mike (NIH/OD) [E]
Subject: FW: Grant Questions - FBI Inquiry - 1-R01AI110964-01 - 2-R01AI110964-06
Date: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:18:05 PM
Attachments: SF 424 AI110964.docx

Hi David,

In preparation for our call on Tuesday, Erik (cc'd) has provided responses to your initial questions below (also attached).

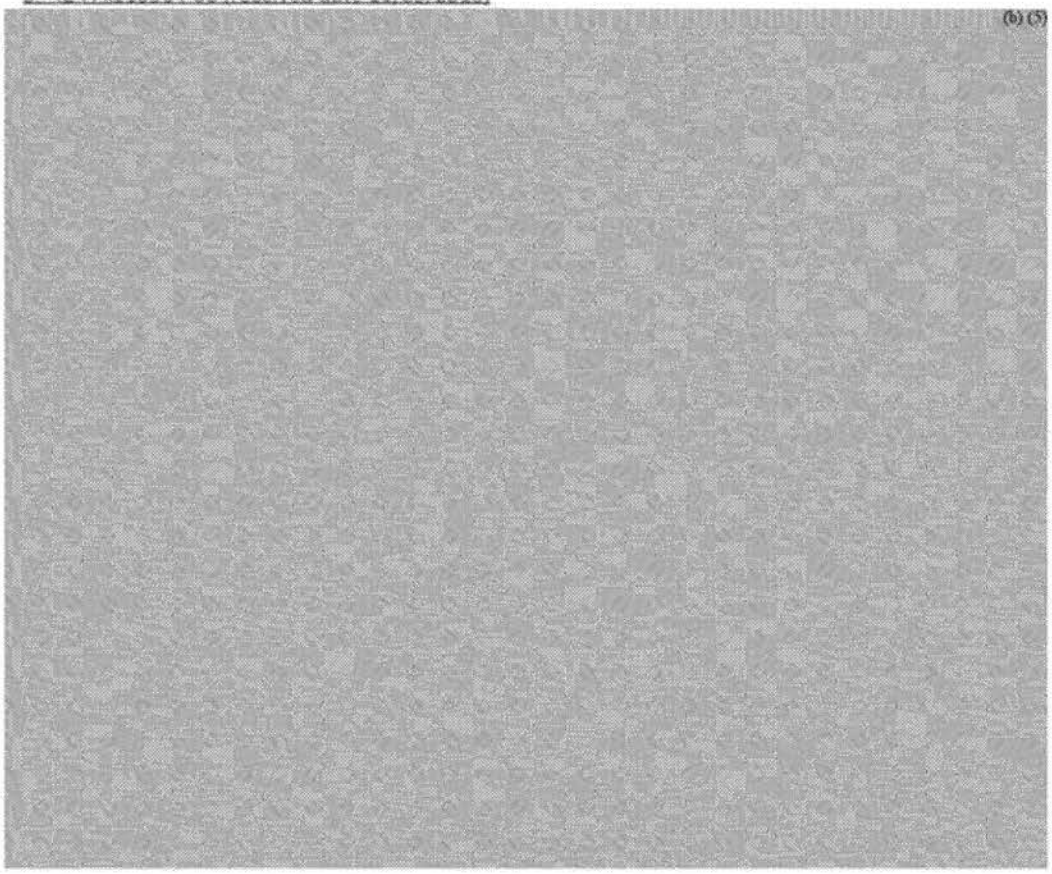
Hope you have a great holiday weekend!

Ashley

Ashley M. Sanders, MPS
Senior Program Investigations Officer
NIH, OMA, Division Program Integrity
6011 Executive Blvd.
Rockville, Maryland 20852
Office: (b) (6)
Cell: (b) (6)
(b) (6)w

SF 424 AI110964-06 (received date 11/05/2018)

(b) (5)



Grant Questions - FBI inquiry May 20205 pages

Last October, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released a report assessing the possible origins of the pandemic. In the document, which followed a 90-day review by the spy agencies ordered by President Joe Biden, one agency assessed with moderate confidence that the pandemic had a lab origin, "probably involving experimentation, animal handling, or sampling by the Wuhan Institute of Virology." While the DNI report did not name the agency, the New York Times reported at the time that it was the FBI. (Four other intelligence agencies and the National Intelligence Council concluded with low confidence that the pandemic had a natural origin.)

Experts have puzzled over whether the spy agencies gained access to EcoHealth Alliance's grant documents. The DNI's detailed report did not list grant documents or communications as a source of information, but the email about the inquiry now suggests that the FBI had previously obtained at least some internal information about the EcoHealth Alliance grant. The FBI declined to confirm the existence of the inquiry or otherwise comment.

Separately, in December 2020, the NIH cited a law enforcement exemption when denying a public records request from The Intercept for the EcoHealth Alliance grant documents. In a July 2021 hearing, a federal litigator explained the agency's rationale: "At the time that they asserted the exemption, they were told and were under the impression there were ongoing investigations, law enforcement investigations, into what plaintiffs are alleging is a lab-leak hypothesis, what caused COVID," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander J. Hogan, referring to the NIH's 2020 denial of The Intercept's FOIA request. "And because of the implication of those investigations, they withheld these documents in full."

The NIH released the bat coronavirus grant proposal to The Intercept in September 2021.

In a previously unpublished email sent in April 2021, Daszak told an NIH administrator that following a trip to China as part of the World Health Organization investigation, he had briefed the FBI and other intelligence agencies, as well as the National Security Council.

"Fishing for Material"

The newly released emails detail how EcoHealth Alliance fought back against the NIH's termination of its grant. On May 22, 2020, lawyer Andrew Krinsky of the New York firm Tarter Krinsky & Drogin wrote to Lauer on behalf of EcoHealth Alliance. The lawyer said that NIAID had ranked the grant as "extremely high priority" when it was considered for renewal in mid-2019 and that EcoHealth Alliance had already agreed not to pass any more funding on to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

While the NIH had said that "the decision not to award a grant, or to award a grant at a particular funding level, is at the discretion of the agency" and cited a clause that allowed it to terminate grants at will, Krinsky argued that the NIH didn't have the legal right to cut off the funding and that according to the NIH's own rules, there was "no rational basis to terminate" the grant.

The NIH, EcoHealth Alliance, and Tarter Krinsky & Drogin did not immediately respond to requests to comment.

Date: April 19, 2020

From: Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] Digitally signed by Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] Date: 2020.04.19 10:47:40 -04'00'

To: Kevin Olival, PhD
Vice-President for Research
EcoHealth Alliance
(b)(6)

Naomi Schrag, JD
Vice-President for Research Compliance, Training, and Policy
Columbia University
(b)(6)

Subject: Project Number 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag:

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. is the recipient, as grantee, of an NIH grant entitled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence." It is our understanding that one of the sub-recipients of the grant funds is the Wuhan Institute of Virology ("WIV"). It is our understanding that WIV studies the interaction between corona viruses and bats. The scientific community believes that the coronavirus causing COVID-19 jumped from bats to humans likely in Wuhan where the COVID-19 pandemic began. There are now allegations that the current crisis was precipitated by the release from WIV of the coronavirus responsible for COVID-19. Given these concerns, we are pursuing suspension of WIV from participation in Federal programs.

While we review these allegations during the period of suspension, you are instructed to cease providing any funds from the above noted grant to the WIV. This temporary action is authorized by 45 C.F.R. § 75.371(d) ("Initiate suspension or debarment proceedings as authorized under 2 C.F.R. part 180"). The incorporated OMB provision provides that the funding agency may, through suspension, immediately and temporarily exclude from Federal programs persons who are not presently responsible where "immediate action is necessary to protect the public interest." 2 C.F.R. § 180.700(c). It is in the public interest that NIH ensure that a sub-recipient has taken all appropriate precautions to prevent the release of pathogens that it is studying. This suspension of the sub-recipient does not affect the remainder of your grant assuming that no grant funds are provided to WIV following receipt of this email during the period of suspension.

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In a July 2020 letter previously published by Vanity Fair, Lauer informed Daszak that the grant could be reinstated, but only if EcoHealth Alliance could meet seven conditions. Those included providing a sample of "the actual SARS-CoV-2 virus that WIV used to determine the viral sequence" and explaining apparently unusual activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, including roadblocks and diminished cellphone traffic, as well as the deletion of the online profile of a staffer at the lab named Huang Yanling.

The next month, the newly released emails reveal, the Tarter Krinsky & Drogin lawyers sent Lauer a detailed, seven-page rebuttal, demanding that the NIH reinstate the grant and immediately release the grant funds. The rebuttal suggested that EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were being unfairly scrutinized. Daszak echoed that idea in an interview with Nature that same month in which he called the NIH's conditions "heinous."

In October 2020, Lauer responded, arguing that the agency was within its rights to cut off the grant. "EcoHealth's responses have not satisfied the NIH's concerns that EcoHealth had failed to adequately monitor the compliance of its subrecipient, and that the subrecipient, WIV, had failed to comply with safety requirements," Lauer wrote. Still, he offered the nonprofit one last chance to respond to its seven conditions — and added three more requests about the research in Wuhan. Among the new requests, which have not been previously reported, were descriptions of EcoHealth Alliance's efforts to monitor risk at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and copies of all WIV biosafety reports from June 2014 through May 2019.

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Andrew N. Krinsky, *Partner*
(b) (6), *Direct Dial*
(b) (6)

August 13, 2020

Via Email, Certified Mail, & FedEx
(b) (6)

Michael S. Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Re: Suspension of NIH Grant 2R01 AI 110964-6

Dear Dr. Lauer:

This firm represents EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. ("EcoHealth Alliance"), in connection with the post-award decision by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases ("NIAID"), an Institute within the National Institute of Health ("NIH"), under the Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS"), on July 8, 2020, to suspend grant 2R01 AI 110964-6 (the "Suspension:"), which funds the project *Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence* (the "Project").

This letter constitutes EcoHealth Alliance's initial response to the Suspension, which was due to purported concerns regarding the safety of unspecified research being conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology ("WIV") and for EcoHealth Alliance's alleged failure to report certain subawards in connection with grant 2R01 AI 110964-6 (the "Grant").[1] As set forth in more detail below, the Suspension is unjustified as WIV has no connection to the Project or EcoHealth Alliance's current research and EcoHealth Alliance had not issued any subawards in connection with the Grant at the time of the Suspension. Moreover, NIAID is not authorized under 45 CFR §§ 75.371, 75.205, and 75.207, entitled *Specific Award Conditions*, to impose, *inter alia*, conditions that consist of demands for information regarding entities that are neither subrecipients of grant funds nor project affiliates.[2] Accordingly, EcoHealth Alliance hereby demands that the Suspension be withdrawn and all funding in the HHS Payment Management System be released immediately.

BACKGROUND

A. EcoHealth Alliance

EcoHealth Alliance is a prolific New York-based nonprofit institution dedicated to protecting the health of people, animals, and the environment from emerging zoonotic diseases. For more than a decade, EcoHealth Alliance has been conducting cutting edge scientific research

[1] A copy of my prior letter, dated May 22, 2020, regarding NIH's termination of the Grant, is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.
[2] Notwithstanding NIH's lack of authority to impose extraneous conditions on the Grant and Project, EcoHealth Alliance has made a good faith effort to respond to NIH's questions regarding WIV.

EcoHealth - NIH letters August - October 2020 11 pages

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Six months later, in April 2021, Daszak wrote a lengthy letter to Lauer — this time signed by him and not his lawyers — addressing the 10 conditions. He offered to meet with Lauer "without legal counsel in a scientist-to-scientist conversation," adding, "I look forward to your reply and hope that these will allow NIH to lift the suspension on funding so that we can continue our work to help protect our nation, indeed the global population, against future coronavirus pandemics."

Yet, in a confiding email he sent to NIH officials and program officers later in April, he struck a less conciliatory tone. "I believe he's fishing for material to support his earlier insinuation that EHA has done a poor job of monitoring biosafety," Daszak wrote about Lauer in the email. Daszak interpreted the NIH official's oversight efforts as a possible attempt to "provide cover so that he can say that we weren't in compliance" and asked the NIH staffers to intervene.



Related

NIH Officials Worked With EcoHealth Alliance to Evade Restrictions on Coronavirus Experiments

Among the recipients of the email was Erik Stemmy, the program officer on the EcoHealth Alliance grant. The Intercept previously reported that Stemmy was one of two agency employees who had allowed Daszak to draft a rule governing his group's research. The recipient list also included several NIH section heads, including Emily Linde, the director of the NIH's grant management program; Matthew Fenton, director of

the agency's division of extramural activities; and Emily Erbelding, director of the division of microbiology and infectious diseases.

"Any nudging you could give to Dr. Lauer would be welcome," Daszak wrote to the group. He also nodded at recent developments. In the preceding weeks, dozens of scientists had signed open letters calling for a robust investigation of the origin of the pandemic. "I realize that the politics are not great right now, but this is science, not politics, and we have a job to do in trying to identify the next COVID-like disease, which is surely out there and probably already spilling over somewhere in S. China."

EcoHealth Alliance

Dr. Michael Lauer
Deputy Director for Extramural Research,
NIH, Bethesda, MD.

Response to the Reinstatement and immediate suspension of 2R01AI110964 "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"

April 11th 2021

Dear Dr. Lauer,

I am responding your letters of 7/8/2020 and 10/3/2020 regarding the reinstatement and immediate suspension of NIH grant 2R01AI110964 "*Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence*", that was terminated "for convenience" on 4/24/2020. In particular, this letter addresses the conditions you state would need to be fulfilled in order for us to have access to the funds to continue this work.

As you know, we had not set up any subcontracts to the Wuhan Institute of Virology under this renewal R01. Immediately following NIH's letter on 4/19/2020 that the WIV was being 'investigated', we suspended all plans for contractual work with WIV. This termination of a funded relationship with the institute makes it extraordinarily difficult and more likely impossible to provide the information requested about an autonomous foreign organization – as would also be the case for a domestic one - that our organization neither works with currently, nor has control over.

Additionally, our collaborative work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology prior to your grant termination letter of 4/24/2020 and that planned in the suspended grant, is wholly unrelated to many of the conditions listed below. These conditions also pertain to certain events and situations that in no way involve EcoHealth Alliance or are not under our control. Thus, most of the conditions below are either unrelated to EcoHealth Alliance's planned research in our highly rated, approved and funded grant application, and/or to the biosafety of our continued research funded by the suspended grant when it is reinstated in full.

Furthermore, in our recent correspondence with NIH regarding the latest in a series of FoIA requests, we were informed (1/26/2021 – see email correspondence at the end of this letter) by an NIH staff member Garcia-Malene Gorka that "any indication from my program that there is an ongoing investigation into WIV can now be disregarded, as we recently confirmed there are no pending investigations into that organization." Because this was the explanation in your initial letter of 4/19/2020 for the decisions from your office regarding restrictions on, termination of, then reinstatement and suspension of our grant, we believe that these decisions should now be reassessed.

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10018
212.380.4460
EcoHealthAlliance.org

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As NIH-funded research in Wuhan was thrust into the spotlight in 2020, agency communications added to the sense that staffers had a flimsy grasp of the biosafety of both that project and others. In August 2020, a ProPublica article about a biosecurity lapse at a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill lab sparked a flurry of emails at NIAID. Two days after the article was published, the communications show, staff scrambled to find information about the incident, in which a researcher was bitten by a mouse infected with a coronavirus and did not isolate afterward.

The NIAID employees appear to have had no record of it. "Was this February 2016 incident reported to NIAID and, if so, for which grant was this incident report filed?" a staffer in the NIH's Office of Extramural Research and Policy Operations wrote to Stemmy, the NIH program officer, on August 19. She said her office had been asked to determine whether researchers at UNC followed proper biosafety procedures but "was unable to locate incident report memos in the grants folders" for five grants. The office had checked folders for two grants for research on coronaviruses at UNC, as well as the folder for the grant funding EcoHealth Alliance's bat coronavirus research in Wuhan, possibly because the nonprofit worked closely with UNC. (UNC was a partner on the bat coronavirus grant, as well as on a new grant that NIH awarded to EcoHealth Alliance in August 2020.)

According to ProPublica, federal lab safety officials at the NIH had confirmed that the UNC incident involved types of "SARS-associated coronavirus" and the university had said in a statement that it had informed the proper oversight agencies. But several staffers looked for and were unable to find records of the risky episode. In one email, an administrator said that the incident had been reported to another division at the NIH but not to NIAID. He added that the program officer for the grant only knew about a more recent safety breach because a scientist had told him.

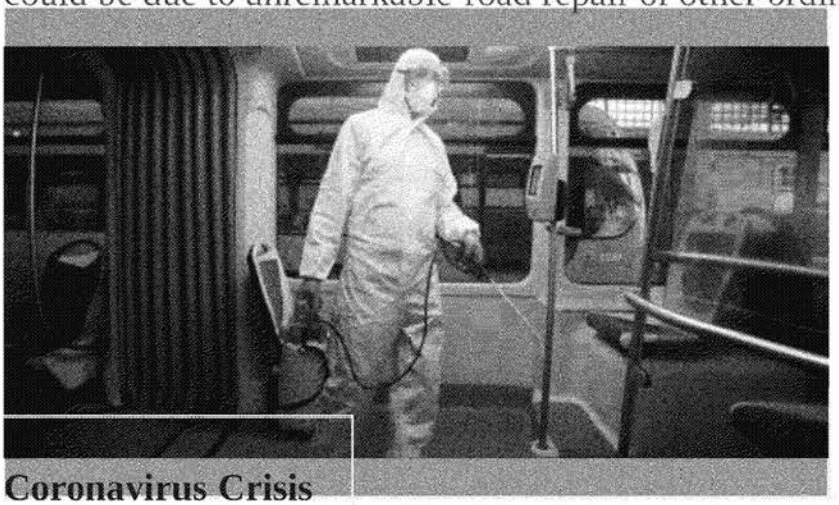
"That just seems to indicate that they do not have their house in order," said Lentzos, the biosecurity researcher. "It underscores that as a funder, NIH is not the independent oversight body that you would want for this kind of research."

"Great Personal Burden"

In his April 2021 letter to Lauer, Daszak said that he had traveled to China with a World Health Organization team in part to satisfy the NIH's demands for more information. "I have made extensive efforts to satisfy NIH's broad concerns," Daszak wrote. "This includes serving as an expert on the WHO-China joint Mission on the Animal Origins of COVID-19, which involved 1 month on the ground in China (including 2 weeks locked in quarantine), at great personal burden and risk to me, to our organization, and to my family."

While admitting that EcoHealth Alliance would not be able to meet some of the agency's conditions, Daszak nevertheless appeared hopeful that the NIH might reassess its decision to terminate the funding. He again pushed back against some of the agency's requests. Specifically, Daszak said that the questions about roadblocks near the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the deletion of Huang's online presence — both of which had been focal points of online speculation — could be easily explained without any malfeasance.

"While many conspiracy theorists have suggested that the lack of a web presence of this person suggests some nefarious activity, there are dozens of unremarkable and routine reasons why a person may be removed from a web listing of employees or students," he wrote of Huang. Similarly, Daszak noted, roadblocks and diminished cellphone traffic could be due to unremarkable road repair or other ordinary occurrences.



Read Our Complete Coverage **The Coronavirus Crisis**

Daszak also had a different read on State Department cables from January 2018 that Lauer had asked about in his letter. The cables detailed a shortage of trained technicians for the Wuhan Institute of Virology's BSL-4 laboratory, the first lab in China certified to deal with the most dangerous pathogens.

While in April 2020, Washington Post opinion columnist Josh Rogin had interpreted excerpts of the cables as evidence of safety and management weaknesses in the lab, Daszak disagreed. Indeed the full cables, which were released in July 2020, give a more complex picture, favorably describing research at the lab to which Daszak had contributed. "These do not in fact provide evidence of safety concerns at the laboratory," he wrote to Lauer. "Neither do they convincingly imply safety issues."

Lauer had also asked EcoHealth Alliance to arrange for an outside inspection of the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Daszak argued that cutting off the grant had made it virtually unthinkable that the Wuhan lab would assist with such requests. "This termination of a funded relationship with the institute makes it extraordinarily difficult and more likely impossible to provide the information requested," Daszak wrote to Lauer. International politics made the situation worse, as he noted in an explanation of

why EcoHealth Alliance was unable to procure a sample of the actual SARS-CoV-2 virus that the Wuhan Institute of Virology had used to determine its viral sequence.

"During the last 16 months, there has been a series of vitriolic attacks from the US Government accusing China of bioengineering and releasing SARS-CoV-2 or of otherwise allowing COVID to become pandemic," he wrote to Lauer. "Given these attacks, and WIV's status as a government entity, it seems to us incredulous that any request, particularly without scientific rationale, from a US non-profit to a Chinese Government laboratory for an active sample of a pathogenic human virus would likely be successful."

Daszak also cited strained international relations when explaining why he couldn't produce copies of the WIV biosafety reports, which might have provided insight into what precautions the lab had taken in its work on bat coronaviruses and whether any breaches of protocol had occurred.

"Some of [NIH's] demands were a little impractical," said Alina Chan, co-author of the book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19." "How would EcoHealth Alliance be able to obtain information about the missing staffer?" But Daszak should have been able to provide lab safety records, which are "much more significant," she said.

To Lauer, Daszak noted that the media attention and resultant public curiosity about the work EcoHealth Alliance conducted in Wuhan had cost him personally. "This type of harassment has accelerated to the point that personal security guards are now stationed at my home address, where I have also had to install invasive equipment and set up procedures to protect my family against expected violent attacks," Daszak wrote. "Additionally, I now meet regularly with FBI agents and others at my home to monitor these threats." As he did in communications The Intercept published in December, Daszak referred to a letter containing white powder that he had received at his home. Local news media reported the incident at the time.

Denying Document Requests

Meanwhile, EcoHealth Alliance was also pushing on another front. In January 2021, Matthew Torsiello, one of its lawyers, emailed Lauren Bartok, an information specialist in the NIH's Freedom of Information Act Office, to request that a FOIA request for EcoHealth Alliance's grant documents be denied. Torsiello asked that the request, which was made by a member of the public through the transparency organization MuckRock, be denied because the grant termination was under appeal and because "a law enforcement investigation concerning WIV remains ongoing." Torsiello explained that his law firm had previously asked for the the NIH to deny a request for EcoHealth Alliance grant documents made in 2020, also by a member of the public.

The lawyer's email went on to make a tenuous argument. "As demonstrated by the recent attack on the US Capital [sic] fueled by disinformation and conspiracy theories, the need to protect the privacy of EcoHealth Alliance's employees and affiliates is more important than ever." The email did not offer further explanation, but Daszak had previously argued to the press and in the pages of the medical journal The Lancet that the notion that the pandemic could have a lab origin was a conspiracy theory.

We're really hopeful that this is the case, and everyone at EcoHealth Alliance is looking forward to continuing this critical work.

Looking forward to hearing news from you!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b) (6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Garcia-Malene, Gorka (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 12:20:51 PM
To: Matthew R.Torsiello
Cc: Nels T. Lippert; Andrew N. Krinsky; Bartok, Lauren (NIH/NIAID) [E]; NIH FOIA
Subject: [EXT] FW: FOIA Case No. 55702 re: EcoHealth Alliance & Grant No. R01AI110964-6

Good afternoon, Mr. Torsiello –

I'd like to insert myself into the unfolding FOIA conversation in hopes of providing some helpful context. Our records show that this competing renewal has in fact been funded. In addition, any indication from my program that there is an ongoing investigation into WIV can now be disregarded, as we recently confirmed there are no pending investigations

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The day after Torsiello sent his email, another NIH FOIA officer wrote an email to an undisclosed recipient rejecting the lawyer's arguments for withholding the records. The officer noted that "there are no pending investigations" into the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Nine months later, the NIH FOIA office closed the public records request, pointing the requester to documents that the NIH had released online.

While EcoHealth Alliance's intervention in the FOIA request is not unusual, agencies are required by law to independently determine whether records should be disclosed, said Gunita Singh, an attorney for the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. "Agencies subject to FOIA are obligated to serve the public's interest in learning about government functions," she wrote in an email. "They cannot operate at the behest of private parties."

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date:	Mon, 17 May 2021 5:08:09 PM -0400
Sent:	Mon, 17 May 2021 5:07:53 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Details of BSL-2/3/4 levels for viral cultures
From:	Roberts, Rich [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Peter:

Thanks for this. I'll take some time to digest it and also see what a friend of mine who was concerned about this issue has to say. Sometimes it can help to re-frame "evidence" in a way that is easy for people to digest.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 4:20 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Details of BSL-2/3/4 levels for viral cultures
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Please have a look at the attached, ready for people asking you about comments from Ian Lipkin, Ralph Baric and others re China using BSL-2 level to culture bat-CoVs. This is now being used to suggest a lab-origin for SARS-CoV-2 is more valid. I list 7 reasons why this argument is flawed, and we cite a bunch of examples of viruses known to be lethal to people that are cultured at BSL-2 in the USA.

Hope all this helps, and thank you for your support and advice.

Each of these new conspiracy angles takes us multiple phone calls, a few hours of digging, and a not insignificant amount of emotional angst before we realize (as usual) that these are little more than hype, rhetoric and misinformation.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 2:27 PM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' b6 'Keusch, Jerry b6 b6 'Rich Roberts b6
Subject: RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Didn't see that one. Vincent's right that EcoHealth was not part of any gain-of-function work. He's wrong that the work between Ralph and Zhengli was actually 'gain of function'. The chimeric virus (bat spike, SARS-CoV backbone) actually lost some replication capacity – more like 'loss of function'.

The interview video clip is one I recorded in Singapore in December 2019 at a Nipah meeting. I didn't use the phrase gain of function, and wasn't referring to work we did, as Vincent says. Quite ridiculous, but easy to fool the public with this…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:54 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Jerry b6 <
b6 Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Dmid

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
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National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:11 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM b6 >
Subject: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research
https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research

In a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul, longtime NIAID Director Anthony Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied his institute has funded gain-of-function research.
By Daniel Payne

•

Updated: May 15, 2021 - 11:44am
A prominent Columbia University virologist claims that in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic a U.S. nonprofit

funded coronavirus experiments in Wuhan, China the results of which were used in "gain-of-function" virology research at the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Vincent Racaniello made the claim amid ongoing controversy over a recently resurfaced interview between himself and Peter Daszak, the president of the U.S. infectious disease nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.

Both EcoHealth Alliance and the scientist leading the research at UNC have been heavily funded over the years by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which has been directed since 1984 by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the public face of the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic under Presidents Trump and Biden.

Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied that NIAID has funded gain-of-function research in a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) at a Senate hearing.

Racianello's half-hour interview with Daszak took place in early December 2019 at the Nipah Virus International Conference in Singapore. Significant attention has been given to a segment in which Daszak appears to allude to having participated in "gain-of-function" experiments, a type of procedure in which scientists increase a virus's pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in order to study its potential for human infection.

"You can manipulate [coronaviruses] in the lab pretty easily," Daszak says in the interview. "Spike protein drives a lot of what happens with the coronavirus, zoonotic risk. So you can get the sequence, you can build the protein — and we work with Ralph Baric at UNC to do this — insert into the backbone of another virus, and do, do some work in the lab."

Those remarks, when they resurfaced this week, caused considerable controversy due to Daszak's role in funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars through his EcoHealth Alliance to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to bankroll coronavirus experiments there. The Wuhan lab sits just a few miles from where the first detected outbreak of COVID-19 occurred.

Speculation has swirled over the last year as to what role, if any, the Wuhan lab may have played in the origin of the pandemic, including whether it was engaging in any gain-of-function experiments that may have posed a pandemic risk.

Experiments 'confer a new property to the original virus'

Racaniello said that Daszak in the December 2019 interview was indeed describing gain-of-function experiments.

"Here is the idea," he said in an email exchange this week. "You go into caves in China and sample bats for CoVs. You collect bat guano and sequence it to find the viruses. You don't actually have the viruses, just their genome sequences. You want to know if these viruses have the ability to infect human cells."

"Since you don't have the viruses," he continued, "you just take the spike sequence from all these viruses and put it into a coronavirus that you work with in the lab. Then you see if that recombinant coronavirus can infect human cells. It's all done under containment to prevent any release. If the spikes of the bat CoV can allow the CoV to infect human cells, then they have the potential to infect humans and we should be making antivirals against them to prevent a pandemic."

Those kinds of experiments, Racaniello said, "are considered 'gain of function' because they would confer a new property to the original virus."

That research, Racaniello said, "was done in the laboratory of Dr. Ralph Baric in [the University of] North Carolina and was not funded by EcoHealth Alliance." When pressed, Racaniello revealed that EcoHealth did have an indirect role in the funding of Baric's work.

"EcoHealth Alliance provided funds to Zengli Shi at the Wuhan Institute of Virology to conduct bat surveillance for SARS-like CoVs," he said. "Baric then received the spike sequences from Wuhan to do his experiments independently."

"Daszak and Baric did not work together on this project," he added.

Anna Marie Skalka, a professor emerita at the Fox Chase Cancer Center and one of the authors of the bestselling textbook "Principles of Virology," did not expressly deny that Baric's research constituted gain-of-function, though she claimed that the overall issue was more complex than that.

"I prefer to describe the research in broader terms, as gain-of-function seems too narrow and has acquired negative connotations," she said. "The aim of such research is to learn as much as possible about the gene/protein in question so that one can begin to develop possible therapeutic or vaccine-related approaches."

Queries to Daszak and Baric on Racaniello's claims went unanswered.

The assertions from Racaniello — a four-decade veteran of academic virology who along with Skalka is also an author of "Principles of Virology" — constitute the sharpest allegations yet that both EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were involved, even if adjacently, with gain-of-function research prior to the pandemic.

Baric's research, meanwhile, has been the recipient of millions of dollars in funding from the NIAID over the years, much of it focused on coronaviruses, including experiments in the "replication and pathogenesis" of those viruses.

Racaniello himself forcefully defended such research. "There is a very clear reason to do these experiments and if we had done them even more we could have prevented the current pandemic," he said.

EcoHealth, meanwhile, has been the focus of controversy for the past year due not merely to its alleged association with coronavirus experiments but also to the fact that its work was for years heavily funded by the federal government, specifically the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

EcoHealth routed hundreds of thousands of NIAID dollars to the Wuhan lab in the years leading up to the pandemic to conduct coronavirus research there. Experts and commentators alike have called for a major investigation into the lab to determine if SARS-Cov-2 may have accidentally leaked from the facility and launched the pandemic.

The federal funding for the Wuhan project was pulled last year near the outset of the pandemic. Daszak himself told NPR last

year that the Wuhan experiments were "funded entirely through the NIH grant," as the news service put it.
The lab was the subject of part of the World Health Organization's investigation into the origins of COVID-19. That probe concluded earlier this year and determined that a lab-leak theory was unlikely, though world officials have called for additional investigations into the facility.
The international team of investigators reportedly only spent a single day at the Wuhan lab. Among the team's members — and the only U.S. representative on it — was Peter Daszak.

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Date: Mon, 27 Sep 2021 2:26:00 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 27 Sep 2021 2:25:59 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]

Hi David and friends,

Just to let you know I called Tony's office and while he was not available now he told his secretary to take my phone number and he would call me back when he can, perhaps not until this evening.

Peter/Robert, anything new on the Reschenthaler amendment to the defense appropriations bill? I want to contact my congressional representatives and being up to date is relevant.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Sunday, September 26, 2021 7:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Roberts, Rich [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >
Subject: Re: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate

Guys, i just emailed chief of staff Greg Folkers and also Patty, as these are the two key people who decide what Tony sees. I expect they will get back to me and will make sure Tony gets the message in advance. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 26, 2021, at 07:25, David Morens [b6] > wrote:
>
> Patty is his « scheduler », whatever that means. But I will line up all the right people. Since Tony no longer reads his unfiltered email or answer his phone, this has to be teed up
>
> David
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
>> On Sep 25, 2021, at 21:03, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:
>>
>> Thanks David,
>>
>> I will plan on doing that. I have a call with Richard Horton at noon to discuss whether the Lancet will appoint us a Working Group reporting directly to the Lancet. He was prepared to do that, extracted a promise from Jeff he wouldn't be out in the public space after he altered the Commission website, and asked up to

develop a proposal. We did and listed all 12 of the task force members as the new Working Group. With the WSJ piece and other media vehicles picking up on it we are not inclined to give one inch and it will be all 12 of us or none of us. We are still holding our public voice silent, but the issue is not if but when, and then what we will say.
>>
>> What I want to talk to Tony about is the amendment to defund EHA in the defense appropriation bill passed by the House. I am sure staff were largely unaware. Just like I expect Richard Horton to stand on the side of scientific integrity so too must the NIH, and it is time for Francis Collins to set the record straight - Peter and EHA did nothing wrong, their science was important and helped the world prepare for the emergence of COVID rather than being responsible for it happening. I think Tony can speak to Francis - who probably won't be listening - but even more important to Biden, his senior staff, and to Eric Lander.
>>
>> Long story short is I can call Tony in the 1:30-2:30 time frame. If you can let him and his secretary know that would be great. Is that still Patty Conrad because she will most likely recognize my name.
>>
>> Jerry
>>
>> -----Original Message-----
>> From: David Morens [b6]>
>> Sent: Saturday, September 25, 2021 4:08 PM
>> To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
>> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Roberts, Rich
>> [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>
>> Subject: Re: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>
>> Jerry, i would call him on his land line at work on Monday. [b6] [b6] [b6] and his assistant Kim will answer. I can give her a heads up of who you are and that u will be calling.
>>
>> In a pinch i can give you his cell phone, but there is a sort of rule that us piss-ons shouldn't give it out. Although i sm sure he would be fine
>>
>> But as he is so swamped all the time, i think the land line call is best, so that he will know in advance that you are going to call. david
>>
>> Sent from my iPhone
>> David M Morens
>> OD, NIAID, NIH
>>
>>>> On Sep 25, 2021, at 15:59, Keusch, Gerald T [b6]> wrote:
>>>
>>> David. What's the best way for me to contact Tony. I don't know what he could achieve in trying to get Collins to do what is right here but he can have a lot of influence on Biden and Eric Lander. I will raise what our mutual mentor, Shelly Wolff, would have done - make it clear this is egregious and get the Govt to do what is right.
>>>
>>> Jerry
>>>
>>> Sent from my iPhone
>>>
>>>>> On Sep 25, 2021, at 11:50 AM, David Morens [b6]> wrote:
>>>>
>>>> Peter, sorry for not replying earlier I was in a sort of urgent

>>>> situation and was tied up the whole past two days.
>>>>
>>>> First, it is hard to believe this passed or will be allowed to
>>>> stand, I suspect most Democrats and Republicans didn't even know
>>>> about it because some staffer sneaked it in. Also, and I dread
>>>> appearing charitable, I doubt even most Republicans would want this.
>>>>
>>>> beyond that, the law prevents me from doing anything about it other
>>>> than fume, so please accept my sympathetic fuming and hope that
>>>> this will die a rapid death. d
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> David M. Morens, MD
>>>> b6
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> b6
>>>> b6 b6 b6 (work)
>>>> b6 b6 b6 (cell)
>>>>
>>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash,
>>>> which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in
>>>> a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email
>>>> address
>>>>
>>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to
>>>> my NIAID address
>>>>
>>>>> On Sat, Sep 25, 2021 at 9:30 AM Peter Daszak
>>>>> b6 > wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>> Jerry – this is very good to hear. Yesterday was a very worrying day. If this amendment becomes law, we will have to lay off staff and basically close down. It penalizes us for something that we didn't do, without due process. It sets a terrible precedence for congress members ability to shut down a non-profit or a university's line of research based on rumor and hearsay. It's also based on a falsehood that there is any evidence that the virus came out of a lab, of course.
>>>>>
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>>>>>
>>>>> There's a lot of drum-banging going on out there, and the attacks on us continue. We're trying to do the right thing by keeping quiet and not talking to the press, but this also means they have a field day at our expense when every rumor or hyped-up article comes out.
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>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>> Peter
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>>>>> Peter Daszak
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>>>>> President
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>>>>>
>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance
>>>>>
>>>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
>>>>>
>>>>> New York, NY 10018-6507
>>>>>
>>>>> USA
>>>>>
[b6]
>>>>>
>>>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
>>>>>
>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>>
>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>>
>>>>> From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
>>>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:05 PM
>>>>> To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens
>>>>> [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
>>>>> Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
>>>>> Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>>>>
>>>>>

>>>>>
>>>>> I'm going to contact my congressional representative and senators, and Tony Fauci and Victor Dzau as well.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> If Rich gets in touch with Harold that could help some, at least with Eric Lander who sits in the cabinet and has the ear of the White House leadership.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> Jerry
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
>>>>>
>>>>> Professor of Medicine
>>>>>
>>>>> Associate Director
>>>>>
>>>>> National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
>>>>>
>>>>> Boston University, Boston MA 02118
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]
>>>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:31 PM
>>>>> To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T
>>>>> [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
>>>>> Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
>>>>> Subject: FW: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>>>> Importance: High
>>>>>
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>>>>>
>>>>> Dear Robert, David, and Jerry,
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>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> Sorry to send this, but please read the email below and you'll see that a bill filed by a Republican congressman from PA then became a single line amendment attached to the Defense Appropriations bill, and actually passed the House last night.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> We're very worried here because we rely on Federal funding and this puts our organization in great threat. Any advice is welcome. We're reaching out to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, but I'm really worried that if they are too busy to get involved for a small non-profit with no political clout, we'll be drummed out of business.
>>>>>

>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> If you have colleagues who know how to deal with this sort of issue, and are willing to help, we would be extremely grateful for any advice, suggestions and support. I realize you've all spent social and political capital helping our organization since we were first targeted by Pres. Trump, but this is truly an existential threat to us, considering 80-90% of our budget is from federal grants and contracts.
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>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>> Peter
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>>>>> Peter Daszak
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>>>>> President
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>>>>>
>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance
>>>>>
>>>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>>>>> New York, NY 10018-6507
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>>>>> USA
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>>>>> Tel.: b6
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>>>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>>
>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>>
>>>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
>>>>> Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:11 PM
>>>>> To: 'Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)'
>>>>> [b6]>; 'Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)'
>>>>> [b6]>
>>>>> Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler
>>>>> [b6] Jeff Sturchio
>>>>> [b6] [b6]
>>>>> Subject: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was
>>>>> passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
>>>>> Importance: High
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> Dear Jamison and Gilbert,
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> You were kind enough to talk with us a couple of months ago about attacks on our New York City-based 501c3 non-profit from the hard right wing regarding the work we've done in the past trying to protect us from new emerging diseases coming out of China and other hotspots. As you remember, this work was largely funded by NIH, DoD and USAID and has become a target for Republican-led attacks on the Biden administration.
>>>>>
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>>>>>
>>>>> We're very concerned that one of the House Republicans, Congressman Reschenthaler, filed a bill titled HR591 "Defund EcoHealth Alliance Bill" in Jan. 2021 and managed to get this attached as Amendment 148 to the National Defense Authorization Act (HR 4350). The five other co-sponsors are all Republicans: Van Drew, Perry, Harshbarger, Keller, and Budd: https://rules.house.gov/bill/117/hr- 4350. The House passed the NDAA last night (https://armedservices.house.gov/ndaa) and unfortunately this Amendment is now progressing with it.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance is a non-profit based in Midtown Manhattan that employs around 50 people whose jobs depend on the funding we receive each year. If this amendment continues forwards, we stand to all lose our jobs and close down the organization. This amendment is based on a false premise that our organization acted wrongly and was involved in the origin of the COVID pandemic. In fact it's the opposite, we worked with federal approval to help protect US citizens against this and other pandemic risks. If passed, it would penalize an organization doing public good, without any due process or consideration of the facts. Also of great concern is that this amendment would set a precedent that any single member of Congress can specifically block funding to an organization or institution through a simple amendment, bypassing all political norms.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> We are urgently hoping that you will be able to make Sen. Gillibrand aware of our issue and move to strike out this amendment at the first possible opportunity. We are at this point very worried for our staff, and our work around the world protecting the US against the next pandemic.
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>>>>> Yours sincerely,
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>>>>> Peter
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>>>>> Peter Daszak
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>>>>> President
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>>>>> Tel.: b6
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>>>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>> From: Peter Daszak b6
>>>>> Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 10:46 AM
>>>>> To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>>>> b6 >; Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)
>>>>> b6 >
>>>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll b6 >; Aleksei Chmura

>>>>> [b6] >; Robert Kessler
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> That would be perfect. It'll be me, our chief of staff Aleksei Chmura, and our Communications Director Robert Kessler.
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>>>>> Thanks for making time!
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>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>> Peter
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>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent
>>>>> pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>> From: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>>>> [b6]>
>>>>> Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 8:42 AM
>>>>> To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Ruiz, Gilbert
>>>>> (Gillibrand) [b6]
>>>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura
>>>>> [b6]>; Robert Kessler
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> Happy to chat. Would Monday at 2:30pm over zoom work for you all?
>>>>>
>>>>>
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>>>>> From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
>>>>> Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 3:38 PM
>>>>> To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> Cc: Dennis Carroll [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura
>>>>> [b6]>; Robert Kessler
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> Subject: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
>>>>> Importance: High
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>>>>>
>>>>> Dear Brooke,
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> I hope you don't mind me contacting you directly – I was given your email address by my colleague Dennis Carroll.
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> As you may know, I'm the President of EcoHealth Alliance, based here in NYC, and also Chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats and member of the National Academy of Medicine. I mentioned the latter, because I received a very kind letter from Senator Gillibrand when I was voted onto the NAM a couple of years ago – it's now framed on my wall!
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>

>>>>> You may have heard our organization's name (EcoHealth Alliance) and mine being mentioned in the press recently in the general discussion of identifying the origins of COVID-19. For the last 17 years, we've worked closely with colleagues in China to get ahead of emerging viruses, including by collaborating with their premier virologists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Unfortunately, this work has become a very public target politically following over a year of conspiracy theories online that have now gone mainstream about the possibility COVID emerged as a leak from a biosafety laboratory in Wuhan. This was amplified a few weeks ago with testimony by Dr. Fauci and the release of FoIA'd emails that have put our organization in the cross-hairs of efforts to attack the current administration. This includes proposals by some minority members for bills that would significant harm our international work to prevent pandemics, as well as directly defund our organization.
>>>>>
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>>>>>
>>>>> I've attached a letter in Lancet that came out last week that helps provide some context of the way this issue is being viewed by serious scientists, but as you can imagine we're worried about the impact on work that we believe is critical to preventing future pandemics. I wondered if you would be interested in my giving you a short briefing on this issue, to explain in more detail what the evidence behind these theories is, and to get your take on the political issues we are concerned about?
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>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>> Peter
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>>>>> Peter Daszak
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Date: Fri, 16 Apr 2021 6:41:48 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 16 Apr 2021 6:41:43 PM -0400
Subject: RE: It doesn't rain, but it pours... Request from Republicans in House Committee & information re. requirement for biosafety monitoring reports for our current CREID funding at NIH
From: "Roberts, Rich" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 David Morens b6

Peter:

This is terrible.

Maybe you should start working on cricket bats.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 4:51 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; David Morens b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: It doesn't rain, but it pours... Request from Republicans in House Committee & information re. requirement for biosafety monitoring reports for our current CREID funding at NIH
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just to let you know today I received a letter from the Minority on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce with about 20+ questions re. our work with China. Some of it is frankly offensive and clearly has racist overtone, e.g. name our Mandarin-speaking staff at EcoHealth! In any case, I've passed it on to our lawyers, and I believe I don't have to either acknowledge receipt, or respond in any way. I've cc'd the letters here, so you can get a feel for the sort of gibberish they're putting out. It's largely direct quotes from conspiracy theorists on the web, and actually cites some of them. These shouldn't be made public yet, because I'm not responding and it just amplifies conspiracies.

The second point is regarding the request from Lauer for details of our biosafety monitoring documents over the last 7 yrs. I think this is bogus because I remember they re-issued our Notice of Award for our current U01 with a new clause on providing copies of our "Biosafety Monitoring Plans" 30 days after setting up a subcontract. Why would Lauer on the one hand say this is encoded in the CFR, but then have program staff insert a new clause to our NoA to demand it. Anyway, I checked with one of the other contracts that's been awarded in the same CREID program and they were not asked for this, so it's simply targeting EHA directly with extra onerous process to cover NIH's demands and mistakes related to the R01 termination, I believe.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date:	Thu, 22 Apr 2021 11:32:48 PM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 22 Apr 2021 11:28:26 PM -0400
Subject:	2 pager with timeline of NIH-EHA grant issues and Political letters/bills etc.
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6];
Attachments:	Political letters, bills, re. CoV research in China, GoF etc..docx

Dear All,

I've lined up a timeline of all the NIH-EHA correspondence (almost all now available on the www.nlcampaigns.org website), as well as the political activities that have been happening over the past year of relevance – various bills, letters demanding information etc.

Please feel free to share this doc with people who need to know. There are url links to all the political actions, and many more on the nlcampaigns website.

Thanks again for all you're doing!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 4:44:06 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 4:44:03 PM -0400
Subject: RE: FW: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6];

Sure, always happy to chat with you. [b6]

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:42 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Jerry, I am finally frree, sorry for the long delay but the meetings never ended.

Free now, I can call you if you wish to talk. d

On 9/8/2021 1:02 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> Thanks, and much appreciated. I will be talking to Simone at 8 tomorrow morning.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 1:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

> Jerry, I am just goinmg into a eeting now. Happy to share any insifhts I have but it might also be good to loop in Jeff Taubenberger with who I work, who has been dealing with GoF stuff momstop since it began, and who is on the 3PCO committee. He can explain it better than me. Ironically he and I were discussing it at lengrh. This was in the context of a draft paper I wrote reviewing the whole GoF thing some years ago, as the so called moratorium was looming. We never published it for several reasons, and now it is out of date becaause it deals mostly with H5N1, but I did share it with a reporter off the record and she said it helped her alot. More later d
>
> On 9/8/2021 12:07 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:
>
> > Hi David,
> >
> > Thanks for the update yesterday on the GOF kerfuffle (it's an old Manchester term which means kerfuffle). As you can see below, Simone McCarthy from the S. China Morning Post wants to talk about it, specifically in the context of Tony's recent remarks. That suggests to me that you should not be involved. However, I would be very grateful for every bit of nuance about NIAID's position so I can stay well within the philosophical and rational grounds of interpretation of the 2017 ground rules for review of GOFOC research, and for any GOF research in general.

One key question I want to be sure about pertains to the initial flagging of grants from submitting entities when there are experiments proposed that could be considered GOF. I understand that institutional review boards are required to review proposals on EIDs for research on the genetic basis for pathogenesis and to tell NIH if these reach a threshold for special attention by the established mechanisms. What I am not sure about is how NIH handles a proposal that is labeled GOF but not of concern. Are all of those reviewed in-house to determine if the grant is correctly classified? That would take a lot of admin review time for sure. I don't know how many grants submitted since the process was announced in 2017 have been flagged, been reviewed, and been denied funding, at least for those experiments. If you have any data that can be shared and NIAID would like to see that information out there (as you know Nature is also working on an article), at least in ballpark figures, I'd be happy to have that in my back pocket. What would the oversight be when a grantee is told specific aim X cannot be explored? What is the concern when other sources of funding are used – as I note below – in non USG facilities?

A related perspective is that the NIH process, and therefore the position of the USG, is restricted to oversight of government funded research, and research facilities that receive federal research funding. If Sheldon Adelson were to ask one of our NEIDL scientists to open a separate laboratory to see what it takes to make a bat coronavirus transmissible to a mammal by the respiratory route would there be any review at any level or any constraint on supporting that work? My sense of it is that the NIH can only oversee NIH funded research and institutions. The private research establishment, and of course the lab-in-the-garage, can do whatever they want to do, and for whatever reason they would do so. It is important that there be a well-considered and thoughtful overview of what should be acceptable because the knowledge gain predominates and the risk can be mitigated by training, protocol, and suitably equipped and safe facilities.

Thanks, Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 9:34 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Well, along these lines my editors have asked me to do an explainer about the controversy surrounding Fauci's comments to Congress on NIH funding for gain of function research at WIV via EcoHealth. I'm putting together a story that will look at the definitions of GofF under NIH and how it's decided what merits review. I'm wondering if it's something that you would be up for commenting on? If so, I'd ideally hope to chat tomorrow (Thursday), although I'm not sure if that is one of your office days. Please let me know if that might be feasible, and thank you.

Best,

Simone

On Mon, 6 Sept 2021 at 17:30, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Travel well.
>
> I think the continuous flow of more thoughtful reporting on what the science tells us and what is pure

speculation and political perspective is beginning to turn the tide towards a more refined appreciation of the likely and the unlikely scenarios. My view is we need to continue to push on what is objective science, what is crap pseudoscience, and what is pure PR marketing.

I think – but can't really prove – the public that buys into the risky research plot is the same public that refuses to get immunized and then for the few, on their death bed, they say maybe I made a mistake. Although some of them are OD'ing on Ivermectin in horse dose quantities. Same thing – no ability to sift through information. Who is your readership? What do they appreciate and what are they confusing?

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 8:30 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Gerry,

Thank you for the note/offer of your time and glad you hear you've been basking in some vacation time. Hope you guys didn't get hit too hard by Henri or Ida.

I'm on my way back from Martha's Vineyard to Hong Kong this week myself (although have been working remotely here) but I'll get back in touch soon and look forward to discussing the latest then.

Good luck adjusting back to the office coffee.
Best,

Simone

On Fri, 3 Sept 2021 at 21:20, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> I see I didn't respond to your note. I have been happily on vacation at our place in the Berkshires, which means no alarm in the morning, hot tub on waking, good coffee, doing the chores and fixing things on my to-do list, and trying to avoid anything that sounds like professional activities. So I stay off the emails, except for family stuff.
> At any rate I am back in the office next week after Tuesday, so we could follow up after that.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Tuesday, August 24, 2021 7:18 AM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Gerry,
>
> Ah, too bad! Would have been nice to cross paths on the Vineyard, perhaps another time here or in Boston, which I end up travelling through fairly frequently.
>
> I wanted to check in with you in advance of the US intelligence report on the origins which we expect will be released publicly in the coming days. I'll likely be putting together a story about how scientists are viewing the assessment reached there (angle still to be honed). I'm not exactly sure the timeline, but I wanted to drop you a line and see if you might be up for chatting when it's out.
>
> Hope all is well otherwise, thank you again for all your time last month and for mentioning me to Dr. Morens - I have gotten in touch.
>
> Best,

Simone

On Fri, 30 Jul 2021 at 03:21, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Great to hear you will spend a bit of time on the Vineyard. My son has a house in West Tisbury, and loves it. Unfortunately this year we won't make it there in August, otherwise we might have been able to say hello in person.
>
> I'll let David know you are away and you may be in touch with him in a couple of weeks. This issues you are reporting on won't go away in the near future.
>
> Jerry
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Thursday, July 29, 2021 2:21 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Jerry,
>
> Thanks for these thoughts - very clear, and thanks as well for suggesting a conversation with David Morens. I'll be on leave (actually headed to MA) for a short stint, but I look forward to staying in touch on this in the coming weeks and will drop Dr. Morens a line as well. Hope you enjoy some nice August time in the Berkshires.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Wed, 28 Jul 2021 at 12:39, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> > Hi Simone,
> > In addition, I have been in touch with David Morens at NIAID who works closely with Tony Fauci. Based on my interactions with you, as well as comments by Peter Daszak regarding your thoughtful journalism, he could be helpful for future reporting albeit considering all of the circumstances it would almost certainly be off-the-record. You can therefore contact him at [b6] and he will respond if he has something of value to add.
> >
> > Jerry
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, July 28, 2021 4:57 AM
> > **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> > **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
> >
> > Dear Jerry,
> >
> > One more with the comment from our previous exchange, thank you again for the time.
> > https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3142773/no- entry-trouble-ahead-china-whos-covid-19-origins-hunt
> >
> > Best,
> >
> > Simone

On Mon, 26 Jul 2021 at 16:47, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com> wrote:

Dear Jerry,

Thank you, and that is a very graphic (and apt) metaphor. I am attempting to drill (lance?) deeper into these exact issues in a piece that will be published Tuesday HKT. I realise this is very short notice (and I promise I won't be knocking on your door so frequently here after that), but we have touched on some of the key issues at length in our conversation earlier this month that I believe they may need to be clarified within the context of the next phase proposal to use in this story. If there's any way you might be able to share your thoughts on these follow-ups via email or chat for 15 minutes anytime on Monday I'd really love to be able to update and include your perspective.

I am also planning to include the comment that you sent me last week regarding keeping the original international team involved, and wanted to ask you a follow-up there. Please see below. Thank you.

Best,

Simone

- I know that you mentioned that the lab leak hypothesis should be investigated, but that it is of lesser priority as compared to work to investigate the animal/natural pathways due to where the publicly available evidence points. Do you think that the prioritization of the lab leak as one of the five areas in the WHO proposal will slow down the process of being able to get started on international collaboration on animal studies in China? Is the inclusion politics at play or is it fitting that this is part of the proposal?
- Do you think that putting together this SAGO, as opposed to moving forward with the original team (perhaps with the addition of some relevant expertise as you and Dr. Koopmans mentioned), will slow down the process of getting this next phase of work started? Does it present other challenges/benefits?

On Fri, 23 Jul 2021 at 11:08, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

I'm game. You have only been able to scratch the surface of the political overlay at play here. I think there is some pus underneath that needs to be drained so the deeper tissues can heal. When there is no "laudible pus" exuding on its own from a deep wound a pathway must be created by the physician in order to prevent more severe complications, including the potential for sepsis and death, if the patient is to have a chance to heal and return to good health. Same thing pertains here. You can help to point the way to accomplish that and I am willing to talk with you about the issues and how this has been made more difficult by partisan voices on both sides.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 22, 2021 10:42 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Thanks so much for the feedback. The May 25 report is attached. Hope we can keep in touch as this goes forward.

Best,

Simone

On Fri, 23 Jul 2021 at 10:09, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Yes things do move fast. I think your report was balanced, and your use of my quote makes me seem prophetic. Thanks.
>
> Would you send me a pdf of your report on May 25th of the additional work on bat coronaviruses. I can only see a portion of it when I try to open it from your article of today.
>
> Cheers, Jerry
>
> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
> Professor of Medicine
> Associate Director
> National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
> Boston University, Boston MA 02118
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 8:36 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Jerry,
>
> Lots of shifting sands under this story, due to new developments, but happy to be able to include some of your comment here. Thank you.
> https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3142113/chinas- covid-origins-snub-shows-limits-world-health
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Wed, 21 Jul 2021 at 11:39, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com> wrote:
>
> > Dear Jerry,
> >
> > Thanks very much for this - well noted and I really appreciate the quick turnaround. I'll be sure to keep in touch regarding publication.
> >
> > Best,
> >
> > Simone
> >
> > On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 23:13, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
> >
> > > Hi Simone,
> > >
> > > I'm in catch up mode so here are a few additional comments.
> > >
> > > Despite agreeing – at least in part – with the Relman quotes regarding WHO in Jon Cohens piece in Science that WHO may not be the best organization to pursue the origin studies right now it is the only organization that can pursue the investigation. I say that because it is the only global public health entity with membership from virtually all

nation states – that why it's called the World Health Organization. That structure also makes it subject to political influence, often played out in terms of whether or not a country will provide the extrabudgetary funding WHO needs to do things like this investigation, which subjects WHO to the terms and conditions the funding country applied. Most certainly in my mind WHO cannot move forward with credibility if Dr. Tedros dismisses the original 10 international team members and calls for self and government nominations of a new team. The 10 are true experts in their field and internationally respected scientists. I agree with Marion Koopmans that appointing an expert or two in specific areas of interest could more optimally meet any reasonable need for additional expertise.

Regarding the comments/quotes below, I was certainly following a consistent theme along the way, which is again reflected in what I say above and on the record. I made one edit below which you will see in bold underlined italic font.

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 8:51 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Jerry,

Thanks again for your time sharing your thoughts with me last week - really good food for thought for me there. The floor has shifted underneath our conversation a bit given that Dr. Tedros released the outline of his plan for the phase two work. I'm putting together an article that takes a look at the proposal (as described to member states in the public statement) and the challenges that may exist for getting it off the ground. I'd like to be able to include a few of your comments from our conversation and I've included those below for you to check, as discussed.

I did see your related comments in Jon Cohen's Science story, and I would be curious to ask just broadly if you think that the path laid out by Tedros is the best way forward and perhaps what exactly a lab audit in this specific scenario may entail. If it's something you'd be able to discuss via email or a short chat today or tomorrow I'd appreciate that - if I've already taken up way too much of your time, no worries, that is highly understandable too.

I realize you're not in the office today, but I'm wondering if you might be able to give these quotes a quick look and let me know any changes sometime during your Tuesday. Please note in order to optimize timing I am sending over a rough draft version, the context will be as described, but I can't guarantee that there won't be changes to the exact wording in the preceding lines. Likewise it's possible there could be further paraphrasing or shortening of the direct quotes, but that would be with strict attention to the meaning as shown below. Thank you.

Best,

Simone

Gerald Keusch, associate director of the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory Institute at Boston University
Some scientists say the rhetoric around the laboratory leak hypothesis - especially that which seeks to blame China for the outbreak or accuse its scientists of wrongdoing - has made it difficult to move forward with international research in China.
"All of the accusatory statements and hypotheses built on no ***publicly available*** evidence will not gain access to an open, clear, transparent, collaborative international investigation, one that is meant not to cast blame, but to find out what happened so that efforts to prevent this happening again in the future can actually take place."
"There is something called the scientific method - we know how to do collaborative work - it just takes the willingness to do it, in an environment that is positively oriented." "Let's get on with it."

Keusch said it was a "mistake" of the phase one WHO report to not recommend further research into the laboratory leak, and that both this hypothesis and the natural origin should be investigated. However, research into the natural origins was more urgent, given that it was the more likely of the two scenarios, based on available evidence, he said.
"We need to be looking at all of it [both natural origins and lab leak] systematically and in a thoughtful and planned manner."
The kind of work that should be done: forensic analysis of the labs, serology on humans and animals (for example Linfa Wang's cPass serological test which "is available and could be used systematically in China, in Thailand and other border countries where bats, coronaviruses, and people interface")
"It can be done...but there has to be the environment and the desire and the goals for doing it which is not blame and castigate, but to learn and intervene in the future."

[The urgency of uncovering the origin, why it matters for the next phase of the WHO-led mission to begin]
"If you don't look for evidence it doesn't just spring up on its own and hit you in the face, there needs to be a cooperative, collaborative, collegial and communicative way of going about this and as far as I can see the only organisation that can do it is WHO."
"It's no longer a question of if, but when and what. Now that we've seen three severe coronavirus outbreaks of respiratory disease [this century] and we know that these trace back to a vast viral floral, across multiple bat species, another SARS, MERS, or Covid is not a question."

On Wed, 14 Jul 2021 at 09:10, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com > wrote:

> Hi Jerry,
>
> Sure that's no problem, and thanks for sending the event details, looks interesting. Speak soon and thank you again for the time.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone

On Wed, 14 Jul 2021 at 06:10, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Hi Simone,
>
> Can we move the call tomorrow to 11 am EDT? I will be logging on to a presentation on financing future pandemic preparedness organized by the Center for Global Development in DC, which goes from 9:30 to 10:30. The buffer time allows for late ending, pit stops, and refills of the coffee mug. I will forward the

announcement of the seminar to you so you can register if you are interested.

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:16 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Got it, thank you and look forward to speaking.

Best,

Simone

On Fri, 9 Jul 2021 at 01:54, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> My office phone is [b6]
> Backup will be my cell phone [b6]
> Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:58 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Sure, Wednesday 10:30a Eastern daylight works just fine for me, thank you. What's the best number to reach you?

Best,

Simone

On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 23:38, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> How about Wednesday at 10:30 am EDT (you will probably recall that too). Is that OK for Hong Kong time (I assume that's where you are).
>
> Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 9:25 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Dr. Keusch,

Thanks so much for your message and the offer of your time. I'm glad to hear that you had a nice (and unplugged) Fourth of July weekend. I should have realized

when I wrote you... I've been over here a bit too long I guess, although originally I'm from your neck of the woods, Massachusetts.

I'd still be interested to chat with you about the letter, and also your thoughts more broadly on what the most critical next steps are for moving forward on gathering more data about how SARS-CoV-2 started circulating in humans. My schedule is open your Wednesday or Thursday morning EST next week, if there's a convenient time for you to talk in either of those windows, please let me know. I'd be grateful for a chance to speak then.

Best,

Simone

On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 00:16, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Hi Simone,
>
> Sorry I was not able to respond to you on Monday. While the timing of the publication in The Lancet on a Monday was fine for the world, it was over the long July 4th independence day weekend, and we were with family for the first time in a while and unplugged the WiFi.
>
> I am willing to chat with you about this, but to be clear I should say that I am on my summer schedule, which means I am out of the office from Fridays through Tuesdays, which leaves Wednesday or Thursday to find a time.
>
> GT Keusch
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Monday, July 5, 2021 10:41 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Dr. Keusch,
>
> I am a reporter with the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong, where I cover research into the origins of SARS-CoV-2. I'm reaching out to you while following up on the 'Science, not speculation' Lancet letter. I realise that I am contacting you quite late in your evening, I thought it couldn't hurt to check if you would be available to share a short comment for our coverage today. Specifically I was hoping to ask you why/how the decision was made to put this letter forward now and what you hope it will add to the current conservation/efforts to understand how the virus emerged. Do you and the other signatories also feel that there should be more research into the potential of a lab or research-related accident?
>
> I'd also be interested to speak with you in more detail about your views on the next steps that should be taken in the origins research, specifically how different hypotheses could be further probed and what the priorities should be. Ideally I'd love to touch base quickly and include your perspective in our piece,

which will be published today here in Hong Kong time, but if that's not possible and you would be up for a separate conversation on this, I'd love a chance to learn more about how you're looking at the origins research work.

Thank you.
Best,

Simone

--

Simone McCarthy | Reporter
South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd
19/F Tower One, Times Square,
1 Matheson Street, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong
M: b6
E: simone.mccarthy@scmp.com

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Simone McCarthy | Reporter
South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd
19/F Tower One, Times Square,
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E: simone.mccarthy@scmp.com

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--
David M Morens b6

Date: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 1:17:36 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 1:17:35 AM -0400
Subject: Re:Intercept piece is now out.
From: "Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)" <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
To: b6 b6 b6
CC: b6 b6 b6 b6 b6
Attachments: Untitled attachment 08467.png; Untitled attachment 08470.jfif; Untitled attachment 08473.jfif; Untitled attachment 08476.jfif; Untitled attachment 08479.jfif

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Well done, Angie, for being a voice of reason. I'm sorry my profession seems intent on piling on you, David. Personally, I find this whole line of inquiry incredibly boring. Hope you're able to switch off soon and get some rest. Jason

From: b6 At: 09/10/21 15:09:54 UTC+10:00
To: b6

Cc: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:), b6 b6 b6

Subject: Intercept piece is now out.

Really appreciate you speaking out Angie. I just read the piece in the Intercept and it's very upsetting: https://theintercept.com/2021/09/09/covid- origins-gain-of-function-research/

What you said is correct – without evidence of ability to infect people, or transmit even from one animal to another, it can't possibly meet the NIH definition of GoF, which is now officially the P3CO definition as follows (from https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf):

Section II. Scope and Definitions For the purposes of this HHS P3CO Framework:

A. A potential pandemic pathogen (PPP) is a pathogen that satisfies both of the following:

1. It is likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations; and

2. It is likely highly virulent and likely to cause significant morbidity and/or mortality in humans.

B. An enhanced PPP is defined as a PPP resulting from the enhancement of the transmissibility and/or virulence of a pathogen. Enhanced PPPs do not include naturally occurring pathogens that are circulating in or have been recovered from nature, regardless of their pandemic potential

How on any planet is a bat-CoV that's never been seen in people, "likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations"? It seems the 8 scientists that believed this to be GoF base it on one of the chimeras growing faster than the parental strain early on, while forgetting that 1) these are bat viruses have never been shown to infect people, or that, as you say Angie – the growth rates of the parental strain caught up with it by the end of the expt. I'm v. disappointed that Vincent Racaniello is one of these scientists – he should know better.

I'm hoping that more will speak out and point to the differences between their version of what GoF is, and the actual definition that we're all supposed to adhere to, and by the way that NIH uses as the agency of note to decide!

NIH DOCUMENTS PROVIDE NEW EVIDENCE U.S. FUNDED GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH IN WUHAN

U.S.-funded experiments in China posed biosafety risks but did not cause Covid-19 pandemic, scientists say.



Sharon Lerner, Mara Hvistendahl, Maia Hibbett

September 9 2021, 9:03 p.m.

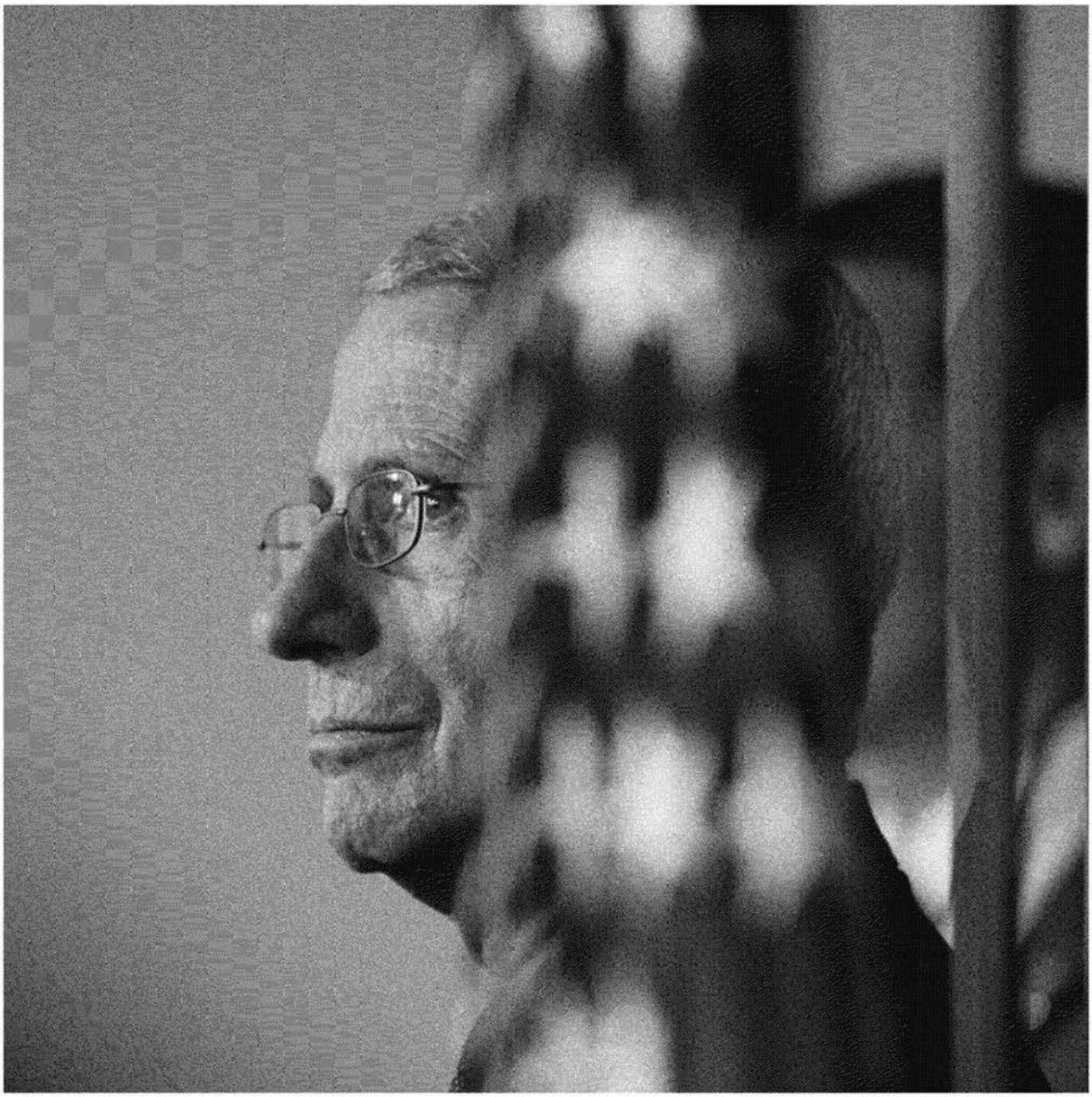
DOCUMENTS OBTAINED BY The Intercept contain new evidence that the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the nearby Wuhan University Center for Animal Experiment, along with their collaborator, the U.S.-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, have engaged in what the U.S. government defines as "gain-of-function research of concern," intentionally making viruses more pathogenic or transmissible in order to study them, despite stipulations from a U.S. funding agency that the money not be used for that purpose.

Grant money for the controversial experiment came from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is headed by Anthony Fauci. The award to EcoHealth Alliance, a research organization which studies the spread of viruses from animals to humans, included subawards to Wuhan Institute of Virology and East China Normal University. The principal investigator on the grant is EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak, who has been a key voice in the search for Covid-19's origins.

Scientists unanimously told The Intercept that the experiment, which involved infecting genetically engineered mice with "chimeric" hybrid viruses, could not have directly sparked the pandemic. None of the viruses listed in the write-ups of

the experiment are related to the virus that causes Covid-19, SARS-CoV-2, closely enough to have evolved into it. Still, several scientists said the new information, which the NIH released after it was sued by The Intercept, points to biosafety concerns, highlighting a general lack of oversight for research on pathogens and raising questions about what other information has not been publicly disclosed.

"As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19, by an airborne coronavirus.



National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci listens during a briefing on the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on March 26, 2020 in Washington, DC.

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The experiment also raises questions about assertions from Fauci and NIH Director Francis Collins that NIH-funded projects at the Wuhan Institute of Virology did not involve gain-of-function research. In May, Fauci testified before Congress: "The NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." The documents do not establish whether Fauci was directly aware of the work.

Scientists working under a 2014 NIH grant to the EcoHealth Alliance to study bat coronaviruses combined the genetic material from a "parent" coronavirus known as WIV1 with other viruses. They twice submitted summaries of their work that showed that, when in the lungs of genetically engineered mice, three altered bat coronaviruses at times reproduced far more quickly than the original virus on which they were based. The altered viruses were also somewhat more pathogenic, with one causing the mice to lose significant weight. The researchers reported, "These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice."

But the terms of the grant clearly stipulated that the funding could not be used for gain-of-function experiments. The grant conditions also required the researchers to immediately report potentially dangerous results and stop their experiments pending further NIH review. According to both the EcoHealth Alliance and NIH, the results were reported to the agency, but NIH determined that rules designed to restrict gain-of-function research did not apply.

The Intercept consulted 11 scientists who are virologists or work in adjacent fields and hold a range of views on both the ethics of gain-of-function research and the Covid-19 origins search. Seven said that the work appears to meet NIH's criteria for gain-of-function research.

One said that the experiment "absolutely does not meet the bar" for gain-of-function research. "You can't predict that these viruses would be more pathogenic, or even pathogenic at all in people," said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist with the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization at the University of Saskatchewan. "They also did not study transmissibility at all in these experiments," meaning that the scientists did not look at whether the viruses could spread across a population.

Three experts said that, while they did not have enough knowledge of U.S. policies

to comment on whether the research met NIH criteria, the experiment involving humanized mice was unnecessarily risky.

One virologist, Vincent Racaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Columbia University, said while he considered the mouse experiment described in the document to clearly fall into the gain-of-function category, he didn't see it as problematic. "You can do some kinds of gain-of-function research that then has unforeseen consequences and may be a problem, but that's not the case here," said Racaniello.

Robert Kessler, communications manager for EcoHealth Alliance, denied that the work on the humanized mice met the definition of gain-of-function research. Kessler insisted that bat viruses are not potential pandemic pathogens because, he said, "a bat virus is not known to be able to infect humans." The proposal justified the work on WIV1 by explaining that it is "not a select agent" — referring to a list of closely monitored toxins and biological agents that have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health — and "has not been shown to cause human infections, and has not been shown to be transmissible between humans."

But the group's bat coronavirus research was focused on the very threat that bat viruses pose to people. Kessler did acknowledge that, while the original bat coronavirus in the experiment did not spread among humans, the research was designed to gauge how bat coronaviruses could evolve to infect humans.

All but two of the scientists consulted agreed that, whatever title it is given, the newly public experiment raised serious concerns about the safety and oversight of federally funded research. "In my point of view, the debate about the definition of 'gain-of-function' has been too much focused on technical aspects," said Jacques van Helden, a professor of bioinformatics at Aix-Marseille Université. "The real question is whether or not research has the potential to create or facilitate the selection of viruses that might infect humans." The experiments described in the proposal clearly do have that potential, he said.

NIH spokesperson Elizabeth Deatrick said that the agency had considered the research — and decided not to restrict it under its own rules. "In 2016, NIAID determined that the work was not subject to the Gain-of-Function (GoF) research funding pause and the subsequent HHS P3CO Framework," Deatrick wrote, referring to criteria put in place in 2017 to guide the agency's funding decisions about research that involves, or is reasonably anticipated to involve, potential pandemic pathogens.

Republican members of Congress have alleged, without sufficient evidence, that gain-of-function research in Wuhan sparked the coronavirus pandemic. As part of

an inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, they have twice grilled Fauci in Congress on his role as NIAID director.

In a heated exchange in July, Republican Sen. Rand Paul accused Fauci of lying when he claimed that NIH did not fund gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Experts now say that the documents support the contention that NIH funded gain-of-function work, though not in the specific instance where Paul alleged it. "There's no question," said Racaniello, of Columbia University, who pointed to the decreased weight of the mice infected with the chimeric viruses that was described in the research summaries sent to NIH. "From the weight loss, it's gain of function. Tony Fauci is wrong saying it's not."

But the documents do not prove Paul's claim that Fauci was lying, as they do not make clear whether Fauci read them. Nor do they in any way support Paul's allegation that Fauci was "responsible for 4 million people around the world dying of a pandemic" — or that anyone intentionally caused Covid-19. What is clear is that program officers at NIAID, the agency that Fauci oversees, did know about the research.

A paragraph describing the research, as well as two figures illustrating its results, were included in both a 2018 progress report on the bat coronavirus grant and an application for its 2019 renewal. And NIH confirmed that it reviewed them.

"NIH has never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans," the agency said in a statement, echoing remarks by Collins, the NIH director, posted to its website in May. "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease." Similar research funded by NIH had aided in the development of vaccines against the coronavirus, the statement continued.

The White House did not respond to questions about the research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 8:13 PM
To: David Morens b6
Cc: Rasmussen, Angie b6; Peter Daszak b6 Garry, Robert F b6; Edward Holmes b6, Jason Gale b6 Robert Kessler b6; Stephen Goldstein b6
Subject: Re: here's the latest line of attack today...

"she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up".

If she had in fact done that, she'd realize there'd be no news and no need for a second article - except to say "nothing to see here, move along".

Sigh.

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:28 PM David Morens b6 wrote:

> Amen and good for you! You are right that Ebright and his ilk are not only NOT experts but are harmful demogogues. They need to be called out. Because i am in government i can only fo this off the record, but i have done do again and again. Some of them are knowingly promoting false equivalences. If they interviewed a Holocaust survivor, they would say they have to give equal time and space to a Nazi murderer. They have no shame. d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 9, 2021, at 18:40, Rasmussen, Angie [b6] wrote:

Peter and all,

I am so sorry you are still going through all of this. For what it's worth, I broke my rule of talking to disingenuous journalists and sent Mara Hvistendahl a long email telling her exactly what I think of the "experts" she's talked to and setting the record straight about what these FOIAd reports supposedly show. From what I can see, they show that you were reporting your work appropriately to NIH as required, the work itself was done in appropriate biocontainment, and, importantly, you didn't have SARS-CoV-2 or a progenitor. I also explained that previous work was published with WIV1 chimeras and that this type of study precludes doing more dangerous (and technically very difficult) virus isolation.

She wanted to know whether I agreed with her two sources (likely Alina Chan or Richard Ebright, based on her prior story) that this fits the definition of GoF by NIH and I told her no and explained at length why not and the assertions that it was should disqualify any supposed "expert". Took every opportunity to dunk on their amateurish, disingenuous bullshit, while also emphasizing the importance of this work. Mara wrote back defensively, claiming she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up. I am not optimistic that the follow-up will be more balanced, but I did try to provide some juicy quotes about how her "experts" actually have no expertise, and emphasized the profound damage these people have done to this essential research. They make all of us less safe.

Hang in there. Ultimately the truth will come out and it's not going to be from the likes of the Daily Caller's inability to interpret virology data or from Jesse Bloom and all the grifters and conspiracy theorists populating the rabbit hole that he's crawled down.

Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
University of Saskatchewan
Office: [b6] [b6]
She/her
www.vido.org



On Sep 9, 2021, at 3:07 PM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

CAUTION: External to USask. Verify sender and use caution with links and attachments. Forward suspicious emails to phishing@usask.ca

Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain.
https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth- alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

There's a good response from NIH: 'An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

This story is particularly irritating because if you look at the P3CO rules, it's clear they are meant for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans. Let's also not forget that the virus with a higher viral load in mice was actually because it had the spike protein of a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence - In fact, the opposite: the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find. It reduces risk!

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP

Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show

<image003.jpg>

<image007.jpg>

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ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.**

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.

Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.

EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.

"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."

"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.

EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

<image005.jpg>

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)

"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."

The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.

"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.

EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.

EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.

Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.

The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review.

Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

<image006.jpg>

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)

An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."

"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."

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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 8:29 PM
To: 'Garry, Robert F' b6 'Kristian G. Andersen' b6
Cc: 'David Morens' b6 'Edward Holmes' b6; 'Jason Gale' b6; 'Rasmussen, Angie' b6 Robert Kessler b6; 'Stephen Goldstein' b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

That's interesting about Jesse Bloom – I wasn't aware of that work and hadn't really heard of him before this year to be honest. I suspect that like many people his view of his own research is that it's highly professionally managed and carefully controlled re. biosafety. He clearly has a different view of the work at WIV & by other leading Chinese scientists and seems suspicious of their motives in many of his public comments. This can't be based on their published work – it's often excellent. It just seems like a difficulty people have teasing apart their viewpoint about the Chinese Govt from their opinion about individual scientists. Anyone who's been on the ground in China rapidly realizes that the two are not the

same.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

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New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Kristian G. Andersen b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Edward Holmes b6

Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net >; Rasmussen, Angie [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6] Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6], Robert Garry [b6], Edward Holmes [b6], Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>, "Rasmussen, Angie" [b6], Robert Kessler [b6] Stephen Goldstein
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: [b6]

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6] dward Holmes [b6] Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie < [b6]; Robert Kessler < [b6] Stephen Goldstein <
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [redacted b6] wrote:

Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h

NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With

@fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release

<image001.jpg>

New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab

More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.

theintercept.com

<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h The full documents are here: “Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence” https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…

"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…

<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

7h

There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6 ; Kristian G. Andersen b6 >; Edward Holmes b6 ason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

> To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated,

suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6]

Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes <b6> wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
>
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> >
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date:	Fri, 11 Jun 2021 5:01:05 PM -0400
Sent:	Fri, 11 Jun 2021 4:56:54 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: House E&C Republicans Send Second Letter to NIH Director Regarding Grants Issued to EcoHealth Alliance
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
CC:	Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; 06.10.21-Letter-to-NIH-Director-Collins House Rep. E&C Comm. further demands re. EHA.pdf

I really appreciate the support and positive comments from all of you. It's just devastating to read this stuff. The letter actually implies we are a "money-laundering" outfit. Of course they word it carefully:
"How does NIH ensure its grantees do not act as a pass-through or money laundering provider to send U.S. research funding to China?"

They also state: "It has been reported that some Chinese scientists working with EHA are current or former members of the People's Liberation Army of China"

I've attached the letter above.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 4:41 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]g >; Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: Re: House E&C Republicans Send Second Letter to NIH Director Regarding Grants Issued to EcoHealth Alliance

That's exactly what it is, but I still maintain this will all end eventually. Keep the faith.... d

On 6/11/2021 4:16 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Allow me to translate to common language: "Republicans carry on bullying small New York non-profit, demanding they spend weeks of work finding and turning over private documents so they can weaponize them in their fight against Biden, even though they already canceled the funding and the organization doesn't have the staff to do the work." Etc. etc.
>
> Just disgusting. This is like standing in full view of the world with our hands up, while the firing squad raises their guns.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 2:50 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6 < b6 Rich Robert b6
Subject: FW: House E&C Republicans Send Second Letter to NIH Director Regarding Grants Issued to EcoHealth Alliance

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2021 2:48 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: House E&C Republicans Send Second Letter to NIH Director Regarding Grants Issued to EcoHealth Alliance

E&C Republicans Send Second Letter to NIH Director Regarding Grants Issued to EcoHealth Alliance

b6

Washington, D.C. — Republicans on the House Energy and Commerce Committee sent a second letter to National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Francis Collins, today asking NIH to produce grant reports and related documents to inform a complete, scientific investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter states:

"The Chinese Communist government has not yet allowed Chinese scientists to cooperate with an investigation into COVID-19 origins, and has admitted to destroying samples and records pertinent to such an investigation. Thus, it is imperative we assemble all data and information in U.S. possession about bat coronavirus research experiments and lab safety protocols from all sources outside of China, particularly from EcoHealth Alliance (EHA). EHA is an NIH grantee who has been involved in bat coronavirus research in China and has issued grant subawards to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV). It is also essential to collect information about the WIV, the laboratory that was conducting bat coronavirus experiments located in Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak. **As a federal cognizant grant-making agency that funded bat coronavirus research at the WIV through EHA awards, NIH is in a unique position to share publicly detailed research reports in its possession. Importantly, NIH has full access to EHA records and EHA has refused to cooperate with our inquiry. Therefore, it is critical for NIH to cooperate with our objective fact-finding investigation as we continue to collect data about U.S. funded bat coronavirus research."**

The Republicans on Energy and Commerce ask asking for reports and documents related to:

NIH's Award of $2 million to EHA Despite Grant Suspension

NIH's Inadequate Oversight of EHA's Other Support

NIH's Inadequate Oversight of EHA's Delinquent Financial Reports

NIH's Possible Funding of EHA for Duplicative Research in China

NIH's Inadequate Reconciliation of EHA's Grant Subawards

NIH's Inadequate Oversight of EHA's Place of Performance Reporting (China)

NIH's Lack of Visibility into EHA's Grant Subawards

NIH's Inadequate Oversight of EHA's Grant Fund Accounting and Eligibility

NIH's Inadequate Oversight of Its Funded Researchers in China

NIH's Lack of Cooperation with Congressional Oversight Inquiry

CLICK HERE to read the letter to NIH Director Collins.

CLICK HERE to read about the COVID-19 origins investigation.

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Date: Thu, 8 Jul 2021 2:05:37 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 8 Jul 2021 2:05:28 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Some good media and science this week
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" b6
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
CC: Roberts, Rich b6 Peter Daszak b6 ; David Morens b6

I think the fact that we are being resolute and firm, and speak with some common sense is quite powerful

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 8, 2021, at 11:36 AM, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Hi Rich,
I copied yesterday's press reports addressing the Lancet letter (attached as well for your convenience), including the Rupert Murdoch rag MailOnline, which were fine (except Murdoch). I'm getting more media inquiry and I am responding, either totally off the record or by email exchange (I want a record of what I say in case I am quoted out of context or incorrectly).

I don't think we have turned the tide yet but we have surely slowed it down.

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 9:34 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]>; peter hotez [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: RE: Some good media and science this week

Peter:

Indeed, a better week than many. Hopefully, avoiding journalists will continue to pay off.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email:[b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 12:27 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6]
peter hotez [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Some good media and science this week
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Finally great to see some pushback this week against the 'anti-science' agenda out there…

First a bit more pickup of the new Lancet letter. A good piece in the Global Times. I know this is a Chinese Govt outlet, but it's read widely across Asia and in English speaking countries so it does have an impact:
https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202107/1228109.shtml There's also a piece in South China Morning Post:
https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3140052/coronavirus- scientists-again-say-theres-no-evidence-lab-

leak and in The Hill https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/561633- group-of-scientists-argues-covid-19-lab-theory-without-evidence

Second, I've heard that the China scientists from the WHO team also have letter in Lancet coming soon – don't know what it'll say but expect (hope) it calls for balance and patience…

Third – piece from Eddie Holmes and colleagues (incl. some big names) is now up online, laying out substantial evidence for 'natural' origin, including lots of data gathered by WHO team, as well as pointing out lack of evidence for lab leak: https://zenodo.org/record/5075888#.YOX5KuhKhY

Also of interest – China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is paying close attention to the media reports of threats against scientists. Normally this would make me cringe, but EcoHealth is a bit more distanced this time, and the target is a letter from a group of activists pushing a lab leak agenda. It's interesting reading in any case https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202107/1227848.shtml

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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<Lancet Letter Initial press response.docx>
<Lancet Commentary 7-5-2021.pdf>

Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 1:44:36 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 1:44:29 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Could we set up a zoom call together?
From: Alison Andre [b6]>
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Hi David,

Thanks for letting me know. The 5:00pm Tuesday slot seems to work better for the others on the call. I'll keep you on the invite in case anything changes and Peter will plan to update you afterwards.

Best,
Alison

Alison Andre
Executive Assistant to the President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Ave – Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018

[b6] (direct)
1.212.380.4465 (fax)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

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From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
Date: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 12:00 PM
To: Alison Andre [b6]>
Subject: Re: Could we set up a zoom call together?

I can be free on Wednesday, but not the times on Mon and Tue d

On 6/15/2021 11:22 AM, Alison Andre wrote:

> Dear David,
>
> Both Peter D and Peter H are available next week on:
>
> Monday June 21 at 5:00pm ET
> Tuesday June 22 at 5:00pm ET
> Wednesday June 23 at 11:00am ET
>
> Would any of these options work for you? I am following up with the rest of the group now.
>
> Many thanks,
> Alison
>
> On Tue, Jun 15, 2021 at 10:18 AM David Morens [b6] wrote:
>
> > Peter, great, and count me in. My schedule isn't too bad in the next couple weeks
> > d
> > Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2021, at 09:42, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

Dear Robert, Jerry, David, and Peter

I had a good conversation with Peter Hotez at the end of last week – Peter's running a taskforce on the Lancet COVID-19 Commission, and has been following the media frenzy around the COVID origins with a keen eye. As you know, he's been talking publicly about the anti-vaccine movement for a long time, and sees strong parallels between the politically motivated anti-vaxxer movement, and the politically motivated COVID origins conspiracies. He's also dealing with intense harassment similar to the attacks I've been having recently.

Peter and I would really appreciate an opportunity to all meet by Zoom to talk about what we can do together (and separately) to change the narrative and deal with the growing anti-science agenda. Peter is, like many of us, disappointed by the risk-averse nature of the academies (he's a NAM member) and many of the professional societies. He's also well aware of media messaging and how that can be used – he's a regular contributor to CNN and other TV networks. By the way, Peter is one of the inaugural Fellows of the ASTMH, as well as a past member of the NIH Council of Councils.

I've cc'd Alison and Aleksei who can help set up a time for a 1 hour zoom call either later this week or next week. I hope you'll be able to join and really appreciate your efforts.

By the way – Rich – thanks for putting me in touch with Ellie Dehoney at Research!America – she is on the case, albeit she's well aware of the political constraints and the timing right now.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 5:14:01 PM -0400

Sent: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 5:13:59 PM -0400

Subject: Re: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>

To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>;

CC: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]>; Karen Goraleski [b6]>; Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) [b6]>; Jacobson, Julie [b6] [b6]>; Stephen Popper [b6]>; [b6] [b6] [b6] Dan Bausch [b6] [b6]>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]>; Rich Roberts [b6] [b6]>;

Attachments: image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Jerry, i think that's a good idea. I floated the thought of something similar a few days ago

Let's hear again from Karen, Phil, Julie, Joel, Dan Christine and the others. This is doable altho the details are to be determined. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 4, 2021, at 17:08, Keusch, Gerald T [b6]> wrote:

I was thinking along the same lines. At least today two Washington Post journalists said some rational things about the spillover of CoV-2 to the human population.

It seems to me there should be a one year reassessment of the article published last year, with all of us continuing to support the most likely evidence supported pathways rather than the evidence free lab leak scenario, and why the heat of the debate as currently being framed (it is essentially free of any light) will prevent any non-political international science based approach to move forward.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]gov>
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]>; Karen Goraleski [b6]>; Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) [b6] Jacobson, Julie [b6] [b6]; Stephen Popper [b6]>; [b6] Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]; christine- [b6] [b6] Dan Bausch [b6] [b6]>

Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6] [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: FW: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

Dear ASTMH colleagues,

As of today, shockingly, our own Charlie Calisher, who has been involved in so-called GOF research, and who coauthored last year's ASTMH paper, and who has been an esteemed colleague of mine for 45+ years, told the press in two separate interviews that he now thinks the lab leak theory is possible. Peter Palese, an esteemed researcher who has done and been accused of GOF research today said the same. I am very depressed by this, as I know these men and their scientific creds and their integrity.

What is going on?

Possibility no. 1: I am totally crazy and the whole world is a conspiracy that I am blind to.

Possibility no. 2: this is a McCarthy-era witch hunt story and good people are being drawn into it from fear, moral confusion, or a weak inability to evaluate scientific evidence I (I rather hope it's not the latter)….

Before deciding on which of these two, I would recommend seeing the play, or more conveniently and quickly the movie made from it, of Arthur Miller's McCarthy-era classic "The Crucible". I went through all of this as a kid. This whole thing is to me déjà vu all over again.

I don't know what, if anything, ASTMH can or should do, but let us at least agree that this is one of the most dangerous attacks on science in memory.

Surely we should have a voice in some sphere.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
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[b6]

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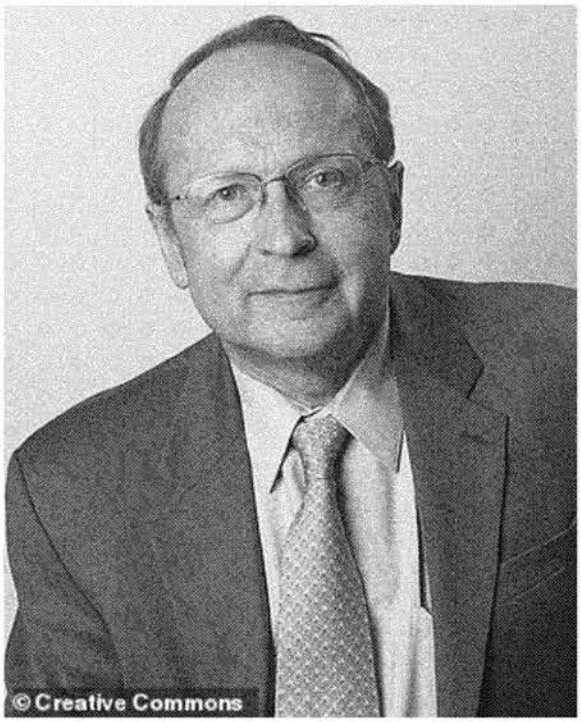
Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

- **EXCLUSIVE: Peter Palese has U-turned after claiming virus was natural in origin**
- **New York microbiologist signed letter in Lancet denouncing all other theories**
- **'Bullying' letter has been described as ostracizing dissenting voices in science**

By Joe Davies For Mailonline
Published: 12:11 EDT, 4 June 2021 | Updated: 13:46 EDT, 4 June 2021



Dr Peter Palese, a professor of microbiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, has U-turned after previously supporting a letter denying that COVID-19 could've leaked from a Wuhan lab

One of the 27 Covid lab leak deniers who signed a letter denouncing the theory that the virus escaped from a lab in Wuhan has now called for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origins, MailOnline can reveal.

Dr Peter Palese, a microbiologist at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, signed the letter in the Lancet in February last year claiming the virus could only have been natural in origin and to suggest otherwise would create 'fear, rumors, and prejudice'.

The 'bullying' letter was criticized by experts for ostracizing anyone offering different opinions on the virus' origins,

dismissing them as conspiracy theorists.
It is only now, nearly 16 months after that letter was published in the world-renowned medical journal, that the theory Covid was accidentally leaked from a lab in Wuhan is being looked at seriously.
US President **Joe Biden** last week ordered intelligence agencies to launch a probe into whether Covid was man-made after all. But **China** immediately hit back and called the suggestion a 'conspiracy'.
And now Professor Palese, 77, has made a significant U-turn, admitting all theories on how Covid came about now need proper investigating.
He told MailOnline: 'I believe a thorough investigation about the origin of the Covid-19 virus is needed.
'A lot of disturbing information has surfaced since the Lancet letter I signed, so I want to see answers covering all questions.'
Asked how he was originally approached to sign the letter and what new information had come to light specifically, Professor Palese declined to comment.
Palese spoke out as America's leading pandemic expert Dr. Anthony Fauci continues to face fevered calls to resign after emails revealed that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
The emails also showed he communicated with Dr. Peter Daszak, the head of a non-profit that funneled U.S. taxpayer dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
Biden through his support behind the embattled expert on Friday, saying: 'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci.'
Dr. Daszak - a key architect of the Lancet letter - runs the New York-based, tax payer-funded non-profit EcoHealth Alliance, which has funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Guardian forced to amend article it published by Peter Daszack to reveal his ties to Wuhan lab as Lancet editor voices support for lab leak theory denouncement

The Guardian was forced to amend an article it published by Dr Peter Daszack to include a reference to his work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
The article, published in June last year, was amended three days after its publication.
In the article titled 'Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn't created in a lab', Dr Daszack said the lab-leak theory was a 'chapter in a tale of blame, misinformation and finger-pointing'.
He characterised lab-leak theorists as 'conspiracy theorists' believing in 'frankenviruses'.
The Guardian was forced to amend the original article to highlight Dr Daszack's ties to the Wuhan lab from where some suggest Covid was accidentally leaked.
The paper said: 'This article was amended on 11 June 2020 to make clear the writer's past work with researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Editor of the Lancet Richard Horton — who published the letter dismissing theories Covid may not have originated naturally in his prestigious scientific journal — Tweeted support for the piece.
He wrote: 'Peter Daszak rejects conspiracy theories about the origins of Covid-19 and he knows more than most of us about coronaviruses.'
Mr Horton has regularly criticised lab-leak theories during the pandemic.
He told the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post it was it is 'not helpful' and 'unfair' to blame China for being the source of the pandemic last year.
He worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli as they investigated and modified coronaviruses.
Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves.
Dr Daszak was one four Brits to sign the letter, including SAGE advisor Sir Jeremy Farrar and two other experts working for the Welcome Trust at the time. The letters' signatories included four others who worked for EcoHealth.
Jamie Metzl, who sits on the World Health Organization's advisory committee on human genome editing and is a form Bill Clinton administration staffer, said Dr Daszak's letter was a 'form of thuggery'.
He said: 'The Lancet letter was scientific propaganda and a form of thuggery and intimidation.
'By labeling anyone with different views a conspiracy theorist, the Lancet letter was the worst form of bullying in full contravention of the scientific method.'
MailOnline has approached the letters' other signatories for comment.
A Freedom of Information Act request revealed Dr Daszak told his fellow signatories in an email that the letter would not be sent under the EcoHealth logo 'and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization of person'.
The emails show he even considered not signing the letter himself, although in the end he did.
The idea, he said was for it to be coming from 'a community supporting our colleagues'.
The letter — titled 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting Covid-19' — praised the Chinese 'who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak'.
It went on to add: 'We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
'Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumors and prejudices that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight

against the virus.'
It ended with the words: 'We declare no competing interests.'
The letter proved so influential that it virtually ended debate on the origin of Covid for more than a year.
Anyone who suggested it could have been man-made was shot down amid accusations of anti-Chinese xenophobia.
Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control told **Vanity Fair** he received death threats after floating the theory that the virus could have been man-made.
He said: 'I was threatened and ostracized because I proposed another hypothesis. I expected it from politicians. I didn't expect it from science.'
Dr Peter Daszak, 55, from Manchester, orchestrated a behind-the-scenes 'bullying' campaign to ensure blame for Covid was directed away from a Chinese lab with which he had worked closely.
Dr Daszack worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli (pictured left) as they investigated and modified coronaviruses. Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves
The theory the virus escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology was originally dismissed by left-leaning media outlets last year as a conspiracy theory after it was mentioned by then-President Donald Trump.
But they have now changed course with the launch of the US investigation.
Liberal US outlets, who slammed Mr Trump when he said a year ago said he had 'a high degree of confidence' that the virus escaped from a lab, have finally conceded that he may have been right — after a year ridiculing the suggestion.

Who signed the letter in The Lancet?

- Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Charles Calisher, Colorado State University
- Dennis Carroll, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, Texas
- Rita Colwell, University of Maryland
- Ronald Corley, NEIDL Institute, Boston
- Christian Drosten, Charité – Universitatsmedizin Berlin, Germany
- Luis Enjuanes, National Center of Biotechnology, Madrid
- Jeremy Farrar, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Hume Field, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Josie Golding, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Alexander Gorbalenya, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, Netherlands
- Bart Haagmans, Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- James Hughes, Emory University, Atlanta
- William Karesh, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Gerald Keusch, Boston University
- Sai Kit Lam, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Juan Lubroth, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy
- John Mackenzie, Curtin University, Perth, Australia
- Larry Madoff, Massachusetts Medical School
- Jonna Mazet, University of California at Davis
- Peter Palese, Icahn School of Medicine, New York
- Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa
- Leo Poon, The University of Hong Kong
- Bernard Roizman, University of Chicago
- Linda Saif, The Ohio State University
- Kanta Subbarao, The University of Melbourne, Australia
- Mike Turner, The Wellcome Trust, London

The lab-leak theory was bolstered last week after it was revealed three workers at the Wuhan lab were hospitalized in November, 2019, months before Covid was first discovered in China.
China claims the virus was transmitted to humans from an animal host, with bats and pangolins both named as potential sources. Many scientists agree that is the most likely theory.
Professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Cambridge Ravi Gupta, a member of Nervtag, said the theory has not yet been investigated with 'scientific rigor'.
He told **The Telegraph**: 'The possibility was not adequately explored due to lack of access to primary records by the WHO group. Lab leak has not been scientifically rejected as a cause using [the] scientific rigor that one would expect.'
A soon to be published report by a team of British and Norwegian experts suggests it is possible to trace the creation of the virus to research in China that began in 2008.
Professor David Relman, a microbiologist at Stanford University, said the theory needs to be investigated by an

international consortium of scientists in collaboration with the UN.
He said: 'Ideally, an investigation would rely on an international consortium of scientists under the auspices of many national academies of science working in partnership, in collaboration with an international governance entity, the UN Secretary General's Office, or something of that sort.'
And Harvard epidemiologist Professor Marc Lipsitch said a lab escape scenario 'remains plausible enough that it should be looked into rigorously'.
He told the paper: 'This is not a fringe position, given that multiple European governments and Dr Tedros have said the same.'
He said that while scientists are not saying a lab origin is more likely than a natural one, a thorough investigation is needed to reveal the cause of the pandemic.
As Dr Daszak's links to the Wuhan lab become clearer, more questions are being asked about his influence over the WHO team that went to China in January and stayed for four weeks searching for answers.
The team was met with resistance in China. Authorities there made them quarantine for two weeks in Wuhan and barred two members completely after they tested positive for coronavirus antibodies.
But critics say the WHO researchers were too cozy with Chinese authorities, who are desperate not to shoulder the blame for a worldwide death toll now approaching 3.6 million.
They claim its members may have been influenced by a tour they took round a 'propaganda museum' which described Wuhan's fight against the virus and the leading role taken by President Xi Jinping.
While China has tried to insist the virus originated elsewhere, academics, politicians and the media have begun to contemplate the possibility it escaped from the WIV - raising suspicions that Chinese officials simply hid evidence of the early spread
The Wuhan Institute of Virology is about 20 miles from the Huanan Seafood Market where the first coronavirus cases are reported to have occurred
In recent weeks, the lab-escape theory has gained ground. Already British intelligence officials, who are helping the US search for the cause of the pandemic that has cost nearly 600,000 American lives, are said to be leaning towards the man-made scenario.
Last week MailOnline revealed two leading scientists had found 'unique fingerprints' in Covid samples that could only have come from lab manipulation.
British Professor Angus Dalgleish and Norwegian scientist Birger Sørensen, wrote that they have had 'prima facie evidence of retro-engineering in China' for a year — but were ignored by academics and major journals.

Did Covid originate in Chinese lab?

The Wuhan Institute of Virology has been collecting numerous coronaviruses from bats ever since the SARS outbreak in 2002.
They have also published papers describing how these bat viruses have interacted with human cells.
US Embassy staff visited the lab in 2018 and 'had grave safety concerns' over the protocols which were being observed at the facility.
The lab is just eight miles from the Huanan wet market which is where the first cluster of infections erupted in Wuhan.
The market is just a few hundred yards from another lab called the Wuhan Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (WHCDC).
The WHCDC kept disease-ridden animals in its labs, including some 605 bats.
Those who support the theory argue that Covid-19 could have leaked from either or both of these facilities and spread to the wet market.
Most argue that this would have been a virus they were studying rather than one which was engineered.
Last year a bombshell paper from the Beijing-sponsored South China University of Technology recounted how bats once attacked a researcher at the WHCDC and 'blood of bat was on his skin.'
The report says: 'Genome sequences from patients were 96% or 89% identical to the Bat CoV ZC45 coronavirus originally found in Rhinolophus affinis (intermediate horseshoe bat).'
It describes how the only native bats are found around 600 miles away from the Wuhan seafood market and that the probability of bats flying from Yunnan and Zhejiang provinces was minimal.
In addition there is little to suggest the local populace eat the bats as evidenced by testimonies of 31 residents and 28 visitors.
Instead the authors point to research being carried out within 300 yards at the WHCDC.
One of the researchers at the WHCDC described quarantining himself for two weeks after a bat's blood got on his skin, according to the report. That same man also quarantined himself after a bat urinated on him.
And he also mentions discovering a live tick from a bat - parasites known for their ability to pass infections through a host animal's blood.
'The WHCDC was also adjacent to the Union Hospital (Figure 1, bottom) where the first group of doctors were infected during this epidemic.' The report says.
'It is plausible that the virus leaked around and some of them contaminated the initial patients in this epidemic, though

solid proofs are needed in future study.'
Professor Dalgleish, 71, a vaccine researcher and professor of oncology at St George's Hospital, last year struggled to find a publisher for his paper suggesting the virus's spike protein contains artificially inserted sequences.
He said the research was shunned by the scientific community, who did not want to threaten China or be seen to be agreeing with President Donald Trump — who was a big advocate for the theory the virus was leaked from a lab at the time.
The oncologist said: 'The changes required to infect humans are extremely unlikely to have occurred naturally.'
Professor Dalgleish — who ran for Parliament as a UKIP candidate in 2015 — said the President's use of the terms 'Wuhan flu' and 'China virus' damaged scientific debate on the subject.
He told The Times: 'I was basically ostracized. I was fearful — really frightened by the way I was being treated. I was told I was not an expert on coronaviruses and I should just shut up.
'We couldn't believe people with whom we'd collaborated and published papers with in the past would shun us — I was warned I was out of my depth and I shouldn't get into this and I'd make a fool of myself.'
And just last week President Joe Biden ordered another look at the theory as part of a wide-ranging intelligence investigation into the pandemic's origins. He felt it so urgent that he put a 90-day deadline for a conclusion.
Emails from Dr Anthony Fauci, Mr Biden's chief medical advisor, show that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
Fauci says those emails, obtained by Buzzfeed, have been taken out of context.
But he did U-turn about where the virus may have originated this week, saying 'you never know'.
One of them was from Dr Daszak, who thanked Dr Fauci for pushing back on the man-made theory.
In April, Dr Drazak wrote: 'I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for Covid-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Even WHO's Ethiopian director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the report was not extensive enough and more work needed to be done to discover the cause of Covid.
'As far as WHO is concerned, all hypotheses remain on the table,' he said.
'This report is a very important beginning, but it is not the end.'
America is looking at the theory seriously, leading to China hitting out at the 'dark history' of the US intelligence community after President Biden's probe was announced.
Lijian Zhao, foreign ministry spokesman who has been Beijing's point-man in trying to pin blame for the pandemic outside the country's borders, accused the US of trying to shift blame away from its own high Covid case and death counts - and suggested security services may be involved in a cover-up.
Meanwhile Hu Xijin, editor of the state mouthpiece Global Times newspaper, accused Biden of trying to discredit a WHO investigation which concluded that a lab leak is 'unlikely' — although critics have previously blasted that report as a China-centric whitewash.
China's American embassy also hit out, accusing Biden and his security services of being 'fixated on political manipulation and (the) blame game' in a statement on its website.
No10 officials have called for investigators to probe all theories as to how the Covid pandemic began.
Dominic Cummings this week revealed the PM held meetings when the crisis first began to discuss whether it had 'escaped' from a laboratory and whether the disease had been 'engineered'.

The Lancet letter in full: 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19'

We are public health scientists who have closely followed the emergence of 2019 novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) and are deeply concerned about its impact on global health and wellbeing.
We have watched as the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China, in particular, have worked diligently and effectively to rapidly identify the pathogen behind this outbreak, put in place significant measures to reduce its impact, and share their results transparently with the global health community. This effort has been remarkable.
We sign this statement in solidarity with all scientists and health professionals in China who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak.
We are all in this together, with our Chinese counterparts in the forefront, against this new viral threat.
The rapid, open, and transparent sharing of data on this outbreak is now being threatened by rumours and misinformation around its origins.
We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
Scientists from multiple countries have published and analysed genomes of the causative agent, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), and they overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging pathogens.
This is further supported by a letter from the presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and by the scientific communities they represent.

Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumours, and prejudice that jeopardise our global collaboration in the fight against this virus.
We support the call from the Director-General of WHO to promote scientific evidence and unity over misinformation and conjecture.
We want you, the science and health professionals of China, to know that we stand with you in your fight against this virus.
We invite others to join us in supporting the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of Wuhan and across China. Stand with our colleagues on the frontline!
We speak in one voice. To add your support for this statement, sign our letter online. LM is editor of ProMED-mail. We declare no competing interests.

Sen. Rand Paul says Fauci's emails paint a 'disturbing picture' about what he knew about work inside the Wuhan lab

Sen. **Rand Paul** continued his blitz on Dr. **Anthony Fauci** in the wake of Fauci's email dump, telling Fox that Fauci knew the US was funding gain-of-function research in Wuhan even though he continues to deny it.
The Republican from **Kentucky** told Fox Thursday night that Fauci's emails 'tell me early on that he was very worried' before the pandemic even started.
'There's a disturbing picture. He gets an email or he gets notification of what's going on in Wuhan and immediately sends something to his assistant saying, "We must meet immediately." And in the subject line it says gain of function research in Wuhan.'
While Paul and other Republicans have come after Fauci, Biden reaffirmed his confidence in Fauci in a Friday morning press conference.
The president had actually left the room where he gave the speech when DailyMail.com shouted a question to him about the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.
President Biden stuck his head back in to answer.
'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci,' he said.
Paul's Thursday night interview on Fox - and weeks of public comments that - makes it clear that senator doesn't share have the same faith in Fauci, and he alluded to a February 1, 2020 email exchange between Fauci and Principal NIAID Director Dr. Hugh Auchincloss.
Auchincloss wrote to Fauci to discuss a paper Fauci sent him appearing to question if National Institute of Health (NIH) grants funded gain-of-function research relating to coronaviruses.
In the email to Fauci, Auchincloss said, 'The paper you sent me says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but have since been reviewed and approved by NIH.'
He also noted that a colleague would 'try to determine if we have any distant ties to this work abroad.'
This was one of the 3,200-plus emails obtained and published by Buzzfeed News on Tuesday.
The NIH awarded a $3.7 million grant to EcoHealth Alliance, which is based in the United States, to study the risk of coronaviruses emerging from bats in 2014. EcoHealth Alliance in turn distributed nearly $600,000 of that funding to its collaborator, the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
The senator also took a shot Thursday at the embattled chief medical advisor on Twitter after Amazon and Barnes & Noble pulled his book from their sites because it wasn't supposed to be released until November: 'Oh, I don't know. I think they should publish it. I love science fiction.'
Paul's interview came after Fauci dismissed the recent revelations that he was warned that COVID-19 may have been 'engineered' and said that the emails are easily misunderstood.
During a Wednesday interview on the Donlon Report, Fauci said of the emails, 'The only trouble is they are really ripe to be taken out of context where someone can snip out a sentence in an email without showing the other emails, and say "based on an email from Dr. Fauci, he said such and such" where you don't really have the full context.'
Fauci added that the Wuhan lab 'is a very large lab to the tune of hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars.'
'The grant that we're talking about was $600,000 over five years for an average of about $125,000 to $140,000 a year,' he said.
Fauci also said on Donlon that he 'can't guarantee everything that is going on in the Wuhan lab.'
Paul has been on Fox twice since a trove of Fauci's emails - dating from January to June 2020 - were obtained and published by Buzzfeed on Tuesday.
Within hours of publication, Paul tweeted '#firefauci' and other Republicans, like Majorie Greene Taylor, followed suit.
Until recently, the Wuhan lab leak was at best a fringe theory, and it has been mostly laughed off by many scientists. The general consensus on COVID-19's origin was that it jumped from a bat to a human in the Wuhan market.
Despite the recent scrutiny, Fauci continues to say that's what he believes happened.
During Senate committee hearings in early May, Paul sparred with Fauci over the two origin theories and said the lab leak is a real possibility that's not being acknowledged.
Instead of investigating the cause of COVID-19 'government authorities - self-interested in continuing gain of function research - say there's nothing to see here,' Paul said during the May 11 hearing.
'To arrive at the truth, the U.S. government should admit that the Wuhan Virology Institute was experimenting to enhance

the coronavirus' ability to infect humans,' he said.
The lab leak theory is now one that President Joe Biden wants investigated.
Last week, Biden ordered a 90-day review to investigate the possibility and several high-profile public health experts have come out in recent months saying they believe that's how COVID-19 started.
British intelligence also reportedly assessed the theory recently and upgraded its likeliness from 'remote' to 'feasible'.

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Date: Tue, 20 Jul 2021 4:32:53 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 20 Jul 2021 4:32:52 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Two good articles on COVID origins
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]>
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>;
CC: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6];

I was expecting a Rand Paulian rant. I hope most of the calls are like this one. OK, it takes time to listen, but it says there are still a few thoughtful people out there. Maybe not in Kentucky unless the area code was informative?

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 4:29 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>
Subject: Re: Two good articles on COVID origins

This is what we have to listen to every day, in between trips to the vomitorium,worth a laff perhaps (attached very short audio)... d

On 7/20/2021 2:00 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> A balanced review from Snopes:
>
> https://www.snopes.com/news/2021/07/16/lab- leak-evidence/
>
> and an NPR piece on Michael Worobey who signed that Science letter calling for more work on the lab leak, but now having seen further data on the geography of early cases, and on live mammals for sale in markets in Wuhan, believes the animal origin is far more likely than a lab leak.
>
> https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2021/07/19/1016005828/new- data-leads-to-rethinking-once-more-where-the-pandemic-actually-began
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: [b6]

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:30 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: 'David Morens' <[b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' <[b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]g >
Subject: Tony Fauci's testimony today
Importance: High

I'm delighted to see Tony Fauci fighting to let everyone understand clear line between what is gain-of-function (work EcoHealth does NOT do), and what is not Gain of function (work EcoHealth did do with Wuhan).

It's a shame it will generate publicity, but he did this so well today that I'm hoping it might help get rid of the willful misinformation the Republicans are engaging in…

Here's a news piece on it https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/563874- fauci-paul-doesnt-know-what-hes-talking-about-and-i-want-to-say-that , and there's some pretty exciting video to watch.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFoaBV_cTek

Well done David on your briefing and practice runs!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak <[b6]
Cc: David Morens <[b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: My AMA podcast on the origins of COVID19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14 &feature=youtu.be

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a

'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora < b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков < b6 >; Leendertz, Fabian < b6 >; Peter Daszak < b6 >; LeendertzF < b6 >; Keith Hamilton < b6 >; John Watson < b6 >; DEBBICHE, Hassene < b6 >; Thea Kølsen Fischer < b6 >; BAERT, Primaël < b6 >; SHEATH, Danny < b6 >; Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) < b6 >; STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan < b6 >; DRURY, Patrick Anthony < b6 >; Ken Maeda < b6 >; M.P.G. Koopmans < b6 >; Hayman, David < b6 >; IVANOVIC, Dragana < b6 >; Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Farag < b6 >; Dominic Dwyer < b6 >
Cc: RYAN, Michael J < b6 >; Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria < b6 >; BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim < b6 >

Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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<C.L.28.2021 (Origins of SARS-CoV-2).pdf>

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--
David M Morens b6

Date:	Tue, 26 Apr 2022 9:59:16 PM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 26 Apr 2022 9:59:12 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: My letter to NAM today: FW: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations
From:	"Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]>;
CC:	Peter Daszak [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Jeff Sturchio [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Peter H,

I think we need to wait for a response from NAM, Fuentes-Afflick or Victor. In the meanwhile we think about the constituency at the Academies we can tap into. Your conversation with Charlie Rice (he is a member of NAM and NAS) when you were at Rockefeller University would be a good one to follow up with, at the right time, that is when we are all doing our best to mobilize support from Academy members. One of my colleagues on the (former Lancet) Task Force is Linda Saif, who is a member of NAS and who might be willing to help mobilize the veterinary/One Health constituency at NAM. I have linked Art Reingold and Sten Vermund into my email to Victor, and they are willing to pursue this when the time is right, and they are both probably in different sections (more public health and epidemiology) than I am, and that's good to get more people on board as responding to somebody you know is more likely to generate support than contacting somebody you know of but don't know.

It might be worthwhile to think about a call on Friday some time for two reasons. First, if NAM has responded to Peter D. Second to discuss when to contact people like Jon Cohen at Science or Betsy McKay at the Wall Street Journal. Perhaps Alexi can send around a doodle poll to see what's possible?

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:52 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6] Jeff Sturchio [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Re: My letter to NAM today: FW: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations

Just tell me when I need to weigh in, I'm beyond disgusted

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Apr 26, 2022, at 7:47 PM, Keusch, Gerald T b6 wrote:

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Good one. Lets see the response.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:18 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6; Roberts, Rich b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6; Jeff Sturchio b6; David Morens b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: My letter to NAM today: FW: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations
Importance: High

Dear all,

Please have a look at the email below that I just sent to Victor Dzau, Elena Fuentes-Afflick and Kim Se of NAM. Given that NAM's already spoken with reporters, I don't feel any breach of confidence sharing this with you.

I doubt it will sway them, but I believe they're making a huge mistake to fall for this political aggression, which is

carefully designed to win over the public with a juicy narrative of deceit and corruption, and to play on the weaknesses of our institutions like NAM. It's tragic actually.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:14 PM
To: 'Dzau, Victor J. b6 'Fuentes-Afflick, Elena' b6
'Kim, Se' b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b6 g)' b6 >
Subject: Reporter inquiries re. the confidential NAM process of dealing with alleged code of conduct violations
Importance: High

Dear Victor, Elena and Kim,

I was very concerned to have received three separate press inquiries today regarding a story in *Fox News* (https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house- republicans-ecohealth-alliance-concealed-data). I am not planning to respond to these questions.

As you can see in the *Fox News* article, yet another partisan political letter has been made public with unsubstantiated and clearly politically motivated allegations against our organization and myself. In the article, an aide to Representative McMorris Rodgers states that "*After receiving our letter, NAM notified us they had opened an internal review of Daszak's behavior, per our request…We believe this letter about EcoHealth's potential false statements and fraud is relevant to the ongoing investigation the NAM is conducting into Peter Daszak, so we have sent NAM a copy of this letter as well.*"

In your letters to me, and by phone, you reassured me repeatedly that the process of deciding whether to investigate these allegations was confidential on the NAM side, and you urged me to also treat correspondence with NAM on this issue as confidential, which I have. However, it appears that this is not the case, in that NAM has informed the Republican staff of intent to review my 'behavior' and that this has now been made public, as I indicated could happen in my letter to you last week, April 22, 2022.

It seems rather evident that the letters you have received are part of an ongoing and systematic political campaign to destroy EcoHealth Alliance's reputation and my own, with the ultimate target of undermining the NIH, Dr. Fauci, and the Biden White House. They are hyper-partisan and disingenuous

in their goals, in that the letters and the fact they are simultaneously made public on *Fox News* and *Twitter*, are clearly designed to push a false narrative. EcoHealth Alliance has repeatedly and publicly refuted such allegations in our responses to NIH that have since been made public (e.g. https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus- study-of-bats-in-china-met-nih-grant-requirements-ecohealth-says-11635441406) and in carefully given interviews with the press (e.g. https://www.science.org/content/article/we- ve-done-nothing-wrong-ecohealth-leader-fights-charges-his-research-helped-spark-covid-19 and https://theintercept.com/2022/03/11/covid- nih-ecohealth-peter-daszak-interview/).

Given the developments today, I urge you to reconsider your decision to investigate these allegations, which have nothing to do with my adherence to the rules of conduct of NAM members, and to respond to the Republican accusers to state that they do not rise to the level whereby an investigation is warranted. I believe this is justified by the one-sided political nature of the attacks, the lack of prima facie evidence for the allegations, and the fact that your communications have already been made public in defiance of the confidentiality of the matter that NAM and EcoHealth Alliance have maintained. I'm very concerned that this public witch hunt will be damaging not just for myself and our organization, which has consistently produced cutting edge research on emerging diseases that has been fundamental to a series of NAM publications, but that it will also be damaging to NAM and the Academies in general. If you do not stand up to these politicized attacks at this point, they will surely continue and drag in other members of the Academies who have been publicly criticized and accused by the same politicians for the last two years, and who are being continually attacked by various fringe groups espousing conjectural hypotheses about the origins of SARS-CoV-2, in spite of the increasing scientific evidence supporting the spillover from bats through an intermediary host to humans.

This active political interference with stewardship of science, the integrity of science, and the pursuit of knowledge by scientists, goes well beyond EcoHealth Alliance and threatens the integrity of the entire U.S. scientific enterprise. It is no different except in volume than the incontrovertible political interference by Donald Trump in the scientific enterprise at NIH in April 2020, which prompted you to issue a public statement about the separation of politics from science in response. Your words and those of Marcia McNutt ring even more true at this point: *"Any efforts to discredit the best science and scientists threaten the health and welfare of us all"* (https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/2020/09/nas- and-nam-presidents-alarmed-by-political-interference-in-science-amid-pandemic). EcoHealth Alliance, myself, the NIH, Tony Fauci, NAM and you are in the cross-hairs now because NIH failed to protect science and scientists from Trump's overtly political, and sadly successful, effort to close down research that was politically inconvenient. I worry that this is just the beginning of the goal of this anti-science agenda, and for that reason it demands brave, bold, and decisive action.

Yours sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Thu, 6 Jun 2024 6:23:57 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 6 Jun 2024 6:23:44 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Media request: NCLA document preservation letter
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: peter hotez [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] David Morens [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]

Apologies Peter - you aren't mentioned - my mistake!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Jun 6, 2024, at 5:21 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Dear all - we've heard about this from reporters - it's a complete "nothing burger" according to our lawyers but I just thought I'd let you know since we're all mentioned. There's a link to the document in the email chain below
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> Peter Daszak
>
> President
> EcoHealth Alliance
>
> 520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA
>
> www.EcoHealthAlliance.org
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> **From:** Peter Daszak [b6] >
> **Date:** June 6, 2024 at 5:18:18 PM CDT

To: Joyce Li [b6] >
Cc: Jeff Sturchio [b6] >, Aleksei Chmura [b6] >, John Feigelson [b6] >
Subject: Re: Media request: NCLA document preservation letter

Just so you're all aware this document preservation letter is related to a suit against NIH re Francis Collins et al talking about the Great Barrington Declaration leaders. They're now alleging that the Morens foia issue suggests there are hidden emails that they now want to find. Our lawyers have reviewed this and tell me there is nothing for me to do and they will deal with it in due course. It's essentially of no consequence for us and we shouldn't be amplifying the story by responding to reporters requests.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Jun 5, 2024, at 1:06 PM, Joyce Li [b6] > wrote:
>
> FYI -- this is a small right-leaning pub so not sure if we need to respond.
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ---------
> From: **Greg Piper** <gpiper@justthenews.com>
> Date: Wed, Jun 5, 2024 at 1:57 PM
> Subject: Media request: NCLA document preservation letter
> To: <communications@ecohealthalliance.org >
>
> Hello, this is Greg Piper at Just the News in DC. Peter received this document preservation letter from the New Civil Liberties Alliance related to its lawsuit Murthy v. Missouri, and I wanted to get his response.
>
> https://nclalegal.org/filing/notice- of-request-to-preserve-all-documents-and-electronically-stored-information-as-defined-by-federal-rule-of-civil-procedure-34/
>
> My deadline is 10 pm Eastern, thanks.

--
Greg Piper
Reporter
Just the News
gpiper@justthenews.com
b6

Date: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 7:06:44 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 7:06:35 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.
From: "Rasmussen, Angie" b6
To: Edward Holmes b6 >;
CC: Garry, Robert F b6 David Morens b6 Jason Gale b6 Peter Daszak b6 >; b6

Hooper is basically the original lab leaker, so this tracks.

Incidentally if anyone is in need of a bitter laugh, check out the "About Edward Hooper" section of that website.

As the weeks and months passed after the Royal Society meeting, it became increasingly clear that a carefully-organised whitewash was being carried out, partly by the original vaccinators (who had, among other things, leant on witnesses to change key aspects of their stories), and partly by well-meaning research scientists who firstly were unwilling or unable to imagine that their peers might not be telling the truth, and secondly could not countenance the possibility that their own work of the last ten years might be erroneous.

Stung by this realisation, I decided that I had no alternative but to continue my independent investigation into the origins of the pandemic.

This dude's complete lack of self-awareness and apparent unshakeable confidence that his hypothesis is correct without a shred of affirmative evidence and a mountain of data suggesting otherwise is matched only by his contemporaries Wade, Chan, Ridley, Birrell, et al.

Angie

Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
University of Saskatchewan
Office: b6 b6
She/her
www.vido.org

On Aug 17, 2021, at 4:43 PM, Edward Holmes b6 wrote:

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And just to complete the circle, Hooper has weighed in on COVID origins. Have a wild guess if he thinks there has been a conspiracy:

b6 19-and-the-origins-of-aids-debate/

http://www.aidsorigins.com/blunders- and-blunderbusses/

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E b6

On 18 Aug 2021, at 8:36 am, Garry, Robert F b6 wrote:

Yes – Eddie and I have had some remembrances of our separate interactions with Hooper. There are a lot of parallels.

The current batch of Lab Leakers are giving Hooper a run for the money in the crazy Department.

I have nothing at all against people writing books [like Hooper or Sir Jeremy for that matter], but it's not a coincidence that several of the most annoying Lab Leakers are attempting to selling books.

b

From: David Morens b6
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 5:20 PM
To: Edward Holmes b6
Cc: Jason Gale b6 >, Peter Daszak b6 g >, Robert Garry b6 b6 " < b6
b6
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

mber Nick was fired from the New York Times
and has a history of controversial stuff including truly appalling neo-eugenics crap.
Sadly, he has even influenced Don McNeil, another great journalist also fired from the NYT. I have always admired Don, a protege of sorts of the NyT's Larry Altman, but even he fell under the crazy spell

I greatly admire highly intellectual journalists as a whole, but as a group they seem to have a tenfency to go off the deep end

Is there something about this era? Did aliens put crazy-drugs in our drinking water???

Anyone remember Edward Hooper and The River, a best seller of 20+ years ago in which the author impugned, harassed, and nearly drove to the grave one of virology's heros, the late Hilary Koprowski. All from a cockamamie book length best selling slander that Hilary started the AiDS epidemic with 1950s polio vaccine trials

I knew Hilary well, the tragedy of slander by smart and smarmy journalists is real

You cannot make this shit up!!!!!

Something is very, very wrong about the interface between science and science journalism. Jason, we need folks like you to take note and follow breadcrumbs out of this forest. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens

On Aug 17, 2021, at 17:34, Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:

It really doesn't get much lower than Wade. It really doesn't.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

On 18 Aug 2021, at 7:00 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:

Please let me know when you can share it under embargo. I know Science goes mental when their own journos don't get stuff first. But it's helpful to have the luxury of time to properly read papers without the haste to get something out ASAP. JG
----- Original Message -----
From: Peter Daszak [b6] >
To: JASON GALE, [b6]
CC: [b6]
[b6]
At: 08/18/21 00:51:28 UTC+10:00

Add to that a preprint we'll be posting next week that suggests 50,000 – 400,000 people are actually infected by bat SARSr-CoVs in SE Asia each year, and a comment from the international members of the WHO team that'll be in Nature this week or next.

As long as these articles keep up their 'drip, drip' with actual new data and analyses, all the lab leak hypothesis has is re-hashing of the same innuendo-filled vitriol.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:30 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: [b6] [b6]; [b6]
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

Thanks Peter,

Totally agree that It's quite sad to see the attacks on scientists and science from Wade. It's the very basis for the "lab leak" hypothesis, so no surprise.

Wade is old enough to know this, but anyone that thinks that Jeremy Farrar and Tony Fauci are part of the "problem" has literally [in the case of Tony] not been paying attention for 50 years.

Looking forward to Wade and his ilk going ballistic as two new papers favoring natural origin appear shortly in *Cell* and *Science*.

Bob G.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 7:40 AM
To: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6], Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: '[b6] Kang[b6]>, "[b6], Robert Garry[b6] [b6] [b6]
Subject: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Nicholas Wade's at it again – another miserable innuendo-filled attack on science and the process by which scientists email, talk and come to decisions. Nothing new of course, just trash journalism published in a pseudo-scientific journal. Pretty shameless smear on some of us – no facts of course, no sue-able accusations, just snipey comments and excerpts from Social Media. It's as if we can't now be scientists and actually colleagues who break bread and share a glass any more.

https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/how- covid-19s-origins-were-obscured-by-the-

east-and-the-west/

The irony is in the ending – he claims the lab leak is an albatross hanging around China's neck that they won't be able to shake off until they open up the lab videos, books, freezers etc. The truth is his and others continued attacks are what put the albatross there in the first place. Does anyone really believe that if China gave access to all the above and no further evidence was found, that these folks would simply say "OK, it wasn't a lab leak after all"!!!

Cheers,

Peter

How COVID-19's origins were obscured, by the East and the West

By Nicholas Wade | August 17, 2021

Error! Filename not specified. A bus carrying a team of experts from the World Health Organization departs an airport in Wuhan on Jan. 14, 2021, after arriving in the Chinese city to investigate the origins of the coronavirus pandemic. That investigation is widely seen as having been obstructed by Chinese authorities. (Photo by Kyodo News via Getty Images)

Some 20 months after the Covid-19 pandemic first broke out, its origins remain obscure. A vigorous campaign of concealment by the Chinese authorities is the principal reason. But China received considerable help, strange to say, from senior medical research officials in the United Kingdom and United States who mishandled and effectively derailed the initial inquiry into the virus's origins.

The mishandling began at a pivotal teleconference held on February 1, 2020. The organizer was Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, a large medical research charity in London. News of the conference emerged with the release this June of emails from the office of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Farrar supplied further information in his book *Spike*, published on July 22.

The conference was held to discuss the unanimous view of a group of virologists that the SARS2 virus had been manipulated in a lab. Yet within a few days of the meeting, the virologists abruptly reversed their conclusion. The meeting's participants were later involved in two letters to scientific journals that stated the virus must have emerged naturally and that condemned any suggestion of manipulation as a conspiracy theory. These two letters, to *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*, shaped the views of the mainstream media for more than a

year.

Error! Filename not specified. Letters published by *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* in early 2020.

Even today, no one can say for sure whether the SARS2 virus emerged naturally or escaped from a lab. Much less could anyone have been sure back then. If the conferees had stuck to known facts, they would have left the question open to the two hypotheses, and the full exploration of the virus's origins might not have been sidetracked for over a year.

More significant, the Chinese government would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to manipulate the World Health Organization (WHO) into setting terms of reference that favored China's obstructive goals and kept WHO inspectors who visited China this February from accessing records vital to understanding the origin of the pandemic. China now insists those terms of reference cannot be changed, blocking further investigation into the origin of the SARS2 virus. "The two groups that produced the infamous letters in *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* paved the way for the Chinese government and helped enormously to facilitate all of that," says Milton Leitenberg, an arms control expert at the University of Maryland. The reversal of the virologists' conclusion about SARS2's artificial origin is thus a matter of some significance.

At 10:32 p.m. on the evening before the February 1 conference, Fauci had received an electrifying memo from Kristian G. Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research institute in California. Andersen reported that the virus seemed to be man-made. "The unusual features of the virus make up a really small part of the genome," he wrote, referring presumably to a genetic component known as a furin cleavage site, which greatly enhances the virus's infectivity, "so one has to look really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentially) look engineered."

Error! Filename not specified. A key email from Kristian Andersen to Anthony Fauci.

Andersen went on to note that "after discussions earlier today, Eddie, Bob, Mike and myself all find the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory"— meaning that, in their unanimous view, the virus didn't come from nature. "Those opinions could still change," Andersen added. Eddie is Edward C. Holmes of the University of Sydney. Bob is Robert F. Garry of Tulane University. Mike is Michael Farzan at Scripps Research.

The message sent Fauci into a whirlwind of activity. "You will have tasks today that must be done," he emailed his deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, two hours later at 12:29 am on February 1. One of these urgent tasks evidently concerned NIAID funds that had been passed, via the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, to Zhengli Shi, China's leading bat virus expert, at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci was doubtless anxious to check whether his agency's funding of Shi's work had complied with US law, which banned funding gain-of-function research from 2014 to 2017 and required it be reported to a government panel thereafter. "Gain of function" refers to research in

which a pathogen's ability to cause disease is enhanced. Auchincloss replied a few hours later that efforts were underway to ascertain "if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Meanwhile Farrar, who had independently heard of the Andersen team's conclusion from Holmes, says in *Spike* that he arranged a teleconference set for 7 p.m. London time, convenient for both Washington and Australia, where Holmes was based.

The participants included Fauci and possibly his nominal boss, Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health. (Farrar says in *Spike* that Collins was present, but Collins's name is not on the list of invitees in the Fauci emails.) Officials on the UK side were Farrar and Patrick Vallance, the chief scientific adviser to the UK government. The others were mostly virologists, including Andersen, Holmes, and Andrew Rambaut of the University of Edinburgh.

Far from being selected at random, the conferees were associated through a complicated web of relationships, a sort of virologists' old boy network that included senior medical officials in China. Farrar was well acquainted with George Fu Gao, the head of China's counterpart of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has described Gao as an "old friend," who in fact had called a month earlier, on December 31, 2019, to tell Farrar about the initial cases in Wuhan of what turned out to be Covid-19. Farrar says in his book *Spike* that on the weekend of the teleconference, he called another highly placed Chinese official, Chen Zhu, China's minister of health from 2007 to 2013, to tell him of "rumours that the novel coronavirus could be the result of a lab accident." As for Holmes, he has published many papers both with Farrar and with Gao and has been a guest professor at Gao's CDC from 2014 until 2020.

Because of these varied connections, it seems likely that Chinese authorities knew about the conference almost from the moment it occurred and, if so, would have had the opportunity to influence deliberations that followed it.

At the conference there was a notable imbalance of power between the virologists and the officials. Fauci and Farrar together control a large portion of the funds available for virological research in the Western world. A virologist keen to continue his career would be very attentive to their wishes. Two of the conference participants had multimillion-dollar grant proposals under final review with NIAID at the time of the call.

Almost all references to what was discussed at the teleconference have been redacted from the Fauci emails under exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act. The conference would doubtless have included explanation from Andersen and Holmes as to why they had concluded the previous evening that the virus had been altered through laboratory manipulation. "Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call," Farrar writes in one of the Fauci emails.

RELATED:

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of

Error! Filename not specified. A Jeremy Farrar email about the teleconference.

Whatever was said at the meeting, it was followed by a remarkable and almost immediate about-face. By at most three days later, Andersen had executed a 180 degree turn in his views about the virus. In an email of February 4, 2020 to Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, which had directed NIAID funds to Shi, Andersen wrote, "The main crackpot theories going around at the moment relate to this virus being somehow engineered with intent and that is demonstrably not the case." The email was obtained by U.S. Right to Know, an investigatory group.

Participants have not explained what was said at the meeting or found in the days immediately following it to induce the change of mind. Media offices at the Wellcome Trust and NIAID declined to comment on this article. Andersen, Holmes and Rambaut did not reply to emails seeking an account of the reversal.

Farrar, not Fauci, seems to have been the leader in the teleconference's deliberations. "This is not my area of expertise so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy," Fauci wrote on February 13 to a CDC official. US officials were not to take the lead in this pivotal inquiry.

Error! Filename not specified. Fauci's "leaving it all to Jeremy" email.

Farrar had a direct hand in the two letters that went out to the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*. He was a signatory of the *Lancet* letter, a draft of which Daszak, the organizer of the letter, began circulating just five days after the conference. The letter sought to squelch all discussion of the possibility that the virus had escaped from a lab by deriding it as a conspiracy theory. When Daszak wrote an article in the *Guardian* elaborating on the same theme, Farrar promoted it with a tweet, saying "as always worth reading @PeterDaszak."

Farrar also recruited the five authors who drew up the *Nature Medicine* letter, his spokesman told the writer Ian Birrell. (The spokesman referred to the *Lancet* letter but evidently meant the *Nature Medicine* letter, which has five authors.) The *Nature Medicine* letter, accepted on March 6 and published on March 17, 2020, presented a detailed and influential case that the virus had emerged naturally from animals. Its authors were Andersen, Rambaut, W. Ian Lipkin, Holmes and Garry.

In his book *Spike*, Farrar portrays the events between the February 1 conference and publication of the two medical journal letters as a judicious process in which he held an agnostic view and played no role other than asking questions. "On a spectrum if 0 is nature and 100 is release—I am honestly at 50!" Farrar says he emailed to Fauci and Collins a day after the conference. But if that were honestly so, he fails to explain his switch from 50 to 0 when signing the *Lancet* letter a few days later.

According to *Spike*, it wasn't until March, "after the addition of

important new information, endless analyses, intense discussions and many sleepless nights" that Andersen and his four fellow virologists "were ready to pronounce on the origins of the novel coronavirus." Why then was Andersen, the virologists' leader, ready to pronounce just 3 days after the conference that lab release was a conspiracy theory? Farrar's account does not match with the available facts.

Nor does Andersen's. In a June interview with the *New York Times*, he painted a picture that includes a change of mind on the possible engineering of the virus "in a matter of days, while we worked around the clock," and then that quick reversal being buttressed by drawn-out research.

"This is a textbook example of the scientific method, where a preliminary hypothesis is rejected in favor of a competing hypothesis as more data become available and analyses are completed," he said in a statement released by Scripps Research after his Jan 31 email to Fauci had become public. "I cautioned in that same email that we would need to look at the question much more closely and that our opinions could change within a few days based on new data and analyses—which they did," Anderson said in the *New York Times* interview. In that same interview, he also said that "more extensive analyses, significant additional data and thorough investigations to compare genomic diversity more broadly across coronaviruses led to the peer-reviewed study published in *Nature Medicine*."

These later data and analyses would not have been available three days after the conference, the date of Andersen's volte-face email to Daszak. And they would not have been available to Farrar as he signed the *Lancet* letter, which was published just 17 days after the teleconference.

More puzzling is Andersen's statement that in his preliminary studies "the genome of RaTG13, a SARS-related coronavirus found in bats, wasn't yet available." In fact its full sequence had been deposited by Shi in a data bank on January 24, 2020, a week before Andersen's report to Fauci, and Farrar says in *Spike* that he had seen the sequence by the time of the conference. RaTG13 is the closest known relative of SARS2, and the fact that it lacks the furin cleavage site found in SARS2 would have been a major reason for the Andersen group to suppose that this genetic element had been inserted into SARS2 in a lab.

Given his role in leading the February 1 teleconference, in presiding over the virologists' 180 degree change of views, and in arranging or influencing the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* letters, Farrar was evidently the driving force of the campaign to persuade the public that the SARS2 virus could not possibly have leaked from a lab. This was an unfortunate position for any scientist to take, given that he was assuring the public of something he could not be sure was true. Farrar now says in *Spike* that, although natural emergence is more likely, "nobody is yet in a position to rule out an alternative." But his campaign sought very vigorously to do exactly that. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that

COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," Farrar and his cosignatories wrote in the *Lancet* on February 18, 2020. This lapse in scientific judgment reflects also on the other senior participants in the conference who saw what was happening but apparently took no steps to insist that scientific truth should take precedence over unjustifiable professions of certainty.

RELATED:

Caltech's David Baltimore discusses the debate over origins of SARS-CoV-2

The decision to quash any notion of lab escape seems to have brought relief all round. At least until the tide of opinion began to change a year later, Fauci and Collins didn't have to endure unpleasant questions about why they had been funding hazardous research in minimally safe conditions at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Daszak emailed Fauci after a White House press briefing on April 17.

In August 2020 the NIAID announced it would award $82 million over five years to 10 participants in its new network for detecting infectious diseases. Among the lucky winners: Daszak, Andersen, and his associate Robert Garry.

The perturbing lab leak theory raised by Andersen and his colleagues on January 31, 2020 had been safely laid to rest. Farrar and his colleagues had succeeded in the one goal also pursued by the autocrats in Beijing, that of suppressing discussion of whether the SARS2 virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab.

Beijing's way of squelching inquiry about the virus was, unintentionally, somewhat more obvious than the methods used in London. Chinese authorities tried so hard to stamp out information about the virus's origin that they left a rather clumsy trail of footprints pointing to where they didn't want people to go.

One of the more informative suppressions of data was the closure of China's main database on bat and other viruses. Zhengli Shi, China's leading expert on bat coronaviruses, told the BBC that it was taken off line because of numerous hacking attempts. It's conceivable that in January 2020, after the pandemic broke out, people without authorized access might have tried to hack into the database. But in fact the database went off line on September 12, 2019. Who would have wanted to hack into a bat virus database back then? More likely, that is the date at which Chinese authorities realized they had a virus escape problem.

In February of last year, President Xi referred to the need to ensure biosafety and biosecurity, and the Chinese Communist Party followed by tightening up their biosafety rules in October 2020, accelerating a long planned revision. "To me, the fact that the CCP enacted a major series of laboratory biosafety regulations this past

year is an indication that China's political leadership believes that a lab accident is likely to have caused the pandemic," says a biosurveillance expert who has monitored China's disease outbreak reporting for the past two decades.

Major clues as to what happened are evident in Shi's various pronouncements about the virus. The omissions and untruths in these statements are specific enough to outline the very body of facts the censors have sought to conceal.

Error! Filename not specified. Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli spoke about SARS during a Yixi event (comparable to a TED talk) on June 23, 2018. (Yixi video)

In looking at Shi's questionable statements, it's only fair to keep in mind that they may have been compelled. Her train of deceptions began immediately after the genetic sequence of the SARS2 virus was published on January 10, 2020, by Yong-zhen Zhang of Fudan University, against the wishes of Chinese authorities who subsequently closed his lab for a time. Where did this strange new virus come from? Shi wanted or was told to establish SARS2's pedigree as a bat virus, with an ancestry analogous to that of SARS1, the bat virus that caused an epidemic in 2002. In an important paper published on February 3, 2020, Shi reported that the genome of SARS2 is 96 percent similar to that of a bat virus, RaTG13, "which was previously detected in [the bat species] *Rhinolophus affinis* from Yunnan province."

Shi neglected to mention a salient difference between the two viruses, namely that SARS2 possessed a furin cleavage site and RaTG13 did not. Alina Chan, of the Broad Institute in Cambridge, has likened the omission to describing a unicorn by reporting all its horse-like features, but neglecting to mention the horn. Evidently the Chinese authorities were highly sensitive to the furin cleavage site's presence.

Shi also failed to say when and where she had discovered the RaTG13 virus, surely important data for the closest known relative of SARS2. In fact, she had found RaTG13 in 2013, in an abandoned mine in Tongguan—the same place where six miners had fallen sick the year before. At that time, she analyzed just one of its genes and reported the virus under another name, BtCoV/4991. Daszak, the holder of her NIAID grant, told the London Times, perhaps on misinformation from Shi, that the virus was then thrown in a freezer and forgotten about until 2020. This was untrue—the virus was of much greater interest. Shi had analyzed its full genome, probably by 2018, but did not publish it. It was only when she needed a bat virus pedigree for SARS2 that Shi released information about the virus, which she now renamed RaTG13. The fact that BtCoV/4991 and RaTG13 were one and the same was discovered by Monali Rahalkar and Rahul Bahulikar, two internet-sleuthing researchers in Pune, India.

It's not acceptable practice among scientists to report something already published under a different name as if were new. Shi's February paper had the goal of portraying SARS2 as just another bat

virus while concealing the true provenance of its closest known relative—a cave known to harbor lethal viruses.

When RaTG13's connection to the Tongguan mine was pointed out, Shi still tried to conceal the lethality of the mine's bat viruses, saying the miners had died of a fungus infection. This untruth was corrected when a master's thesis by a Chinese doctor, Li Xu, was unearthed by the internet sleuth who calls himself TheSeeker268. The thesis reported that the miners had died of a SARS-related virus with symptoms identical to those of Covid-19 and with CT scans similar to those of Covid patients. The only evident difference between that virus's effects and those of SARS2 is that the miners' virus was not readily transmissible from one person to another.

The specificity of what Shi's statements concealed—the furin cleavage site, RaTG13's identity with BatCoV/4991, the latter's origin in the mine where six miners were infected, the death of the three miners from infection by a virus with symptoms very similar to those of SARS2—all point to the involvement of these elements in a scenario the Chinese authorities are determined to cloak. That scenario may have been the storage or generation of the SARS2 virus in Shi's lab from one of the many viruses recovered from the Tongguan cave.

The Chinese government's persistent stonewalling and Shi's pattern of evasions do not amount to proof that the SARS2 virus escaped from her lab. But they seem less like the actions of innocent people and more like attempts to cover up a fatal accident, one that has caused the deaths of maybe 10 million people and counting.

Perhaps proof will one day emerge that the virus emerged naturally. If not, the likelihood that SARS2 escaped from a researcher's laboratory is an albatross that will hang round China's neck in perpetuity. China's only hope of release from this terrible encumbrance lies in opening its laboratory doors and either establishing its innocence or admitting its fateful error.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 6:26 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6
b6 Garry, Robert F b6
Subject: RE: feedback on wild animals

Jason, not sure whose office politics is worse, but there is many a day I'd rather be in Australia, even if I had to drink that awful beer Fosters. (To quote Grouco Marx as he help up a glass of questionable beer: "last time I saw something like this, they had to shoot the horse")…. But I do have fond memories of Australia, and two of my closest freiends, both ex-students of mine, are out in Perth, the only large city there (if oy can call it that) I have never been, although it's high on my bucket list if this damn pandemic ever ends. He's an American public health physician and she's an Australian-Tongan PhD virologist, both wondeful smart people.

Error! Filename not specified.

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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b6

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error, please erase all copies of the message and its attachments and notify us immediately.

Error! Filename not specified.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: [b6]
[b6] Garry, Robert F [b6];
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Thanks, David.
I just got off a video conf call with the current editor in NY (the one asking all the latest questions). He's very nice and I feel like he gets its. He thinks it's a fascinating story.
Problem we have in journalism is that there are some people who aren't interested in actual journalism and telling stories; they want to climb to the top and manage people. I rejected the latter route 10 years ago, but am so grateful that I still get to meet so many remarkable people, visit cool places and see all aspects of humanity.
A difficulty working for a NY-based organization is that it's assumed that all the best people are in NYC, so being in Melbourne (where I need to be to be close to my kids in Adelaide), is that folks consider Australia a backwater and, by association, I mustn't be all that important/valuable. But my new role as "global biosecurity czar" is helping somewhat.
Ahhhhh... Office politics!

From: [b6] At: 08/15/21 09:03:03 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

> Jason, all I can say is that it must be harder to be a journalist than a scientist…. I had no idea someone at your level would get pushed back.
>
> Usually i get from one to 4 reviewer responses to a ms. and three of those are out to lunch. Occasionally i get a reviewer who really understands the work: half of those are helpful, the other half are trashers.

Maybe it's like being in the government where i am: there is endless push back, but the push-backers are brainless idiots who don't know what they are talking about.

Do you ever get to a point where the editors leave you alone on the science? Or do they all think they are science geniuses? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Aug 14, 2021, at 16:05, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
>
> Thanks, Bob. In journalism, getting to the truth even when it's genuinely and actively pursued, can be a tortuous process!
> ----- Original Message -----
> From: Robert F Garry [b6]
> To: JASON GALE, [b6]
> [b6] [b6]
> [b6]
> At: 08/15/21 01:45:11 UTC+10:00
>
> > Looking forward to this important article. Truth is stronger than fiction.
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
> > **Sent:** Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:41 AM
> > **To:** [b6]
> > [b6] >; [b6]
> > [b6] >; [b6] <
> > [b6] >; [b6] <
> > [b6]; Garry, Robert F <
> > [b6]
> > **Subject:** Fwd:Re:feedback on wild animals
> >
> > External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.
> >
> > Hi guys, in case you have nothing better to read over the weekend, this is some of the dialog I am having with editors in the U.S. Essentially, my response to questions from editor #6.
> > I thought I could claim victory when it looked like the story could be published this morning, but the editor of Businessweek objected and thinks he can make it better with another revision and an ETA of Tuesday. Sigh.
> > Jason

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
At: 08/14/21 16:36:58 UTC+10:00
To: Cristina Lindblad (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , Eric Gelman (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: Joel Weber (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:feedback on wild animals

Hi.
Thanks for the feedback and the questions, which I have tried to answer in detail.
It's often easier to have a conversation over Nexi or the phone to explain nuanced information, or details that are clear to me, but might not be to someone coming at this fresh, but that's tricky with the time difference.
When you look back at what's happened here, it seems that in trying to deflect blame for the pandemic, which became increasingly vicious as the cataclysmic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded around March-April 2020, China tried to conceal a very obvious, very plausible source of the pandemic: it's flourishing wildlife trade (worth about $90 billion in 2016).
It was an obvious cause of the pandemic because an almost identical scenario triggered an international outbreak caused by a very similar coronavirus (SARS) in 2003-04. But in attempting to cover up the wildlife trade, and making like there were never any wild animals being sold in Wuhan's wet markets, things began to backfire on China; questions were raised about the nearby lab studying these coronaviruses. The more geopolitical, heated and vicious the arguments and accusations became, the less cooperative China became. In response, the more intent/adamant some groups have become in their belief that China is covering up a lab-leak. It's become a vicious circle. If China isn't coming clean on the wild animals, what else is it trying to hide?? China's

defensiveness means we may never get the cooperation needed to find the answers. If China had been honest and transparent about the wild animals in the wet markets, it might not be in this mess now.

Anyway, here are my response to your queries in green.

By the way, I wonder if the current headline:
Delayed Paper Gives Credence to Wuhan Market Covid Origin Story
doesn't convey much more than what we had 2 months earlier when we reported Xiao's findings: China Markets Sold Mink, Civets, Stoking Natural Origins Theory
Perhaps Obscured China Paper Scuppered Chance to Trace Covid Origins
would hits "China", "Covid" and "Origins" in a way that won't alienate people who already believe it was a lab-leak

<><><><>

According to the report, minks, civets, raccoon dogs and other mammals known to harbor coronaviruses were sold in plain sight for years in shops across the city, including the now infamous Huanan wet market, to which many of the earliest Covid cases were traced. The evidence collected over 30 months by **Xiao Xiao** a I'D NAME HIM HERE [[i don't know that naming a researcher no one has ever heard of adds much]]researcher working at a lab affiliated with China's Ministry of Education was hastily drafted into a manuscript and submitted to a scientific journal [Joel, we cannot name the first journal they delivered it to because the authors decline to give us the name, saying it may affect their future chances of being published] in February 2020, just weeks before the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

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While the study received wide attention when it was eventually released by a different publisher [Publisher (Springer Nature) and publication (Scientific Reports) are different. Might add confusion DO YOU WANT TO ADD NAME HERE?], its long and torturous journey to publication gave **Chinese officials an opportunity to weave alternative narratives in which the virus may have come from abroad, even from a U.S. Army biological research facility**. [the stuff in bold is not contested and we go on to show how that happened, documenting with links when available]I TWEAKED WORDING HERE BUT THIS STILL ISN'T QUITE RIGHT. IF THE REPORT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED EARLIER CHINESE OFFICIALS COULD STILL HAVE DONE WHAT THEY DID—THEY COULD HAVE JUST SAID THE REPORT WAS SHODDY, OR WHATEVER, AND THEY ALSO COULD HAVE JUST IGNORED IT. I disagree. The evidence that Xiao et al provide was meticulously documented and supported by photographs that would have been difficult/impossible for China to dismiss (as older published photos and media reports had been). What's more, Newman understands that Xiao collected blood-sucking ticks from the wild animals he studiously cataloged. His frozen tick samples could be tested for blood/antibodies/virus, which could be extremely helpful in identifying infected species PRIOR to December 2019. The WHO team knew nothing of this, so couldn't have asked China for this research or any results, had they actually done the research. The delay in the publication of Xiao's paper delayed the evidence that there were live animals sold in the Huanan market. The WHO researchers couldn't have asked about tests on wildlife that ostensibly were never there. Likewise, Chinese authorities couldn't have done the tests on animals that didn't exist. The

problem is that in January and February 2020, it was widely assumed the animals HAD been there and that the necessary tests and tracing of animals (the sampling of animals on farms they were raised on, testing of farm workers, animal hunters, transporters and traders **had all been done** by researchers in China -- the very things that ultimately led to the discovery of the origins of SARS and of MERS viruses. **None of these things were done** (or at least, there is nothing publicly available to show that they were done) **because the animals "weren't there"**. Now that we all know they were there, China as lost considerable face. The issue has become so political than there is much less/?no willingness to cooperate and conduct the additional research that the WHO-led team recommended. Ideally, Xiao's ticks should be studied, but it's doubtful that will now happen (I wouldn't be surprised if he's been ordered to incinerate them!) Hope this is clear.

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An international team of experts convened by the WHO traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to seek answers—a trip that might have yielded different results if the scientists had known about the work of Xiao Xiao, a virologist whose roles straddled epidemiology and animal research at the government-funded Key Laboratory of Southwest China Wildlife Resources Conservation and at Hubei University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.'MIGHT HAVE YIELDED DIFFERENT RESULTS' SEEMS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. WHAT RESULTS DID IT YIELD? I'D CUT THIS GRAF
As mentioned above, the WHO-convened team of researchers was told by market authorities, vendors and regular market visitors that there were no live animals sold in the Huanan market. That undermined completely the premise that the

Huanan market was the kind of place where live animals from different species are stacked in cages, with urine and fecal material drips from one cage to the one below it, where there are splatters of blood and guts from animals, and lots of potential for the spread of diseases from one species to another (including Homo sapiens). Instead, the market (and one other one known to have been selling live wild animals in 2019) was presented as selling only frozen wild animals and aquatic species and things unlikely to be the source of SARS-CoV-2. The WHO researchers were told there were frozen ferret badgers and other wildlife found in freezers. Some of the carcasses actually came from Yunnan, the province where the closest coronavirus related to SARS-CoV-2 was found in bats -- thus establishing a potential route from Yunnan to Wuhan in wildlife. That was actually important. When the researchers showed their Chinese counterparts photos of caged raccoon dogs taken in the Huanan market by Prof. Edward Holmes five or six years earlier, they were told by Chinese scientists that the photos may have been faked, and that the market had ceased selling such live animals anyway. The WHO researchers saw no evidence (empty cages, animal pelts, etc) to dispute what the Chinese scientists told them, although they did smell "animals" -- but were told they were smelling rotten meat, sewage etc. Three people associated with the WHO-led mission told me that they didn't believe the information they were given by anyone associated with the market. But since there was no evidence to the contrary, they were unable to push the Chinese scientists further on this. **The fact that the mission concluded that frozen, not live wild animals were sold in the market undermined the thesis that Covid resulted from an animal spillover**. And the absence of strong evidence pointing to a spill

over from wild animals to humans made the lab-leak theory look, in relative terms, more plausible.

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Six months and two revisions later, the journal's publishers rejected the paper. "They did not think it would have widespread appeal," says Newman, who declined to name the publication [do you want us to say why he won't name it? I don't think it's necessary . There's no upside for scientists to make a publisher look bad (most journals are published by a handful of publishers)] "It caused us, especially our Chinese co-authors, concern that these data would not be taken seriously."

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The manuscript underwent a third revision to include data on China's pangolin trade networks (an earlier study, later contested, had implicated pangolins in the virus's spread to humans)WHO ASKED THAT THIS INFO BE INCLUDED? (I did, because we're trying to explain here why WHO missed the significance of Xiao's evidence. The WHO was slammed by other papers being submitted PLUS Xiao's paper had a weird title. That title seemed relevant to the authors back in January-February 2020, when pangolins were considered a possible SARS-CoV-2-spreading culprit. But in October 2020, pangolins were off the hook, so the title would have seem irrelevant/unimportant at first glance at WHO). It was then sent to the online journal *Scientific Reports* .

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The China-based researchers had reason to be cautious. In February 2020, the China Center for Disease Control (CCDC lets not use "CCDC". It's not commonly used like the U.S.

"CDC" is, and it's going to force readers to go back and figure out what the "CCDC" is) prohibited scientists working on Covid-relate

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~~CCDC~~ Disease detectives arriving from Beijing (think this makes it clear that these are China's disease "feds" arriving) on the first day of 2020 ordered environmental samples to be collected from drains and other surfaces at the market. Some 585 specimens were tested, of which 33 turned out to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. “All current evidence points to wild animals sold illegally,” China CDC Director George Gao and colleagues wrote in the agency’s weekly bulletin in late January. All but two of the positive specimens came from a cavernous and poorly-ventilated section of the market’s western wing, where many shops sold animals.

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~~The information void kindled a raging political debate that’s already caused a trade war between China and Australia, as nations~~ demand to know ~~how Covid emerged.~~
Australia in April 2020 called for a global inquiryinto the origins of the pandemic, including China’s handling of the initial outbreak. Days later, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo used part of his Earth Day message to call on China to close its wet markets to “reduce risks to human health inside and outside of China.”

Based on a discussion today with someone with knowledge of the WHO-led mission to Wuhan in Jan-Feb 2021, a significant catalyst for China's defensiveness is the emergence of **claims for reparations** that extended from the finger-pointing at China's wet markets. These surfaced in April 2020, and have continued as recently

as June 2021 (when Trump pushed for it again at a rally in the Midwest)

SO IS THIS THE POINT AT WHICH CHINA, WHICH SEEMINGLY ACCEPTED THE WET MARKET HYPOTHESIS, BEGAN TRYING TO CREATE A DIFFERENT NARRATIVE? (I think it was incremental. I believe China was embarrassed that its citizens were still buying wild animals in wet markets to eat -- a well-known hazard for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago. But that embarrassment/humiliation morphed into rigid denial and obfuscation when governments began openly blaming the Chinese Communist Party and agitating for China to pay reparations for the pandemic. See these clips:

- USA Today: Blame the Chinese Communist Party for the coronavirus crisis: Coronavirus crisis proves communism is still a grave threat to the entire world. If Beijing had just been honest, the pandemic could be preventable. April 5, 2020
- Yahoo News: More than half of Americans think China should pay coronavirus reparations, poll shows April 9, 2020
- Voice of America: Americans Join Coronavirus Lawsuit to Make China Pay April 10, 2020
- Washington Post Opinion: China must pay reparations to Africa for its coronavirus failuresApril 16, 2020
- Reuters: In a first, Missouri sues China over coronavirus economic losses April 22, 2020
- Washington Post: Missouri is suing China over the coronavirus pandemic. It's the latest conservative gambit, April 22, 2020
- New York Post: Top German paper demands $165 billion coronavirus

reparations from China April 22, 2020

- Attorney General Fitch Prepares to Sue China on Behalf of Mississippians April 22, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump on U.S. Seeking Compensation From China Over COVID-19: 'We Have Not Determined the Final Amount' April 28, 2020
- The Guardian: Trump says China could have stopped Covid-19 and suggests US will seek damages April 28, 2020
- Intelligencer: Trump Thinks He Can Make China Pay for the Virus Like Mexico Paid for the Wall, April 30, 2020
- Washington Post: U.S. officials crafting retaliatory actions against China over coronavirus as President Trump fumes April 30, 2020
- Lawfare: Does China Really Owe the World Trillions of Dollars? May 7, 2020
- Fortune: Trump's demand that China pay coronavirus reparations evokes an ugly history May 8, 2020
- South China Morning Post: Why China won't be paying the West coronavirus reparations any time soon May 15, 2020
- Deccan Herald, India: Abhijit Bhattacharyya | Why China needs to pay reparations to the world June 4, 2020
- Why calls for reparations from China for coronavirus are an unfeasible distraction June 9, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump Demands China 'Pay Reparations' for COVID, Says $10 Trillion Not Enough June 12, 2021

In response, Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied "wildlife wet markets" existed in the country. Government researchersCAN WE BE MORE SPECIFIC? Twenty-two researchers from mostly nationally-funded laboratories (I think it's the

Chinese equivalent of the NIH in the U.S.) and institutes attached to the Chinese Academy of Sciences) now dismiss the market hypothesis completely. "SARS-CoV-2 could not have possibly evolved in an animal market in a big city and even less likely in a laboratory," they wrote in a paper released last month ahead of publicationWHERE/WHENWILL IT BE PUBLISHED? It was released as a "pre-print" on a Chinese academic repository ahead of publication that appears to be managed/owned by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Papers are usually released in pre-print form before they have been accepted for publication or peer-reviewed as a way of expediting public access to the information. In this case, there is no information to suggest if, where or when the paper will be published.

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A more recent paperBY WHOM? (China CDC's Gao and eight other scientists mostly from the Chinese of Academy of Sciences' institutes) contends that the virus may have been imported from multiple locations worldwide, including parts of Europe where mink are raised in areas inhabited also by horseshoe bats known to harbor coronaviruses. "The official narrative changed not because the evidence changed," says Robert Garry, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Tulane University's School of Medicine in New Orleans "A spillover from a wet market was what caused SARS, and, embarrassingly for China, those wet markets were never shut down." Garry is the co-author of one of the earliest papers on the origins of Covid but wasn't involved in the research on Wuhan's markets.

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I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT POINT THIS GRAF IS TRYING TO MAKE. This is

intended to demonstrate the kind of gaslighting that has occurred. Some of the WHO-led researchers are veterinarians and zoologists -- they know what animals smell like, and could smell their lingering presence a year later, but were told essentially that it was impossible that they were smelling animals because **there "were no live animals there"**.) The researchers noted a mixed smell of animals and disinfectant in some areas of the market, but they were told by the market's manager that they were probably smelling the lingering stench of rotten meat and sewage, according to a joint WHO-China report. [should we add "according to Laing Wannian etc here? Liang Wannian was the leader of the Chinese research team collaborating jointly with the WHO-led research team. The source for the above description are in the annexes to the official joint WHO-China report released at the end of March 2021.]

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Earlier the same day, the international research team visited Wuhan's larger Baishazhou market, where Xiao had regularly surveyed two sellers of live wild animals. Yet the group was told only frozen food, ingredients, and kitchenware were on offer there. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist who led the Chinese experts collaborating with the WHO-convened team, says his group had no knowledge of Xiao's data either. [if the above information on what the delegation saw all comes from this same source, maybe we should include his name higher up (The source for the description of what the origins researchers saw on Jan. 31, 2021, comes from the official 120-page joint WHO-China report and its 193-page annexes, not from Liang. Since we are essentially accusing China of concealing the information that Xiao

documented, we asked Liang at a press conference in late July 2021 when the Chinese team first knew about Xiao's findings -- that the Huanan market and three others in Wuhan were selling live animals permissive to SARS-CoV-2 infection -- and what research China has done subsequently as a follow-up on this information? Liang gave a very long-winded response in Chinese in which he said essentially "we didn't have that information in January-February 2021 when the research team was in Wuhan". I think it's important we keep this to demonstrate that we have tried to ascertain what China knew/has done and have given the Chinese researchers the opportunity to respond. In addition, I have emailed China CDC Director George Gao at least twice and not received any response.]

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Among the earliest clusters of infections recorded in Wuhan, one involved three Covid cases among staff working at a stall in Huanan. One of the employees, a 32-year-old who fell ill on Dec. 19, traded goods back and forth between the Huanan and Baishazhou markets.
WHERE DOES THIS FACT COME FROM? NOT THE REPORT, RIGHT? WHEN DID IT FIRST BECOME KNOWN? This information was from the joint WHO-China report released in March 2021, however, the WHO-led researchers went to the Baishazhou market more as a demonstration by the China team of what a perfectly functioning large food market looks like. The WHO-led team was oblivious to Xiao's research that showed there were at least two stalls in Baishazhou that had been selling live wild animals for human consuption. So this detail and its significance was lost on the WHO researchers at the time.)

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A confirmed case linking two markets that sold wild animals is “very intriguing,”says Stephen Goldstein, a research associate in evolutionary virology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. But tracing any contact the employee might have had with infected wildlife is impossible now that the animals are long gone.WOULD TIMELY PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT HAVE CHANGED THIS? It's unlikely that Xiao et al's paper would have been *published* soon after It was drafted in February 2020, but it could have been *released* as a pre-print ahead of publication and peer-review that same month. That would have **confirmed** what almost everyone had suspected: that there **was** a flourishing wildlife trade in Wuhan that provides a plausible pathway by which coronavirus-infected wildlife from Yunnan and beyond could have introduced the virus to the city, sparking the Covid outbreak. It's also possible that swift recognition of these potential wild-animal vectors could have allowed scientists to test them for the virus and for antibodies against the virus while they were still alive (perhaps not the ones from Huanan, but wildlife in the three other Wuhan markets). Because of the statements the Chinese authorities had been making in January and February that strongly supported the animal spill over theory, it was assumed that this research was being done. Of course, the pandemic was raging then, so it would have been challenging. But, because of the denial by Chinese researchers that wild animals were being sold in Wuhan wet markets before the pandemic, there was never that level of follow up. At least, if there was, it was never made public.)

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“It seems to me, at a minimum, that local or regional authorities kept that informationWHAT INFORMATION? (

that Wuhan had a flourishing live wild animal business going on in its wet markets before the pandemic) quiet deliberately," Goldstein says. "It's incredible to me that people theorize about one type of cover-up, but an obvious cover-up is staring them right in the face."

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<Mail Attachment.png><Mail Attachment.png><Mail Attachment.jpeg><Mail Attachment.png>

Date:	Wed, 26 May 2021 2:05:21 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Dr. Rand Paul Stops Gain-of-Function Research Funding in China
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
CC:	Robert Kessler [b6]>;
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Thanks for the details – political posturing that will have no discernable impact on anything NIH was funding, because it wasn't funding that work!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 9:14 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Dr. Rand Paul Stops Gain-of-Function Research Funding in China

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
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National Institutes of Health
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● b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
● b6 b6 b6
● b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 8:17 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg b6 gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Dr. Rand Paul Stops Gain-of-Function Research Funding in China

Dr. Rand Paul Stops Gain-of-Function Research Funding in China

Home / news

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 25, 2021
Contact: Press@paul.senate.gov, b6

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the U.S. Senate passed U.S. Senator Rand Paul's amendment that would permanently ban all funding of gain-of-function research in China. This is following much back-and-forth with Dr. Fauci, and continually defending against the use of American taxpayer dollars in funding gain-of-function research, which aims to enhance the infectiousness or severity of a virus. The amendment is co-sponsored by U.S. Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI), U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL), Dr. Roger Marshall (R-KS), U.S. Senator Mike Braun (R-IN), and U.S. Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC).

"We don't know whether the pandemic started in a lab in Wuhan or evolved naturally," **said Dr. Paul.** "While many still deny funding gain-of-function research in Wuhan, experts believe otherwise. The passage of my amendment ensures that this never happens in the future. No taxpayer money should have ever been used to fund gain-of-function research in Wuhan, and now we permanently have put it to a stop."

Senate Amendment 2003 bans the National Institutes of Health and any other U.S. agency from funding any gain-of-function research in China.

The amendment defines gain-of-function research as "any research project that may be reasonably anticipated to confer attributes

to influenza, MERS, or SARS viruses such that the virus would have enhanced pathogenicity or transmissibility in mammals." This is the same definition the NIH used when implementing a funding moratorium on gain-of-function research in 2014-2017.

The origin of the COVID-19 virus is unknown. It has yet to be determined if the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or due to a laboratory accident at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China. But this pandemic, and the questions of its origin, has exposed the inherent risk of gain-of-function research and never again will taxpayer dollars fund this type of research in China.

You can read S. 2003 in its entirety HERE.

BACKGROUND:

During a Senate HELP hearing on May 11, Dr. Paul specifically asked Dr. Fauci about the funding of gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and the potential link between the COVID-19 outbreak and the lab itself. Gain-of-function research essentially involves juicing up naturally-occurring animal viruses to infect humans.

For years, Dr. Ralph Baric, a virologist in the U.S. has been collaborating with Dr. Shi Zhengli of the Wuhan Virology Institute, sharing his discoveries about how to create super viruses. During their research, Dr. Baric and Dr. Shi worked together to insert bat virus spike protein into the backbone of the deadly SARS virus and then used the man-made super virus to infect human airway cells.

Much of the research they were doing was funded through Dr. Fauci's NIH and NIAID.

When Dr. Paul asked Dr. Fauci whether he supports the NIH funding of the lab in Wuhan, Dr. Fauci, a strong supporter and ardent advocate of gain-of-function research, claimed that the NIH "has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology."

Despite Dr. Fauci's previous denials, there is ample evidence and backing by the scientific community that the NIH and the NIAID, under his direction, funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. A multitude of scientists have reviewed this research and said it meets the definition for gain-of-function. Many of these scientists have also discussed the inherent dangers of conducting gain-of-function research and the risks it poses to the human population.

###

Previous

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Date: Fri, 11 Jun 2021 11:25:04 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 11 Jun 2021 11:23:59 AM -0400
Subject: More irony - We've been forced to file a "progress report" on our terminated/suspended grant 17 papers published despite this!
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; Daszak PI NIH R01 yr 2 report.pdf

Here's some more irony. Because our R01 is now "suspended" (not "terminated") we have to spend staff time filing an annual progress report

I've attached it here for your interest. You'll see that even with no funding, we've published 17 new papers, 13 during the time the grant was terminated/suspended, and have at least 2 others in prep/press. These all automatically appear in the system, it's not us trying to prove a point!

It's a really cruel system that cancels your grant, then forces you to spend time reporting on it, otherwise your other grants are in jeopardy.

FYI – I'm emailing the GAO with more information today and will be letting them know just how morally bankrupt this is.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 6:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: Re: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

wow. Really??? If so, how to light a fire under our NIH/ govt system????

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 10, 2021, at 18:02, Peter Daszak [b6]g > wrote:

Very well put David.

Roughly translated – if you reinstate EcoHealth's NIH grant, we can probably find you the reservoir, the intermediate host and the first cluster of COVID during the project period!

Maybe not the 90 days that Biden's waiting for the Security report, but it will have some actual data in it!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6]>; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

David

David M. Morens, M.D.

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 4:23 PM
To: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM [b6]>
Subject: RE: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

Greg, I just did a very quick read.

A bit hard to know what this means, as it is a very geeky "insider" paper.

But a first take is that this suggestes an even greater genetic turmoil in the already-complicated evolutionn of the sarbecoviruses.

It does the following (my provisoinal "take"):

moves us further in our certainty that SCV-2 is a naturally occurring virus (and I should add, it IS, as in really IS, already certain)

suggests an enormous degree of ferment and evolution with complex viral, bat, and secondary host evolution, including multiple avenues for cross-viral/cross-species exchanges, that would be expected to facilitate emergent viruses,

argues that among our HIGHEST research priorities is to start working collaboratively, collegially, and openly with colleagues from China and the other regional countries, to characterize the compex and enormous viral, reservoir, and human behavioral risks,

argues that the time to let China-bashing drive the research agenda should be over. The research findings and opportunities are too important to let political wackiness interfere witb pandemic control.

New pandemics are waiting in the wings. We need to get our act together and get cracking.

That's my off the top of my low-IQ head "take"….

David

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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 3:24 PM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>

Subject: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

We will no doubt be asked how/if this paper impacts the origins-of-covid discussions that are everywhere

What are your thoughts? What would u tell a reporter who called u?

Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses

- Hong Zhou [9]
- Jingkai Ji [9]
- Xing Chen [9]
- Yuhai Bi [9]
- Juan Li
- Qihui Wang
- Tao Hu
- Hao Song
- Runchu Zhao
- Yanhua Chen
- Mingxue Cui
- Yanyan Zhang
- Alice C. Hughes
- Edward C. Holmes
- Weifeng Shi [10]
- Show less
- Show footnotes

Published:June 09, 2021DOI:https://doi.org/10.[b6]

Highlights

- Four novel SARS-CoV-2 related viruses were identified in rhinolophid bats.
- RpYN06 is the closest relative of SARS-CoV-2 in most of the virus genome.
- A high diversity of bat coronaviruses was present in a very small geographic area.
- Ecological modeling reveals a broad range of rhinolophid bats in parts of Asia.

Summary

Despite the discovery of animal coronaviruses related to SARS-CoV-2, the evolutionary origins of this virus are elusive. We describe a meta-transcriptomic study of 411 bat samples collected from a small geographical region in Yunnan province, China, between May 2019 and November 2020. We identified 24 full-length coronavirus genomes, including four novel SARS-CoV-2 related and three SARS-CoV related viruses. *Rhinolophus pusillus* virus RpYN06 was the closest relative of SARS-CoV-2 in most of the genome, although it possessed a more divergent spike gene. The other three SARS-CoV-2 related coronaviruses carried a genetically distinct spike gene that could weakly bind to the hACE2 receptor *in vitro*. Ecological modeling predicted the co-existence of up to 23 *Rhinolophus* bat species, with the largest contiguous hotspots extending from South Laos and Vietnam to southern China. Our study highlights the remarkable diversity of bat coronaviruses at the local scale, including close relatives of both SARS-CoV-2 and SARS-CoV.

Keywords

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Date: Wed, 10 Aug 2022 1:51:13 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 10 Aug 2022 1:51:02 PM -0400
Subject: EcoHealth Alliance Digital Scrapbook
From: Majelia Ampadu [b6] >
To: [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6] Alison Andre [b6]

Dear David,

I'm Majelia, EcoHealth Alliance's new Communications and PR Coordinator.
Peter suggested I reach out to you, as one of our long-running supporters.

We're compiling a digital scrapbook to highlight the impact of the amazing work our researchers, scientists, and supporters have cultivated.

We would deeply appreciate it if you could draft a *quote, send any photos, or record a video* related to your experiences with EcoHealth.

Feel free to reply to this email or contact me via text or phone call at +[b6] with any questions.

Best wishes,

Majelia

--

Majelia Ampadu
Communications & PR Coordinator

EcoHealth Alliance ▪ ecohealthalliance.org
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

Date: Sat, 16 Jan 2021 12:10:56 PM -0500
Sent: Sat, 16 Jan 2021 12:10:55 PM -0500
Subject: Fwd: Francis Collins to stay on as NIH Director
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

Update assessment from Harold.

Sent from my iPhone
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
Date: January 16, 2021 at 11:57:00 AM EST
To: "Roberts, Rich" [b6], Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Francis Collins to stay on as NIH Director

Good advice, Rich. I'll continue to pursue the back channel routes I have.

I was in touch with Harold, who noted the announcement said "continued" but not "reappointed", which has real significance. That resonates with your comment about identifying the next NIH Director and floating some real options through those back channels.

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 11:45 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Francis Collins to stay on as NIH Director

Jerry:

There won't be a lot of support for a public letter from the NLs about Collins. While many would liked to have seem him go, they won't say so publicly. Back channels may be more effective. However, a good replacement name would be helpful.

From my perspective the most important first goal is to get Peter's grant reinstated. I will pursue that – and can use the previous letter for that purpose.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 11:25 AM

To: Peter Daszak [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: RE: Francis Collins to stay on as NIH Director

EXTERNAL SENDER

As we all are here, not in quarantine, with great (?) Chinese food delivered to your door. Great Chinese wine as well?

I have reached out to friends who are slotted for positions in the new administration, or know some of them well, to urge them to consider the danger of reappointing somebody who has violated the fundamental principle of responsible administration of science, to guard against political interference. We should be referring to Collins as Francis Lysenko Collins.

Rich, another Nobel laureates letter? If you do that I will see if the NAM group I gathered will sign on again, perhaps using the same text?

Let's move on it now.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 1:06 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Francis Collins to stay on as NIH Director
Importance: High

Very disappointed to read this in my quarantine hotel in Wuhan here…

https://www.reuters.com/article/us- health-coronavirus-usa-nih/biden-will-keep-dr-francis-collins-as-national-institutes-of-health-director-statement-idUSKBN29K2KG

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 12:50 PM

To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]) [b6]>
Subject: RE: Attacks from a anti-GMO group, another investigative reporter's Foia & a congressman

Here is the link to David Relman's opinion – really not constructive, and actually damaging because it just gives more weight to the conspiracy theorists who are banging the drum out there

https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2020/11/03/2021133117

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 11:41 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Attacks from a anti-GMO group, another investigative reporter's Foia & a congressman
Importance: High

Rich and Jerry,

Unfortunately, I feel I have to let you know that the US Right to Know (an anti-GMO, anti-vaxx group associated with Organic consumers.org) have Foia'd NIH for our emails and grants. NIH refused, they've now sued. https://usrtk.org/news-releases/u-s-right-to-know-sues-nih-for-documents-about-origins-of-sars-cov-2/. They've also Foia'd people I collaborate with at state universities (Ralph Baric others), including Rita Colwell at U. Maryland (she's on my Board). They've just published 446 pages of emails between her and myself – all completely harmless of course, but just awful to have all our detailed correspondence out there https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard_FOIA_Maryland_Emails_11.6.20.pdf . They've concocted a story about how I orchestrated a Lancet letter back in February – which I did, but they're implying that EcoHealth funded Chinese gain of function work, and therefore I orchestrated the paper to cover up our nefarious work. Just disgusting. Here's the story which contains links to the emails https://usrtk.org/biohazards-blog-index/ and came out today. It also uses the fact that NIH (Collins) inserted demands into our grant reinstatement as evidence that EcoHealth is 'under increased scrutiny'. Apologies Jerry, but your listed in some of these.

Unfortunately, some of the emails are from you Rich, to Rita, and others, and are mixed in here related to the anonymous gift you helped secure. They haven't been highlighted in news stories yet, and I don't believe they're particularly

newsworthy, but I just wanted you to know the pressure we're under and that it may come out in the press.

At the same time, other conspiracists are applauding David Relman of Stanford on social media because he published an opinion piece in PNAS that continues to bang the drum about Wuhan, gain of function, and that the WHO mission on COVID origins and the Lancet COVID-19 commission's taskforce on COVID origins (which I'm heading up) are 'cloaked in secrecy'.

Finally, I heard yesterday that a Florida congressman (Bill Posey) wrote to Jeff Sachs to try to get me kicked off the Lancet COVID-19 Commission because of a perceived conflict of interest re. China. Jeff's not going to do that right now, but everyone has their breaking point.

Add to all of this another FoIA we got against other NIH grants from an investigative reporter who has an anti-gain of function/bioweapons stance and it's adding up to be a tough week here!

We're not responding to this US Right to Know group, because it just gives them oxygen, but I worry that there'll be continued Foia's and pressure to trash my reputation and eventually it will begin to be successful. We've already had one of our funders hold back funding, and I don't want to have so much bad press out there that eventually I get disinvited from committees that everyone knows are important to careers these days.

Advice welcome, and apologies that your emails are in this batch.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Wed, 21 Apr 2021 4:56:18 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 21 Apr 2021 4:56:16 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6];

Hi:

I will talk to Harold tomorrow morning.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 4:28 PM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

EXTERNAL SENDER

Even more interesting insights. Lets see how it goes and what Harold has to say to Rich.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Thanks, Jerry, i will let you know how it goes, although he may not indicate to me his next steps. The way it works with us is that he tries to never ask me things directly, like ask for my advice on what to do, but rather does alot of homework ahead of time, figures out what i am likely to say, then HE tells ME what he thinks so that i can confirm it. Yes, we all have our peculiarities, but as long as the machine runs smoothly its ok

I DO know that he has great respect for Harold, and i think also admires Harold's charge-ahead no-BS style, which is the opposite of Tony's extreme caution. So i have little doubt that he would welcome that kind of help. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:09, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

David,
Thanks for the note, and I recognize what you say is what I know about Tony. He is a remarkable person, but like all of us he isn't perfect. I think your strategy to lay out the issues and let him run with it to decide what can be effectively addressed and with what strategy.

Rich's suggestion to talk to Harold is on track, and it would be great Rich if you were to do that. I know that they have a very close and positive history of working together, that Harold is very strategic in his thinking, he prefers to work in the background (something I have confirmed multiple times this past year as I have asked for his advice on things I could take on), and that he will be really frank in talking to Rich. Harold has very recently told me that he has worked closely with Rich on a number of issues related to the concerns we all have.

Let us know how the chat goes tomorrow. I think you have the right perspective heading in to it, and lots of good information at your fingertips.
Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:33 PM
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Hi:

If I am to do something I would talk to Harold first. I'll see what he has to say as a possible path forward.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

EXTERNAL SENDER

Jerry, The way it works with Tony, at least at my level, is you can't suggest he do anything. If you do, he won't do it on principle. The trick is to make him think of doing something himself, and then he will ask you to help him do it

My strategy tomorrow is to tell him that alarming things are at work, to the point that many scientists (our grantees and

others) have become increasingly worried and are looking for the way forward. In that context i will share with him verbally Peter's information, and offer to get to him any of the materials he wants to see, or connect him directly with Peter, who he very much respects

I have not heard that he has engaged Harold, or the National Academies, or the professional societies, although i might not know if he did. He is very much a loner about things like this. He prides himself on being like teflon, but I am worried that he may not be as invulnerable as he may think

Our Chief of Staff, Greg Folkers (who has Masters degrees in both journalism and PH), is among the only folks here, partly excepting Cliff Lane, in whom Tony confides when the subject is difficult or personal, only rarely to me.... and Greg told me today that he thinks Tony is getting worried that the brown stuff is about to hit the fan, and that he may have become a major target

There is very little i can do to help because i am a mere scientist, not a NL, or member of the NAM, or head of a prestigious society (the only kinds of people Tony will usually engage with, as he is very proud).

So if he doesn't become more proactive, what remains is for scientists and science orgs at the very highest level to come together forcefully to push back against the craziness

Who would be willing to approach him directly and "talk turkey"? Harold? Rich? You? Victor? A couple of you?

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 15:01, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Tony will be well aware of this kind of push back. That's not the issue for you tomorrow. Its really how to get the scientific societies engaged once again in the campaign for clarity and resolution of the breech in integrity and the grants management beginning a year ago.

Maybe there would be a moment to suggest that he talk to Harold Varmus about strategy?

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 2:57 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6] Robert Kessler < [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Jerry, i am traveling without much news access, but this is really depressing. My concern has grown to alarm and i am afraid to think what comes next

We seem to have arrived at that Orwellian point where all investigations of important matters have to exclude participation of the subject experts, since being a subject expert is disqualifying on the grounds that all expertise is inherently biasing.

Before George Orwell, we had Lewis Carroll telling us this. We are in grave danger of going down-the-rabbit-hole-with-Alice.....
D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 14:36, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

The COVID Commission Planning Group includes people like Mike Osterholm. I don't put him into the category of Lipsitch, but am I missing something here? He was one of the people on the Biden COVID task force I talked to in December-January about the shattered integrity at the level of NIH/OD. He didn't say much to me, and I didn't take that as a signal that he was on the darker side of the divide.

I saw the results of a focus group of Trump supporters reported on today: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/04/20/vaccine- hesitant-republicans/ A bit of text in this report is about Tony.

"Every participant said they preferred hearing from politicians over the medical expert, who has been pilloried by conservative media for months over his coronavirus warnings. The data have shown that unfortunately Dr. Fauci has been politicized, and we need different messengers, because even the right messages coming from the wrong messengers aren't always helpful," Castrucci said, noting his foundation's polling [de Beaumont Foundation] found Americans trust their personal doctors more than the government's top infectious-disease doctor".

This is the fundamental problem we have, as the politicians will only use this as an echo chamber to amplify their support from their public supporters and constituents. It does point back to the scientific societies which have weighed in previously, but no more impact than we have had as individuals. It doesn't stop this approach, its just that we need some deus ex machina to help us. Is that going to be Eric Lander? What's happening with his approval? I haven't heard much of late.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 12:41 PM
To: David Morens [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] u>; Rich Roberts < [b6] ;Robert Kessler [b6] ; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
Importance: High

Thanks for the email David - comments below. Also please see the attached word doc with links to some of the political actions that I'm concerned about. Tell Tony that this is very early days, with most of these coming from the Right, and many that can be headed off at the pass by positive outreach to Democrats, which I believe people will be doing.

I've also put in a link to the new " Covid Commission Planning Group (Covid CPG)" that has no official role from USG, but boldly states as its core mission "to prepare the way for a National Covid Commission". Members include David Relman & Marc Lipsitch and I have heard from many on the conspiracy theory chatter networks online that this will focus partly on advocating for reduction in biosafety labs, viral work in wildlife, and gain-of-function.

Please feel free to share any docs that I've sent to you, with Tony. Hopefully you can do that in a way that avoids FoIA, and if not possible, just show him stuff on screen share on Zoom.

Please also see comments below...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Gerald Keusch b6; Rich Roberts b6; Robert Kessler b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Peter, i am on leave in Florida for my granddaughters graduation from Florida State

Tomorrow at 130 i will be having a zoom call with Tony to tip him off on some of the info you sent in your recent email

I want to be sure about what info or docs you would or would not want me to share

[Peter Daszak:] Any and all

Other than what i see on tv, the jousting with Rand Paul and Jim Jordan, for example, i do not know how much of this Tony is aware of. To my knowledge he doesn't share it with anyone up here

I think issues he will be most concerned about are not your grant, although i add i am sure he would do anything he could to restore the funds and get the hellhounds of your back, but rather 1) the possibility that people like Rep Rodgers and her committee are about to turn up the heat and put Tony, personally, in their crosshairs, and 2) the possibility the NIH funded scientists or other esteemed scientists, are in cahoots with politicians wanting to attack him or niaid
[Peter Daszak:] agreed

As background, we all went through the original version of this crap about 10 years ago with the original GOF attacks surrounding H5N1. As Tony's scientific advisor, i spent much of the year, along with Jeff T, helping brief him and get him up to speed, which he did. At the time, David Relman, who had been one of Tony's favorites, was leading the charge, and we all wondered why a young guy with so much promise would choose demagoguery over science. Lipsitch was only a minor player at that time, but relished his attack role and seem to become more alarmist as time went on. Now these guys are in the NAM. How did that happen???? Ebright has always been a crackpot, in the mold of Peter Duseberg, remember him?, and no one took him seriously except some of the press who didn't know any better
[Peter Daszak:] I had the unfortunate issue of voting on Marc Lipsitch's membership of NAM. He's an accomplished scientist. He's also very opinionated, arrogant and pushy on whatever issue he believes in. I voted on his science acumen.

I was unclear from your email on a couple points you might clarify. Obviously the Rodgers letter asking you to produce all those dox not only overlaps with the Lauer letter to you, but could not have been written without the help of a virologist.
[Peter Daszak:] I have it on good authority (Ebright's Twitter account) that he was involved. They are also getting pressured from Jamie Metzl who's working with the internet conspiracy networks actively to promote their "Research"

Actually, given that there are a few points in the letter that someone knowledgable about coronavirus virology would have corrected, my suspicion is that the letter was put together with the help of a legitimate scientist who needs to do more homework on coronaviruses.
[Peter Daszak:] you're right..! Metzl isn't a virologist, neither's Ebright. The internet 'researchers' are led by a banker and some junior scientists, many from human genetics, mol boil world.

Do you agree, and do you think that person was Ebright? Do you think Relman, Lipsitch, Imperiale, or other current or former grantees might have been involved?

I am not sure we ever funded Ebright, but we did fund the others. I would like to think that Relman et all are only mouthing off to the press, but do you think there is more to it than that, eg, that any of them are working with the politicians?
[Peter Daszak:] David Relman is talking with reporters a lot about this, including casting aspersions on my motives for speaking out about this virus emerging via wildlife-to-human spillover (he's quoted as saying my motives

are to protect the research I've been doing and reputations of our collaborators). Ebright is very actively (and obnoxiously) critical on social media calling me a 'Grifter' on a weekly basis and promoting unsubstantiated arguments for a lab leak. I had to look up what 'grifter' meant at first...

Your earlier comments about this proposed investigative committee, and the possible role of these folks in it, are alarming. Can you be more specific about where this stands and what is being done to forward it and to squelch it?
[Peter Daszak:] Nothing's being done to squelch it, and neither should it be - there will be other committees that also pop up. My concern is their bold claim that they're laying the groundwork for a 9/11 type commission (and have a 9/11 commission person involved). It may be that just by saying that a lot, and having well known people involved, they end up forming one. They're clearly politically connected and are advocating for this politically. Jerry and I also proposed this in our paper published in Health Affairs, but we assumed this would be led by NAM or some other well-respected institution.

When i speak with Tony i do not want to step into the politics of all this, as that's not my job and he wouldn't want me to. If he needs further info it might be best to connect you two, in an off the record manner. Would that be OK? We are getting FOIA'd non stop, so it's most important that Tony not have anything on the record that could come back to bite
[Peter Daszak:] Totally agree. Tell him I'm happy to speak with him at any time and will do so in a way that's not FoIA-ble. One thing I could do is either on a zoom call or by sending you a document, is lay out responses to the Mendendez questions so that the arguments are known and well-supported. For example, everyone's saying that this is a 'gain-of-function' issue, but actually that's not the case - we worked on bat viruses, not human pathogens. The expts produced loss of function, not gain of function, all appropriate conditions and approvals were demonstrably checked and correctly answered.

Finally, i didn't read all of the Menendez bill-in-committee, which is longer than Les misérables, but what's the gist? Do you think that in their zeal to take a hard stance against the PRC, these Democrats are purposely, or accidentally, getting sucked into the evil-WIV scenario? Is there real danger here?
[Peter Daszak:] The Menendez bill is the only one that stands a chance so far of becoming law because it's bipartisan. The WIV, gain-of-function stuff is thrown in as a very small part of it. The draft wording only calls for a report from NIH after 180 days on these issues, and they are easily addressed. However, if it does pass and the anti-China mood hardens in the US, it may end up with calls to testify and the Republicans may use that to undermine NIH, and in particular Tony, given the rabid GoF myth they've been building.

Anything you think might be helpful, I'd appreciate

TY, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Wed, 1 Sep 2021 7:09:49 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 1 Sep 2021 7:06:52 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Interview Request: Scientific American
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Justin Ling [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Great – you're in a much better position than I, given you're proximity to the debate the first time this was litigated following the H5N1 expt w/ Ron Fouchier.

Justin (off the record) - at some point as you build your story, and if you're going to get into whether SARSr-CoV work at WIV was GoF or not, I'd be happy to talk off the record with you to explain w/ extreme precision and logic why Dr. Fauci is right that NIH did not fund GoF work at the Wuhan lab, and why some of the bacteriologist commentators out there are utterly wrong and disingenuous to state that it was.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 6:46 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Justin Ling [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Interview Request: Scientific American

TY Peter, I just spoke at length today on GoF to a Nature reporter, the first time that the govt here has lifted censorship on me discussing this issue. Happy to discuss once clearance is nailed down. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 1, 2021, at 18:41, Peter Daszak [b6] g > wrote:

Thanks for the nudge Justin. I'm sorry, but I really think I'm the wrong person to be talking about gain of function work pros and cons given that I'm not a lab virologist and haven't been involved in GoF work really. I know people who would be much better to talk to and who might be willing to talk including Gerry Keusch from the Boston NEIDL lab and BU, and David Morens at NIAID. I've cc'd them here.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Justin Ling [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 9:46 AM
To: [b6]
Cc: [b6]
Subject: Re: Interview Request: Scientific American

Hey Peter,

Just following up again to see if you'd be able to chat sometime in the next week or two

Sent from ProtonMail mobile

-------- Original Message --------

On Jul 22, 2021, 11:00 AM, Justin Ling < b6 > wrote:

Hey Peter, thanks for getting back

I totally get it. I'm happy to talk on background if that's the best way to do it.

Justin Ling
Journalist
b6 b6

------- Original Message -------
On Wednesday, July 21st, 2021 at 12:40 PM, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:

Cc'ing Robert Kessler, our communications director. I don't know if I'll be able to talk – I'm being sent death threats on a regular basis, and these increase when my name or our organization's name is in the press. But I'll at least be able to talk off the record.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Justin Ling <justinling@protonmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 10:54 AM
To: b6
Subject: Interview Request: Scientific American

Hi there Dr. Daszak,

I'm a freelance journalist, writing for Scientific American, on a story that I think you might have some really valuable insight on.

The story is really looking to kick the tires on the utility, efficacy, and safety of gain-of-function research.

I should say right away: This is a piece that is determined to look at the *science* of the matter, not the speculation. I pitched the piece because the histrionics around this issue have gotten so intense, that I think it's hard for people to separate fact from speculation. I've previously written about why this myth-making around the Wuhan Institute of Virology's supposedly incredibly gain-of-function research makes little sense: https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/06/15/lab- leak-theory-doesnt-hold-up-covid-china/

So the point isn't to rehash the same unproven allegations about the supposed lab origins of

COVID-19. The point is, now that gain-of-function is front-page news, to revisit the debates that have been had in recent decades and ask whether gain-of-function has really offered the breakthroughs we had hoped for. If so, what are they? How does that research work?

And, if not, do we have to have a new discussion about whether this research is worth it?

I think putting on the table some hard facts about what gain-of-function is, and what it's capable of, will be useful for a lot of people who have only heard the conspiracy theorists.

Let me know if you would be interested in talking. I fully appreciate that you've become a bit of an unwanted celebrity amonst the rabidly pro-lab leakers, so I'm happy to further explain exactly what I'm working on or to discuss some things on background. Just let me know.

Thanks

Justin Ling

Journalist

b6 b6

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Date: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 6:57:29 PM -0500
Subject: RE:
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Good to hear that. I think this is the person I spoke with on my last day in Wuhan when I was very irritated by the whole thing, having seen the lab, seen the market, and clearly seen what really probably happened in Wuhan (will talk more tomorrow in Tony Fauci briefing). I think he has me on record calling for the resignation of NIH Director, saying it's shameful that they disparaged EHA's reputation, and demanding an apology and the grant to be reinstated. Obviously, that' not going to play well given that even Biden is acting macho w/ China, but hopefully he'll do a good job and make sure I don't come across as dramatic!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 4:59 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject:

Just had a long off the record talk about you and your work and the grant issue with Nick Shifrin of PBS Newshour. Not sure what he will do with the info, but he may be planning something in conjunction with WHO report and/or the Biden teams response to it….. By the way, he knows quite a bit about your work and grant situation….

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [redacted] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

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Date: Sat, 25 Sep 2021 9:30:01 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 25 Sep 2021 9:26:55 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>;

Jerry – this is very good to hear. Yesterday was a very worrying day. If this amendment becomes law, we will have to lay off staff and basically close down. It penalizes us for something that we didn't do, without due process. It sets a terrible precedence for congress members ability to shut down a non-profit or a university's line of research based on rumor and hearsay. It's also based on a falsehood that there is any evidence that the virus came out of a lab, of course.

There's a lot of drum-banging going on out there, and the attacks on us continue. We're trying to do the right thing by keeping quiet and not talking to the press, but this also means they have a field day at our expense when every rumor or hyped-up article comes out.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich < [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler <[b6]
Subject: RE: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate

I'm going to contact my congressional representative and senators, and Tony Fauci and Victor Dzau as well.

If Rich gets in touch with Harold that could help some, at least with Eric Lander who sits in the cabinet and has the ear of the White House leadership.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:31 PM
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T <[b6]>; Roberts, Rich <[b6]>
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: FW: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
Importance: High

Dear Robert, David, and Jerry,

Sorry to send this, but please read the email below and you'll see that a bill filed by a Republican congressman from PA then became a single line amendment attached to the Defense Appropriations bill, and actually passed the House last night.

We're very worried here because we rely on Federal funding and this puts our organization in great threat. Any advice is welcome. We're reaching out to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, but I'm really worried that if they are too busy to get involved for a small non-profit with no political clout, we'll be drummed out of business.

If you have colleagues who know how to deal with this sort of issue, and are willing to help, we would be extremely grateful for any advice, suggestions and support. I realize you've all spent social and political capital helping our organization since we were first targeted by Pres. Trump, but this is truly an existential threat to us, considering 80-90% of our budget is from federal grants and contracts.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 1:11 PM
To: 'Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand)' <[b6]>; 'Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand)' <[b6]>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Jeff Sturchio ([b6]
Subject: Urgent - Amendment to defund EcoHealth Alliance was passed by the House last night and now moves to the Senate
Importance: High

Dear Jamison and Gilbert,

You were kind enough to talk with us a couple of months ago about attacks on our New York City-based 501c3 non-profit from the hard right wing regarding the work we've done in the past trying to protect us from new emerging diseases coming out of China and other hotspots. As you remember, this work was largely funded by NIH, DoD and USAID and has become a target for Republican-led attacks on the Biden administration.

We're very concerned that one of the House Republicans, Congressman Reschenthaler, filed a bill titled HR591 "Defund EcoHealth Alliance Bill" in Jan. 2021 and managed to get this attached as Amendment 148 to the National Defense Authorization Act (HR 4350). The five other co-sponsors are all Republicans: Van Drew, Perry, Harshbarger, Keller, and Budd: https://rules.house.gov/bill/117/hr- 4350. The House passed the NDAA last night (https://armedservices.house.gov/ndaa) and unfortunately this Amendment is now progressing with it.

EcoHealth Alliance is a non-profit based in Midtown Manhattan that employs around 50 people whose jobs depend on the funding we receive each year. If this amendment continues forwards, we stand to all lose our jobs and close down the organization. This amendment is based on a false premise that our organization acted wrongly and was involved in the origin of the COVID pandemic. In fact it's the opposite, we worked with federal approval to help protect US citizens against this and other pandemic risks. If passed, it would penalize an organization doing public good, without any due process or consideration of the facts. Also of great concern is that this amendment would set a precedent that any single member of Congress can specifically block funding to an organization or institution through a simple amendment, bypassing all political norms.

We are urgently hoping that you will be able to make Sen. Gillibrand aware of our issue and move to strike out this amendment at the first possible opportunity. We are at this point very worried for our staff, and our work around the world protecting the US against the next pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 10:46 AM
To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand) b6 >; Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand) < b6
Cc: Dennis Carroll b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.

That would be perfect. It'll be me, our chief of staff Aleksei Chmura, and our Communications Director Robert Kessler.

Thanks for making time!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand) [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 8:42 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Ruiz, Gilbert (Gillibrand) [b6]
Cc: Dennis Carroll [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler < [b6]
Subject: RE: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.

Happy to chat. Would Monday at 2:30pm over zoom work for you all?

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 3:38 PM
To: Jamison, Brooke (Gillibrand) [b6]
Cc: Dennis Carroll [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler < [b6] >
Subject: Concerns about political attacks on EcoHealth Alliance around COVID origins.
Importance: High

Dear Brooke,

I hope you don't mind me contacting you directly – I was given your email address by my colleague Dennis Carroll.

As you may know, I'm the President of EcoHealth Alliance, based here in NYC, and also Chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats and member of the National Academy of Medicine. I mentioned the latter, because I received a very kind letter from Senator Gillibrand when I was voted onto the NAM a couple of years ago – it's now framed on my wall!

You may have heard our organization's name (EcoHealth Alliance) and mine being mentioned in the press recently in the general discussion of identifying the origins of COVID-19. For the last 17 years, we've worked closely with colleagues in China to get ahead of emerging viruses, including by collaborating with their premier virologists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Unfortunately, this work has become a very public target politically following over a year of conspiracy theories online that have now gone mainstream about the possibility COVID emerged as a leak from a biosafety laboratory in Wuhan. This was amplified a few weeks ago with testimony by Dr. Fauci and the release of FoIA'd emails that have put our organization in the cross-hairs of efforts to attack the current administration. This includes proposals by some minority members for bills that would significant harm our international work to prevent pandemics, as well as directly defund our organization.

I've attached a letter in Lancet that came out last week that helps provide some context of the way this issue is being viewed by serious scientists, but as you can imagine we're worried about the impact on work that we believe is critical to preventing future pandemics. I wondered if you would be interested in my giving you a short briefing on this issue, to explain in more detail what the evidence behind these theories is, and to get your take on the political issues we are concerned about?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date: Wed, 1 Feb 2023 9:18:58 AM -0500
Sent: Wed, 1 Feb 2023 9:14:21 AM -0500
Subject: Concept note and Agenda for our discussion today at 1pm Eastern US time
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
CC: David Morens b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >;
Attachments: image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; Concept Note.docx; Coalition meeting b6

Dear All,

I'm looking forward to our discussion today at 1pm. Attached is a concept note that Jeff Sturchio drafted to frame some ideas around what we might try to do.

I've also attached a rough agenda for us.

Here are the details of the zoom call, and I look forward to speaking with you all later on:

Join Zoom Meeting
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Two great articles!

Many thanks Peter! Appreciate the support!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: b6

Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6

iPhone

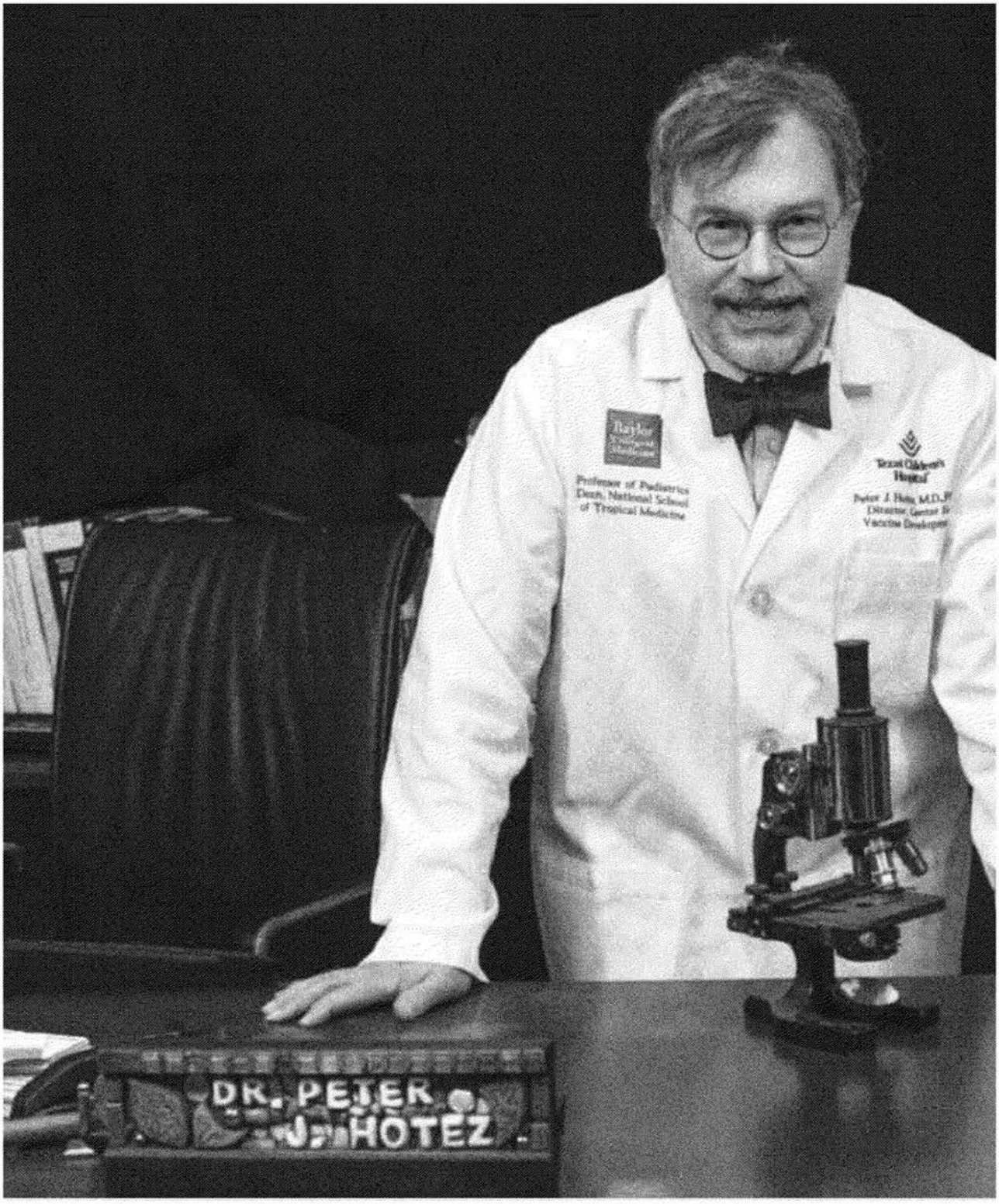
On Jan 31, 2023, at 1:44 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

First, want to send my appreciation for your great interview in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday, Peter:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Viral spread: Peter Hotez on the increase of anti-science aggression on social media

By Sara Goudarzi | January 30, 2023



Peter Hotez (Image courtesy of Agapito Sanchez, Baylor College of Medicine)

Last November, Twitter announced it will no longer enforce "the COVID-19 misleading information policy." The platform also allowed previously banned users to rejoin the site. Since then, anti-vaccination messaging has gained renewed energy, distressing scientists and researchers who have been combatting misinformation and disinformation on social media. According to research, there's a strong relationship between anti-vaccination efforts on social media and vaccine hesitancy, and while millions of people were saved by having taken the COVID-19 vaccines,

hundreds of thousands of Americans died after refusing it.

Peter Hotez, a physician-scientist, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, and a professor in the departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, is no stranger to anti-vaccination attitudes. He has fought against misleading medical information for years. But now, he says, anti-science sentiments have been weaponized by businessmen and politicians seeking profits and power.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated and discredited several scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project. Hotez expects congressional committees under Republican control to engage in a similar targeting of scientists in an attempt to accumulate influence and foster a sense of belonging—a signature of authoritarian regimes—among their constituents. In his view, this anti-vaccine, anti-science movement, versions of which are spreading to other countries, could destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem.

I spoke with Hotez about the role of social media in spreading misleading information on vaccines and stoking anti-science aggression in many dimensions. *The resulting discussion has been edited for length and clarity.*

Sara Goudarzi: You've been on Twitter for more than a decade and often use it as a tool to communicate health and science facts, such as the importance of vaccinations. How in your experience has the social media platform changed during this time?

Peter Hotez: Well, it's become a lot more adversarial as the anti-vaccine movement has shifted. The anti-vaccine movement began in earnest around 20 years ago in the United States around false assertions that vaccines cause autism. The way I got involved was because I have a daughter with autism, and I wrote the book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism: My Journey as a Vaccine Scientist, Pediatrician, and Autism Dad,* and that made me public enemy number one or two with the anti-vaccine activists.

What I would do at that time of social media was use their statements in their attacks against me as a teachable moment, to expose what the anti-vaccine movement was all about and how they were monetizing the internet with books on Amazon and nutritional supplements and the phony autism cures. So, rather than simply block people who were attacking me, I would retweet them with a little description of what they were doing. People found it very interesting because it was teaching them how an anti-science movement works, and they started coming to my Twitter for that purpose.

The game changer was about nine years ago, when [vaccine disinformation] became a political movement around health and medical freedom. You saw a different set of actors come into this, and it became a lot more aggressive; people's political allegiance became tied to not giving their kids vaccinations, and that has just come off the rails with COVID-19. And I'd like to point out that 200,000 Americans now have needlessly lost their lives because they refused the COVID vaccine.

The hardest thing yet is really trying to describe the anti-vaccine ecosystem, because too often it's still couched in the old autism thing that they call infodemic or give it euphemisms like misinformation or disinformation. That is, as though it's some random stuff appearing on social media, when in fact, it's organized, politically motivated, and deliberate. It has a system in place, and what I do now is use that to actually describe who the actors that comprise that ecosystem are—elected leaders in the House Freedom Caucus, certain senators, and local leaders amplified in Fox News with designated contrarians from the far right think tanks.

All our training to be a scientist says you're not supposed to talk about Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives; you're supposed to be politically neutral. But what do you do when the anti-science, anti-vaccine aggression is predominantly coming along the partisan lines from the far right? How do you articulate that without basically saying, "the reason I'm doing this is to save lives?" It's no longer a theoretical discussion; Americans have lost their lives because they believed the politics, and to be able to articulate that is really threading a needle there.

Goudarzi: With Twitter's moderators practically gone, the platform's announcement that it will no longer enforce measures to combat misleading information regarding COVID-19 and will give amnesty to previously banned users, there seems to be a rise in anti-vaccination sentiment.
Hotez: It's blown up. It's gotten much tougher: Anything I put out there gets immediately pounced on, and I can trace the origins to four or five either elected leaders or these contrarians from far right think tanks and elsewhere who blow dog whistles. They will put out a (typically false or exaggerated) statement against me, and then I'll receive hundreds and hundreds of tweets or emails specifically targeting me. About half of them look like bots because the person sending it is an empty face with a gazillion numbers attached to the Twitter handle. But others are real people tuning into Fox News every night who totally fall into the rabbit hole because they seem to worship these contrarians. The other piece to this is a lot of Nazi imagery and fantasies, a lot of antisemitism, because they know I'm a Jewish scientist. And that's yet another dimension to all of this.
Goudarzi: How do you think this affects patients in healthcare settings? Have you had personal experience with those who decided not to get vaccinated because of information on the internet or social media indicating the shots are dangerous?
Hotez: I've had sort of the opposite experience, where patients were in the rabbit hole, had seen my postings, see me as credible, and because of me are taking the vaccine, which is kind of nice and spurs me on to keep going at this. But more and more I've also had the other extreme as well, which is based on what they see on social media: People will take the time to write me a threatening email or make a call to the lab or to the office. Then I have to bring in law enforcement through the Texas Medical Center Police or the Houston Police Department and the Anti-Defamation League (because they have a list of individuals who are known to make these types of threats). It's taken this very, very dark turn as a consequence.
Goudarzi: Anti-vaccination movements are nothing new and go back to the late 1700s, even before the development of the smallpox vaccine and then the 1800s and again in the 1990s and 2000s. Do you think social media has allowed the latest movement to gain even more steam than previous movements?
Hotez: I wrote an article about the whole history of [anti-vax movements] in *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. I think it really accelerated in the early 2000s with autism, in part aided by social media—it was new then but was starting up. Now, I think social media has really been an enabler. It's not only social media; I think amazon.com was a big contributor. If you search for books on vaccinations, what's out there is a horror show. My books are among the top-rated on vaccines, and they're probably ranked about number 30 or 40, because it's all preceded by the phony-baloney, anti-vaccine COVID conspiracy books. So, it's Amazon and social media. And Fox News is having a huge impact. This has been documented by Media Matters, the watchdog group, as well as this very interesting paper that came out of ETH Zurich, which is like the MIT of Central Europe.

Goudarzi: Do you think Amazon is purposefully placing these books higher up in search results, or are search results just a reflection of how much steam the movement has gained?
Hotez: I don't know. Amazon is probably amoral. I don't think they think about this one way or the other, but whatever sells. So, it's whatever people are buying—that's how they're ranking it.
Goudarzi: Are you seeing a difference in the attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines versus say the flu or MMR vaccines?
Hotez: Yeah, because remember, MMR came out of autism; that was the [original] assertion that the MMR vaccine causes autism. That was [*The Lancet*] paper from 1998. But then around 2014, 2015 (I like to think because I was helping to take some of the wind out of the sails around autism), you started to see the anti-vaccine movement pivot around this concept of health and medical freedom, that you can't tell us what to do about our kids. And that was the first link to the Republican Tea Party here in Texas. In fact, they started getting PAC [political action committee]

money… It really took off in Texas and Oklahoma and that's what you see came off the rails with COVID-19.

It has been documented now by Charles Gaba, a health analyst whose work has been mentioned in the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, Pew Research Center and Peterson Academic Center, that the lowest vaccination rates were where health freedom propaganda was the strongest, and among those who are in red states like Texas, the redder the county, the lower the vaccination rate, the higher the numbers of deaths. It's a really tight correlation, so much so that David Leonhardt in the *New York Times* has called it red COVID. My forthcoming book, *The Deadly Rise of Antiscience: A Scientist's Warning* and it's full on linked to far-right politics and it's been embraced by the House Freedom Caucus.

After vaccines became widely available, the statements from the 2021 CPAC conference of conservatives in Dallas was first along the lines of: "they're going to vaccinate you, and then they're going to take away your guns and your bibles." It's ridiculous. A quarter of the country accepted it—mostly in Texas and the Southern states, and then [Georgia US Rep.] Marjorie Taylor Greene called people like me "medical brownshirts," using Nazi paramilitary analogy. Then, those in the Senate GOP, such as Senator Johnson from Wisconsin, held anti-vaccine roundtables, amplified by Fox News. Every night, during the last half of 2021, nighttime anchors Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham filled their airwaves with very strong anti-vaccine rhetoric, discrediting the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. And then contrarians from the far right think tanks piled on.

As I said, if it were just a theoretical construct, I wouldn't get so exercised, but 40,000 Texans died during the delta wave in the last half of 2021 and early Omicron BA1 wave in 2022 because they refused the COVID vaccine and were victims of this targeted aggression towards them. The number that I put out in the new book is 200,000 Americans across the country. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the health analyst Charles Gaba come up with similar numbers. On that basis, anti-vaccine activism, anti-science aggression, if you look at it as a societal killing force, is killing more Americans than gun violence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, or cyber-attacks.

Goudarzi: And the interesting thing is that COVID-19 vaccines have been tremendously successful.

Hotez: Alison Galvani at Yale has just done a modeling exercise with the Commonwealth Fund, indicating that COVID vaccines have saved 3.1 million Americans.

Goudarzi: Yet the messaging against these vaccines seems to be just as successful and as you mentioned hundreds of thousands of deaths could have been prevented here in the United States. So, it begs the question, why are we having such an anti-science moment?

Hotez: It's because it's fully ensconced in the political landscape of the country that became part of the far right, and people refused the vaccine out of allegiance. Part of showing your allegiance to the far right is not getting vaccinated. Then, you saw the Proud Boys march in anti-vaccine rallies, and an early arrest in the January 6 insurrection included a prominent anti-vaccine activist.

The question that I get is: "Hey doc, what should we do about this?" And I say I don't know, because this goes outside the health sector. This is a political problem right now. How do you uncouple the anti-science from the politics? It's been really, really challenging, and the Biden administration has not been willing to take this on. Vivek Murthy, who is a very good Surgeon General, issued an advisory in July of 2021 about social media and said we have to work with Meta and Facebook and Twitter to prevent this stuff from going viral. That's fine, but it doesn't get to those who are generating the content. This is where we're starting to see breakdowns, in my view, among our scientific and professional societies, and even the National Academies, because this idea that we have to remain politically neutral is so strong that no one will talk about it the way I'm talking about it with you. You have to be politically neutral; it's silly.

To paraphrase Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, neutrality favors the aggressor.

Goudarzi: What do you think the end goal is for those generating the content and spearheading

these movements? There are certain people who truly believe that vaccines could cause x, whatever x is, but there are others like Gov. DeSantis who himself was vaccinated yet promotes anti-vaccination sentiments.

Hotez: Early on when vaccines first came out, he was actually pro-vaccines. So, what caused the change? When it was pre-health freedom, it was fairly straightforward: It was people monetizing the internet, selling nutritional supplements and books on phony autism cures. When I wrote the book, trying to look at other examples of this, I found what's going on now in Stalin's Russia in the 1930s 1940s. This is part of the signature of an authoritarian regime: to target the science and scientists. When you read Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, you see this is part of the playbook. Even though it's self-defeating, it still fosters allegiance and belonging. I think what happened is with the anti-vaccine groups for whom the wind was let out of their sails around autism, they needed a new thing. They found money and power and relevance by tying themselves to the far right, and the far right created a whole new cadre of people that they wouldn't have otherwise.

Goudarzi: Just add adding to that: Do you think vaccine disinformation is propagated or reinforced purposely by other governments to cause division within the United States, similar to the 2016 election?

Hotez: No question about that, and I think Russia is probably the most egregious [perpetrator], and this has been documented. David Broniatowski, a computer scientist at the George Washington University, has written about this and the Russian bots' roles. In some cases, they're using both anti-vaccine and pro-vaccine rhetoric. They are specifically using this as a wedge issue to divide the country and destabilize our democracy. And it's not only the Russians—the Chinese, North Koreans and Iranians are doing this. But I think Russia is probably the biggest state actor.

What I've recommended to the Biden administration is they create an inter-governmental agency, because the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) doesn't know what to do at this point. Because of the foreign actors involved, you have to bring in Homeland Security, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department and the State Department as well. There are people smart enough who know about these big dangerous societal forces, and we need their advice on what levers we can pull and push. But they haven't wanted to take it on.

Similarly, at the level of the UN agencies, the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do at this point. So, you're starting to see that same US-style anti-vaccine activity moving to Canada, the United Kingdom and Western Europe—and I wrote about this in a paper in *Nature Reviews Immunology*. You're even seeing it now in low- and middle- income countries, including those in Africa. So, it's going to destabilize the global vaccine ecosystem, even around childhood vaccination.

Goudarzi: Scientific debate around new treatment or preventive measure used to happen more or less behind closed doors. But given the nature of a real time pandemic, some of those debates are taking place on social media, and sometimes that leads to the lay audience misunderstanding certain aspects of the discussion and spreading misinformation. How valuable, and how harmful, do you think it is to have scientific debates between researchers on social media?

Hotez: It's often not between researchers. For instance, one of the most common things when they target me on social media is they say I should be in a public debate with the lead anti-vaccine activist. And I say, "No, that's not how science is done. I've written a scientific paper and if somebody has an issue with that, they can either refute it in a scientific journal, or publish their own finding." Of course, they can't get it published because there's no science behind it. So, what they want to do instead is they want a public debate.

And I say, "Look, you can debate 18th-century enlightenment philosophy, but science is not typically something that's debated in that kind of forum; we have a mechanism for doing that through scientific publication and peer review." And they don't want to play that way. They just want to put out their propaganda because that's all they have behind it. An example is ivermectin or

hydroxychloroquine, which the scientific community has clearly shown has no effect on COVID-19. Hydroxychloroquine is even harmful. But the problem is the anti-vaccine force has dominated the internet, and they say, "Hey, scientists don't want to debate us, what are they hiding?" And that's, again, how they weaponize communication.

Goudarzi: I was actually thinking of earlier during the pandemic. Because there was so little time, some researchers were putting their papers up on open access preprint servers, which didn't require a peer review, and then others were weighing in on social media platforms. At times, you would see non-scientists take one aspect of that discussion and spread something that wasn't necessarily true.

Hotez: I think with the whole preprint server mechanism, ultimately the benefits outweighed the downside. I can't tell you how many times I had to depend on data from bioRxiv, medRxiv in order to make sense of what was going on. If I had to wait a few weeks for it to air in *New England Journal of Medicine* or *Nature* and *Science*—and by the way, they did a pretty good job too; they were able to turn that around in record time—[it would have been too late.] If you're looking for any silver lining in this pandemic, it's the journal editors, the whole preprint server mechanism, and the willingness of the scientific community to share information. And I think for most of the public understood that they were seeing this play out in real time and that there wasn't always going to be consistency. The problem was those who were who were weaponizing it for their own personal or political gain.

Goudarzi: But you still think the advantages outweighed the disadvantages?

Hotez: I think so. It's hard to imagine how I could've really talked about everything going on knowledgeably on CNN, NBC, or wherever without having access to the information. The preprints were so important.

Goudarzi: Some researchers have either left Twitter or are thinking of leaving. What will this do to scientific discourse? Would it make sense to stay on the platform to counter misinformation and disinformation and increase public awareness, or should researchers seek a more balanced platform?

Hotez: I don't have the answer. I struggle with this every day. I mean, the aggression against me and the threats would continue even if I wasn't on Twitter, because more often than not, it's not against anything that I tweeted. Ninety percent of the time, it's people who see me as a threat to undermine their politics or their business line and are just making up things about me and would still continue even if I wasn't on Twitter. So that's the reason I stay on it, because at least I'm getting out important and timely information. But it is really painful and awful to see what's going on there.

Goudarzi: Is the amount of aggression you face tied to the changing ownership of Twitter and political shifts?

Hotez: The politics around the anti-science, anti-vaccine and phony baloney about COVID origins had started with the pandemic in 2020. But now with all the contrarians back at once it reminds me of the old *Batman* series when they brought back Catwoman, Joker, Penguin, and Riddler all at once to do away with Batman. That seems to be going on, so it's been their superstars who are super energized by being invited back to Twitter, and they are using the platform very aggressively.

Goudarzi: What are some of the lessons we've learned about disinformation and misinformation over the last few years regarding social media that we should consider moving forward?

Hotez: I would say social media is a major weapon of choice for spreading disinformation. But remember, we have to get to those who are generating content. Social media is an important vehicle, but it's not the only one. I think we probably should stop calling it misinformation, disinformation or infodemic. We should call it for what it is, which is anti-science aggression, because it is a killing force. What we realized is that the science aggression is taking lives in the United States on an unprecedented scale.

For that reason, it needs to be addressed, and that's the part the scientific community has not come to terms with. When I call myself a scientist, it's not just co-heading a team of scientists making a

COVID vaccine for the world that has reached a 100 million people. That's a very noble activity, but from my perspective, even that's still insufficient. Now being a scientist means, to some extent, being willing to combat the anti-science. It's nothing that any of us signed up for. I never dreamed when I got my MD-PhD in New York in the 1980s that this was something I'd be doing, but this is what's in front of us.
And I don't really feel that the scientific community—the professional societies, scientific bodies, even the academy—fully understand the impact. Hopefully it'll be clear when my book comes out, but it may become even clearer when we see the House GOP hearings. I predict the oversight committee and the judiciary committee or select subcommittees will become an anti-science witch hunt and will target prominent American scientists. And then we'll get a better picture.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 6:27 PM
To: David Morens b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6; Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Gerald T < b6; Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: My latest

Many thanks David! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor

Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
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Media Inquiries:
b6

iPhone

On Jan 30, 2023, at 5:22 PM, David Morens b6 wrote:

kudos to you, again! dmm

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jan 30, 2023, at 14:37, Hotez, Peter Jay (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) wrote:

https://thebulletin.org/2023/01/viral- spread-peter-hotez-on-the-increase-of-anti-science-aggression-on-social-media/

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6

iPhone

On Jan 27, 2023, at 2:43 PM, Roberts, Rich b6 wrote:

Peter:

No, I didn't come up with the name.

But one I have recently come up with is CheatGPT instead of ChatGPT.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 3:30 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Hotez, Peter Jay < b6
Cc: David Morens b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

EXTERNAL SENDER

I forgot about that Rich. But I'm assuming it wasn't you that came up with somewhat colonial name!!???

In all seriousness, while it's good for virologists to push back against calls to block scientific research, I don't think a campaign to support gain of function work that's designed to see what would happen if you make a lethal pathogen more transmissible is anything any of us particularly want to get behind right now!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 g >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Finally - virologists fight back!

Peter:

In the interests of compete disclosure, I was a member of the "Cambridge Working Group". Our concern was about the deliberate attempts to make the flu virus more infectious. It was the deliberate nature of the experiments that was troubling, not virus research in general.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, January 27, 2023 8:39 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Finally - virologists fight back!
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Article in NPR this morning (https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/01/27/1151867224/virologists- science-oversight-risky-experiments) – and below, based on a Commentary (attached) in mBio and various ASM journals signed by >150 virologists that fights back against the anti-science, defends virus research and gives a table of positive results from gain of function work.

I'll reach out to Felicia Goodrum (lead author) today to see if they will talk about helping with some sort of coalition. Michael Imperiale was quoted so if any of you know him or Felicia or others who are leading this (e.g. Arturo Casadevall), it would be good to reach out to let them know the urgency.

Some of these people were involved in the coalition (Scientists for Science - http://www.scientistsforscience.org/) to push back against earlier efforts to cancel Gain of function work by the "Cambridge Working Group" (a pretentious name, of course)…

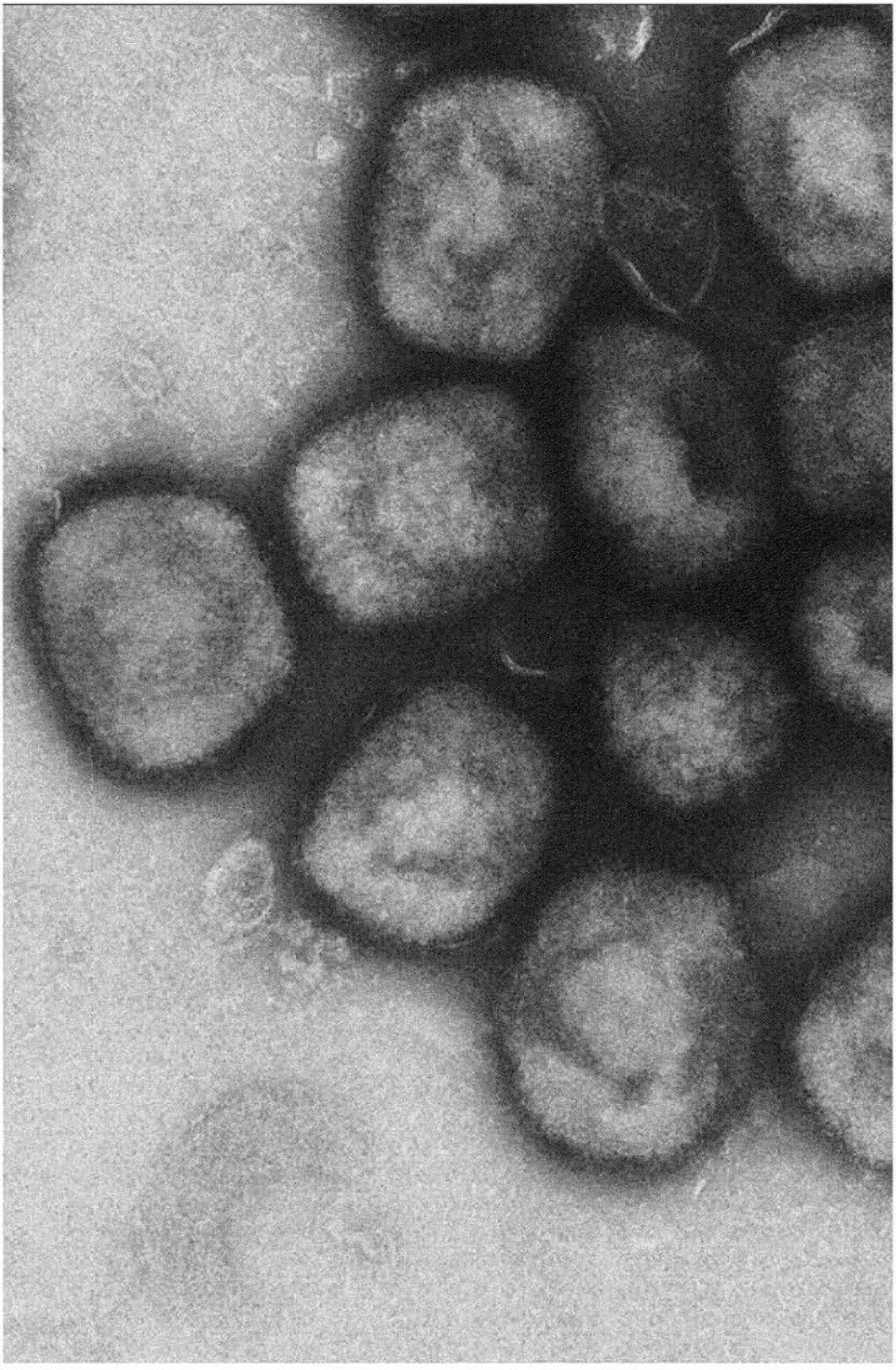
BTW – saw your name on the Scientists for Science website Jerry!

POLICY-ISH

Virologists defend their science as officials eye more oversight of risky experiments



NELL GREENFIELDBOYCE



This image shows purified particles of mpox virus, formerly called monkeypox. Viruses like these can be genetically altered in the lab in ways that might make them more dangerous.

NIAID

Over 150 virologists have signed on to a commentary that says all the evidence to date indicates that the coronavirus pandemic started naturally, and it wasn't the result of some kind of lab accident or malicious

attack.
They worry that continued speculation about a lab in China is fueling calls for more regulation of experiments with pathogens, and that this will stifle the basic research needed to prepare for future pandemics.

The virologists issued their statement just ahead of a key meeting Friday held by outside advisors to the federal government. That group is set to wrap up a recent review of the existing oversight system for experiments that are controversial because they could create new potential threats.
The advisors' draft recommendations call for expanding a special decision-making process that currently weighs the risks and benefits of experiments that might make "potential pandemic pathogens" more dangerous.
"The government really has a strong interest on behalf of all of us, in the public, in knowing when researchers want to make a virus more lethal or more transmissible, and understanding how that would be done and why that would be done, and whether the benefits are worth it," says Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
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He thinks if the draft recommendations were adopted by the government, "it would be a very big step forward."

The origins of the pandemic

All of this comes as the lab in China, known as the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is again in the headlines. An internal government watchdog released a report this week criticizing the National Institutes of Health, saying it failed to adequately monitor grant awards given to a nonprofit that had collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan lab.
Felicia Goodrum, a virologist at the University of Arizona, says that open-minded experts have investigated the origins of the pandemic. The available evidence, she says, supports the notion that the virus emerged from nature just like other viruses such as HIV and Ebola did — by jumping from animals into people who had contact with them.
"The evidence that we have to date suggests that SARS-CoV-2 entered the human population by that route, " says Goodrum. "There is no evidence to the contrary or in support of a lab leak, nothing credible."

Basic research on viruses, she says, is what led to the swift development of vaccines and drugs to fight the pandemic.

And yet virologists have watched in dismay as misinformation and conspiracy theories have placed the blame on science.

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"There's this complete disconnect between reality and what happened," says Michael Imperiale, a virologist at the University of Michigan.
He says that while debates have gone on for years about the wisdom of doing experiments that might make bad viruses even worse, this moment feels different.

"The pandemic," he says, "has really kind of heightened the urgency with which we need to address these issues, just because of all the controversy that's been out there regarding, you know, was this a lab leak or not?"

A bird flu study raises alarm

Unlike, say, nuclear physics research, biology has traditionally had a culture of openness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, however, biologists began to grapple with the possibility that their published work might serve as recipes for evildoers who wanted to make bioweapons.

And in 2011, there was an outcry after government-funded researchers altered a bird flu virus that can be deadly in people. Their lab work made this virus more contagious in the lab animals that are stand-ins for people.

Critics said they'd created a super flu. Proponents said that viruses sometimes have to be manipulated in the

lab to see what they might be capable of; in nature, after all, mutations occur all the time and that is how pandemic strains emerge.
That episode marked the start of a long, heated debate, plus research moratoriums and ultimately the development of new regulations. In 2017, a review system was put into place to weigh the risks and benefits of studies that might make a potential pandemic pathogen even worse. So far just three proposed lines of research, with influenza viruses, have been deemed risky enough to merit that kind of extra scrutiny.
"We are really talking about a small amount of research proposals," says Lyric Jorgenson, the acting associate director for science policy and the acting director of the Office of Science Policy at the NIH.

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She says just before the pandemic started, officials asked advisors on the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to consider whether the government needed to be more transparent to the public about how it was making decisions about this kind of research. Before that work was done, the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold. Last year, officials asked the group to broaden its work and to evaluate the regulations more comprehensively.
If the draft changes developed by this advisory group are eventually adopted by the government, an extra layer of oversight would apply to any study "reasonably anticipated" to enhance the transmission or virulence of any pathogen in a way that could make it a public health threat. That means more experiments on more viruses would get a closer look.

"What this new recommendation is saying, is that even if you start with a virus that had no potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, if you are doing research that will change that virus in a way where it could now cause an uncontrollable disease, or a widely spreading disease, that has to be reviewed by this new framework," says Inglesby.

What's more, the advisory group has noted that "increased transparency in the review process is needed to engender public trust in the review and oversight processes."

What's "Reasonably Anticipated"

The American Society for Microbiology has responded positively to the draft recommendations, saying "we urge swift implementation of the recommended changes by the federal agencies engaged in this work." But some virologists think the devil will be in the details if these recommendations turn into policy.

"They keep using this phrase 'reasonably anticipated,'" says Imperiale. "How is that going to be interpreted? Is there going to be clear guidance as to what is meant by that?"

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Researchers often don't know what will happen when they start an experiment, says Goodrum, especially when the science is cutting-edge.

"That's where the big scientific advancements come from. And so to tie our hands behind our back, to say we can only do the science that we can anticipate, then we're really restricting innovative science," she says.

Ron Fouchier, the virologist at Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, whose lab did the bird flu experiments over a decade ago, said in an email that he'd hoped the experience of going through a pandemic would simulate more research, not "unnecessarily delay or restrict it."
He said it looked like many infectious disease researchers in the United States "will face substantial delays in their crucial research efforts, if they can continue that research at all."

The U.S. is unusual in that it has a lot of public discussion of these issues and a system to try to manage the risks, says Inglesby.

He thinks that oversight can be made stronger without getting in the way of science.

"I am avidly, absolutely pro-science and pro-research, and in particular pro-infectious disease research," says Inglesby.

But he says there's a very small part of that research "where there is the potential for very high risk if things

go wrong, either by accident or on purpose. And so we have to get the balance right, between the risks that could unfold and the potential benefits."

lab leak theory
coronavirus research
pathogens
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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 9:20 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6; David Morens b6
Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Rich Roberts b6
Subject: RE: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

For what it's worth I sent a brief note to the two leads for the White House COVID response team, Ashish Jha and Nahid Bhadelia, to say why they needed to agitate at the higher levels to get on to appointing a new NIH Director, preferably from the outside, and ideally a candidate like Harold Varmus who could command respect from both sides of the congressional divide.

I also suggested they consider the point that it would be better if there was a new NIH Director before they appointed somebody to NIAID, and that was OK because Hugh Auchincloss was eminently able to be a respected interim Director, both within the NIH and the outside scientific community. And, that the next NIAID Director should come from outside of the institution.

I don't know what influence they will have, should they choose to act, but they do have access to the higher levels, and that is important.

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:38 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Cc: Peter Daszak <b6>; David Morens <b6>
Jeffrey Sturchio <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Rich Roberts <b6>
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I think top priority is the Biden Administration appointing a new NIH Director and someone really good, I don't understand the holdup.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

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On Jan 25, 2023, at 1:34 PM, Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

Well, if that were to occur there would not only be continued messaging to the public but more push back to the politicians and others spreading misinformation, and I suspect a more focused and strategic scientific plan for the institute. It has been pretty good under Tony, with some gaps that seem glaring to me, but it could also be better. How do we find and support the right outside scientist to take on the challenge?

Jerry

From: Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>

Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>; Jeffrey Sturchio <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Rich Roberts <b6>
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

I see the far right keeps putting video after video about me terrified I might take over for Tony

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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On Jan 25, 2023, at 11:35 AM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

Disapppointed that Hugh isn't a candidate, because short of a stellar scientist from outside (and that isn't looking good), Hugh would be a safe pair of hands for the forseeable future.

I also cannot believe for the life of me that Scott Weaver would be rejected from the other position you mentioned. He's a serious scientists, a huge leader in his field, and someone who is balanced and measured in the way he deals with bureaucracy. What a stupid decision and loss to NIAID.

What we need is a leading scientist, who's got a research and public health background, with experience in dealing with difficult political issues and both sides of the political spectrum…er….Peter Hotez!

Seriously, there surely are others out there?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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Tel.: b6
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Hotez, Peter Jay b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6
Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Gerald Keusch b6
>; Rich Roberts
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Guys, although the director search seems to be proceeding with total secrecy, I learned yesterday that our worst fear has come true: a highly undesirable internal candidate has applied. This person is a middle to upper level physician scientist who is widely disliked as a self-serving narcissist, back stabber, and manipulator. Tthis opinion comes not from me, but from colleagues with much more knowledge of him/her than me. Of course, being an A-hole doesn't necessarily predict a bad leader, but there is widespread worry.

I won't name the candidate but Peter S would know because her/his research at NIAID is in the area of clinical management of rare hereditary pediatric diseases such as Job disease and CGD. Peter H, you could easily ID this person, but i do not want to do so, in part because i have limited personal experience with him/her and am merely relating opinions of colleagues i trust

This individual is in a key management position in which she/he has earned a reputation of cresting an ant-meritocracy: screwing the best scientists while supporting those who suck up. Again this is hearsay, but from people who work under him/her.

If these negative assessments are true, it is still unclear what the implications, if any, would be for EHA, but i would worry that she/he would throw good scientists under the bus to appease politicians downtown

In any case, the best scenario is an open search with many good candidates. I am not sure whether we have that.

Also, my opinion, and that of many others, is that we need someone from the outside, in part because NIAID management and leadership has become inbred, nepotistic, and uninterested in hiring top scientists to fill positions. Moreover, we totally lack

vision or any idea about where the science will and should go, and no mechanism to plan for being at/staying on the cutting edge

When i came here in the 1990s, from academia, where i was a 40-something year old full tenured professor in both med and public health school departments, i was told thst because i only had about 160 publications i had no chance of getting automatic tenure or even being put on a tenure track position
That was then.

Of our two most recent hires placed into tenured positions, one had only 10 publications and the other came straight out of a post doc with few publications as well.

Both were in their early 30s and, as far as i can tell, are unlikely to ever do much

At the same time, we had the ability to hire a top scientist from the outside, my good friend the arbovirologist Scott Weaver from UTMB - Peter H, you may know him- and we was the 100% top choice of the search committee. However leadership below Tony refused to hire him with the excuse that he was overqualified and would make the other scientists look bad

No, i am not joking. This is where we are

I have in my had a small list of about 5-10 qualified folks for NIAID director, and have spoken or written to 4 about it, one being you, Peter H, but all four have expressed no interest. Peter D, you are clearly on that list too, but obvious to all of us is the fact that HHS would never let that happen, sadly, so i never mentioned it. In a better world, you would be at the top of that list in my view

The application deadline of 1/17 has passed, so we may be stuck with a non-ideal list, although no one knows including, i believe, our acting director Hugh, who is not a candidate, or so he told me

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jan 25, 2023, at 10:58, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Unfortunate. At this point you should just throw your hat in the ring!
>
> Why not have a confidential chat with Peter Staley and see if they have a pool of candidates yet?
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura < b6; David Morens b6
Gerald Keusch b6; Rich Roberts
Subject: Re: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter

Unfortunately the far right made a new YouTube claiming I'm the successor to Fauci. Which is ridiculous but it has set off a new wave of aggression

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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On Jan 25, 2023, at 9:47 AM, Peter Daszak <
b6
> wrote:

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Disgusting. Reported to Twitter safety. They've been surprisingly good over the last few months. When there's a clear violation they've tended to lock the account.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Jeffrey Sturchio b6
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 9:08 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6 Peter Daszak <
b6
>; Aleksei Chmura <
b6
>; David Morens <
b6
>; Gerald Keusch b6 >; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: RE: Tweet by Miner Flux on Twitter

Peter: What an idiot this guy is. You should be heartened by the immediate response he got to this asinine tweet!

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:09 PM

To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6] David Morens < [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: Tweet by MinerFlux on Twitter



Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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[b6]g
iPhone

Date:	Mon, 27 May 2024 4:19:55 PM -0400
Sent:	Mon, 27 May 2024 4:19:29 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: Document summarizing our response to the HHS debarment allegations
From:	Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
To:	Roberts, Rich [b6];
CC:	Peter Daszak [b6]; [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Jeffrey Sturchio [b6];
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image001.jpg

Yes I agree with that: we stick to the facts and the facts point to overwhelming evidence of natural origins, Michael Worobey states no pandemic in human history has had as much evidence for its zoonotic spillover as Covid 19.

Of course any pandemic could theoretically be started by a lab leak, but that has never occurred in human history, in fact no significant epidemic in human history has ever started from a lab leak or GoF research.

So my view is that it's like questioning quantum mechanics or general relativity, sure you can cherry pick facts or factoids that sow doubt but there's a scientific consensus built on strong experimental evidence and theoretical underpinnings. Whereas lab leak is based on drunken texts and emails from a couple of careless journalists, policy experts, economists and scientists from other fields, many desperate for relevance. My take anyway…

"And I approve this message for FOIA"

Warmest Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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On May 27, 2024, at 1:06 PM, Roberts, Rich [b6]> wrote:

Peter:

She is trying to urge caution with the politicians. I'm not sure that is always warranted, but sticking to facts is always a good thing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2024 4:01 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]>
Subject: Re: Document summarizing our response to the HHS debarment allegations

EXTERNAL SENDER

She's not a virologist and believes that just because we've not found the exact virus hanging around in bats leaves the door open for lab leak. But that goes against what every virologist says. We have overwhelming evidence for natural origins.

As Michael Hiltzik says

Let's be clear: There is no leak. No one has ever proc its favor other than innuer conjecture. By contrast, ev zoonotic transfer is almost has grown ever stronger o' is widely accepted by virol epidemiologists.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

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On May 27, 2024, at 1:34 PM, Roberts, Rich (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Peter:

I received this feedback from Marcia McNutt.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

Executive Assistant: Erin Varney
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: McNutt, Marcia K. b6
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2024 1:01 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Re: Document summarizing our response to the HHS debarment allegations
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks for sharing this document. I don't know Peter personally, so don't understand how he wants to present himself and EcoHealth to the politicians. As we all have seen, politicians purposefully come across as combative, like to speak in sound bites, and take much liberty with the facts. As a scientist, my personal style is to stick to the facts, insist that others stick to those facts, and admit when and where science cannot answer questions. The way this statement is written, it tends towards giving the politicians a taste of their own medicine, so to speak, by stating in absolute terms topics that are more nuanced. For example:

"Many of the claims levied against EcoHealth Alliance are built on the false assumption that COVID-19 emerged from the Wuhan Institute of Virology because of a lab leak during research supported by the NIH under a subgrant from EcoHealth Alliance: There is not a scintilla of scientific evidence for this narrative. "

I probably would have stated this differently. The failure to find the SARS-COV2 virus in nature has been the primary support for the lab leak hypothesis. So I think stating that "there is not a scintilla of scientific evidence" is overstated, and could bring trouble. The epidemiology of the disease does suggest origin at the market, but without the cooperation of the Chinese, we will not solve this problem. I am sure that many interpret the lack of cooperation by the Chinese as "proof" that they engineered the disease, even if by mistake.

The rest of the statement follows in similar vein, by showing anger and frustration. (And believe me, I can completely relate to why Peter is so frustrated!) But emotion tends to detract from the impression that this is a fact-based rebuttal. I guess I would have just made the same points more dispassionately. e.g. Debarment is not an appropriate action in this case based on government regulations. The timing of the request for data and notebooks was too late, and by that time political tensions virtually guaranteed that they would not be forthcoming as distrust was evident on both sides (Chinese and US). etc.

Please note that these comments are just based on my personal experience with Congress. Peter can take or leave.

One strategy I used to use with Congress was to meet privately with the Members prior to my testimony. For those likely to be in opposition to my case, I would explain in great detail to them and in terms they can understand why they should back off or change their minds. For those likely to be sympathetic to my case, I would feed them questions to ask. I remember one case when I was testifying for the USGS budget, and the proposal had been to zero out the Earthquake Research Grants to universities, a program in place for many decades. I had one Member ask me whether these grants had any impact in the past. That gave me the opening to tell the story of a young Stanford grad student from France whose research funding had run out, and he was going to have to return to France. The USGS stepped in, supported the student, and he used the funds to conduct a strong ground motion mapping of the Bay Area to predict what areas were most vulnerable to earthquake shaking and sediment liquification. Three years later, the Loma Prieta earthquake occurred, and basically validated all of the microzonation shaking that the map had predicted. The student was able to stay in the US, finish his degree, obtain US citizenship, and at the time of my testimony was President of Caltech. All of the money for the earthquake research grants was restored by Congress as a result of that testimony, and no funds were taken out elsewhere.

Peter needs an opportunity to talk about all of the good that the EcoHealth Alliance has done, and needs to create an opening to tell that story.

Hope this is helpful. Have a great Memorial Day!

Marcia

NASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNASNAS
Dr. Marcia K McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
Mailing Address | Physical location:
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On May 25, 2024, at 1:10 AM, Roberts, Rich b6 wrote:

Marcia:

Here is a draft of a document that Peter Daszak is preparing in order to answer the questions from the Congressional sub-committee concerning EcoHealth Alliance. Any comments or advice you might have would be welcome.

There is getting to be increasing concern among the colleagues I speak to about the attacks on Science from politicians and many have expressed a willingness to help with a campaign to counter them. Has any progress been made from your end? I would be happy to talk with you or your communications staff about this.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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<Summary of EcoHealth's responses to SSCP and HHS allegations..pdf>

Date: Wed, 21 Apr 2021 12:43:11 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 21 Apr 2021 12:41:05 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Attachments: Political letters, bills, re. CoV research in China, GoF etc..docx

Thanks for the email David - comments below. Also please see the attached word doc with links to some of the political actions that I'm concerned about. Tell Tony that this is very early days, with most of these coming from the Right, and many that can be headed off at the pass by positive outreach to Democrats, which I believe people will be doing.

I've also put in a link to the new " Covid Commission Planning Group (Covid CPG)" that has no official role from USG, but boldly states as its core mission "to prepare the way for a National Covid Commission". Members include David Relman & Marc Lipsitch and I have heard from many on the conspiracy theory chatter networks online that this will focus partly on advocating for reduction in biosafety labs, viral work in wildlife, and gain-of-function.

Please feel free to share any docs that I've sent to you, with Tony. Hopefully you can do that in a way that avoids FoIA, and if not possible, just show him stuff on screen share on Zoom.

Please also see comments below...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Peter, i am on leave in Florida for my granddaughters graduation from Florida State

Tomorrow at 130 i will be having a zoom call with Tony to tip him off on some of the info you sent in your recent email

I want to be sure about what info or docs you would or would not want me to share
[Peter Daszak:] Any and all

Other than what i see on tv, the jousting with Rand Paul and Jim Jordan, for example, i do not know how much of this Tony is aware of. To my knowledge he doesn't share it with anyone up here

I think issues he will be most concerned about are not your grant, although i add i am sure he would do anything he could to restore the funds and get the hellhounds of your back, but rather 1) the possibility that people like Rep Rodgers and her committee are about to turn up the heat and put Tony, personally, in their crosshairs, and 2) the possibility the NIH funded scientists or other esteemed scientists, are in cahoots with politicians wanting to attack him or niaid
[Peter Daszak:] agreed

As background, we all went through the original version of this crap about 10 years ago with the original GOF attacks surrounding H5N1. As Tony's scientific advisor, i spent much of the year, along with Jeff T, helping brief him and get him up to speed, which he did. At the time, David Relman, who had been one of Tony's favorites, was leading the charge, and we all wondered why a young guy with so much promise would choose demagoguery over science. Lipsitch was only a minor player at that time, but relished his attack role and seem to become more alarmist as time went on. Now these guys are in the NAM. How did that happen???? Ebright has always been a crackpot, in the mold of Peter Duseberg, remember him?, and no one took him seriously except some of the press who didn't know any better
[Peter Daszak:] I had the unfortunate issue of voting on Marc Lipsitch's membership of NAM. He's an accomplished scientist. He's also very opinionated, arrogant and pushy on whatever issue he believes in. I voted on his science acumen.

I was unclear from your email on a couple points you might clarify.

Obviously the Rodgers letter asking you to produce all those dox not only overlaps with the Lauer letter to you, but could not have been written without the help of a virologist.
[Peter Daszak:] I have it on good authority (Ebright's Twitter account) that he was involved. They are also getting pressured from Jamie Metzl who's working with the internet conspiracy networks actively to promote their "Research"

Actually, given that there are a few points in the letter that someone knowledgable about coronavirus virology would have corrected, my suspicion is that the letter was put together with the help of a legitimate scientist who needs to do more homework on coronaviruses.
[Peter Daszak:] you're right..! Metzl isn't a virologist, neither's Ebright. The internet 'researchers' are led by a banker and some junior scientists, many from human genetics, mol boil world.

Do you agree, and do you think that person was Ebright? Do you think Relman, Lipsitch, Imperiale, or other current or former grantees might have been involved?

I am not sure we ever funded Ebright, but we did fund the others. I would like to think that Relman et all are only mouthing off to the press, but do you think there is more to it than that, eg, that any of them are working with the politicians?
[Peter Daszak:] David Relman is talking with reporters a lot about this, including casting aspersions on my motives for speaking out about this virus emerging via wildlife-to-human spillover (he's quoted as saying my motives are to protect the research I've been doing and reputations of our collaborators). Ebright is very actively (and obnoxiously) critical on social media calling me a 'Grifter' on a weekly basis and promoting unsubstantiated arguments for a lab leak. I had to look up what 'grifter' meant at first...

Your earlier comments about this proposed investigative committee, and the possible role of these folks in it, are alarming. Can you be more specific about where this stands and what is being done to forward it and to squelch it?
[Peter Daszak:] Nothing's being done to squelch it, and neither should it be - there will be other committees that also pop up. My concern is their bold claim that they're laying the groundwork for a 9/11 type commission (and have a 9/11 commission person involved). It may be that just by saying that a lot, and having well known people involved, they end up forming one. They're clearly politically connected and are advocating for this politically. Jerry and I also proposed this in our paper published in Health Affairs, but we assumed this would be led by NAM or some other well-respected institution.

When i speak with Tony i do not want to step into the politics of all this, as that's not my job and he wouldn't want me to. If he needs further info it might be best to connect you two, in an off the record manner. Would that be OK? We are getting FOIA'd non stop, so it's most important that Tony not have anything on the record that could come back to bite
[Peter Daszak:] Totally agree. Tell him I'm happy to speak with him at any

time and will do so in a way that's not FoIA-ble. One thing I could do is either on a zoom call or by sending you a document, is lay out responses to the Mendendez questions so that the arguments are known and well-supported. For example, everyone's saying that this is a 'gain-of-function' issue, but actually that's not the case - we worked on bat viruses, not human pathogens. The expts produced loss of function, not gain of function, all appropriate conditions and approvals were demonstrably checked and correctly answered.

Finally, i didn't read all of the Menendez bill-in-committee, which is longer than Les misÉrables, but what's the gist? Do you think that in their zeal to take a hard stance against the PRC, these Democrats are purposely, or accidentally, getting sucked into the evil-WIV scenario? Is there real danger here?
[Peter Daszak:] The Menendez bill is the only one that stands a chance so far of becoming law because it's bipartisan. The WIV, gain-of-function stuff is thrown in as a very small part of it. The draft wording only calls for a report from NIH after 180 days on these issues, and they are easily addressed. However, if it does pass and the anti-China mood hardens in the US, it may end up with calls to testify and the Republicans may use that to undermine NIH, and in particular Tony, given the rabid GoF myth they've been building.

Anything you think might be helpful, I'd appreciate

TY, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Wed, 15 Sep 2021 2:50:52 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 15 Sep 2021 2:50:50 PM -0400
Subject: FW: Sunday Wash Post editorial
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- [b6] [b6] [b6]
- [b6]

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: Sunday Wash Post editorial

Yes, the shit never ends, it seems. Do you know him well enough to email him and say "wat's up

here?"

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 b6 b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6 g>
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 1:23 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: Sunday Wash Post editorial

I don't buy the argument that he simply didn't say anything new. He knowingly gave space for the lab leakers to latch on to the 'field scientist' idea, which is never disprovable of course, but exactly as unlikely as any other lab pathway because 1) they wore PPE, 2) they tested all the samples and none had SARS-CoV-2, and 3) the bat-farmed wildlife-Huanan market is far more likely.

He shouldn't have said what he said to the press, and absolutely knew it would lead to this sort of crap in the US. I think it helps him and WHO look tougher on the lab leak stuff, and helps remove some political heat in the

long run.

Very irritating considering the papers are linking and EcoHealth into all this as usual - it's just too easy for them. Sunday Times did another piece today and it's let to more vitriol on social media directly straight at EHA and me.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 10:32 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Robert Kessler b6>
Subject: Sunday Wash Post editorial

Touting Embarek's supposed recantating. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Wed, 20 Oct 2021 11:04:23 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 20 Oct 2021 11:04:10 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
From: ROCHE Benjamin b6
To: David Morens b6

Yes, just saw that, a bomb threat apparently. We check at noon if we keep our meeting ?

On Wed, Oct 20, 2021 at 10:53 AM David Morens b6 wrote:
Benjamin, i just got word that there is some sort of "police activity" at Walter Reed Military Med Center across from NIH. Roads are shut down and unless this ends soon the Medical Center metro may also be closed. I will let you know d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Oct 20, 2021, at 09:08, ROCHE Benjamin b6 wrote:
>
> That's perfect, thanks a lot
>
> On Wed, Oct 20, 2021 at 8:25 AM David Morens b6 > wrote:
> That's fine, although i had thought you were busy ~~AFTER 2 PM.~~ But 2 is fine for me
>
> Would you and your friends like to come onto the NIH campus? If so you will need masks and 2 IDs and i should be able to help you get in. If not, it is about a 15 minute walk to any place to sit down.
>
> On the NIH campus i am hoping we can sit down in the lobby of Building 50, closest to the Metro stop.
> david
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Oct 20, 2021, at 08:11, ROCHE Benjamin b6 > wrote:
> >
> > We can definitely meet outside the NIH. What about 2PM at the subway "Medical Center" ?
> > BTW, do you mind if I come with two colleagues (one from the prezode initiative, one from the french embassy) ? Please do not hesitate if you prefer to discuss just with me
> >
> > On Wed, Oct 20, 2021 at 6:55 AM David Morens < b6 wrote:
> > OK, i can try to get away before then. Where should we meet? To get on the NIH campus you have to go through security, which is like at the airport. Or we could meet some place nearby on the Metro line. Let me know when and where. I know the areas along the Metro line but am not sure which coffee shops might be open, since some are shut down or with restricted hours due to COVID. Or we could meet at my condo which is a bit south of NIH

But if you want to see a bit of the niH campus that's OK too. david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Oct 19, 2021, at 18:19, ROCHE Benjamin [b6] wrote:
>
> Perfect. It will be complicated for me after 2PM, so if it works for you at that time, that would be fantastic
>
>
> Labs:
>
> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>
> Postal address:
> Centre IRD de Montpellier
> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
> France
>
> [b6]
> e-mail: [b6]
> web: http://rocheben.github.io/
>
>> Le 19 oct. 2021 à 14:58, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] a écrit :
>>
>> Yes, I think so. What time, later is probably easier for me, but I think I can get free for an hour at ANY TIME D
>>
>>> On 10/19/2021 12:18 PM, ROCHE Benjamin wrote:
>>> Fantastic. I'm in downtown (near French embassy), but I can definitely come. Do you think that beginning afternoon could work ? (Something like 1:30PM)
>>>
>>> Best,
>>>
>>>
>>> Labs:
>>>
>>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>>>
>>> Postal address:
>>> Centre IRD de Montpellier
>>> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
>>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>>> France
>>>
>>> Phone: [b6]
>>> e-mail: [b6]
>>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/

>>>
>>>> Le 19 oct. 2021 à 09:16, David Morens b6 a écrit :
>>>>
>>>> Hi Benjamin, I am sorry for being late in replying, because I was on
>>>> leave with my family and just back at work and catching up now.
>>>>
>>>> As far as I know Cristina will be coming to the meeting.
>>>>
>>>> yes I will be arouind tomorrow although working at work. But I should
>>>> be able to find some free time and would like to meet if possible.
>>>> Where will you be? I am at NIH in Bethesda which takes a long time to
>>>> go from downtown to here and back, if you are downtown in DC.
>>>>
>>>> But let me know. We have a Metro that normally works well although
>>>> over the past few days it has been operating at half speed because of
>>>> some safety issues.
>>>> David
>>>>
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> David M. Morens, MD
>>>> b6
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>>>> b6
>>>> b6 b6 b6 (work)
>>>> b6 b6 b6 (cell)
>>>>
>>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which
>>>> is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
>>>> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
>>>>
>>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
>>>> NIAID address
>>>>
>>>> On Mon, Oct 18, 2021 at 1:40 PM ROCHE Benjamin b6 wrote:
>>>>> Dear David and Peter,
>>>>>
>>>>> Sorry for the organization has been a bit confusing. Actually, this is the NIH who has invited Cristina, but we still don't know if she's coming. Nevertheless, I'll be in DC for a couple of days (and pretty free this Wednesday), so if you are available, that would be a pleasure to present you this initiative.
>>>>>
>>>>> All the best,
>>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>> Labs:
>>>>>
>>>>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>>>>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>>>>>
>>>>> Postal address:

>>>>> Centre IRD de Montpellier
>>>>> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
>>>>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>>>>> France
>>>>>
>>>>> b6
>>>>> e-mail: b6
>>>>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/
>>>>>
>>>>>> Le 18 oct. 2021 à 19:32, David Morens b6 a écrit :
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Peter, yes, sorry to miss that. I may not be able to go either
>>>>>> because the organizers invited Cristina Cassetti instead of me, but
>>>>>> that is OK as she will be good.
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>>>>>> D
>>>>>>
>>>>>> David M. Morens, MD
>>>>>> b6
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>>>>>> b6
b6
b6
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>>>>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which
>>>>>> is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
>>>>>> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
>>>>>>
>>>>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
>>>>>> NIAID address
>>>>>>
>>>>>> On Mon, Oct 18, 2021 at 1:08 PM Peter Daszak
>>>>>> b6 wrote:
>>>>>>> Sorry I won't be able to make it to the event after all David. I'll be on a college visit with my daughter that day.
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Please say hello to all our colleagues and I hope you have a good opportunity to talk with Benjamin, who is heading up this really interesting and important initiative at IRD.
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>>>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>>>> Peter
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>>>>>>> Peter Daszak
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> President
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> New York, NY 10018-6507
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> USA
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Tel.: b6
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>>>> From: ROCHE Benjamin b6
>>>>>>> Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 12:48 AM
>>>>>>> To: David Morens <
>>>>>>> Cc: Peter Daszak < b6 ; benjamin.roche < b6 Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio b6
>>>>>>> Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Dear David,
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>

>>>>>>> I hope this e-mail will find you well. Actually, Peter will not be able to come, but I will be glad to meet you to present the PREZODE initiative. By any chance, do you have some possibilities on Wednesday 20th? I'll be in DC
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>> All the best,
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>>>>>>> Labs:
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>>>>>>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>>>>>>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Postal address:
>>>>>>> Centre IRD de Montpellier
>>>>>>> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
>>>>>>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>>>>>>> France
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Phone: b6
>>>>>>> e-mail: b6
>>>>>>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Le 22 sept. 2021 à 16:54, David Morens b6 a écrit :
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Peter, and Ben glad to meet you on email, and will be happy to come to the event.
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Not sure what you mean by "represent at the event", but I suppose you mean represent NIH? Or NIAID? Anything I need to do other than just enjoy it?
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>>>>>>> TY, David
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>>>>>>> David M. Morens, MD
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> b6

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>>>>>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
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>>>>>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address
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>>>>>>> On Tue, Sep 21, 2021 at 11:43 AM Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Hi David,
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>>>>>>> I'm introducing you by email to my colleague Dr. Ben Roche from IRD France. He is the PI of the new French Govt pandemic prediction initiative PREZODE. As you can see from the Email below mine, there is an event scheduled for October 21st at the French Embassy in DC. I'll be moderating the panel discussion and will be in DC in person (FINALLY!!).
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Ben is looking for someone from NIH to represent at that event. I've suggested you would be perfect for that role, and wanted to introduce you to him now.
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Full disclosure, Ben is working with EHA on joint projects and we signed an MOU with the French Govt IRD to stimulate joint efforts to predict and prevent pandemics. I've also cc'd Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio from EHA who I believe you've met in the past, who has worked closely on this initiative.
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>> Hope you're available and look forward to seeing you while I'm in DC whatever the case!
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>>>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>>>> Peter
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>>>>>>> Peter Daszak
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>>>>>>> President
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>>>>>>> Tel.: b6
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>>>>>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>>>> From: POIRIER Agnès b6
>>>>>>> Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:47 AM
>>>>>>> To: Biffl, Claire < b6
>>>>>>> Cc: Liao, Julie < b6 ; LIGEARD Christian < b6
>>>>>>> Subject: French Embassy: conference on the PREZODE Initiative (October 21st)

>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Dear Ms. Biffl,
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> As you well know, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of designing effective strategies for preventing and responding to health crises by taking greater account of the interactions between human health, animal health and environmental health.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> In response to this emergency, the French President Emmanuel Macron launched the PREZODE initiative during the One Planet Summit on January 11, with the support of the Director General of the FAO and the President of the European Commission.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> This initiative (see attached document) aims to network, on a global scale, research work and operational actions to prevent the risks of zoonotic emergencies and pandemics through the reduction of pressures on biodiversity, in accordance with the "One Health" approach. It will improve knowledge of the risks of emergence and spread of zoonoses, strengthen the surveillance activities of the networks that already exist and ensure greater compliance with prevention measures for future diseases.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> The PREZODE initiative will strengthen cooperation with several regions of the world (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, America, Europe…) and will support the integration and strengthening of human, animal and environmental health networks. It will also support the work of the "One Health" High Level Panel of Experts proposed by France with the support of Germany, and launched by what we call the Tripartite + (WHO-FAO-World Organization For Animal Health-UN Environment Programme) on May 17 and 18.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> The year 2021 is dedicated to building the strategic framework and the operation of the initiative, with the objective of entering the operational phase from 2022.
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>> In this context, the French Embassy is planning to host a conference (preferably an in-person event) to present the PREZODE initiative and discuss the possible involvement of US government and research institutions.
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> The event is scheduled for October 21, 2021, in the afternoon (2:30–5:30 pm) and would consist (see draft program attached) of two sequences of approximately one hour each:
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> - Presentation of the PREZODE initiative by representatives (scientific or institutional directors) of the three French research institutes involved, CIRAD (Agricultural Research Centre for International Development), INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), IRD (National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> - Panel discussion on national and international initiatives: statements by DoS, DoD (DTRA), CDC, USDA, USAID, OHHLEP, the Tripartite+, the World Bank, private

sector…
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> We are currently looking for a moderator for this event, and would be honored to involve an expert from the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Indeed, the Forum's work on these issues, its leadership and independence, and its broad audience seem to me to be perfect for our event. If you agree to this role, I would be happy to discuss further the organization of the meeting.
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Thank you for your consideration and best regards,
>>>>>>>
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>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Dr Agnès POIRIER, D.V.M.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Conseillère SPS / Counselor for sanitary and phytosanitary matters - USA / Canada
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Conseiller agricole adjoint / Deputy Agricultural Counselor
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Ambassade de France / Embassy of France
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> 4101 Reservoir Road N.W.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Washington DC 20007-2173
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>>>>>>> Tel: b6
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>>>>>>> Cell b6
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>>>>>>> www.ambafrance- fr.org
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>>>>>>> https://frenchtreasuryintheus.org
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>>>>>>> <image001.png>
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>> --
>> David M Morens b6
>

--

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

Phone:+ b6
e-mail: b6
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

--

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

Phone:+[b6]
e-mail:[b6]
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

--

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

Phone:+[b6]
e-mail:[b6]
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

Date:	Sun, 16 May 2021 11:52:16 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: and there's more...
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Roberts, Rich [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Here's a link to the letter from Devon Nunes et al.:

https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/20709271- 20210516_rm-ltr-to-president-biden_re-covid-19

and here's another news item on it:

https://hillreporter.com/devin- nunes-milks-covid-19-conspiracy-theory-101052

I guess the Republicans are flailing around throwing mud at whatever they perceive as Democrat-focused to see what will stick on Biden via Fauci via EcoHealth.

Pretty sad state of politics right now.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 11:47 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6]; 'Keusch, Jerry' [b6]
Subject: and there's more...

Hot of the (Fox News) press – apparently I've spent $100 billion in Govt funding now…:

Republican members of the House Intelligence Committee wrote to President Biden and Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines demanding information on the origin of COVID-19. Devon Nunes stated on Fox News that: "Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance, has taken $100 billion in government funding. Though he has no accounting of how the money was spent, Nunes said he believes some was used for good, but "the question is 'is someone who was involved in allocating that money be involved in investigating the origins of this Wuhan virus?' I'm not sure that would be appropriate."
https://foxwilmin[b6]politics/gop- members-press-biden-dni-haines-for-more-information-on-covid-lab-leak-theory/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 11:39 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' b6; 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' b6; 'Keusch, Jerry' < b6
Subject: RE: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

Amusingly, some of the early attacks on Zhengli Shi in China accused her of being a CIA agent because she'd collaborated with Americans at….you guessed it EcoHealth Alliance!

By the way – another find just now… on 5/11/20, Kansas Republican Sen. Roger Marshall put forward a resolution for a Senate Select Committee to investigate origins of COVID, role of WIV etc. etc. https://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article251329378.html . Bill details: https://www.marshall.senate.gov/wp- content/uploads/ROM21556.pdf

In a normal year I'd be shocked, but this just seems like more of the same gibberish…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 3:34 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Subject: RE: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

Peter:

Utter nonsense all round. Don't let it get you down. My favorite non-sensical theory, which I heard recently, is that it was the CIA who started this and deliberately dropped the virus in Wuhan.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 2:52 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Roberts, Rich < [b6]
Subject: RE: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks for sharing. His comment "The original WHO study was not considered to have been as thorough or as objective as it needs to be." Seems harmless on the surface, but is grossly offensive to those of us who spent 4 miserable weeks in Wuhan, and many more miserable weeks being attacked in the press since that. It also demonstrates a total lack of understanding of the process of this study, and of the actual contents – 3 reasons why even just thi one sentence is inaccurate.

> Re. 'not considered to have been as thorough' – It's actually more thorough than the internationally-negotiated Terms of Reference laid out. These specifically did not include any investigation of the lab. It was only after we got on the ground in Wuhan and were told a hard 'no' on looking into the lab leak hypothesis that I then reached out to Zhengli Shi and set up calls to break the ice on this, allowing us to visit the lab and ask the questions we did, and get new data from the lab. Looking back on this – why did I bother!
>
> Re. '…or as objective as it needs to be'. It's been said repeatedly that the international experts on the WHO mission all unanimously considered the lab leak hypothesis extremely unlikely. If this is not objective, why not? Perhaps he's referring to the China side having also voted the same way – so what? Maybe because I was involved and somehow I can't think independently because I'm linked to the lab – so what? If >10 independent international experts viewed it as extremely unlikely, why is that not objective?
>
> Re. calling it the 'original WHO study' is erroneous because it's ongoing. This was phase 1 and the recommendations in the report are for the phase 2 studies that are being designed right now. This is in the terms of reference that are published. It's fine for someone to not know these details, but if you don't know, you should suggest this was the 'original study' as if indicating there would be a future, different one.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 14, 2021 2:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6
b6 ; Rich Roberts (b6
Subject: FW: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
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-
- b6

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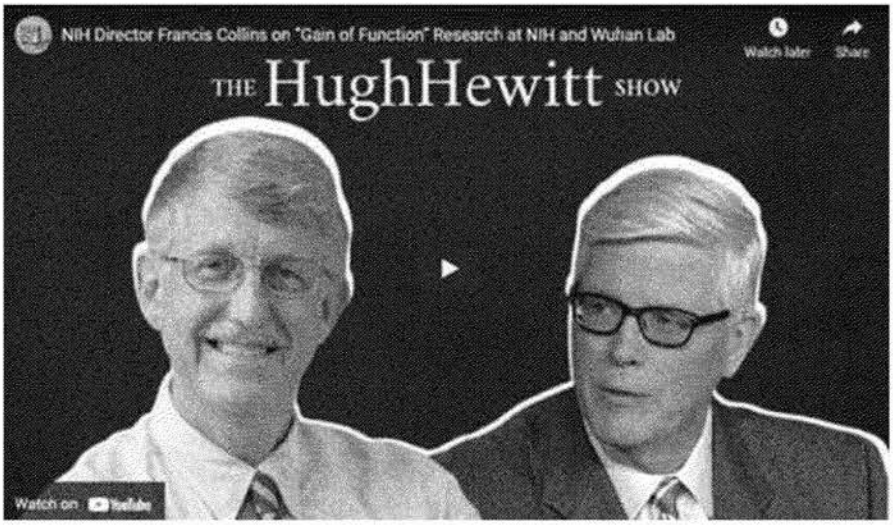
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 14, 2021 12:00 PM
Subject: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

THU, MAY 13, 2021 | BY HUGH HEWITT

NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab



Transcript:
Dr. Francis Collins, director of NIH joined me this AM. He answered many objections about vaccinations and also discuss

HH: But first, let me ask you about gain of function research. It's become a contentious issue. I'm looking at an NIH symposium you held on gain of function. Could you explain for the Steelers fans out there what gain of

function research is?

FC: Absolutely, and there has been a lot of noise about this. And a lot of the information is not accurate, so let me try. Basically, this is the kind of research where you're studying a particular pathogen in a very tightly controlled environment to try to understand what about that virus or that bacterium might we most want to be worried about that nature might develop into an even more dangerous organism. We do this under extremely tight circumstances. The NIH has only approved that kind of research in a couple of instances for influenza. We have never approved that for coronaviruses. But now, there's a buzz that maybe that Wuhan Institute of Virology was conducting that kind of research. We don't know that. There's no evidence for that. And let me say categorically, NIH would not have supported any such research on coronaviruses, because there are risks there that you might actually end up producing a virus that has a higher danger attached to it than what nature has already come up with. Again, the reason to do it is to try to have a little forecast of what we might need to watch out for that nature could develop. But that should only be done under very carefully controlled circumstances. We have in the United States a rigorous system for overseeing any kind of gain of function research like that. And it's only really been utilized twice for influenza.

HH: Now I just heard you say categorically the United States did not fund research of gain of function sort into the COVID virus in Wuhan. Would they have funded, can you say the same thing about gain of function research period, of any sort, in Wuhan?

FC: We, of course, do not have internal insight as to what was going on at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. NIH strongly supports the position that we need more thorough investigation of what exactly were the origins of this virus. The original WHO study was not considered to have been as thorough or as objective as it needs to be. NIH, working with the State Department, the Agriculture Department, and WHO, is insisting upon a more careful and more objective analysis of everything that happened in Wuhan back in December of 2019.

HH: But can you rule out, Dr. Collins, the United States having funded any sort of gain of function research in Wuhan?

FC: We absolutely did not fund gain of function research in Wuhan.

HH: All right. That's great.

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Date: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 3:47:04 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 3:47:00 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>; peter hotez [b6]

Peter:

I just spoke with Jon Cohen from Science. I mentioned that you were being attacked completely unfairly and that it would be good if he could find some encouraging words to help you. I am wondering if one of you would also be prepared to talk to Jon.

Rich

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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:47 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]>
Subject: Good LA Times article.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just saw a piece in the LA Times that sums up the state of the origins "debate" pretty clearly:

https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2021- 09-28/evidence-against-a-lab-leak-as-covid-source

It's firewalled so here's the article:

Column: New evidence undermines the COVID lab-leak theory — but the press keeps pushing it

BY MICHAEL HILTZIK BUSINESS COLUMNIST
SEPT. 28, 2021 6 AM PT

When it comes to the pandemic, pseudoscience has outweighed real science at almost every turn. One of the best examples of that is the unsupported assertion that the virus causing COVID-19 escaped from a Chinese laboratory.

Despite mounting evidence that the virus reached humans through natural pathways — from infected animals such as bats — the lab-leak hypothesis recently jumped back into the news, thanks to CNN, the investigative news site the Intercept, and the Atlantic.

All treat the idea that the virus escaped from a lab credulously. They downplay or entirely ignore the latest scientific findings that support the theory that the virus' origin can be found in the animal kingdom — the view accepted by a preponderance of experts in virology.

It's a likely probability that this one originated from animals as well. But the possibility also remains that the virus leaked from a lab.

CNN'S SANJAY GUPTA OVERSTATES THE LAB LEAK THEORY

This is known as the zoonotic theory, from the term for a disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

We've reported before on the near absence of evidence for a lab leak, whether or not it's the product of a deliberate act.

Ever since the lab-leak claim first emerged during the Trump administration, where it was part of a White House information campaign demonizing China, one of the arguments in its favor has been that evidence for a zoonotic origin has also been spotty.

That argument has never been quite true — virologists know that animals have been the source of most of the viral diseases afflicting humanity — but it has become weaker than ever over the last year.

The question of the origin of COVID-19 isn't of merely academic interest. The answer could guide the world's preparation for future pandemics; if the virus emerged from a laboratory, then improving lab safety measures will be prioritized. If scientific opinion continues to coalesce around animal-to-human transmission, that will underscore the importance of regulating contact between humans and wildlife.

To put it another way, if we focus on the wrong answer, the right measures won't be taken. In a real sense, humankind's future depends on not being distracted by an unsupported, politically motivated claim about Chinese labs.

Before examining the flaws in the CNN, Intercept and Atlantic treatments, let's look at what's been published recently about the zoonotic path.

For context, keep in mind that the earliest cluster of COVID-19 cases, in late 2019, was identified in the environs of the Huanan seafood market in the Chinese metropolis of Wuhan. Lab-leak theorists find this significant, because it's 7.5 miles from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which does research on bat viruses.

A paper posted online earlier this month chiefly by researchers at France's Institut Pasteur and under consideration for publication in a Nature journal, however, reports that three viruses were found in bats living in caves in northern Laos with features very similar to SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19.

As Nature reported, those viruses are "more similar to SARS-CoV-2 than any known viruses."

Another paper, posted in late August by researchers from the Wuhan lab, reports on viruses found in rats also with features similar to those that make SARS-CoV-2 infectious in humans. Two other papers published on the discussion forum virological.org present evidence that the virus jumped from animals to humans at more than one animal market in Wuhan, not just the Huanan seafood market.

Given that these so-called wet markets have long been suspected as transmission points of viruses from animals to humans because they sell potentially infected animals, that makes the laboratory origin vastly less likely, according to a co-author of one of the papers.

"That a laboratory leak would find its way to the very place where you would expect to find a zoonotic transmission is quite unlikely," Joel Wertheim, an associate professor at UC San Diego's medical school, told me. "To have it find its way to multiple markets, the exact place where you would expect to see the introduction, is unbelievably unlikely."

As virologist Robert F. Garry of Tulane, one of Wertheim 's co-authors, told Nature, the finding is "a dagger into the heart" of the lab-leak hypothesis.

Garry and Wertheim are among the 21 expert co-authors of a "critical review" of virological findings on the origins of COVID-19. The review concludes, "There is currently no evidence that SARS-CoV-2 has a laboratory origin."

Now let's look at the recent reporting in support of the lab-leak theory.

On Sept. 19, CNN aired an hourlong documentary entitled "The Origins of COVID-19: Searching for the Source." Hosted by the channel's star science anchor, Sanjay Gupta, the program carries the veneer of an evenhanded approach.

Proponents of the zoonotic origin theory are given airtime, including Kristian Andersen of the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla and Peter Daszak, a prominent grant maker in the virology field.

But so are proponents of the lab-leak theory. They include Alina Chan, a researcher at the Broad Institute, a biomedical research center, and Josh Rogin, a Washington Post columnist. Neither has any experience in virology. Chan is co-writing a book about COVID's origins that is expected to feature the lab-leak theory prominently, a fact not mentioned by CNN.

Yet at the top of the hour, referring to the common pattern of viruses jumping from animals to humans, Gupta says, "It's a likely probability that this one originated from animals as well. But the possibility also remains that the virus leaked from a lab."

By posing these two theories as simply two equally plausible solutions to a mystery, CNN glosses over the fact that the virological community regards the animal origin as vastly more likely than a lab leak. In fact, the two hypotheses are miles apart in credibility.

One of the program's chief targets is a report by a World Health Organization team issued in early 2021 that found spillover from an animal host to be "likely to very likely" and a laboratory incident an "extremely unlikely pathway."

Gupta calls the WHO report "the only scientific study of COVID's origins to date." That's not remotely accurate. There have been countless scientific studies, both before the WHO report and since. Indeed, Gupta mentions one of them, a seminal paper by Andersen and colleagues, published in March 2020. That paper termed the lab-leak theory "a speculative incomplete hypothesis with no credible evidence."

Much of the rest of the CNN program is filled with speculation about the Wuhan Institute, typically presented with portentous music on the soundtrack, suggesting subliminally that something sinister is going on there. The absence of information from the institute or the Chinese government is generally taken as tantamount to an admission of guilt.

"Over the course of 2020," Gupta declares, "more and more revelations emerged related to the Wuhan Institute of Virology."

One of these revelations concerned three staff members who reportedly sought hospital treatment for a flu-like illness in November 2019, before the COVID pandemic emerged.

Nothing has ever transpired to suggest these workers had COVID — November is flu season, after all. That they sought treatment at a hospital is immaterial, since it is well-known that people in China often go to hospitals for primary care, which residents of other countries would tend to receive in a doctor's office.

A CNN reporter appearing on air overstated the case, saying the patients were "hospitalized with an unknown illness." There has been no evidence that they were admitted to the hospital or that their illness was "unknown."

CNN doesn't bring its audience up to date on any of the latest research supporting the zoonotic theory, though it was published well before the air date and superseded what Gupta described as "the only scientific study" of COVID origins.

More recently, the Intercept trumpeted a purported scoop based on a leaked document — a grant proposal submitted in 2018 by Daszak's organization, the EcoHealth Alliance, to the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA.

The proposal, for a laboratory manipulation of a virus related to SARS, the viral disease that caused an outbreak of pulmonary disease in China in 2003. DARPA rejected the proposal, however, and there's no evidence that it was submitted to, much less approved by, any other funding body.

"Many questions remain about the proposal, including whether any of the research described in it was completed," the Intercept acknowledged.

Commentators on the Intercept's disclosure have displayed, perhaps in spite of themselves, that they lack the courage of their own convictions. In an article published Sept. 24, the Atlantic, unable or unwilling to delve into what the Intercept's document actually meant, if anything, settled for declaring that it made the lab-leak debate "even messier."

The magazine's Daniel Engber and Adam Federman wrote: "Does the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic have an unnatural origin? The answer hasn't changed: probably not. But we have learned something quite disturbing in the past few days, simply from how and when this information came to light."

By pretending that the debate itself is important, as if both sides have something to offer, they manage to report on a claim that has no substance. The approach also protects journalists from their persistent fear of landing on the wrong side of things — the authors preserve an out in case the lab-leak hypothesis turns out to be true, as unlikely as that is. If that happens, they can point to their lily-livered observations and say, "See, we knew it all

along."

In this debate, however, the zoonotic camp has evidence and the lab-leak camp nothing to offer but innuendo.

Here's the true state of the discussion. There is no evidence that the virus leaked from the Wuhan laboratory or any other lab. There is no evidence that the Wuhan lab was working with a bat virus that had anything but a very distant resemblance to SARS-CoV-2. Viruses that resemble it much more closely have been found in natural settings a thousand miles from Wuhan, as the crow, or bat, flies.

Evidence that artificial manipulation of a virus gave rise to SARS-CoV-2 has faded, as scientists find more evidence that features of SARS-CoV-2 thought to be unnatural occur in nature. Meanwhile, evidence for zoonotic transmission is constantly accumulating. No one who reports on the issue without acknowledging these two trends should be trusted.

Los Angeles Times columnist Michael Hiltzik writes a daily blog appearing on latimes.com. His seventh book, "Iron Empires: Robber Barons, Railroads, and the Making of Modern America," has just been published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/hiltzikm and on Facebook at facebook.com/hiltzik.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Wed, 25 Aug 2021 12:22:46 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 25 Aug 2021 12:22:32 AM -0400
Subject: FW: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

Additionally, I'm seeing a shift in the Right wing press to start pointing the finger at China for its "Strange food fetishes", "industrialized wildlife farming" etc. which is actually a good sign that commonsense on the origins is beginning to be accepted, albeit that the Right wing is putting an anti-China slant on this as well (of course). Example is this Op Ed in today's WSJ, below.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid- 19-coronavirus-origins-china-wet-market-lab-leak-intelligence-agencies-biden-xi-11629839700

- OPINION
- BUSINESS WORLD

Let the Spooks Speak on Covid

The spy agencies can tell us a lot even if they can't nail down the virus's origins.



By
Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.
Aug. 24, 2021 6:44 pm ET

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- TEXT

133



Security personnel stand near the Wuhan Institute of Virology during a visit by the World Health Organization investigators in Wuhan, China, Feb. 3.

PHOTO: NG HAN GUAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Length5 minutes

Queue

If the U.S. intelligence agencies adhered to the mandated schedule, and there's nothing magical about 90 days, the White House on Tuesday received spookdom's report on the origins of Covid 19.

Leaks already indicate the 18 agencies couldn't settle an internal disagreement over whether a natural origin or a lab release was more likely. There is much else they might usefully say, though, in the declassified release the administration has talked about making public in the next few days.

With 100% confidence, the agencies could certainly tell us that China has engaged in a deliberate coverup. With some degree of confidence, they might tell us whether they believe China itself knows how Covid got started.

The agencies could estimate how committed Xi Jinping and his regime are to the propaganda claim that the virus originated outside the country, perhaps in the U.S. Army facility at Fort Detrick, Md. They

might tell us about China's efforts to steal the secrets of the West's superior vaccines.

On a related question, they could estimate how long China will stick with its zero-Covid policy, which has required a deepening, Mao-like control over its population and China's re-isolation from the world.

If news reporting is correct, China is sitting on samples from early Covid infections and much other information it hasn't shared. A Bloomberg News investigation elaborates on a point made by this column: China's leadership would likely be covering up even a natural origin, "embarrassed that its citizens were still eating wild animals bought in wet markets—a well-known path for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago."

China's scientists would know with documentary certainty by now whether the virus is related to one held and possibly manipulated in a government-run lab. Thus it matters whether secret evidence shows they are still trying to find answers to Covid's origins.

The Economist magazine suggests that, following on the work of private researchers, U.S. intelligence supercomputers may have scoured the web for traces of deleted viral sequences once housed by the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

CNN, citing leaks, reports that the agencies may be in possession of Wuhan lab records that the Chinese mysteriously tried to take offline in September 2019, weeks before the Wuhan outbreak became publicly known.

The stakes are rising, geopolitically and politically. Once the story seemed to be that China, with its strange dietary fetishes and industrially primitive food markets, inflicted the virus on the world. The integrated, rules-based, freedom-based outside world saved the day with mRNA vaccines.

That story is less satisfying now that Delta has emerged. Our vaccines, however fabulous, are proving not a one-and-done fix. Everybody now seems to have a Delta breakthrough story. In my circle, multiple acquaintances talk about colleagues or family members who previously had Covid, were vaccinated, and now have tested positive for Covid again.

More than ever, coping with the virus seems likely to involve long-term adjustments. We might take with a couple of sacks of salt reports this week that China beat down its own Delta outbreak spread over 17 provinces by conducting 100 million tests in a matter of days, including testing every resident of one city 12 times.

Whether China can carry on this way is doubtful. In the meantime, it has effectively entered into a biological-cum-chemical standoff with the outside world. The global population's immune systems are being hardened by multiple exposures as well as by vaccination, and people are getting back to normal life after much loss and suffering.

China's increasingly virulent propaganda is aimed not at outsiders but at its own people, neutralizing what is bound to be a growing disgruntlement over recurrent iron-fisted lockdowns, over having to wait

in lines repeatedly for mandatory testing, over the loss of tourism dollars, the loss of domestic and foreign travel and education opportunities, the loss of income and opportunities of every kind.

Three weeks ago I suggested the White House would likely prefer continued murk around Covid's origins for the purpose of rebuilding U.S.-China relations—that is, "unless the Biden administration's popularity is in free fall in three weeks and needs a foreign conflict to revive it."
That caveat was offered in advance of the Afghanistan debacle, in advance of a now-avalanche of indicators suggesting the Delta surge is complicating what should be a shining recovery and renewing U.S. political fights over masks, vaccine mandates, schools and deteriorating hospital care in some locations.

The Biden administration has more reason now to treat the intelligence report on Covid's origins as a chance to lay down a tougher line on China's role in bringing this calamity on the world.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 12:03 AM
To: 'David Morens b6 b6 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F < b6

b6

Subject: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins
Importance: High

Here's the 'nothing burger' from the US Intel Services.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/08/24/covid- origins-biden-intelligence-review/

Good quote from Bob Garry in here. Shameful disingenuous crap from David Relman, of course.

Hate to harp on about it, but we did have an active grant to work on "Understanding risk of emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses" in China that Trump/Francis Collins canceled, then suspended, and NIH is still refusing to release. We had active collaboration on the ground in the sites where the wildlife farms supplied Huanan and other markets, and I know that WIV is ready, willing and able to continue this work with us. Surely that's a better option than increasing the ranks of the CIA with people who "have significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens" that Biden is quoted as saying below.

This is beyond ironic at this point.

Cheers,

Peter

Biden receives inconclusive intelligence report on covid origins

The report falls short of concluding whether the coronavirus jumped from animal to human, or might have accidentally escaped from a lab in China

By
Ellen Nakashima
,
Yasmeen Abutaleb
and
Joel Achenbach

Today at 10:32 p.m. EDT
260

President Biden on Tuesday received a classified report from the intelligence community that was inconclusive about the origins of the novel coronavirus, including whether the pathogen jumped from an animal to a human as part of a natural process, or escaped from a lab in central China, according to two U.S. officials familiar with the matter.

The intelligence community will seek within days to declassify elements of the report for potential public release, officials said.

The assessment is the result of a 90-day sprint after Biden tasked his intelligence agencies in May to produce a report "that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion" on the origins of a virus that has killed more than 4 million people globally and wrecked national economies. But despite analyzing a raft of existing intelligence and searching for new clues, intelligence officials fell short of a consensus, said the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the report is not yet public.

The debate over the virus's origins has become increasingly rancorous since former president Donald Trump said last year that the virus originated in a Chinese lab. Efforts to understand the virus's provenance have been

complicated by Chinese authorities' steadfast refusal to allow a more intensive inquiry by international investigators.

Biden's directive came after he received a May report from the agencies saying that they had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" but had not reached a conclusion. He disclosed that two agencies leaned toward the hypothesis that the virus emerged from human contact with an infected animal, while a third leaned toward the lab accident scenario.

The leader of the intelligence community, Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, cautioned in June that the agencies might not solve the mystery. "We're hoping to find a smoking gun," she told Yahoo News in an interview. But, she said, "it's challenging to do that," adding that "it might happen, but it might not."

The review involved dozens of analysts and intelligence officials across multiple agencies, Haines told Yahoo. She said she deployed "red cells," or groups to test analysts' assumptions and ensure the intelligence is scrutinized from every angle.

Another official said the intelligence community is "not necessarily best equipped to solve this problem," which is fundamentally an issue of science. Although spy services are "positioned to collect on a range of foreign actors," the official said, they are not necessarily poised to dive into global health data sets.

Biden himself, in his first visit to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in July, voiced the need for a more robust group to track pathogens. "You're going to have to increase your ranks with people with significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens," he said at the time.

Officials in the Biden administration hammered China's lack of transparency ahead of a World Health Organization report on the origins of the coronavirus. (JM Rieger/The Washington Post)

Many scientists familiar with the origin debate have been skeptical that the 90-day review would settle it, and some have said the inquiry could require years of research.

"We should not even be thinking about closing the book or backing off, but rather ratcheting up the effort," David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist who has pushed for a broad investigation of all origin hypotheses, said late Tuesday in an email.

The notion that the virus may have escaped from a lab got sharply increased interest this spring after 18 scientists wrote a letter to the journal Science in May saying that all possible origins needed to be investigated, including a laboratory accident.

Proponents of that theory point to classified information, first disclosed in the waning days of the Trump administration, that three unidentified workers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — one of the world's preeminent research institutions studying coronaviruses — went to the hospital in November 2019 with flu-like symptoms. In China, people visit the hospital for routine and mild illnesses.

Throughout 2020, that hypothesis became enmeshed in election-year politics. Trump's assertion that the virus emanated from a lab came as he and other administration officials were blaming China for the global outbreak and trying to deflect attention from their botched handling of the virus at home.

Many scientists, however, noted that viruses have a long history of jumping from animals to humans. There are many plausible scenarios in which that might have occurred, including the possibility the virus spread from wild and domestically raised animals sold in crowded markets. Many early cases were clustered around a seafood market where traces of the virus were later detected on surfaces.

That zoonosis theory was bolstered by a June 7 report, published in the journal Nature, documenting 38 species of animals sold in 17 markets in Wuhan before the pandemic. The authors said many of the animals suffered from poor hygiene and were known to carry zoonotic diseases.

"We now know for sure that [coronavirus] susceptible animals were in fact sold at the markets in Wuhan, which changes the calculus tremendously," Robert Garry, a Tulane University microbiologist who strongly supports the zoonosis theory, said in an email.

Experts in viral genome evolution also determined that the novel coronavirus almost certainly was not engineered as a bioweapon because it has several naturally occurring features seen in many other coronaviruses. But even scientists favoring a natural origin have said that without definitive evidence of animal-to-human transmission, it is not possible to rule out the possibility that a laboratory accident led to the outbreak.

And many questions remain unanswered. The animal that carried this virus before it infected people has not been identified — a process that has taken years in previous disease outbreak investigations. Nor have the lab-leak advocates found any direct evidence that SARS-CoV-2 was inside a laboratory in Wuhan before the pandemic, although the lab has not released its records, which have been sought by scientists and governments around the world.

A delegation of investigators from the World Health Organization made a brief visit to the Wuhan laboratory in

February and later declared that there were multiple possible origins, with a natural zoonosis most likely and a lab leak "extremely unlikely."
But the WHO director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, undercut that conclusion, saying it would be premature to rule out the lab-leak theory. The WHO effort was also criticized by some international scientists and researchers, who called for further investigation.
White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Monday said the public would be told the report's outcome. "I don't know what format that will take at this point in time," she said.

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:36 AM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6 b6 b6 b6;
Garry, Robert F < b6
Subject: Re: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

TY, i think this is different from the article in The Economist a week or two ago? That one was interesting as i recall.,.. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Aug 23, 2021, at 03:08, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
>
> In case you missed it, FYI.
> Seems to lay things out well. I feel sorry for the int'l team. They didn't decide on/agree to the terms of reference, so the response from

the DG on the final report (which he waited for until weighing in) seems disingenuous to me.

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:40:56 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

"The virus mystery" broadcast on August 12th, drew uncommonly wide attention for a Danish television documentary. That was because it featured Peter Ben Embarek, an expert on food security and zoonotic diseases, casting doubt on the conclusions of a "joint study" on the origins of the covid-19 pandemic carried out earlier this year under the auspices of the World Health Organisation (who). Dr Ben Embarek was the senior who figure who went to China as part of that study.

In March the joint study reported that it was "extremely unlikely" that the virus had been released in a laboratory accident. Dr Ben Embarek revealed that this conclusion did not come from a balanced assessment of all the relevant evidence but from a steadfast refusal by the Chinese members of the joint study to support anything stronger. Indeed they only allowed even that minimal assessment on the condition that the report did not call for further investigation into the question. He also pointed out that the idea that the point of spillover was someone collecting bat samples for research purposes belongs in the "likely" basket, along with other human interactions with wild bats.

Problems in the joint study had long been clear. Within the
who one source describes it as "riddled with compromises and sloppiness". Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the
who's director-general, was uneasy about the way it was carried out. He pushed back at the marginalisation of the lab-leak hypothesis, particularly when the final report was released in March. He has since called for further investigations into it, as well as into other possibilities.

The further unravelling of the joint study matters because, more than a year and a half after the covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, a city in Hubei, was first recognised as the work of a new pathogen, there has been nothing like a thorough international investigation of how that pathogen,
sars-cov-2, got into humans and spread round the world. The pandemic's death toll stands at 9m-18m, according to a model which *The Economist* has built on the basis of excess-mortality reports and other indicators. The question of how it started matters both for the relatives of the dead and for those who wish to prevent such an outbreak happening again. China's efforts to stop the world from answering it are both shabby and, to an extent, self-defeating. The more the truth seems hidden, the more it seems suspicious.

Earnest calls for an international investigation into the origins of covid-19 began in April 2020, voiced most clearly by Scott Morrison, the prime minister of Australia. The next month the World Health Assembly, the gathering of government representatives which serves as the
who's decision-making body, passed a motion calling for a study into the origins of the pandemic. But in order to be acceptable to China—which had reacted furiously to Mr Morrison's original suggestion—the work was set up as a joint research project between two teams of scientists, one Chinese, one international. And it was to be based on "scientific and collaborative field missions", rather than a targeted and forensic inquiry into all the relevant circumstances.

The terms of reference, which were subsequently negotiated behind closed doors, allowed the Chinese hosts to frame the joint study's work in the way which best suited them. The study was set up to build on pre-existing Chinese research, not to delve into unvetted data. Investigating the laboratories that had been working with coronaviruses like sars-cov-2 in Wuhan was not part of its terms of reference.

After a lot of wrangling, the international team got to China in January this year. Data about

the first reported covid-19 cases, those from December 2019, were one subject of friction with their hosts. The Chinese had reported 174 such cases, but would not share the underlying data on which those reports were based. Hearing that these vital data were not being made available worried Dr Tedros enough that he lobbied the Chinese government for access. The authorities declined, citing concerns over citizens' privacy. It could have been anonymised.

Elsewhere the team appears to have been knowingly misled. Take, for example, the live-animal trade at the Huanan seafood and wildlife market, a site associated with a number of Wuhan's earliest recorded cases of covid-19. In its final report, the study group took at face value claims there was no credible evidence that live mammals were sold there in 2019. A lot of eyewitness accounts gainsay that; so does a study published in *Scientific Reports*, a journal, this summer.

One report and no more

The *Scientific Reports* paper found that 18 species of mammal had been for sale in Wuhan between May 2017 and November 2019; gunshot wounds and trapping injuries suggested that almost a third of them were taken from the wild. Although the paper was published only recently, it was submitted to the journal in October 2020. Chinese law requires that all covid-19 research be reviewed by the government before it is sent to a journal. Some Chinese authorities would have known of its contents before the team arrived.

The market is not the only way for animals and the pathogens they carry to get into Wuhan. The horseshoe bats in which the closest wild relatives to sars-cov-2 have been found do not live anywhere near the city, but the two laboratories there that were known to have engaged in coronavirus research received samples from bat caves around the country. The joint-study team was not allowed to investigate the procedures around, or documentation of, this research; when it visited the laboratories the team was shown presentations on safety procedures but no more.

When the researchers left Wuhan the who 's Geneva headquarters told them that their report needed to be laid out scientifically and could express dissenting opinions; the international members and the Chinese members did not have to reach a consensus. However, according to sources within the who , the team felt committed to producing a joint report with their Chinese counterparts. Dr Tedros was so unhappy with what finally emerged from the processes that he nobbled the report as it left the starting blocks, rejecting its contention that the possibility of a lab leak needed no further investigation.

On May 26th President Joe Biden ordered America's intelligence services to report on the pandemic's origins in 90 days (time will be up on August 24th). When he and his fellow g7 leaders met in June they joined in calling for a timely, transparent and science-based follow-up study. On July 16th Dr Tedros laid out the next steps which the who wants to see taken. They include further work on the Wuhan animal markets, studies of early cases and audits of local laboratories.

The Chinese government has reacted angrily to the idea of further studies on its territory. Zeng Yixin, the vice-minister of China's National Health Commission, said he was "shocked" by the plan to investigate a lab leak, saying it was "impossible" to accept. According to the *Global Times*, a tub-thumping tabloid run by the Communist Party, 55 countries have sent written complaints about the proposal for further investigations to the who . Dr Tedros, elected director-general with China's support in 2017 and derided by President Donald Trump as China's puppet, may now face a Chinese-backed candidate when he looks for reappointment later this year.

In the absence of any hope that China will co-operate, sources of data beyond its control

have become increasingly important. One area of interest is genetic sequence data. Another is early cases exported from China.

See what you did there

An online open-source-intelligence group which calls itself
drastic
has been scouring sequencing data to get insight into activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (wiv). When researchers publish sequences they typically post the raw data from which those sequences are assembled to public databases such as the sequence-read archive at America's National Centre for Biotechnology Information. Contamination events in the laboratory, or within sequencing machines themselves, mean these data sometimes contain sequences not meant to be there. In theory such evidence could reveal nefarious goings-on.

Such work, while promising, takes a lot of resources. If you have the sort of supercomputers available to America's national labs it gets easier. Gilles Demaneuf, a data scientist who works with
drastic
, says he has a hunch the American intelligence community's 90-day study is working the same angle. It is conceivable that the intelligence services might have been able to filch raw sequence reads directly from Chinese sequencing machines, thus picking up even more data.

Sequencing data only offers a way forward if the virus did indeed leak out of a lab, something which remains a possibility but which is far from proven. The study of early cases should be useful whatever route it took; the closer you get to understanding the when and where of the crossing-over from animal to human, the easier it should be to learn something of the how.

On the basis of information provided by China the joint study concluded it was unlikely for there to have been any substantial transmission in Wuhan before December 2019. That is unlikely to be true. For one thing the *South China Morning Post*, a newspaper based in Hong Kong, obtained government documents in 2020 which showed one to five new cases a day in Wuhan from November 17th 2019 onwards. Further evidence has strengthened the possibility that the virus could have been in circulation much earlier than the official story allows.

That circulation need not have been limited to China. There is increasing evidence suggesting early infections elsewhere. These cases would have been exported from China; no virologists doubt that Hubei was where the virus got going within humans. But if circulation in Hubei goes back further than thought and cannot be directly assessed through studies there, the presence of cases elsewhere offers an alternative way to get an idea of the timing. If a specific travel link were identified, that might help identify a group in Hubei which was infected early on.

A recent study of blood samples from 9,144 adults in 12 different regions of France found seven which contained antibodies against sars-cov-2, all of them taken in November 2019. An Italian lung-cancer screening trial has found samples taken in September 2019 which seem to contain anti-sars-cov-2 antibodies. Another antibody study suggests the virus was circulating at a low level in northern Italy at the same time, notably in Lombardy, a region which has close connections to Wuhan through the garment trade, and saw Europe's first major outbreak of covid-19 in March 2020.

Antibody tests can give false positives. In a preprint published on August 6th by the *Lancet*, researchers in Lombardy reported on looking instead for
sars-cov-2 gene sequences. Examining 289 swabs and urine tests taken from people who had presented with a rash as far back as the second half of 2019, they found
sars-cov-2 sequences in 13, the earliest of which was taken on September 12th.

Sudhir Kumar of Temple University in Philadelphia says the *Lancet* preprint is likely to inspire other investigators to go back and look at retrospective hospital samples. That should help his own research into the origins of the virus. A family tree Dr Kumar and his colleagues have built from vast numbers of published sars-cov-2 genomes allows them to

predict the sequence of the progenitor virus from which they are all descended. This sequence differs in three places from that found in the earliest samples taken from patients in Wuhan, meaning there had been enough spread for a certain amount of viral mutation to take place before December. Dr Kumar says that an analysis of the Lombardy sequences suggests that the timeline for the origin of the virus in China might now extend back to the late summer.

More systematic international research into these early infections and their circumstances is needed. Maria Van Kerkhove, head of emerging diseases and zoonoses at the who, suggests it may be possible to prioritise work in areas which saw the earliest outbreaks in America, France, Italy and Spain. "I think the floodgates will open one day," says Dr Kumar.

A last line of light

An early origin would fit with the timeline that lab-leak proponents tend to favour. Early this August, the minority Republican staff on the House foreign-affairs committee released an 84-page report arguing this case. It makes much of a small but deadly disease outbreak which took place at an abandoned copper mine in Yunnan in 2012. As drastic showed last year, a virus studied at WIV which had been taken from that mine is the closest known relative to sars-cov-2.

The report sees importance in the removal, on September 12th 2019, of a database containing details of sequences and samples from the wiv. This is read as the beginning of a cover-up, and thus as the point when the authorities first knew something had gone amiss, arguing for a leak in late August or early September. The wiv says it was a response to cyber-attacks.

A leak is not the only research-related possibility. The first person infected could have been someone employed by the wiv or another lab to collect bats and samples—the prospect to which Dr Ben Embarek pointed in his television interview. And it is important to remember that some other form of spillover outside the lab, either directly from a bat or by way of some other species, may well be to blame.

China clearly does not want lab-leaks investigated; but that does not mean it knows one happened. It is also being misleading about Huanan market, denying access to early-case data and obfuscating in various other non-lab-leak-specific ways. The most obvious explanation is that it does not really want any definitive answer to the question. An unsanitary market, a reckless bat-catcher or a hapless spelunker would not be as bad in terms of blame as a source in a government laboratory. But any definite answer to the origin question probably leaves China looking bad, unless it can find a way to blame someone else. To that end China has called for an investigation of Fort Detrick in Maryland, historically the home of American bioweapons research; state media regularly publish speculations about its involvement.

The possibility of spillover from wild bats does not have to be studied in China. Yunnan abuts onto Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, and bats are not sticklers in matters of territory. Samples taken outside China could provide a good idea of viral diversity the other side of the border. A thorough evaluation of the existing farm-animal and wildlife trade in the region would also be useful.

Yet there is an inherent risk in such work that needs to be considered. Efforts to uncover the roots of covid-19 by seeking out a natural reservoir of something very like sars-cov-2 would, by definition, expose people to the sort of risks that can seed pandemics. Ironically, the very possibility of a lab leak raises questions about how most safely to pursue investigations into other possibilities.

When he called for further inquiries in July, Dr Tedros also announced the formation of a new permanent group of pathogen hunters, the International Scientific Advisory Group for

Origins of Novel Pathogens (sago). He wants it to organise further studies of sars-cov-2. But it will also need to look at more general questions for the future—such as how to be sure that, come what may, studies of pathogens involved in past disease outbreaks never create further outbreaks of their own.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 14:34:52 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

I saw. But it's behind a paywall. U have full access?

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:23:52 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

icymi

From: b6 At: 08/22/21 15:23:17 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

The Economist | Putting it all together

b6
world-needs-a-proper-inve
stigation-into-how-covid-19-started?frsc=dg%7Ce

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Date: Fri, 3 Sep 2021 8:57:15 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 3 Sep 2021 8:57:12 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Interview Request: Scientific American
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Justin Ling [b6]>; Robert Kessle [b6]

I also spoke to her about 2 weeks ago. And then a follow up question she had. She seems to be doing her homework. I hope her report will be focused and reflect the scientific input she is getting.
Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 6:46 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Cc: Justin Ling [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Interview Request: Scientific American

TY Peter, I just spoke at length today on GoF to a Nature reporter, the first time that the govt here has lifted censorship on me discussing this issue. Happy to discuss once clearance is nailed down. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 1, 2021, at 18:41, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Thanks for the nudge Justin. I'm sorry, but I really think I'm the wrong person to be talking about gain of function work pros and cons given that I'm not a lab virologist and haven't been involved in GoF work really. I know people who would be much better to talk to and who might be willing to talk including Gerry Keusch from the Boston NEIDL lab and BU, and David Morens at NIAID. I've cc'd them here.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Justin Ling <justinling@protonmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 1, 2021 9:46 AM
To: b6
Cc:
Subject: Re: Interview Request: Scientific American

Hey Peter,

Just following up again to see if you'd be able to chat sometime in the next week or two

Sent from ProtonMail mobile

-------- Original Message --------
On Jul 22, 2021, 11:00 AM, Justin Ling < justinling@protonmail.com > wrote:

> Hey Peter, thanks for getting back
>
> I totally get it. I'm happy to talk on background if that's the best way to do it.
>
> Justin Ling
> Journalist
> b6 b6
>
> ------- Original Message -------
> On Wednesday, July 21st, 2021 at 12:40 PM, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>
> > Cc'ing Robert Kessler, our communications director. I don't know if I'll be able to talk – I'm being sent death threats on a regular basis, and these increase when my name or our organization's name is in the press. But I'll at least be able to talk off the record.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Justin Ling <justinling@protonmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 10:54 AM
To: b6
Subject: Interview Request: Scientific American

Hi there Dr. Daszak,

I'm a freelance journalist, writing for Scientific American, on a story that I think you might have some really valuable insight on.

The story is really looking to kick the tires on the utility, efficacy, and safety of gain-of-function research.

I should say right away: This is a piece that is determined to look at the *science* of the matter, not the speculation. I pitched the piece because the histrionics around this issue have gotten so intense, that I think it's hard for people to separate fact from speculation. I've previously written about why this myth-making around the Wuhan Institute of Virology's supposedly incredibly gain-of-function research makes little sense: https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/06/15/lab- leak-theory-doesnt-hold-up-covid-china/

So the point isn't to rehash the same unproven allegations about the supposed lab origins of COVID-19. The point is, now that gain-of-function is front-page news, to revisit the debates that have been had in recent decades and ask whether gain-of-function has really offered the breakthroughs we had hoped for. If so, what are they? How does that research work?

And, if not, do we have to have a new discussion about whether this research is worth it?

I think putting on the table some hard facts about what gain-of-function is, and what it's capable of, will be useful for a lot of people who have only heard the conspiracy theorists.

Let me know if you would be interested in talking. I fully appreciate that you've become a bit of an unwanted celebrity amonst the rabidly pro-lab leakers, so I'm happy to further explain exactly what I'm working on or to discuss some things on background. Just let me know.

Thanks

Justin Ling

Journalist

b6 b6

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Date: Fri, 26 Apr 2024 7:36:11 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 26 Apr 2024 7:35:39 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Details and a link to my upcoming Public Hearing
From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC: [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Jeff Sturchio [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; [b6]

Terrific, it would be helpful to have you reinforce some points

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: [b6]
Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6] | Phone: [b6] | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 6:28 AM, Roberts, Rich [b6]> wrote:

Peter:

Good luck. I am at the NAS meeting and will be in the audience.

Rich

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 7:19:14 AM
To: [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Jeff Sturchio [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6] [b6] [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; [b6] [b6]>

Subject: Re: Details and a link to my upcoming Public Hearing

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks, whether it stimulates any tangible action or deliverables is hard to say, but I will try! Best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Texas Children's Hospital: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

E-mail | Twitter | LinkedIn | Skype: (b) (6)(b) (6)
Amazon Author Center | Daily Beast Contributor

Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

On Apr 26, 2024, at 5:48 AM, b6 > wrote:

Peter, that is great. I hope you pull no punches and also get a chance to let NAS colleagues what is happening and what needs to be done to put an end to it. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/26/24 01:20, Hotez, Peter Jay wrote:

> Dear Peter: this Sunday I'm in DC at NAS on a panel with Tony Fauci, Michael Mann, and Akiko Iwasaki discussing the political attacks on scientists and I plan to comment on these horrific congressional hearings, best Peter
>
> Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
>
> **Texas Children's Hospital**: Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics | Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development | Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine

Development

Baylor College of Medicine: Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine | Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology | Health Policy Scholar

Baylor University, University Professor
Rice University, Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty
Texas A&M University, Faculty-Senior Fellow, Hagler Inst for Advanced Study & Scowcroft Institute of Intl Affairs

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Senior Coordinator & Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6 | Phone: b6 | Fax: 713-798-2299

Media Inquiries:
b6
iPhone

On Apr 25, 2024, at 10:35 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

CAUTION: This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.

Dear colleagues,

Sadly we're getting close to my upcoming public hearing with the SSCP. There are some details and a link below that you can use to watch it live on the day:
https://uspolitics.einnews.com/pr_news/706672646/hearing- advisory-ecohealth-alliance-president-dr-peter-daszak-to-testify-on-may-1

Hearing Advisory: EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak to Testify on May 1

WASHINGTON — On May 1, 2024 at 10:00am ET, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic will hold a hearing titled, "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak." This hearing will examine EcoHealth Alliance's (EcoHealth) use of U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund dangerous gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology as well as hold Dr. Daszak publicly accountable for any and all discrepancies between his closed-door transcribed interview and available evidence. Prior to Dr. Daszak's public testimony, the Select Subcommittee will release the full transcript from Dr. Daszak's transcribed interview and publish a detailed report about EcoHealth's impact on the origins of COVID-19.

Read more about Dr. Daszak's upcoming hearing here.

WHAT: Hearing titled "A Hearing with the President of EcoHealth Alliance, Dr. Peter Daszak"

DATE: Wednesday, May 1, 2024

TIME: 10:00AM ET

LOCATION: 2154 Rayburn House Office Building

WITNESS:

Dr. Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.

WATCH: The hearing will be open to the public and press and will be livestreamed online at https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/a- hearing-with-the-president-of-ecohealth-alliance-dr-peter-daszak/.

RSVP: Media must be congressionally credentialed and RSVP by Tuesday, May 1 at 5:00 PM ET.

###

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6 >
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 6:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Jeff Sturchio b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Hotez, Peter Jay < b6

Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Now public that Tony Fauci will testify in front of SSCP on June 3rd

I do not I t have a date yet. My lawyer is ne
motivating with sscp

In the meantime, my law.yers have initiated a professional deep dive into my Gmail and Proton mail,and will turn that over to sscp. This will take some time. I doubt there is anything to find but of course. they will look for crumbs to blow up into mountains. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/24/24 17:33, Peter Daszak wrote:

> I've attached a pdf of the story in the Washington Post (it's behind a paywall) – also here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2024/04/24/fauci- congress-testimony-pandemic/.
>
> David – have your lawyers managed to get a date for you to testify yet?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 9:15 PM

To: b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 'Jeff Sturchio' b6 ; 'Roberts, Rich' b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' b6 ; 'John Feigelson' < b6
Subject: RE: Today's news...

By the way – Allegations that me sending information to David Morens is somehow corrupt are outrageous. Tony Fauci was busy working with the White House COVID taskforce at the time, trying to halt the worse pandemic since the 1918 influenza outbreak. I would have happy emailed him directly, but pretty sure he wasn't checking each of his 50,000 emails a day!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 8:10 PM
To: b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 ; 'Jeff Sturchio' b6 ; 'Roberts, Rich b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 g >; John Feigelson < b6
Subject: Today's news...

Had a very successful EcoHealth Alliance benefit last night – sorry some of you couldn't be there.

Michael Mann was our main honoree, and he was great! We raised well above our

expectation – all critical to keeping us afloat given the increased pressure we're under right now.

Speaking of which – here's the latest attempt from the SSCP to smear David Morens, EcoHealth Alliance and others as being involved in a 'cover up'

https://nypost.com/2024/04/19/us- news/ex-fauci-adviser-shared-confidential-nih-info-with-ecohealth-about-covid-biosafety-levels-docs/

Basically, they've found an email from me to David, Jerry others when the allegations that EcoHealth expts were conducted at an insufficient BSL level first came out. Tony Fauci was interviewed and said that he would look into it. I sent David M. a review I'd done of the BSL rules for Bat CoVs in various countries, which clearly show that we were operating at the correct biosafety levels.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 7:16 AM
To: Peter Daszak; b6; Keusch, Gerald T; b6; Jeff Sturchio; b6; Roberts, Rich; b6; Hotez, Peter Jay; b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura; b6
Subject: Re: Testimony from Science Editor, Holden Thorp in front of the SSCP today

Peter, my thought is that it could have been worse, and he does blame Collins as well.... d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/16/24 20:59, Peter Daszak wrote:

Unpleasant to see him criticize me and EcoHealth today, in a pretty shoddy attempt to curry favor with the SSCP:

https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1780332154620092505

Here's the text of the tweet:

Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

@COVIDSelect

<image005.png>
<image005.png>
<image005.png>

@ScienceMagazine
AGREES that EcoHealth Alliance may have misled the U.S. government about its highly controversial DEFUSE proposal — which some believe created a blueprint for COVID-19. WATCH
<image005.png>
<image005.png>

You can see the video of him criticizing our work here:

https://youtu.be/Oru0-fYGcJU

The relevant section starts at 1hour, 31 minutes and 30 seconds into the video

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 3:22 PM
To: [b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Jeff Sturchio' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; John Feigelson [b6]
Subject: COVID Select Subcommittee subpoena to David Morens for correspondence etc.
Importance: High

Here is today's subpoena & a cover letter to David Morens from the SSCP for all correspondence with the following people, related to WIV, EcoHealth or COVID origins or "regarding or referencing the following people". He has to produce this by April 30th

No direct demand for public hearing has been made public yet.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: b6

Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 8:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6] Jeff Sturchio < [b6] Roberts, Rich < [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6] [b6]
Subject: Re: COVID select subcommittee is now threatening to call David in for a public hearing

Guys,my lawyer called and i am to be subpoenaed to testify in public hearing on camera. They want me b4 Tony but after Peter. The Dems reached out to my lawyer and asked WTF is going on. Not sure why they don't know. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 16:12, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Here's the COVID committee (SSCP) threatening to call David in for a public hearing based on the emails they claim show that we all used gmail inappropriately (based on a Washington Examiner report today)…
>
> Tweet here: https://x.com/COVIDSelect/status/1778859503796056214
>
> Washington Examiner BS article here: https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/2964227/ecohealth-alliance-email-release-confirms-fauci-aide-used-private-account-discuss-covid/
>
> Full text of tweet:
>
> **Post**
> See new posts
> **Conversation**
> **Pinned**
> <image003.jpg>
>
> **Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**
>
> @COVIDSelect
>
> <image005.png>
> BREAKING
> <image005.png>
>
> @EcoHealthNYC
> President Dr. Peter Daszak CONFIRMS whistleblower

allegations that Dr. David Morens — a top advisor to Dr. Fauci — used Gmail to hide COVID-19 information. We are beginning the process to secure Dr. Morens's public testimony.
<image004.jpg>

From washingtonexaminer.com

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: b6
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T < b6 ; Jeff Sturchio b6 oberts, Rich < b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6 b6
Subject: Re: My email to Michael Hiltzik with an EcoHealth Statement and Email release today

Again. this is excellent. We need more of these stand-up-to-bullies fusillades. d

Sent from Proton Mail Android

-------- Original Message --------
On 4/12/24 11:20, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Please read the email I just sent to Michael Hiltzik. It has links to a statement from EcoHealth and the release of the full text (slight redactions) of emails that involve David and Jerry, and were reported in the NY Post and other Right wing outlets yesterday, amplified by Republicans on the COVID Committeee…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 11:19 AM
To: 'Michael Hiltzik' <b6>
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' <b6>
Subject: EcoHealth Statement and Email release today has relevance to NIH and Michael Lauer issues
Importance: High

Good to talk with you yesterday Michael. We got more negative press yesterday, this time related to emails that allegedly show coverups and inappropriate behavior among scientists. The Republicans released only the subject line and addresses etc. (https://oversight.house.gov/release/wenstrup- reveals-emails-from-whistleblower-alleging-additional-attempts-by-fauci-advisor-to-subvert-transparency-about-covid-19-origins/), leading to BS stories in the usual right wing press. We released the full text of the emails today:

https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2024/04/ecohealth- alliance-releases-emails-that-are-the-subject-of-false-allegations-in-the-press

These are all from me to senior NIAID staffmember David Morens and former NIH Center Director Jerry Keusch, trying to make sense of the termination of our grant by Trump, and to find a way to get it reinstated. In the end NIH did reinstate the grant (May 2023). One of the chains shows emails that refer to the pressure from Michael Lauer, and the fact NIH instructed me not to talk with our program officer (Erik Stemmy) and direct all communications to Grants Management (Emily Linde). That was another highly unusual move from NIH and is part of the pattern that I was talking with you about.

Here is that particular set of emails:
https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Emails- 01.pdf

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 6:01 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: Call tomorrow?

Absolutely. That time is good...I can call then...

MH

On Tue, Apr 9, 2024 at 2:59 PM Peter Daszak < b6 > wrote:

Hi Michael – just following up on this – are you available tomorrow at 5:30pm my time, 2:30pm West Coast time?

I can send a zoom link or call my cellphone b6

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, April 7, 2024 9:34 AM
To: 'Michael Hiltzik' <
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura (b6 >; 'Alison Andre (b6 >
Subject: RE: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant
Importance: High

I have good answers for you on all of those – it's ugly and political. There are also others who are well-placed who you can talk with.

I can do Wednesday at 5:30pm my time if that works for you (2:30pm West Coast). I have other times as well… cc'ing Alison who will make sure we find a time that works.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Michael Hiltzik b6
Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2024 6:50 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Re: Confidential - NIH still hampering EcoHealth's ability to conduct work 4 years since the termination of our grant

Peter,

Let's set up a time to talk next week (Wednesday or later best for me). On first glance, it strikes me that I'm glad I'm not in the grants-application business, because the bureaucratic behavior here seems incomprehensible, at least to a layman.

What's the overarching theme in their relations with you? Is it pressure from the lab-leak crowd, the FOIAing from Tobias, which as far as I can tell has yielded nothing of any substance? A spillover from the Trump era?

I read the Science piece, which was thorough in detailing what was done to the Chinese researchers but silent on what provoked b6 was the question I was left with--Why did NIH do all this?

MH

On Sat, Apr 6, 2024 at 12:03 PM Peter Daszak < b6 wrote:

> Hi Michael, I'm just contacting you off the record in case you or others are interested in reporting on what's going

on at NIH with respect to EHA's grants. We were trying to deal with this privately, without it becoming public, but we found out last week that some of our recent correspondence with Emily Erbelding asking for her help is in a batch of FoIA's emails that will be released to Jimmy Tobias in the next couple of weeks. Tobias is in the habit of simply dumping these on the internet, so we wanted to get these to a bona fide reporter before that happens.

As you probably know, our organization has been funded by NIAID for around 20 years, conducting successful research on emerging diseases, and working closely with communities, scientists and governments in emerging disease hotspot countries to try to reduce the risk of disease emergence. Prior to the termination of our R01 grant in April 2020 that would have had the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a subrecipient, we had never had any issues with NIH or NIAID, and had been lauded by program officers for our cutting edge research into viral emergence, and the many papers in Science, Nature, NEJM and others based on NIH funding.

After the termination of our grant, the HHS OIG was called in to audit our work and NIH's oversight. They reported back after an 18 month audit with recommendations for both us, and for NIH, most of which were minor and easily addressed. We rapidly complied and NIH's DFAS group confirmed that all audit findings were resolved. However, we continued to receive further actions from the Office of the Director (Michael Lauer, who *Science* wrote about re. NIH's actions on grantees with China connections https://www.science.org/content/article/pall- suspicion-nihs-secretive-china-initiative-destroyed-scores-academic-careers), and the NIH group that manages oversight (OPERA) directly under Michael Lauer. In April 2023, Michelle Bulls from Opera and Emily Linde from NIAID placed 4 Specific Award Conditions (SACs) on our grants. At the time, Michael Lauer had contacted Tufts University who oversaw our IACUC approvals to conduct wildlife sampling because EHA doesn't have an animal facility. This led to Tufts canceling our interinstitutional agreement. The only way for us to proceed was to request an Animal Welfare Assurance from OLAW (based at NIH), but this was denied because of these SACs. One of the SACs stated that all of our subcontracts must be reviewed and revised by NIH reviews. We worked extremely hard to rapidly respond (often within days) to every single request, despite many of them being contradictory or having no material impact on the contracts. In the original letter NIH set a deadline of September 2023 to resolve the SACs, which due to

repeated delays by NIH grants management staff in responding to us, continued further requests and shifting of the goalposts means we still do not have resolution. Furthermore, grants management are now suggesting that we are beyond the period of work and our subcontractees won't be able to be reimbursed. Additionally, during the past 12 months, NIH has only reimbursed EcoHealth for around $50K of the now nearly $2 million we are expecting and have expended.

As you can imagine, this puts us in a very difficult position, with institutions like UNC and Uniformed Services University likely to be outraged that their funding is threatened, and with us unable to do our work fully – work that has been reviewed, scored well, and is critical to pandemic prevention. We've tried every possible avenue to get a fair and reasonable rapid resolution. We've informed Emily Erbelding of these issues (hence the FoIA'd email), and Program staff at NIAID remain supportive of our work, but we still have no resolution. Every time we try to seek a meeting or resolution, we get a hard response from NIH that we're out of compliance and they set further deadlines and further minor issues for us to fix. Right now I believe we're probably in greater compliance with NIH rules and just about any other institution in the US, given the level of scrutiny we've gone through. I've attached some of the many recent letters between NIH OPERA, NIAID Grants managements and EcoHealth Alliance to give you an indication of the levels of detailed work that we've gone through to try and resolve these issues.

We don't know the reasons why this is happening – all our subcontracts prior to April 2023 covered every single requirement in NIH's grants management guidance, subrecipients had to sign that they would adhere to these. The stonewalling, and shifting of goalposts by NIH is linked to emails that they send us stating that we're 'delinquent' or 'out of compliance', or that they're 'concerned' etc. and seem to us designed ready to be FoIA'd (which they are being) or to be used when NIH has to show Congressional Republicans that EcoHealth is being treated in the way they are calling for. Meanwhile, important findings can't be reported, including a novel SARS-CoV-2 related virus able to bind well to human ACE2 that we have found in one of our country sites, but are now unable to publish because our subrecipient is concerned they don't yet have an approved contract. This is hurting our ability to conduct pandemic prevention work, and the US's ability to be informed about public health threats that could emerge and threaten our citizens.

If you want to report on this, I'm happy to talk on-the-

record on some issues, and there are others who are aware of these problems that I can put you in touch with, including at NIH and senior people from outside.

Cheers,

Peter

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Date: Thu, 6 May 2021 11:18:52 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 6 May 2021 11:16:19 PM -0400
Subject: conversation with the H
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]

Just to let you know that I spoke with Kevin Barstow, Chief Oversight Counsel for the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. They have oversight of NIH. My main goal was to ask his advice re. the letter with 34 questions from the republican minority, and what we should do. He thinks their goals are entirely political and that if I answer these questions, more will come and they'll keep digging. I told him I don't intend to respond, and he asked if I'd be willing to give them a briefing – bipartisan, off the record.

After thinking that through with Robert, I just don't think it's a good move right now. It reinforces their opinion that this is politically good for them. If it's off the record, they can tell the public whatever they like. If it's on the record, the conspiracists will have a field day digging in further.

He also pointed out that if the Dems lose the house in the mid-terms (which they probably will, apparently), this committee will have subpoena power. I don't know if this lab leak stuff will still be an issue in a year and a half, but right now my plan is to NOT respond to the letter and not give a briefing. If they continue the harassment, I'll continue trying to build support politically and legally.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM
To: 'David Morens ([b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich' <[b6]>
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]; 'Robert Kessler ([b6]
Subject: New: Letter from Republican Rep. Gallagher to Dr. Fauci re. WIV and gain of function
Importance: High

David,

A Republican representative sent a letter to Tony Fauci today asking some pretty simple questions that are clearly designed to play to their political base.

If Tony Fauci is going to respond to the attached letter that was made public today, I hope he's ready to point out that the work we did was NOT gain of function. This phrase has been bandied about now for a few months and is utterly incorrect.

If he decides to draft a response, I'd be happy to do a quick briefing with you and him to explain the work that has been done up to now with WIV, and was planned to be done on our NIAID grant.

Cheers,

Peter

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Date:	Tue, 17 Aug 2021 8:35:49 AM -0400
Subject:	Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Jason Gale [b6]
CC:	[b6] [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6]
Attachments:	image003.jpg; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png; image007.png; image008.jpg; image009.gif; image010.jpg

Nicholas Wade's at it again – another miserable innuendo-filled attack on science and the process by which scientists email, talk and come to decisions. Nothing new of course, just trash journalism published in a pseudo-scientific journal. Pretty shameless smear on some of us – no facts of course, no sue-able accusations, just snipey comments and excerpts from Social Media. It's as if we can't now be scientists and actually colleagues who break bread and share a glass any more.

https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/how- covid-19s-origins-were-obscured-by-the-east-and-the-west/

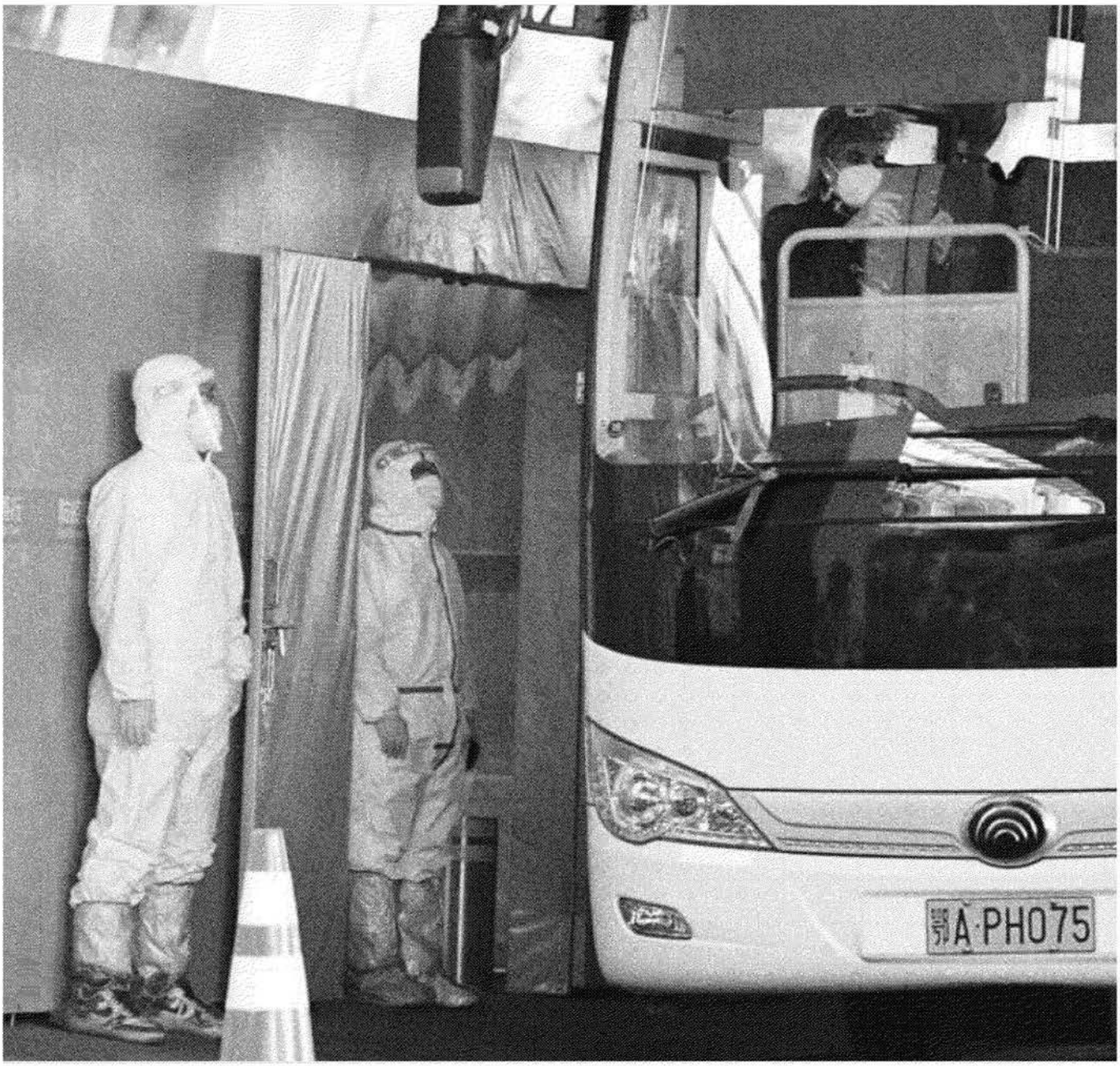
The irony is in the ending – he claims the lab leak is an albatross hanging around China's neck that they won't be able to shake off until they open up the lab videos, books, freezers etc. The truth is his and others continued attacks are what put the albatross there in the first place. Does anyone really believe that if China gave access to all the above and no further evidence was found, that these folks would simply say "OK, it wasn't a lab leak after all"!!!

Cheers,

Peter

How COVID-19's origins were obscured, by the East and the West

By Nicholas Wade | August 17, 2021



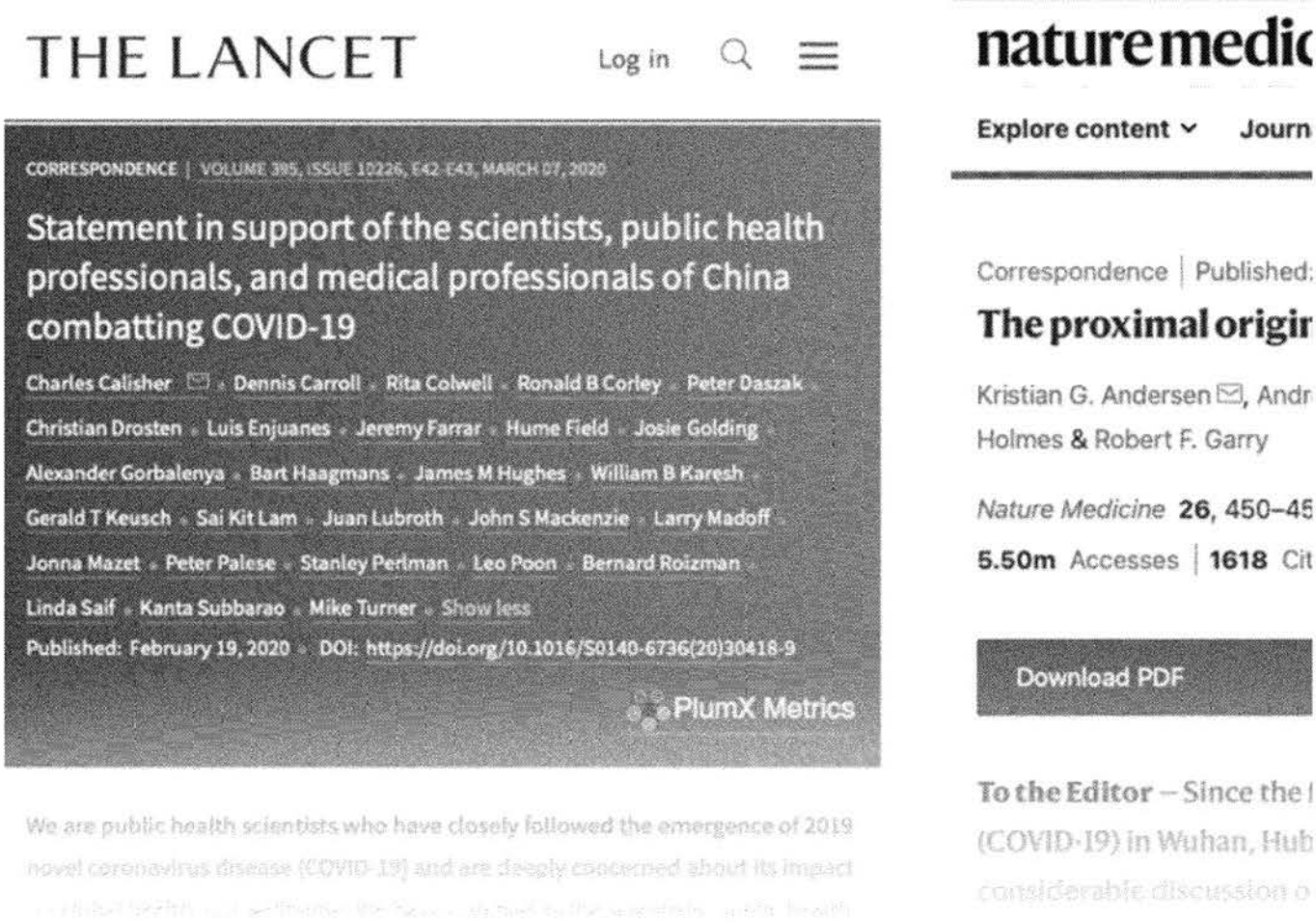
A bus carrying a team of experts from the World Health Organization departs an airport in Wuhan on Jan. 14, 2021, after arriving in the Chinese city to investigate the origins of the coronavirus pandemic. That investigation is widely seen as having been obstructed by Chinese authorities. (Photo by Kyodo News via Getty Images)

Some 20 months after the Covid-19 pandemic first broke out, its origins remain obscure. A vigorous campaign of concealment by the Chinese authorities is the principal reason. But China received considerable help, strange to say, from senior medical research officials in the United Kingdom and United States who mishandled and effectively derailed the initial inquiry into the virus's origins.

The mishandling began at a pivotal teleconference held on February 1, 2020. The organizer was Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, a large medical research charity in London.

News of the conference emerged with the release this June of emails from the office of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Farrar supplied further information in his book *Spike*, published on July 22.

The conference was held to discuss the unanimous view of a group of virologists that the SARS2 virus had been manipulated in a lab. Yet within a few days of the meeting, the virologists abruptly reversed their conclusion. The meeting's participants were later involved in two letters to scientific journals that stated the virus must have emerged naturally and that condemned any suggestion of manipulation as a conspiracy theory. These two letters, to *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*, shaped the views of the mainstream media for more than a year.



Letters published by *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* in early 2020.

Even today, no one can say for sure whether the SARS2 virus emerged naturally or escaped from a lab. Much less could anyone have been sure back then. If the conferees had stuck to known facts, they would have left the question open to the two hypotheses, and the full exploration of the virus's origins might not have been sidetracked for over a year.

More significant, the Chinese government would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to manipulate the World Health Organization (WHO) into setting terms of reference that favored China's obstructive goals and kept WHO inspectors who visited China this February from accessing records vital to understanding the origin of the pandemic. China now insists those terms of reference cannot be changed, blocking further investigation into the origin of the SARS2 virus. "The two groups that produced the infamous letters in *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* paved the way for the Chinese government and helped enormously to facilitate all of that," says Milton Leitenberg, an arms control expert at the University of Maryland. The reversal of the virologists' conclusion about SARS2's artificial origin is thus a matter of some significance.

At 10:32 p.m. on the evening before the February 1 conference, Fauci had received an electrifying memo from Kristian G. Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research institute in California. Andersen reported that the virus seemed to be man-made. "The unusual features of

the virus make up a really small part of the genome," he wrote, referring presumably to a genetic component known as a furin cleavage site, which greatly enhances the virus's infectivity, "so one has to look really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentially) look engineered."

From: Kristian G. Andersen (b) (6)>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 10:32 PM
To: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6)
Cc: Jeremy Farrar (b) (6)>
Subject: Re: FW: Science: Mining coronavirus genomes for clues to the outb

Hi Tony,

Thanks for sharing. Yes, I saw this earlier today and both Eddie and myself a great article, but the problem is that our phylogenetic analyses aren't able t sequences are unusual at individual residues, except if they are completely the virus looks totally normal and the close clustering with bats suggest tha The unusual features of the virus make up a really small part of the genome really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentia

We have a good team lined up to look very critically at this, so we should kn the weekend. I should mention that after discussions earlier today, Eddie, B the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory. But w more closely and there are still further analyses to be done, so those opinio

Best,
Kristian

_A key email from Kristian Andersen to Anthony Fauci.
Andersen went on to note that "after discussions earlier today, Eddie, Bob, Mike and myself all find the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory"— meaning that, in their unanimous view, the virus didn't come from nature. "Those opinions could still change," Andersen added. Eddie is Edward C. Holmes of the University of Sydney. Bob is Robert F. Garry of Tulane University. Mike is Michael Farzan at Scripps Research.
The message sent Fauci into a whirlwind of activity. "You will have tasks today that must be done," he emailed his deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, two hours later at 12:29 am on February 1. One of these urgent tasks evidently concerned NIAID funds that had been passed, via the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, to Zhengli Shi, China's leading bat virus expert, at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci was doubtless anxious to check whether his agency's funding

of Shi's work had complied with US law, which banned funding gain-of-function research from 2014 to 2017 and required it be reported to a government panel thereafter. "Gain of function" refers to research in which a pathogen's ability to cause disease is enhanced. Auchincloss replied a few hours later that efforts were underway to ascertain "if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Meanwhile Farrar, who had independently heard of the Andersen team's conclusion from Holmes, says in *Spike* that he arranged a teleconference set for 7 p.m. London time, convenient for both Washington and Australia, where Holmes was based.

The participants included Fauci and possibly his nominal boss, Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health. (Farrar says in *Spike* that Collins was present, but Collins's name is not on the list of invitees in the Fauci emails.) Officials on the UK side were Farrar and Patrick Vallance, the chief scientific adviser to the UK government. The others were mostly virologists, including Andersen, Holmes, and Andrew Rambaut of the University of Edinburgh. Far from being selected at random, the conferees were associated through a complicated web of relationships, a sort of virologists' old boy network that included senior medical officials in China. Farrar was well acquainted with George Fu Gao, the head of China's counterpart of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has described Gao as an "old friend," who in fact had called a month earlier, on December 31, 2019, to tell Farrar about the initial cases in Wuhan of what turned out to be Covid-19. Farrar says in his book *Spike* that on the weekend of the teleconference, he called another highly placed Chinese official, Chen Zhu, China's minister of health from 2007 to 2013, to tell him of "rumours that the novel coronavirus could be the result of a lab accident." As for Holmes, he has published many papers both with Farrar and with Gao and has been a guest professor at Gao's CDC from 2014 until 2020.

Because of these varied connections, it seems likely that Chinese authorities knew about the conference almost from the moment it occurred and, if so, would have had the opportunity to influence deliberations that followed it.

At the conference there was a notable imbalance of power between the virologists and the officials. Fauci and Farrar together control a large portion of the funds available for virological research in the Western world. A virologist keen to continue his career would be very attentive to their wishes. Two of the conference participants had multimillion-dollar grant proposals under final review with NIAID at the time of the call.

Almost all references to what was discussed at the teleconference have been redacted from the Fauci emails under exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act. The conference would doubtless have included explanation from Andersen and Holmes as to why they had concluded the previous evening that the virus had been altered through laboratory manipulation. "Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call," Farrar writes in one of the Fauci emails.

RELATED:

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19

From: Jeremy Farrar (b) (6)>
Sent: Saturday, February 1, 2020 1:13 PM
To: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6)>; Patrick Vallance
Cc: Drosten, Christian (b) (6); Marion Koopmans
(b) (6)>; R.A.M. Fouchier (b) (6);
(b) (6) Andrew Rambaut
Kristian G. Andersen (b) (6); Paul Schreier
(b) (6); Ferguson, Mike (b) (6); Collins,
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Teleconference

Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call. Thank yc

Hope it will help frame the discussions.

_A Jeremy Farrar email about the teleconference.
Whatever was said at the meeting, it was followed by a remarkable and almost immediate about-face. By at most three days later, Andersen had executed a 180 degree turn in his views about the virus. In an email of February 4, 2020 to Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, which had directed NIAID funds to Shi, Andersen wrote, "The main crackpot theories going around at the moment relate to this virus being somehow engineered with intent and that is demonstrably not the case." The email was obtained by U.S. Right to Know, an investigatory group.
Participants have not explained what was said at the meeting or found in the days immediately following it to induce the change of mind. Media offices at the Wellcome Trust and NIAID declined to comment on this article. Andersen, Holmes and Rambaut did not reply to emails seeking an account of the reversal.
Farrar, not Fauci, seems to have been the leader in the teleconference's deliberations. "This is not my area of expertise so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy," Fauci wrote on February 13 to a CDC official. US officials were not to take the lead in this pivotal inquiry.

From: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Thu, 13 Feb 2020 22:36:17 +0000
To: Messonnier, Nancy (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD)
Subject: RE: NAS

Nancy:

The official USG group will be convened by NAS. Bob Kad direct knowledge of that. In addition, there is an ad hoc gro Jeremy Farrar of Wellcome Trust. This group has about 15 p are highly respected scientists, mostly evolutionary biologist by e-mail and conference calls (I have been on 2 of these cal invited me) to look at all of the bat, pangolin and human co to try and determine the evolutionary origin. This is not my so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy.

Best,

Tony

Fauci's "leaving it all to Jeremy" email.

Farrar had a direct hand in the two letters that went out to the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*. He was a signatory of the *Lancet* letter, a draft of which Daszak, the organizer of the letter, began circulating just five days after the conference. The letter sought to squelch all discussion of the possibility that the virus had escaped from a lab by deriding it as a conspiracy theory. When Daszak wrote an article in the *Guardian* elaborating on the same theme, Farrar promoted it with a tweet, saying "as always worth reading @PeterDaszak."

Farrar also recruited the five authors who drew up the *Nature Medicine* letter, his spokesman told the writer Ian Birrell. (The spokesman referred to the *Lancet* letter but evidently meant the *Nature Medicine* letter, which has five authors.) The *Nature Medicine* letter, accepted on March 6 and published on March 17, 2020, presented a detailed and influential case that the virus had emerged naturally from animals. Its authors were Andersen, Rambaut, W. Ian Lipkin, Holmes and Garry.

In his book *Spike*, Farrar portrays the events between the February 1 conference and publication of the two medical journal letters as a judicious process in which he held an agnostic view and played no role other than asking questions. "On a spectrum if 0 is nature and 100 is release—I am honestly at 50!" Farrar says he emailed to Fauci and Collins a day after the conference. But if that were honestly so, he fails to explain his switch from 50 to 0 when signing

the *Lancet* letter a few days later.

According to *Spike*, it wasn't until March, "after the addition of important new information, endless analyses, intense discussions and many sleepless nights" that Andersen and his four fellow virologists "were ready to pronounce on the origins of the novel coronavirus." Why then was Andersen, the virologists' leader, ready to pronounce just 3 days after the conference that lab release was a conspiracy theory? Farrar's account does not match with the available facts. Nor does Andersen's. In a June interview with the *New York Times,* he painted a picture that includes a change of mind on the possible engineering of the virus "in a matter of days, while we worked around the clock," and then that quick reversal being buttressed by drawn-out research. "This is a textbook example of the scientific method, where a preliminary hypothesis is rejected in favor of a competing hypothesis as more data become available and analyses are completed," he said in a statement released by Scripps Research after his Jan 31 email to Fauci had become public. "I cautioned in that same email that we would need to look at the question much more closely and that our opinions could change within a few days based on new data and analyses—which they did," Anderson said in the *New York Times* interview. In that same interview, he also said that "more extensive analyses, significant additional data and thorough investigations to compare genomic diversity more broadly across coronaviruses led to the peer-reviewed study published in *Nature Medicine*."

These later data and analyses would not have been available three days after the conference, the date of Andersen's volte-face email to Daszak. And they would not have been available to Farrar as he signed the *Lancet* letter, which was published just 17 days after the teleconference. More puzzling is Andersen's statement that in his preliminary studies "the genome of RaTG13, a SARS-related coronavirus found in bats, wasn't yet available." In fact its full sequence had been deposited by Shi in a data bank on January 24, 2020, a week before Andersen's report to Fauci, and Farrar says in *Spike* that he had seen the sequence by the time of the conference. RaTG13 is the closest known relative of SARS2, and the fact that it lacks the furin cleavage site found in SARS2 would have been a major reason for the Andersen group to suppose that this genetic element had been inserted into SARS2 in a lab.

Given his role in leading the February 1 teleconference, in presiding over the virologists' 180 degree change of views, and in arranging or influencing the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* letters, Farrar was evidently the driving force of the campaign to persuade the public that the SARS2 virus could not possibly have leaked from a lab. This was an unfortunate position for any scientist to take, given that he was assuring the public of something he could not be sure was true.

Farrar now says in *Spike* that, although natural emergence is more likely, "nobody is yet in a position to rule out an alternative." But his campaign sought very vigorously to do exactly that. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," Farrar and his cosignatories wrote in the *Lancet* on February 18, 2020. This lapse in scientific judgment reflects also on the other senior participants in the conference who saw what was happening but apparently took no steps to insist that scientific truth should take precedence over unjustifiable professions of certainty.

RELATED:

Caltech's David Baltimore discusses the debate over origins of SARS-CoV-2

The decision to quash any notion of lab escape seems to have brought relief all round. At least until the tide of opinion began to change a year later, Fauci and Collins didn't have to endure unpleasant questions about why they had been funding hazardous research in minimally safe conditions at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from

a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Daszak emailed Fauci after a White House press briefing on April 17.

In August 2020 the NIAID announced it would award $82 million over five years to 10 participants in its new network for detecting infectious diseases. Among the lucky winners: Daszak, Andersen, and his associate Robert Garry.

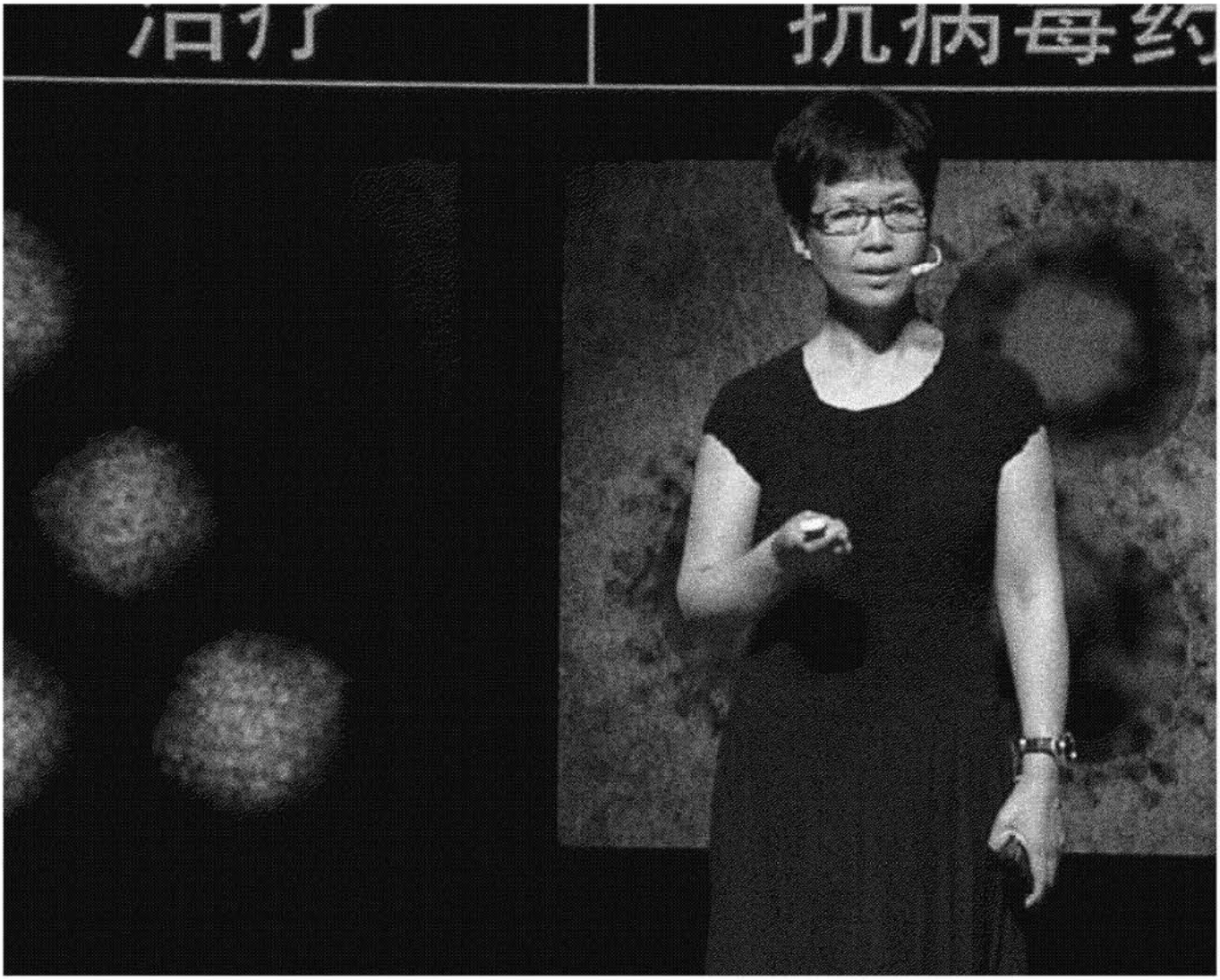
The perturbing lab leak theory raised by Andersen and his colleagues on January 31, 2020 had been safely laid to rest. Farrar and his colleagues had succeeded in the one goal also pursued by the autocrats in Beijing, that of suppressing discussion of whether the SARS2 virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab.

Beijing's way of squelching inquiry about the virus was, unintentionally, somewhat more obvious than the methods used in London. Chinese authorities tried so hard to stamp out information about the virus's origin that they left a rather clumsy trail of footprints pointing to where they didn't want people to go.

One of the more informative suppressions of data was the closure of China's main database on bat and other viruses. Zhengli Shi, China's leading expert on bat coronaviruses, told the BBC that it was taken off line because of numerous hacking attempts. It's conceivable that in January 2020, after the pandemic broke out, people without authorized access might have tried to hack into the database. But in fact the database went off line on September 12, 2019. Who would have wanted to hack into a bat virus database back then? More likely, that is the date at which Chinese authorities realized they had a virus escape problem.

In February of last year, President Xi referred to the need to ensure biosafety and biosecurity, and the Chinese Communist Party followed by tightening up their biosafety rules in October 2020, accelerating a long planned revision. "To me, the fact that the CCP enacted a major series of laboratory biosafety regulations this past year is an indication that China's political leadership believes that a lab accident is likely to have caused the pandemic," says a biosurveillance expert who has monitored China's disease outbreak reporting for the past two decades.

Major clues as to what happened are evident in Shi's various pronouncements about the virus. The omissions and untruths in these statements are specific enough to outline the very body of facts the censors have sought to conceal.



Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli spoke about SARS during a Yixi event (comparable to a TED talk) on June 23, 2018. (Yixi video)

In looking at Shi's questionable statements, it's only fair to keep in mind that they may have been compelled. Her train of deceptions began immediately after the genetic sequence of the SARS2 virus was published on January 10, 2020, by Yong-zhen Zhang of Fudan University, against the wishes of Chinese authorities who subsequently closed his lab for a time. Where did this strange new virus come from? Shi wanted or was told to establish SARS2's pedigree as a bat virus, with an ancestry analogous to that of SARS**1**, the bat virus that caused an epidemic in 2002. In an important paper published on February 3, 2020, Shi reported that the genome of SARS2 is 96 percent similar to that of a bat virus, RaTG13, "which was previously detected in [the bat species] *Rhinolophus affinis* from Yunnan province."

Shi neglected to mention a salient difference between the two viruses, namely that SARS2 possessed a furin cleavage site and RaTG13 did not. Alina Chan, of the Broad Institute in Cambridge, has likened the omission to describing a unicorn by reporting all its horse-like features, but neglecting to mention the horn. Evidently the Chinese authorities were highly sensitive to the furin cleavage site's presence.

Shi also failed to say when and where she had discovered the RaTG13 virus, surely important data for the closest known relative of SARS2. In fact, she had found RaTG13 in 2013, in an abandoned mine in Tongguan—the same place where six miners had fallen sick the year

before. At that time, she analyzed just one of its genes and reported the virus under another name, BtCoV/4991. Daszak, the holder of her NIAID grant, told the London Times, perhaps on misinformation from Shi, that the virus was then thrown in a freezer and forgotten about until 2020. This was untrue—the virus was of much greater interest. Shi had analyzed its full genome, probably by 2018, but did not publish it. It was only when she needed a bat virus pedigree for SARS2 that Shi released information about the virus, which she now renamed RaTG13. The fact that BtCoV/4991 and RaTG13 were one and the same was discovered by Monali Rahalkar and Rahul Bahulikar, two internet-sleuthing researchers in Pune, India.

It's not acceptable practice among scientists to report something already published under a different name as if were new. Shi's February paper had the goal of portraying SARS2 as just another bat virus while concealing the true provenance of its closest known relative—a cave known to harbor lethal viruses.

When RaTG13's connection to the Tongguan mine was pointed out, Shi still tried to conceal the lethality of the mine's bat viruses, saying the miners had died of a fungus infection. This untruth was corrected when a master's thesis by a Chinese doctor, Li Xu, was unearthed by the internet sleuth who calls himself TheSeeker268. The thesis reported that the miners had died of a SARS-related virus with symptoms identical to those of Covid-19 and with CT scans similar to those of Covid patients. The only evident difference between that virus's effects and those of SARS2 is that the miners' virus was not readily transmissible from one person to another.

The specificity of what Shi's statements concealed—the furin cleavage site, RaTG13's identity with BatCoV/4991, the latter's origin in the mine where six miners were infected, the death of the three miners from infection by a virus with symptoms very similar to those of SARS2—all point to the involvement of these elements in a scenario the Chinese authorities are determined to cloak. That scenario may have been the storage or generation of the SARS2 virus in Shi's lab from one of the many viruses recovered from the Tongguan cave.

The Chinese government's persistent stonewalling and Shi's pattern of evasions do not amount to proof that the SARS2 virus escaped from her lab. But they seem less like the actions of innocent people and more like attempts to cover up a fatal accident, one that has caused the deaths of maybe 10 million people and counting.

Perhaps proof will one day emerge that the virus emerged naturally. If not, the likelihood that SARS2 escaped from a researcher's laboratory is an albatross that will hang round China's neck in perpetuity. China's only hope of release from this terrible encumbrance lies in opening its laboratory doors and either establishing its innocence or admitting its fateful error.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 6:26 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6; Garry, Robert F <
b6
Subject: RE: feedback on wild animals

Jason, not sure whose office politics is worse, but there is many a day I'd rather be in Australia, even if I had to drink that awful beer Fosters. (To quote Grouco Marx as he help up a glass of questionable beer: "last time I saw something like this, they had to shoot the horse")…. But I do have fond memories of Australia, and two of my closest freiends, both ex-students of mine, are out in Perth, the only large city there (if oy can call it that) I have never been, although it's high on my bucket list if this damn pandemic ever ends. He's an American public health physician and she's an Australian-Tongan PhD virologist, both wondeful smart people.



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- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: [b6]; [b6]; [b6]; Garry, Robert F < [b6] > [b6]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Thanks, David.
I just got off a video conf call with the current editor in NY (the one asking all the latest questions). He's very nice and I feel like he gets its. He thinks it's a fascinating story.
Problem we have in journalism is that there are some people who aren't interested in actual journalism and telling stories; they want to climb to the top and manage people. I rejected the latter route 10 years ago, but am so grateful that I still get to meet so many remarkable people, visit cool places and see all aspects of humanity.
A difficulty working for a NY-based organization is that it's assumed that all the best people are in NYC, so being in Melbourne (where I need to be to be close to my kids in Adelaide), is that folks consider Australia a backwater and, by association, I mustn't be all that important/valuable.
But my new role as "global biosecurity czar" is helping somewhat.
Ahhhhh... Office politics!

From: [b6] At: 08/15/21 09:03:03 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

> Jason, all I can say is that it must be harder to be a journalist than a scientist…. I had no idea someone at your level would get pushed back.
>
> Usually i get from one to 4 reviewer responses to a ms. and three of those are out to lunch. Occasionally i get a reviewer who really understands the work: half of those are helpful, the other half are trashers.
>
> Maybe it's like being in the government where i am: there is endless push back, but the push-backers are brainless idiots who don't know what they are talking about.

Do you ever get to a point where the editors leave you alone on the science? Or do they all think they are science geniuses? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 14, 2021, at 16:05, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Thanks, Bob. In journalism, getting to the truth even when it's genuinely and actively pursued, can be a tortuous process!
----- Original Message -----
From: Robert F Garry b6
To: JASON GALE, b6, b6, b6
At: 08/15/21 01:45:11 UTC+10:00

Looking forward to this important article. Truth is stronger than fiction.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:41 AM
To: b6 b6 <b6; b6 <b6 b6; Garry, Robert F b6
Subject: Fwd:Re:feedback on wild animals

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Hi guys, in case you have nothing better to read over the weekend, this is some of the dialog I am having with editors in the U.S. Essentially, my response to questions from editor #6.
I thought I could claim victory when it looked like the story could be published this morning, but the editor of Businessweek objected and thinks he can make it better with another revision and an ETA of Tuesday. Sigh.
Jason

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/14/21 16:36:58 UTC+10:00
To: Cristina Lindblad (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , Eric Gelman (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: Joel Weber (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:feedback on wild animals

Hi.
Thanks for the feedback and the questions, which I have tried to answer in detail.
It's often easier to have a conversation over Nexi or the phone to explain nuanced information, or details that are

clear to me, but might not be to someone coming at this fresh, but that's tricky with the time difference.
When you look back at what's happened here, it seems that in trying to deflect blame for the pandemic, which became increasingly vicious as the cataclysmic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded around March-April 2020, China tried to conceal a very obvious, very plausible source of the pandemic: it's flourishing wildlife trade (worth about $90 billion in 2016).
It was an obvious cause of the pandemic because an almost identical scenario triggered an international outbreak caused by a very similar coronavirus (SARS) in 2003-04.
But in attempting to cover up the wildlife trade, and making like there were never any wild animals being sold in Wuhan's wet markets, things began to backfire on China; questions were raised about the nearby lab studying these coronaviruses. The more geopolitical, heated and vicious the arguments and accusations became, the less cooperative China became. In response, the more intent/adamant some groups have become in their belief that China is covering up a lab-leak. It's become a vicious circle. If China isn't coming clean on the wild animals, what else is it trying to hide?? China's defensiveness means we may never get the cooperation needed to find the answers. If China had been honest and transparent about the wild animals in the wet markets, it might not be in this mess now.

Anyway, here are my response to your queries in green.

By the way, I wonder if the current headline:
Delayed Paper Gives Credence to Wuhan Market Covid Origin Story
doesn't convey much more than what we had 2 months earlier when we reported Xiao's findings: China Markets Sold Mink, Civets, Stoking Natural Origins Theory
Perhaps Obscured China Paper Scuppered Chance to Trace Covid Origins
would hits "China", "Covid" and "Origins" in a way that won't alienate people who already believe it was a lab-leak

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According to the report, minks, civets, raccoon dogs and other mammals known to harbor coronaviruses were sold in plain sight for years in shops across the city, including the now infamous Huanan wet market, to which many of the earliest Covid cases were traced. The evidence collected over 30 months by **Xiao Xiao** a I'D NAME HIM HERE [[i don't know that naming a researcher no one has ever heard of adds much]] researcher working at a lab affiliated with China's Ministry of Education was hastily drafted into a manuscript and submitted to a scientific journal [Joel, we

cannot name the first journal they delivered it to because the authors decline to give us the name, saying it may affect their future chances of being published] in February 2020, just weeks before the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

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While the study received wide attention when it was eventually released by a different publisher [Publisher (Springer Nature) and publication (Scientific Reports) are different. Might add confusion DO YOU WANT TO ADD NAME HERE?], its long and torturous journey to publication gave **Chinese officials an opportunity to weave alternative narratives in which the virus may have come from abroad, even from a U.S. Army biological research facility**. [the stuff in bold is not contested and we go on to show how that happened, documenting with links when available]I TWEAKED WORDING HERE BUT THIS STILL ISN'T QUITE RIGHT. IF THE REPORT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED EARLIER CHINESE OFFICIALS COULD STILL HAVE DONE WHAT THEY DID—THEY COULD HAVE JUST SAID THE REPORT WAS SHODDY, OR WHATEVER, AND THEY ALSO COULD HAVE JUST IGNORED IT. I disagree. The evidence that Xiao et al provide was meticulously documented and supported by photographs that would have been difficult/impossible for China to dismiss (as older published photos and media reports had been). What's more, Newman understands that Xiao collected blood-sucking ticks from the wild animals he studiously cataloged. His frozen tick samples could be tested for blood/antibodies/virus, which could be extremely helpful in identifying infected species PRIOR to December 2019. The WHO team knew nothing of this, so couldn't have asked China for this research or any results, had they actually done the research. The delay in the publication of Xiao's paper delayed the evidence that there were live animals sold in the Huanan market. The WHO researchers couldn't have asked about tests on wildlife that ostensibly were never there. Likewise, Chinese authorities couldn't have done the tests on animals that didn't exist. The problem is that in January and February 2020, it was widely assumed the animals HAD been there and that the necessary tests and tracing of animals (the sampling of animals on farms they were raised on, testing of farm workers, animal hunters, transporters and traders **had all been done** by researchers in China -- the very things that ultimately led to the discovery of the origins of SARS and of MERS viruses. **None of these things were done** (or at least, there is nothing publicly available to show that they were done) **because the animals "weren't there"**. Now that we all know they were there, China as lost considerable face. The issue has become so political than there is much less/?no willingness to cooperate and conduct the additional

research that the WHO-led team recommended. Ideally, Xiao 's ticks should be studied, but it's doubtful that will now happen (I wouldn't be surprised if he's been ordered to incinerate them!) Hope this is clear.

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An international team of experts convened by the WHO traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to seek answers—a trip that might have yielded different results if the scientists had known about the work of Xiao Xiao, a virologist whose roles straddled epidemiology and animal research at the government-funded Key Laboratory of Southwest China Wildlife Resources Conservation and at Hubei University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.'MIGHT HAVE YIELDED DIFFERENT RESULTS' SEEMS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. WHAT RESULTS DID IT YIELD? I'D CUT THIS GRAF
As mentioned above, the WHO-convened team of researchers was told by market authorities, vendors and regular market visitors that there were no live animals sold in the Huanan market. That undermined completely the premise that the Huanan market was the kind of place where live animals from different species are stacked in cages, with urine and fecal material drips from one cage to the one below it, where there are splatters of blood and guts from animals, and lots of potential for the spread of diseases from one species to another (including Homo sapiens). Instead, the market (and one other one known to have been selling live wild animals in 2019) was presented as selling only frozen wild animals and aquatic species and things unlikely to be the source of SARS-CoV-2. The WHO researchers were told there were frozen ferret badgers and other wildlife found in freezers. Some of the carcasses actually came from Yunnan, the province where the closest coronavirus related to SARS-CoV-2 was found in bats -- thus establishing a potential route from Yunnan to Wuhan in wildlife. That was actually important. When the researchers showed their Chinese counterparts photos of caged raccoon dogs taken in the Huanan market by Prof. Edward Holmes five or six years earlier, they were told by Chinese scientists that the photos may have been faked, and that the market had ceased selling such live animals anyway. The WHO researchers saw no evidence (empty cages, animal pelts, etc) to dispute what the Chinese scientists told them, although they did smell "animals" -- but were told they were smelling rotten meat, sewage etc. Three people associated with the WHO-led mission told me that they didn't believe the information they were given by anyone associated with the market. But since there was no evidence to the contrary, they were unable to push the Chinese scientists further on this. **The fact that the mission concluded that frozen, not live wild animals were sold in the market undermined the thesis that Covid**

resulted from an animal spillover. And the absence of strong evidence pointing to a spill over from wild animals to humans made the lab-leak theory look, in relative terms, more plausible.

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Six months and two revisions later, the journal's publishers rejected the paper. "They did not think it would have widespread appeal," says Newman, who declined to name the publication [do you want us to say why he won't name it? I don't think it's necessary. There's no upside for scientists to make a publisher look bad (most journals are published by a handful of publishers)] "It caused us, especially our Chinese co-authors, concern that these data would not be taken seriously."

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The manuscript underwent a third revision to include data on China's pangolin trade networks (an earlier study, later contested, had implicated pangolins in the virus's spread to humans)WHO ASKED THAT THIS INFO BE INCLUDED? (I did, because we're trying to explain here why WHO missed the significance of Xiao's evidence. The WHO was slammed by other papers being submitted PLUS Xiao's paper had a weird title. That title seemed relevant to the authors back in January-February 2020, when pangolins were considered a possible SARS-CoV-2-spreading culprit. But in October 2020, pangolins were off the hook, so the title would have seem irrelevant/unimportant at first glance at WHO). It was then sent to the online journal *Scientific Reports*.

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The China-based researchers had reason to be cautious. In February 2020, the China Center for Disease Control (CCDC lets not use "CCDC". It's not commonly used like the U.S. "CDC" is, and it's going to force readers to go back and figure out what the "CCDC" is) prohibited scientists working on Covid-relate

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~~CCDC~~ Disease detectives arriving from Beijing (think this makes it clear that these are China's disease "feds" arriving) on the first day of 2020 ordered environmental samples to be collected from drains and other surfaces at the market. Some 585 specimens were tested, of which 33 turned out to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. "All current evidence points to wild animals sold illegally," China CDC Director George Gao and colleagues wrote in the agency's

weekly bulletin in late January. All but two of the positive specimens came from a cavernous and poorly-ventilated section of the market's western wing, where many shops sold animals.

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~~The information void kindled a raging political debate that's already caused a trade war between China and Australia, as nations~~ demand to know ~~how Covid emerged.~~ Australia in April 2020 called for a global inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, including China's handling of the initial outbreak. Days later, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo used part of his Earth Day message to call on China to close its wet markets to "reduce risks to human health inside and outside of China."

Based on a discussion today with someone with knowledge of the WHO-led mission to Wuhan in Jan-Feb 2021, a significant catalyst for China's defensiveness is the emergence of **claims for reparations** that extended from the finger-pointing at China's wet markets. These surfaced in April 2020, and have continued as recently as June 2021 (when Trump pushed for it again at a rally in the Midwest)

SO IS THIS THE POINT AT WHICH CHINA, WHICH SEEMINGLY ACCEPTED THE WET MARKET HYPOTHESIS, BEGAN TRYING TO CREATE A DIFFERENT NARRATIVE? (I think it was incremental. I believe China was embarrassed that its citizens were still buying wild animals in wet markets to eat -- a well-known hazard for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago. But that embarrassment/humiliation morphed into rigid denial and obfuscation when governments began openly blaming the Chinese Communist Party and agitating for China to pay reparations for the pandemic. See these clips:

- USA Today: Blame the Chinese Communist Party for the coronavirus crisis: Coronavirus crisis proves communism is still a grave threat to the entire world. If Beijing had just been honest, the pandemic could be preventable. April 5, 2020
- Yahoo News: More than half of Americans think China should pay coronavirus reparations, poll shows April 9, 2020
- Voice of America: Americans Join Coronavirus Lawsuit to Make China Pay April 10, 2020
- Washington Post Opinion: China must pay reparations to Africa for its coronavirus failures April 16, 2020
- Reuters: In a first, Missouri sues China over coronavirus economic losses April 22, 2020
- Washington Post: Missouri is suing China over the

coronavirus pandemic. It's the latest conservative gambit, April 22, 2020

- New York Post: Top German paper demands $165 billion coronavirus reparations from China April 22, 2020
- Attorney General Fitch Prepares to Sue China on Behalf of Mississippians April 22, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump on U.S. Seeking Compensation From China Over COVID-19: 'We Have Not Determined the Final Amount' April 28, 2020
- The Guardian: Trump says China could have stopped Covid-19 and suggests US will seek damages April 28, 2020
- Intelligencer: Trump Thinks He Can Make China Pay for the Virus Like Mexico Paid for the Wall, April 30, 2020
- Washington Post: U.S. officials crafting retaliatory actions against China over coronavirus as President Trump fumes April 30, 2020
- Lawfare: Does China Really Owe the World Trillions of Dollars? May 7, 2020
- Fortune: Trump's demand that China pay coronavirus reparations evokes an ugly history May 8, 2020
- South China Morning Post: Why China won't be paying the West coronavirus reparations any time soon May 15, 2020
- Deccan Herald, India: Abhijit Bhattacharyya | Why China needs to pay reparations to the world June 4, 2020
- Why calls for reparations from China for coronavirus are an unfeasible distraction June 9, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump Demands China 'Pay Reparations' for COVID, Says $10 Trillion Not Enough June 12, 2021

In response, Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied "wildlife wet markets" existed in the country. Government researchersCAN WE BE MORE SPECIFIC? Twenty-two researchers from mostly nationally-funded laboratories (I think it's the Chinese equivalent of the NIH in the U.S.) and institutes attached to the Chinese Academy of Sciences) now dismiss the market hypothesis completely. "SARS-CoV-2 could not have possibly evolved in an animal market in a big city and even less likely in a laboratory," they wrote in a paper released last month ahead of publicationWHERE/WHEN WILL IT BE PUBLISHED? It was released as a "pre-print" on a Chinese academic repository ahead of publication that appears to be managed/owned by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Papers are usually released in pre-print form before they have been accepted for publication or peer-reviewed as a way of expediting public access to the information. In this case, there is no information to suggest if, where or when the paper will be published.

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A more recent paperBY WHOM? (China CDC's Gao and eight other scientists mostly from the Chinese of Academy of Sciences' institutes) contends that the virus may have been imported from multiple locations worldwide, including parts of Europe where mink are raised in areas inhabited also by horseshoe bats known to harbor coronaviruses. "The official narrative changed not because the evidence changed," says Robert Garry, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Tulane University's School of Medicine in New Orleans "A spillover from a wet market was what caused SARS, and, embarrassingly for China, those wet markets were never shut down." Garry is the co-author of one of the earliest papers on the origins of Covid but wasn't involved in the research on Wuhan's markets.

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I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT POINT THIS GRAF IS TRYING TO MAKE. This is intended to demonstrate the kind of gaslighting that has occurred. Some of the WHO-led researchers are veterinarians and zoologists -- they know what animals smell like, and could smell their lingering presence a year later, but were told essentially that it was impossible that they were smelling animals because **there "were no live animals there"**.) The researchers noted a mixed smell of animals and disinfectant in some areas of the market, but they were told by the market's manager that they were probably smelling the lingering stench of rotten meat and sewage, according to a joint WHO-China report. [should we add "according to Laing Wannian etc here? Liang Wannian was the leader of the Chinese research team collaborating jointly with the WHO-led research team. The source for the above description are in the annexes to the official joint WHO-China report released at the end of March 2021.]

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Earlier the same day, the international research team visited Wuhan's larger Baishazhou market, where Xiao had regularly surveyed two sellers of live wild animals. Yet the group was told only frozen food, ingredients, and kitchenware were on offer there. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist who led the Chinese experts collaborating with the WHO-convened team, says his group had no knowledge of Xiao's data either. [if the above information on what the delegation saw all comes from this same source, maybe we should include his name higher up (The source for the description of what the origins researchers saw on Jan. 31, 2021, comes from the official 120-page joint WHO-China report and its 193-page annexes, not from Liang. Since we are essentially accusing China of

concealing the information that Xiao documented, we asked Liang at a press conference in late July 2021 when the Chinese team first knew about Xiao's findings -- that the Huanan market and three others in Wuhan were selling live animals permissive to SARS-CoV-2 infection -- and what research China has done subsequently as a follow-up on this information? Liang gave a very long-winded response in Chinese in which he said essentially "we didn't have that information in January-February 2021 when the research team was in Wuhan". I think it's important we keep this to demonstrate that we have tried to ascertain what China knew/has done and have given the Chinese researchers the opportunity to respond. In addition, I have emailed China CDC Director George Gao at least twice and not received any response.]

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Among the earliest clusters of infections recorded in Wuhan, one involved three Covid cases among staff working at a stall in Huanan. One of the employees, a 32-year-old who fell ill on Dec. 19, traded goods back and forth between the Huanan and Baishazhou markets.
WHERE DOES THIS FACT COME FROM? NOT THE REPORT, RIGHT? WHEN DID IT FIRST BECOME KNOWN? This information was from the joint WHO-China report released in March 2021, however, the WHO-led researchers went to the Baishazhou market more as a demonstration by the China team of what a perfectly functioning large food market looks like. The WHO-led team was oblivious to Xiao's research that showed there were at least two stalls in Baishazhou that had been selling live wild animals for human consuption. So this detail and its significance was lost on the WHO researchers at the time.)

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A confirmed case linking two markets that sold wild animals is “very intriguing,”says Stephen Goldstein, a research associate in evolutionary virology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. But tracing any contact the employee might have had with infected wildlife is impossible now that the animals are long gone.WOULD TIMELY PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT HAVE CHANGED THIS? It's unlikely that Xiao et al's paper would have been *published* soon after It was drafted in February 2020, but it could have been *released* as a pre-print ahead of publication and peer-review that same month. That would have **confirmed** what almost everyone had suspected: that there **was** a flourishing wildlife trade in Wuhan that provides a plausible pathway by which coronavirus-infected wildlife from Yunnan and beyond could have introduced the virus to the city, sparking the Covid outbreak. It's also possible

that swift recognition of these potential wild-animal vectors could have allowed scientists to test them for the virus and for antibodies against the virus while they were still alive (perhaps not the ones from Huanan, but wildlife in the three other Wuhan markets). Because of the statements the Chinese authorities had been making in January and February that strongly supported the animal spill over theory, it was assumed that this research was being done. Of course, the pandemic was raging then, so it would have been challenging. But, because of the denial by Chinese researchers that wild animals were being sold in Wuhan wet markets before the pandemic, there was never that level of follow up. At least, if there was, it was never made public.)

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"It seems to me, at a minimum, that local or regional authorities kept that informationWHAT INFORMATION? (that Wuhan had a flourishing live wild animal business going on in its wet markets before the pandemic) quiet deliberately," Goldstein says. "It's incredible to me that people theorize about one type of cover-up, but an obvious cover-up is staring them right in the face."

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Date: Sun, 19 Sep 2021 5:31:50 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 19 Sep 2021 5:31:48 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6
CC: Garry, Robert F b6 Wang Linfa b6 Edward Holmes b6 >; Jason Gale b6 Stephen Goldstein b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 Robert Kessler b6 >; David Morens b6 b6 HRSA OL b6

nPeter, as i am perennially swamped with work that has nothing to do with COVID issues of importance, i am always catching up on reading the important stuff

Just now i poured a martini and-read word for word your "A strategy…" paper with first author Sánchez. Also Kevin and Lin-fa were coauthors. Wow!!!

This is dynamite and also beautifully written. I mean, Hemingway, Conrad, Nin, couldn't have written it better. Beautiful job and so important.

I think you need to promote this work, and emphasize that the conclusions are far reaching and a sort of call to arms.

Let us all keep pushing,
and keep our eyes on the
prize of getting to the bottom of it all
david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 18, 2021, at 12:05, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>
> I put it all in a twitter thread while drinking coffee in my local diner (Saturday is "full English breakfast" day for me).
>
> https://twitter.com/peterdaszak/status/1439236376776658945?s=21
>
> No doubt ill be attacked by multiple lab leak aficionados but so be it - at least eddie,
> Garry and Kristian won't see. The horrors of that…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> Peter Daszak
> (Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Sep 18, 2021, at 10:26 AM, Garry, Robert F [b6] > wrote:

Of course, the momentum on the lab leak side will continue, with books by Sharri Markison, Alina Chan/Matt Ridley, Op Eds that criticize scientists, 70+ FoIAs by one organization alone, many other FoIAs on their way, 900 pages of FoIA'd grants and reports from EHA/NIAID showing zero evidence of lab leak.

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Date:	Wed, 28 Jul 2021 10:46:57 AM -0400
Subject:	RE: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC:	Robert Kessler [b6]; Sturchio, Jeff [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg

Yes – I spoke with her off the record. She quotes me as 'someone with direct knowledge of the WHO work in Wuhan' or something.

Jerry's also quoted.

It's good to see a lot of the BS getting cleared, but I do think that the WHO DG's blatant politicking is being missed by many of these science-y commentators that are being quoted. A lot of them seem to be completely OK with a new team because, I guess, it gives them a chance to be involved – e.g. Wanda Markotter's comments about the current team being not geographically balanced – what a joke – Vietnam, Japan, Russia, Sudan, NZ – she just didn't bother to actually check if that's correct…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 10:42 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: [b6]; Sturchio, Jeff [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

I love that picture of Tony. I'm attaching something Simone McCarthy just published in the S. China Morning Post. I discovered this morning that she had tried to get in touch with me the past two days, but I was focused on other things and not really looking at my inbox as I focused on my outbox. But she had something from my prior conversations with her to stick in there regarding the bad decisions at WHO regarding the investigation.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 10:29 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Sturchio, Jeff [b6] < [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

I wouldn't trust them either, given their history which I didn't know. I'll try to remember to copy Robert K, and ping me if I forget.

Many of these things come from our OD news sweeps, which go on 24-7. But they don't get anywhere near everything, as they are more interested in Ton's press coverage than science itself.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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● [b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
● [b6] [b6] [b6]
● [b6]

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 10:10 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

Thanks for sharing David. Please cc Robert Kessler in on these in case he also misses them. I'm also cc'ing Jeff Sturchio who's working with us to navigate the media attacks at the moment.

This reporter contacted me, and I refused to talk, even though I suspected he would do a decent job. I think I'm the person he says 'supports this sort of research but has been worn down by death threats'.

I actually like the tenor of the story – it's factually correct and points out the danger of people like Lipsitch and Ebright using a false premise to support their efforts to re-litigate 'gain of function'. It's good to see Lipsitch having to be factually correct here and agree that Rand Paul massively overstated their case!

One of the reasons I didn't speak with this reporter, by the way is that the journal (The Intercept) is one of the orgs that's FoIA'd 38 of EcoHealth's NIH grants and annual reports going back to 2001– just wasn't sure I could trust their motives!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 9:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] <[b6]
Subject: FW: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6

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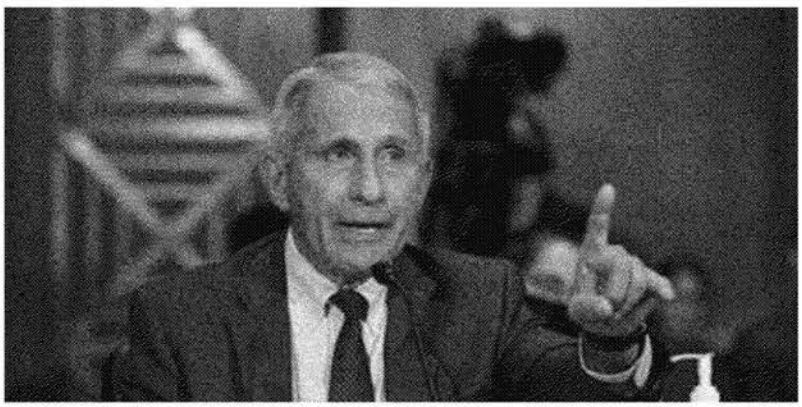
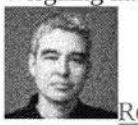
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 2:48 PM
Subject: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research
https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP



At a Senate hearing on July 20, 2021, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told Sen. Rand Paul that he resented the suggestion that he had lied to Congress. Photo: J. Scott Applewhite/Pool/AFP via Getty Images

Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research

By politicizing the debate over virus-modifying research, the senator has thrilled conservatives but discouraged scientists from weighing in.



Robert Mackey

July 27 2021, 10:14 a.m.

A decadelong debate over pandemic preparedness that has divided some of the world's leading biologists into opposing camps, for and against so-called gain-of-function research — in which deadly pathogens that could cause pandemics are artificially enhanced for study in the lab — has all but ground to a halt in the past week, thanks to Sen. Rand Paul.

That's because the Republican senator from Kentucky politicized the argument last week, by cherry-picking expert opinions from critics of the research who call it too risky to pursue, to publicly accuse Dr. Anthony Fauci of lying to Congress, when he said that his National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases had never funded gain-of-function studies at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China.

Paul's made-for-television broadside against Fauci thrilled Fox News hosts and colleagues like Rep. Jim Jordan, the Ohio Republican who has also pushed the debunked conspiracy theory that research financed by Fauci's agency, which some experts describe as gain-of-function, could have led to the development of SARS-CoV-2, the deadly coronavirus that causes the disease Covid-19, in the Wuhan lab. Fauci rejected Paul's claim that research carried out in Wuhan before 2017 with some support from the NIAID met the definition of gain-of-function and pointedly explained that it was impossible to make SARS-CoV-2 from the coronavirus used in that study.

Almost as soon as the heated exchange concluded, the senator's staff uploaded a truncated version of the video on his YouTube channel under the headline, "Dr. Fauci Caught Lying about NIH Funding in Wuhan."

That video was edited by Paul's staff so that it ends before Fauci responded to the senator's harangue by saying, "I totally resent the lie that you are now propagating, senator, because if you look at the viruses that were used in the experiments … it is molecularly impossible … to result in SARS-CoV-2."

On social networks, Republican operatives unconcerned with the facts — like Richard Grenell, the Twitter troll who served as Donald Trump's director of national intelligence for three months — cheered on Paul's attack.

But Paul's false claim that Fauci's supposed support for gain-of-function studies gave him "responsibility for 4 million people dying around the world from a pandemic," and the ensuing frenzy in the conservative media, also caused some previously outspoken biologists who have made the case against such experiments to fall silent.

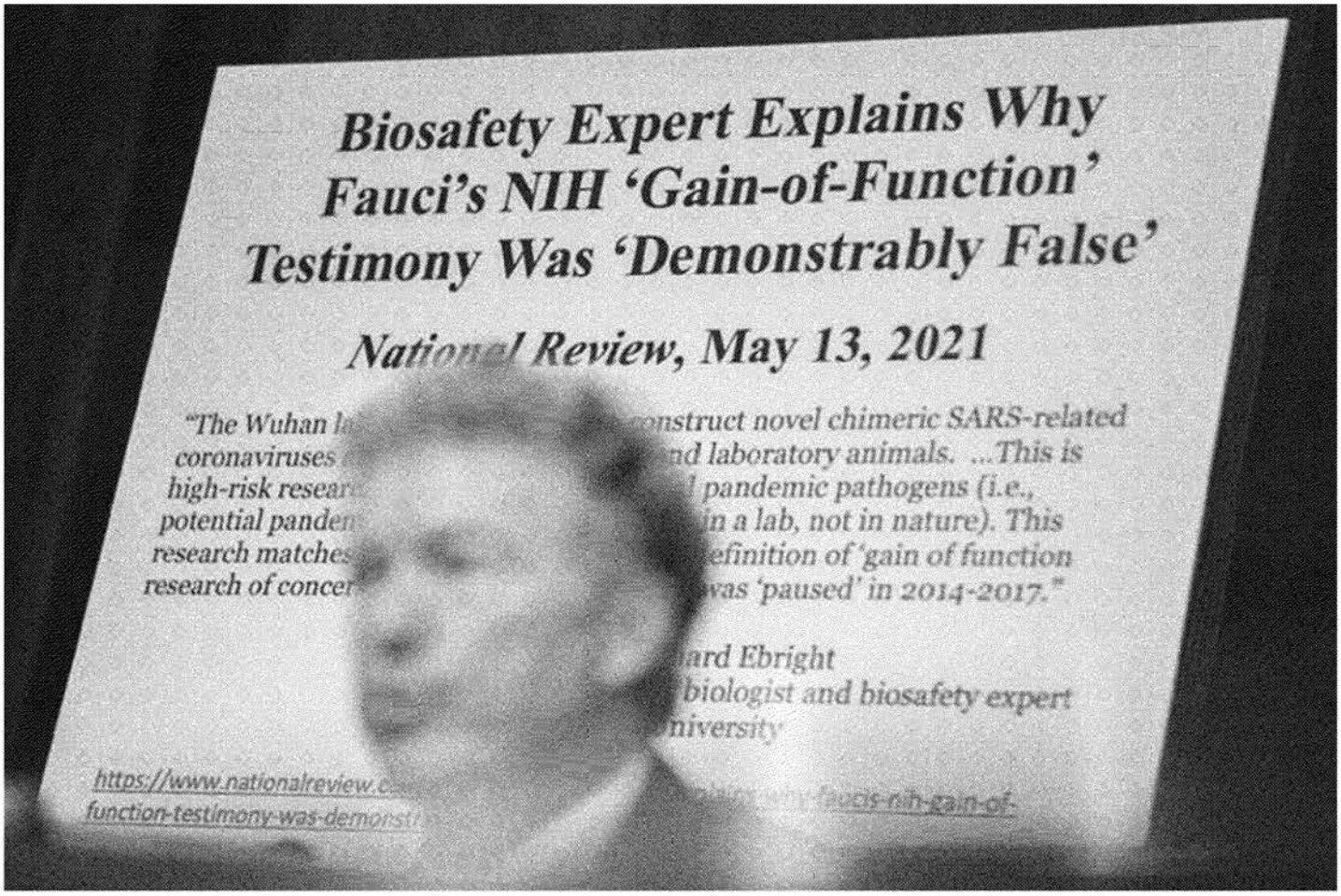
In the wake of Paul's attack on Fauci, several prominent scientists who question the wisdom and safety of gain-of-function experiments — in which biologists deliberately create pandemic-causing pathogens in the lab in order to better prepare to combat them should they evolve in nature — refused to speak to me on the record. One after another, they said Paul's patently false claim that Fauci was to blame for the pandemic, and his selective outrage at gain-of-function research only when conducted in China, made it all but impossible for them to say anything about the pre-pandemic experiments in Wuhan without being vilified by partisans.

One biologist who supports such research told me that he would have liked the opportunity to correct what he called misinformation about the experiments, but had been worn down by death threats.

To recap, at a hearing in May, Paul first accused Fauci of having supported gain-of-function research in Wuhan, which the senator, who is also a doctor, misleadingly defined as "experimenting to enhance the coronavirus's ability to infect humans." In fact, the coronavirus that researchers experimented on between 2014 and 2017 at the Wuhan Institute, with some financial support from the NIAID, was from a strain found in bats that is not closely enough related to SARS-CoV-2 to have been used to fabricate the virus that causes Covid-19 in a lab.

Fauci also insisted that his agency, which is part of the National Institutes of Health, had never funded gain-of-function research in Wuhan.

When Fauci returned to the senate committee last week, Paul confronted him with the words of Richard Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University and a longtime critic of gain-of-function studies, who told the conservative magazine National Review that Fauci's testimony in May was "demonstrably false," since, in Ebright's opinion, the experiments at the Wuhan Institute, indirectly funded by the NIAID as part of a project to head off a pandemic, were "unequivocally" gain-of-function in nature.



Sen. Rand Paul, a Kentucky Republican, used a visual aid to accuse Dr. Anthony Fauci of lying to Congress during a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing on July 20, 2021.
Photo: Stefani Reynolds-Pool/Getty Images

Fauci insisted that the biologist Paul cited was simply wrong, saying experts at the National Institutes of Health had evaluated the Wuhan project and concluded that the experiments there did not meet the criteria for gain-of-function research used by the United States government.

The exchange between Paul and Fauci got even more heated when the senator seemed to imply that this research funded by Fauci's agency could have led to the development of SARS-CoV-2, the deadly coronavirus that causes Covid-19, in the Wuhan lab.

As Fauci correctly noted, that speculation was wildly misleading, since it was "molecularly impossible" for the type of coronavirus used in the pre-2017 experiments to have been manipulated in the lab to create SARS-CoV-2.

On that point, even some of the most outspoken critics of gain-of-function research on potential pandemic pathogens agree with Fauci. Kevin Esvelt, an MIT biologist who told PolitiFact in May that the experiments conducted in the Wuhan study should be considered gain-of-function also emphasized that those experiments "definitely did NOT lead to the creation of SARS-CoV-2." (Esvelt, who worries that viruses developed through gain-of-function experiments in a lab could one day be used as weapons, told "The Open Mind" on PBS in March that whether the virus that caused the Covid-19 pandemic came from an animal or came from a lab, "it was not designed to be a weapon — because anyone good enough to make this thing could make a more devastating weapon.")



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Paul was also rebuked in May by Marc Lipsitch, a microbiologist and professor of epidemiology at Harvard University who brought together hundreds of scientists and experts in law and ethics in 2014 to call for a moratorium on gain-of-function experiments that could create highly transmissible, novel strains of dangerous viruses in laboratories.

Lipsitch wrote in a Twitter thread that in his attack on Fauci in May, Paul had "FALSELY" claimed that the working group Lipsitch assembled had "characterized work at the Wuhan Institute of Virology as gain-of-function." While he and many members of the working group "support proper investigation of SARS-CoV-2 origins including the lab leak hypothesis and continue to oppose many forms of GOF research," he added, "it is just fabrication to say we have made any statement as a group about work in Wuhan."

Fauci did not get a chance to explain during the hearing what the scientific basis was for the determination by NIAID biologists that the experiments conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, described in a paper published in 2017, were not subject to a temporary pause on the funding of gain-of-function research imposed during the Obama administration in 2014, which was lifted in 2017 after Trump became president.

But in a statement provided to The Intercept on Monday, NIAID explained the reasoning behind its review of the experiments conducted at the Wuhan Institute on behalf of EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit in New York that works with researchers in China to study viruses that have the potential to jump from bats to humans. The agency wrote that its scientists had concluded the pre-2017 experiments in Wuhan were not barred by the temporary pause on gain-of-function research, "because they were not reasonably expected to increase transmissibility or virulence of these viruses in humans."

"Under the grant, EcoHealth Alliance proposed research to create chimeric viruses by placing a small portion of newly identified, evolutionarily distant, bat coronaviruses into another well characterized bat coronavirus that has never been demonstrated to infect humans called WIV1," NIAID wrote. "The purpose of this work was to examine whether the newly discovered viruses were able to use the human ACE2 receptor like WIV1 and other SARS-related coronaviruses already do. In the context of these experiments, this well-characterized bat coronavirus would be considered the parental strain against which the function of the new chimeric viruses would be assessed. With this comparison, the newly created chimeric viruses did not gain any function relative to the parental strain; the chimeric viruses did not replicate in cell culture any better than the parental WIV1. In addition, research that had been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals demonstrated that viruses similar to those proposed under the grant had reduced pathogenicity as compared to the parental viruses. For these reasons, it was not reasonably anticipated that the viruses involved in research under the grant would have enhanced pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in mammals via the respiratory route, and therefore did not meet the criteria for gain-of-function research described in the research funding pause."

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Date:	Wed, 26 May 2021 4:26:15 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 26 May 2021 4:25:57 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins
From:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]gov>; Rich Roberts [b6];
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Thanks, and I totally agree with all you say. Do you have a link to that statement by the Chinese delegate?

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 4:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

Finishing off my sentence…

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening…..That's straight from the WHA yesterday where apparently the Chinese delegate stated that "In the view of China, our role in the COVID-19 origins investigation is now over"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 3:43 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I sure do agree with the last complete sentence in Peters note. That's what I would hope to get across to the reporter tomorrow. I'll stay away from the science I sort of understand but not the granularity where all of the important insights reside. One of my mentors (not Donald Rumsfeld) always said "know what you know" as applied to clinical medicine. The implication was to also know what you don't know because that's what you need to add to the I know bucket.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:39 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Rich Roberts < [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I was just talking about that statement with a couple of our Board members. My view is this is Biden's way of punting it down the road for 90 days, hoping the hype dies down, and hoping something shifts the narrative. He looks like he's doing something, while everyone knows that the US intelligence agencies are unlikely to get any more clarity in the meantime.

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening. That's a direct

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] < [b6] >; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:09 PM
Subject: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

1 hour ago - World

Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins



Zachary Basu

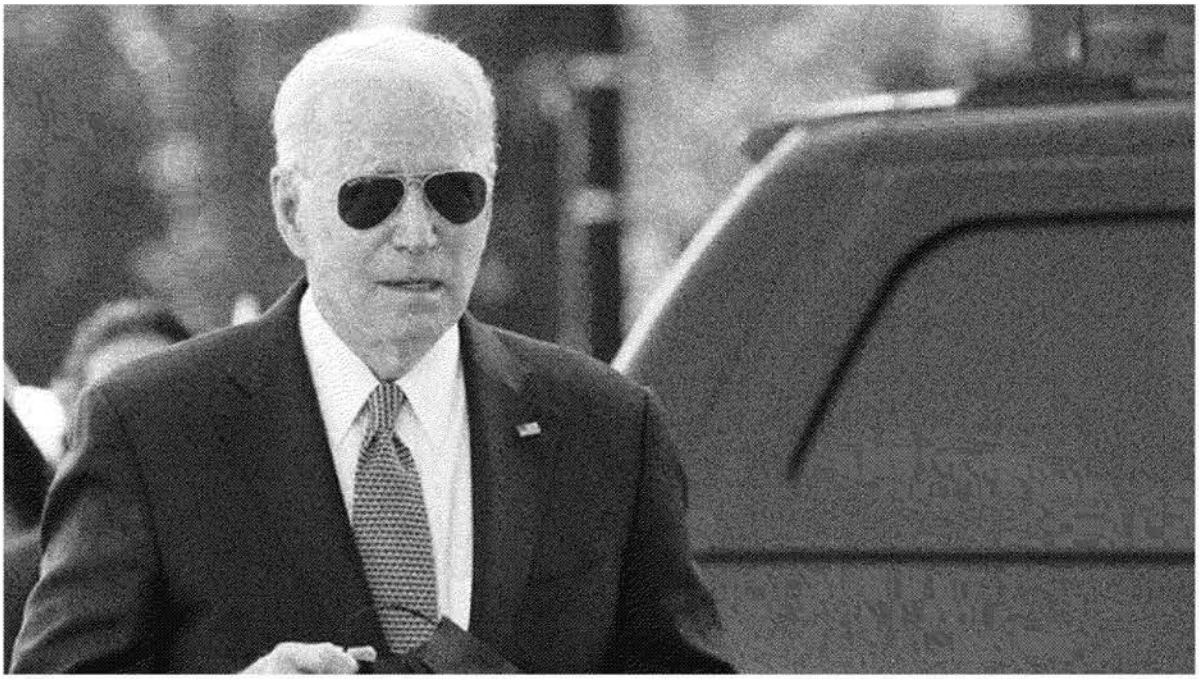

Photo: Win McNamee/Getty Images

President Biden announced Wednesday he has asked the U.S. intelligence community to "redouble their efforts" to investigate the origins of the coronavirus and provide a report within 90 days that "could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion."

Why it matters: The debate over the origins of COVID-19 has been reinvigorated in recent days by previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, that three researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology fell ill enough to be hospitalized in November 2019.

The state of play: Biden said in a statement that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" for the origins of the virus — one, that it emerged from human contact with an infected and animal, and two, that it was the result of an accidental laboratory leak.

- A joint team from the World Health Organization and China issued an inconclusive report in March that described the so-called lab-leak theory as "extremely unlikely."
- But the report has been criticized by the U.S. and WHO leadership for its methodology and lack of transparency from the Chinese government, and top U.S. officials have called for a new investigation.

What they're saying: Biden said the U.S. intelligence community's current position is that "while two elements in the IC leans toward the former scenario and one leans more toward the latter – each with low or moderate confidence – the majority of elements do not believe there is sufficient information to assess one to be more likely than the other."

- "I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said in a statement.
- "As part of that report, I have asked for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for China. I have also asked that this effort include work by our National Labs and other agencies of our government to augment the Intelligence Community's efforts. And I have asked the Intelligence Community to keep Congress fully apprised of its work."

Our thought bubble: Whether COVID-19 ultimately originated in an animal or in a lab, the bulk of the evidence is in China, which limits what the U.S. can find out. But Biden's statement underscores the fact that this debate will not end any time soon, and that the U.S. could ramp up pressure on China to cooperate.

Go deeper: The COVID lab-leak theory goes mainstream

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Date: Wed, 19 May 2021 11:20:19 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 19 May 2021 11:17:20 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Latest from NIH
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] keusch, Gerald T [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Cc'ing my response to Rich's email so Jeff has that also:

Agree with everything you say Rich. The statement is really good and useful, but doesn't clearly define GoF. I am 100% sure that our NIH grant did not fund GoF in the way it's been defined, but this is muddied by Ralph and Zhengli having conducted an experiment using a SARS-CoV backbone which was reviewed as potential gain of function, even though the result was loss of function in the chimera. Likewise, even though NIH didn't fund it, I believe WIV was either interested in or actually doing chimeric work with MERS, for example, which would have been considered GoF.

Clarity on definitions and who did what would help your colleague (Rich) understand that the NIH grant and NIH in general did not fund GoF at WIV, but I don't think it will help the general public who are being fed some serious misinformation in a continuous drip-feed from Fox News, Rand Paul, Devon Nunes, Washington Post etc….

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 10:07 AM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]>; keusch, Gerald T [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: Latest from NIH

Rich, I totally agree. I am copying Jrff Taubenberger on this. He and I and Tony Fauci spent huge amounts of time over the period of a year or two dealing with the first GOF crisis about 10 years ago. This was about the (in my mind) fanciful idea that

one could easily create an H5N1 pandemic by manipulating its avian-adapted-virus genes.

Jeff was in the middle of it because he had sequenced the 1918 influenza pandemic virus and with CDC and other collegues "ressurected" that virus using reverse genetics, and studied it in the lab and in animal experiments. While there had been no particular concern at the time, when the H5N1 GOF crisis broke several years later, Jeff's earlier work became a hot button issue and he was targeted as "Dr. Death". The GOF moratorium shut down much of his lab's "peaceful" work with harmless viruses and viral genes, and demoralized everyone in the 20-person lab, some of whom left.

In response, Jeff and I and others, including in one case David Baltimore, co-wrote several papers pointing out why safely working with viruses like the 1918 virus was important and , implicitly, why being over-zealous in shutting down research was likely to do more harm than good.

I think it might be helpful to take another look at these publications to remember what we said about GOF back then (in some or all of those papers we avoided even using the term GOF because it was bound to be misunderstood by some). About 5 years ago, Jeff and I wrote a draft of yet another paper on this subject, intending it to be co-written with Kanta Subbarao, then a flu virologist at NIH, and Malik Peiris, the Hong Kong based virologist at the center of so many of these viral outbreaks such as SARS and bird flu. I knew Malik from when he was a post doc with James Porterfield, the late and wonderful Oxford virologist, and wanted to get his buy-in. However, when Kanta suddenly moved to Ausstralia, we let the paper languish.

Still, it would be helpful, at least to Jeff and I, to revisit this in light of today.

david

On 5/19/2021 9:15 AM, Roberts, Rich wrote:

> Hi:
>
> In case you didn't see this
>
> **Statement on misinformation about NIH support of specific "gain-of-function" research**
>
> In normal times this would be very helpful, but without a clear definition of what is meant by GoF research, this may only muddy the waters. One thing is clear though and that is that GoF is a hot button for many people thinking about this issue. I had a long conversation with David Lipman, who used to be NCBI Director, yesterday and it was GoF research that he felt was being carried out at the Wuhan Institute that prompted him to tend towards belief in a lab-leak. It is going to be difficult to put that idea back in the bottle, but it would be helpful if there was a way to do so without compromising or even involving Peter.
>
> Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

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Aleksei Chmura b6

Re: Questions about 2R01AI110964-06 (PI: Daszak)

1 message

Aleksei Chmura b6 Tue, Jul 30, 2019 at 2:55 PM
To: "Girma, Tseday (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6

Tseday,

Thanks for the update. I know you are likely inundated with questions from other awardees as well.

Call or email me anytime.

Cheers!

-Aleksei

On Jul 30, 2019, at 14:49, Girma, Tseday (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

Hi Aleksei,

I received your inquiry – I will respond tomorrow. I may also have questions about the revised budget on the type 2 application.

Thanks,
Tseday

From: Aleksei Chmura b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2019 1:38 PM
To: Girma, Tseday (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Questions about 2R01AI110964-06 (PI: Daszak)

Dear Tseday,

Many thanks for all your help and support during our application and JIT processes for this continued award. We are excited about our continued work and progress over the next 5 years!

Two quick queries for you:

1) I see that now that we may commence our Year 5 annual report in eRA Commons' RPPR. Peter just initiated our Year 5 report. We were already prepared to submit this and expect to have everything uploaded and submitted by the end of July. Will this be ok and is there a due-date?

b6

MORENS_SUBPOENA_014457
MORENS_NIH_027154
REL0000480687

2) Since this is Year 6 of our award, may we roll-over any un-expended funds from Year 5 as we would usually do within a 5-year award? Our start-date for Year 6 is 01 July 2019, so does that mean we may not request reimbursement for any expenses from the end of our Year 5 (31 May 2019) to beginning of Year 6 (01 July 2019) or are these allowable 'continuation' or 'start-up' or 'close-out' costs?

Cheers,

-Aleksei

Aleksei Chmura, PhD
Chief of Staff

EcoHealth Alliance
460 West 34th Street, Suite 1701
New York, NY 10001

b6 (office)
b6 (mobile)
www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge scientific research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science, we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

MORENS_SUBPOENA_014458
MORENS_NIH_027155
REL0000480687

Date: Mon, 18 Oct 2021 1:08:50 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 18 Oct 2021 1:08:40 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: ROCHE Benjamin [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: benjamin.roche [b6] Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio [b6]

Sorry I won't be able to make it to the event after all David. I'll be on a college visit with my daughter that day.

Please say hello to all our colleagues and I hope you have a good opportunity to talk with Benjamin, who is heading up this really interesting and important initiative at IRD.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: ROCHE Benjamin [b6]
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 12:48 AM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] [b6] Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio < [b6]
Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st

Dear David,

I hope this e-mail will find you well. Actually, Peter will not be able to come, but I will be glad to meet you to present the PREZODE initiative. By any chance, do you have some possibilities on Wednesday 20th? I'll be in DC

All the best,

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

b6
e-mail: b6
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

Le 22 sept. 2021 à 16:54, David Morens b6 a écrit :

Peter, and Ben glad to meet you on email, and will be happy to come to the event.

Not sure what you mean by "represent at the event", but I suppose you mean represent NIH? Or NIAID? Anything I need to do other than just enjoy it?

TY, David

David M. Morens, MD
b6

b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, Sep 21, 2021 at 11:43 AM Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

> Hi David,
>
> I'm introducing you by email to my colleague Dr. Ben Roche from IRD France. He is the PI of the new French Govt pandemic prediction initiative PREZODE. As you can see from the Email below mine, there is an event scheduled for October 21st at the French Embassy in DC. I'll be moderating the panel discussion and will be in DC in person (FINALLY!!).
>
> Ben is looking for someone from NIH to represent at that event. I've suggested you would be perfect for that role, and wanted to introduce you to him now.

Full disclosure, Ben is working with EHA on joint projects and we signed an MOU with the French Govt IRD to stimulate joint efforts to predict and prevent pandemics. I've also cc'd Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio from EHA who I believe you've met in the past, who has worked closely on this initiative.

Hope you're available and look forward to seeing you while I'm in DC whatever the case!

Cheers,

Peter

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From: POIRIER Agnès b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:47 AM
To: Biffl, Claire b6
Cc: Liao, Julie b6 ; LIGEARD Christian b6 >
Subject: French Embassy: conference on the PREZODE Initiative (October 21st)

Dear Ms. Biffl,

As you well know, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of designing effective strategies for preventing and responding to health crises by taking greater account of the interactions between human health, animal health and environmental health.
In response to this emergency, the French President Emmanuel Macron launched the PREZODE initiative during the One Planet Summit on January 11, with the support of the Director General of the FAO and the President of the European Commission.

This initiative (see attached document) aims to network, on a global scale, research work and operational actions to prevent the risks of zoonotic emergencies and pandemics through the reduction of pressures on biodiversity, in accordance with the "One Health" approach. It will improve knowledge of the risks of emergence and spread of zoonoses, strengthen the surveillance activities of the networks that already exist and ensure greater compliance with prevention measures for future diseases.
The PREZODE initiative will strengthen cooperation with several regions of the world (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, America, Europe…) and will support the integration and strengthening of human, animal and environmental health networks. It will also support the work of the "One Health"

High Level Panel of Experts proposed by France with the support of Germany, and launched by what we call the Tripartite + (WHO-FAO- World Organization For Animal Health-UN Environment Programme) on May 17 and 18.
The year 2021 is dedicated to building the strategic framework and the operation of the initiative, with the objective of entering the operational phase from 2022.

In this context, the French Embassy is planning to host a conference (preferably an in-person event) to present the PREZODE initiative and discuss the possible involvement of US government and research institutions.

The event is scheduled for October 21, 2021, in the afternoon (2:30–5:30 pm) and would consist (see draft program attached) of two sequences of approximately one hour each:

- Presentation of the PREZODE initiative by representatives (scientific or institutional directors) of the three French research institutes involved, CIRAD (Agricultural Research Centre for International Development), INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), IRD (National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)

- Panel discussion on national and international initiatives: statements by DoS, DoD (DTRA), CDC, USDA, USAID, OHHLEP, the Tripartite+, the World Bank, private sector…

We are currently looking for a moderator for this event, and would be honored to involve an expert from the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Indeed, the Forum's work on these issues, its leadership and independence, and its broad audience seem to me to be perfect for our event. If you agree to this role, I would be happy to discuss further the organization of the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration and best regards,

Dr Agnès POIRIER, D.V.M.
Conseillère SPS / Counselor for sanitary and phytosanitary matters - USA/ Canada
Conseiller agricole adjoint / Deputy Agricultural Counselor
Ambassade de France / Embassy of France

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www.ambafrance-fr.org
https://frenchtreasuryintheus.org
<image001.png>

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Date: Sat, 18 Sep 2021 12:11:33 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 18 Sep 2021 12:11:32 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
From: "Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ b6
To: b6 b6 linfa.wang@duke-nus.edu.sg;
CC: b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6

Oh wow. Awesome summary! Thanks, David. Btw, we're all off the record here.

---- Original Message ----

From: Peter Daszak b6

To: JASON GALE, b6

CC: b6 b6

At: 09/19/21 00:12:34 UTC+10:00

Yes – saw that paper Jason – really interesting

I looked through the paper and it's yet another game changer. So far, in the last few weeks/months, we've got the following new evidence supporting emergence via bat-to-intermediate host-to-human origin for COVID-19 (I've probably missed something):

- Multiple new, SARS-CoV-2 related CoVs in SE Asia (Cambodia, Thailand, Japan, China etc.). I know of other work in review describing other related viruses in SE Asia also. We're also finding further novel SARS-CoV-2 related bat viruses in Malaysia, Thailand.
- New evidence that live animals of the type that carry CoVs were present in the Wuhan markets (including Huanan).
- Evidence from other bat SARSr-CoVs that mutations occur where there FCS is found (eg. RmYN02) https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7211627 /
- a rat alpha-CoV with an FCS in wildlife farms, hotels and train stations in S. China, showing that FCS insertions are more common in nature than previously thought. https://journals.asm.org/doi/epdf/10.1 b6 21
- Epidemiological analysis of early cases supporting early origin close to Huanan market, not WIV https://www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092- 8674(21)00991-0
- Phylogenetic analyses suggesting there may have been multiple introductions into the human population, supporting presence of a virus circulating in animals rather than a lab leak (@virology paper)
- Our work showing a very large interface for bat SARSr-CoV spillover in a v. densly population region, and potential for large numbers of missing cases each year https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.09.09.21263359v1
- This paper showing ACE2 binding for bat SARS-CoV-2 related CoVs. https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs-

On the lab leak side, we have convoluted accusations based on interpretations of intent about how Chinese scientists submitted genomes, wrote the papers, or how me and other scientists had collaborations with Chinese scientists. But, as far as new evidence goes, I could only find this:

- None

Of course, the momentum on the lab leak side will continue, with books by Sharri Markison, Alina Chan/Matt Ridley, Op Eds that criticize scientists, 70+ FoIAs by one organization alone, many other FoIAs on their way, 900 pages of FoIA'd grants and reports from EHA/NIAID showing zero evidence of lab leak.

This rate of research even in a pandemic is remarkable and suggests that we'll pretty quickly have such overwhelming evidence for the 'natural' origins that most people will move on from the lab leak.

(Off-the-record) However, the damage they leave behind is already horrific and will be worse by the time they decide to find another issue to focus on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Wang Linfa [b6]
Sent: Friday, September 17, 2021 10:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6] ; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: Stephen Goldstein [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6]
Subject: RE: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

Almost identical SARS-CoV-2 RBD in several bat sarbecoviruses! This is as close as you can get for a natural RBD origin!

Also, the paper concluded that SARS-CoV-2 genome fragments are found in different sarbecoviruses, very similar to the PloS Path paper for SARS-CoV-1.

All we need is to find a sarbecovirus with a furin cleavage site and no more debate on the natural origin of SARS-CoV-2!

Linfa (Lin-Fa) WANG, PhD FTSE FAAM

Professor

Programme in Emerging Infectious Disease

Duke-NUS Medical School,

8 College Road, Singapore 169857

Tel: [b6]

From: Edward Holmes [b6]
Sent: Thursday, 16 September 2021 3:31 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: Stephen Goldstein [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] ; Wang Linfa [b6]
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

[redacted]- External Email -

Dismantles one key argument of the leakers - how could a virus get from Yunnan to Wuhan - in one simple move.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E b6

On 16 Sep 2021, at 2:26 pm, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

And there's this:

"The discovery of civet-CoVs in the Hubei province should not be a surprise as SARS-CoV-like viruses were recently found in a bat species in the same province"

From: b6 At: 09/16/21 14:24:33 UTC+10:00

To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: b6
b6
b6 b6
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

Just stumbled across it reading the discussion of another paper honestly. It's been cited since - there are certainly people who remembered it but I did not know of it and clearly had not penetrated the public origins discussion.

Stephen

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 15, 2021, at 10:22 PM, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Well done, Stephen for finding this:
b6 /

Jason Gale, MHlthSec
Senior editor & chief biosecurity correspondent | Bloomberg News
Level 30, 120 Collins St., Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel. (landline) b6 Mobile b6
@jwgale | Linkedin: http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jason- gale/6/249/a56

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Date:	Sat, 26 Jun 2021 3:02:07 PM -0400
Sent:	Sat, 26 Jun 2021 3:01:44 PM -0400
Subject:	Confidential - Re. Jeff Sachs' article on the NIH-funded work, and the Lancet COVID Commission
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	peter hotez [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments:	Finding the Origins of COVID Jeff Sachs June 21 PD comments.docx

Dear all,

I'm talking with Peter Hotez in a bit about this article Jeff Sachs published, but as I read through it, I put in some comments about where and why it's flawed.

It may or may not be of interest to you all, but I thought I'd copy you anyway, in case you see it and wondered. I apologize for my ranting in places, but I'm disgusted on many levels that he's willing to throw EcoHealth under the bus like this. The article has errors or hyped up comments in just about every paragraph. It's also extremely cynical that on one day he removes me from the Commission because of my 'competing interests', then writes a piece on it and sells it to a media outlet. He's a regular monthly contributor to the place this was published, which means he has to come up with material each month and this month is was our organization that helped make him his $1000-2000. Of course, I can't be sure how much he gets paid, but an op ed in the times or guardian is $500 and these monthly deals pay better – my former boss had a similar one.

The article link is here: https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/finding-the-origins-of-covid19-by-jeffrey-d-sachs-2021-06

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date: Tue, 25 May 2021 11:31:28 AM -0400
Subject: RE: CNN: Why is Anthony Fauci hedging on the origins of the coronavirus?
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>;
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Indeed, a missed opportunity, one of several such, lately….

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
● [b6] [b6] [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
● [b6] [b6] [b6]
● b6

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 11:27 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] gov>; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: CNN: Why is Anthony Fauci hedging on the origins of the coronavirus?

True but I wish Tony had chosen his words more carefully, in particular to reflect the major difference between origin and beginning of transmission among humans.

Its clear, the origin was a bat virus and not an engineered laboratory chimera. He could have reinforced that.

We don't know the transmission pathway. History says it was most likely a spillover through some animal or animals and eventually to humans. But, without knowing what exposure the staff at WIV had to a live virus it is not possible to categorically eliminate the possibility of incidental infection and unwitting exposure of people in the community and then an amplification exposure such as the live markets.

He could have said the accusations and the political heat around the spillover events are counterproductive and inhibiting any sane and considered international attempt to work with the Chinese government to objectively try to learn more in order to identify ways to minimize a similar outbreak in the future.

But he didn't. A missed opportunity.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 12:29 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Rich Roberts < [b6]
Subject: RE: CNN: Why is Anthony Fauci hedging on the origins of the coronavirus?

As always – Chris Cillizza gets it right in the summing up in the last sentence.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 6:57 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Gerald Keusch b6; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: Fwd: CNN: Why is Anthony Fauci hedging on the origins of the coronavirus?

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 24, 2021 at 18:43:55 EDT
Subject: CNN: Why is Anthony Fauci hedging on the origins of the coronavirus?

Why is Anthony Fauci hedging on the origins of the coronavirus?



Analysis by Chris Cillizza, CNN Editor-at-large
Updated 12:29 PM ET, Mon May 24, 2021

p*(CNN)*Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, admitted earlier this month that he is no longer convinced that the Covid-19 pandemic originated naturally.
"I am not convinced about that, I think we should continue to investigate what went on in China until we continue to find out to the best of our ability what happened," Fauci told PolitiFact's managing editor Katie Sanders.
"Certainly, the people who investigated it say it likely was the emergence from an animal reservoir that then infected individuals, but it could have been something else, and we need to find that out. So, you know, that's the reason why I said I'm perfectly in favor of any investigation that looks into the origin of the virus," he continued.

Which is, quite clearly, a change from Fauci's previous view that the disease very likely came about after animal to human transmission. Here's Fauci in an interview with National Geographic last May:
"If you look at the evolution of the virus in bats and what's out there now, [the scientific evidence] is very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated ... Everything about the stepwise evolution over time strongly indicates that [this virus] evolved in nature and then jumped species."

Fauci's dismissal of the idea that the virus originated in a lab in China's Wuhan province followed vague assertions by then-President Donald Trump that he had a "high degree of confidence" that the virus had come from a lab. Pressed for details on that assertion, which ran counter to US intelligence on the virus' origins, Trump offered only this: "I can't tell you that. I'm not allowed to tell you that."

Given that history, conservatives leaped on Fauci's recent hedging as proof positive that Trump was, in fact, right all along. (Worth noting: Fauci made his comments at a fact-checking symposium on May 11, but they were largely ignored at the time. Conservative publications began writing about the remarks over the weekend.)
"Fauci must answer for his role in Wuhan's COVID lab," tweeted former New York Rep. Nan Hayworth (R).

Fauci has become a lightning rod for conservative criticism of how the scientific community has handled the ongoing pandemic. Trump sought to villainize Fauci for his allegedly too-cautious approach to a return to normal from the virus, and the likes of Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene have taken up the cause; last month she tweeted a video of herself

working out that included this text: "This is my Covid protection #MakeAmericaHealthyAgain It's time to #FireFauci"

So, how much "there" is actually *there*? Well, on Sunday, the Wall Street Journal wrote this:
"Three researchers from China's Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care, according to a previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence report that could add weight to growing calls for a fuller probe of whether the Covid-19 virus may have escaped from the laboratory...
"...The disclosure of the number of researchers, the timing of their illnesses and their hospital visits come on the eve of a meeting of the World Health Organization's decision-making body, which is expected to discuss the next phase of an investigation into Covid-19's origins."

It's worth noting here that, according to CNN reporting, US intelligence officials are not certain what the researchers were actually sick with. And Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines told Congress last month that "the intelligence community does not know exactly where, when, or how Covid-19 virus was transmitted initially."
Zhao Lijian, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied the WSJ report and said that the US is "hyping up the lab leak theory."

What's clear is that Fauci is significantly more open to the idea of the lab theory than he was a year ago. While he did leave himself some wiggle room in his statements about the origins last year (he said he was "very, very strongly leaning toward this could not have been artificially or deliberately manipulated,") there was no doubt about where Fauci stood on the question.

The issue, then, is not whether Fauci has moved his position on the possible origins of the virus but rather *why* he is doing so. Fauci defenders will insist that he is simply evolving his view based on information that has come out over the last year. Fauci opponents will insist he knew all along that the lab theory was a possibility and downplayed it solely to make Trump look bad.

In the midst of that debate, it's important to remember that Trump never provided *any* evidence for his vague claims about the origins of the virus. "Something happened," was as far as he would go.
It's also critical to remember that there would be a *major* distinction -- even within the lab theory -- between the virus accidentally getting out and it being purposely released as a sort of weapon. Trump and his allies have long flicked at the latter explanation but without any further explanation or proof.

As CNN wrote on Monday:
"The current intelligence reinforces the belief that the virus most likely originated naturally, from animal-human contact, the sources said. But that does not preclude the possibility that the virus was the result of an accidental leak from the Wuhan Institute, where coronavirus research was being conducted on bats."

Here's the point: The origins of the virus remain not fully known. Tracing that is, at root, a medical and public health question -- not a political one.

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Date:	Sat, 21 May 2022 12:45:25 PM -0400
Sent:	Sat, 21 May 2022 12:44:18 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: HOTEZ PARAGRAPHS Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC:	Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments:	image001.png; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg; image014.jpg

Jeff Sachs' Op Ed is getting severely criticized on Twitter by some well-known virologists. They're commenting on its repeating of now old narratives on the lab leak, but in particular his re-hashing of a previously debunked furin cleavage site hypotheses.

I'll put some comments on the FCS argument into the draft this weekend, but I've also asked one of these virologists if they're willing to check what I write, and maybe even come on the rebuttal if appropriate and they agree with the other comments we'll make.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 3:53 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: 'Jeffrey Sturchio' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6] David Morens' [b6] >; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] Aleksei Chmura <chmura[b6]>; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' <[b6]
Subject: RE: HOTEZ PARAGRAPHS Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

Great – I'll send round a draft over the weekend, and anyone interested can edit and co-author.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 3:48 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 David Morens b6
Keusch, Gerald T b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Subject: Re: HOTEZ PARAGRAPHS Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

OK I drafted a couple of paragraphs for you to use or not or modify, ATTACHED

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:24 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Ja b6
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 ; David Morens b6
Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

I should add that the former Lancet Taskforce (Jerry and I are on it) have a "perspectives" paper to submit Monday for PNAS that reviews all the theories on origins and proposes One Health strategies to deal with future pandemic threats, so we don't need to go too far into the arguments for a natural origin – it will be dealt with in detail in that paper.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Roberts, Rich b6; David Morens b6
Keusch, Gerald T b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Important caveat: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

Sounds good, let me know if and how you would like me to contribute, i could write a section that makes the case for natural origins as the most plausible scenario?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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E-mail: b6
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Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 20, 2022, at 11:45 AM, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:

Note that I should have said on the last email – I'm not necessarily saying we *should* rebut the paper, nor am I expecting that all of you would want to be involved. I respect your views, your moral support, and your wishes to remain above the fray – that has huge benefits also!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 12:40 PM
To: 'Jeffrey Sturchio' b6 ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich' b6 ; 'David Morens' b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T' < b6 'Aleksei Chmura' b6
Subject: Potential response to the PNAS paper - initial thoughts as draft bullets

Importance: High

FYI, Rich will be speaking with Jeff and I sent him some bullets on general reasons why the call for an investigation into US scientists is flawed, inappropriate and based on easily debunked narratives and simple mistakes.

I think we could draft a polite and decent rebuttal based on these. The general thrust I think should be "Why investigating US scientists is the wrong way to identify COVID-19 origins, and prevent future pandemics". This would take the moral high ground in the same way that Peter Hotez has been doing with anti-vaxx sentiment, by talking about how damaging these narratives are on science, and scientists, and how they ultimately undermine public health.

Here is the summary I sent to Rich. I'll continue to read the paper and identify factual inaccuracies we can correct, but maybe one of you (e.g. Peter) could build on this for a rebuttal draft? I have beaucoup references for each point I make, including peer-reviewed science that demolishes the FCS hypothesis, media articles where we refute some of the claims about our openness and data sharing, and reports that link to articles and emails that have been made public via FoIA.

Bullets for a draft rebuttal:
I think we could start on a conciliatory note that most reasonable scientists who believe the lab leak is 'extremely unlikely' (words of the WHO report I was involved with) also believe it is possible. Therefore, calls for further investigations into the origin (including a potential lab leak) are warranted and valid, and come from a basis of scientific inquiry that is beneficial. If a lab leak did happen, we should know, and it would benefit our defenses against future pandemics. However, we should then rapidly pivot to the main issue: that the call for an independent investigation in to US scientists and organizations that the article lays out, and many of the specific statements in it are based on flawed narratives, misunderstandings of the balance of the evidence, mistakes in interpreting the facts behind the work, and simple errors in understanding how science is conducted. Here are some key issues we could raise:

- Understanding COVID origins will require cooperation with China, not investigation of US scientists. A brief look at the history of recent emerging diseases shows that it usually takes many years to identify the reservoir hosts, the amplifier hosts, and the pathway to emergence (e.g. SARS – our paper showing bats carry SARSr-CoVs that can bind to human cells was published 12 years after the outbreak). To do this requires access to sample collection, testing and analysis within the country of origin, and cooperation with the government. Thus, investigating either a natural or a lab origin of COVID will absolutely require working with China.
- Why 'investigating US scientists' is already a witch hunt. The opinion piece calls for bipartisan independent commission that doesn't engage in a 'witch hunt'. However, we are already engaged in a witch hunt. The issue was politicized under Trump, and has led to dozens of letters from Republican members of Congress and the Senate to US scientists demanding documents and testimony, or making accusations about them to the agencies, to the DoJ, White House, and which are inevitably made public without the opportunity for US scientists to respond. Each of the allegations I have seen from Republicans against EHA are easily refuted with documentary evidence, but the volume of them, and their inflammatory nature means that responding to each is either logistically impossible, or simply amplifies these attacks. There have been NO bipartisan requests that I have seen.
- All *relevant* data have already been shared publicly or with the relevant govt. agencies. The article states that " *EHA, UNC, NIH, USAID, and other research partners have failed to disclose their activities to the US scientific community and the US public, instead declaring that they were not involved in any experiments that could have resulted in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2.*" This is simply not true. Each collaborating org has published dozens of papers on this work, in US (not Chinese) journals, uploading data to US (not Chinese) databases like Genbank. All of EHA's papers are available on our website for any member of the public to review, and have been for years. Our staff have given literally hundreds of public lectures on this work. Even after these attacks began, we continued to publish data from our China work, e.g. the 700+ CoV sequences we published and uploaded into Genbank in 2020). Lead scientists from each collaborating organization have shared all unpublished data of relevance (i.e. related to SARSr-CoVs) with the relevant federal agencies including NIH, USAID, DoD, and the intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Sharing of these data has been voluntary, extensive and honorable. This information has not been made public, because it undermines the agencies' ability to conduct their work.
- Demanding release of private emails, files from US scientists does not help build trust in science. Demands on US

scientists to release private emails, unpublished data, drafts of reports and other documents that are normally not made public does nothing to elucidate the origins of COVID. Neither does it help build trust in science at a time when our country is so divided along party lines, and where this issue has been so politicized. With social media algorithms demonstrably amplifying negative narratives, the release of private emails and drafts of later-published reports or papers, are easily used to drive and amplify these negative narratives. We have seen this played out already – with every FoIA release of emails, they are cherry-picked for partial-sentence quotes that are then misquoted, misconstrued, and published as part of (usually) right wing hit-pieces that drive the narrative of an elite group of scientists trying to make money by manipulating viruses or vaccines. They are dangerous and lead to people avoiding vaccines. In the case of EcoHealth, the release of private documents, and the narratives around them have also demonstrably been linked to death threats, white powder letters, break-ins, and hacking attempts that we have been suffering repeatedly for the past 2.5 years.

- Inability to prove a negative: We can't prove that China didn't release a virus accidently or by design – that's the nature of scientific hypothesis testing. If US scientists are forced to release emails or files that these do not show any evidence of a lab leak, they will be followed by allegations that other files are being hidden, and therefore more requests for data dumps. For example, if my emails show that China was not working on a SARS-CoV-2 virus with NIH funding, they will be followed by allegations that we used other private funding to do this work (this has already been alleged), and further requests for private emails. Meanwhile, every email, report or unpublished paper I'm forced to turn over is used over and over again by the political forces to attack science – misquoting, using innuendo and assumptions of motives.
- Furin cleavage site hypothesis is already debunked: Theories that the FCS of SARS-CoV-2 indicates lab manipulation have been widely circulated for 2 years and repeatedly debunked by leading virologists. Firstly, there is nothing novel about a wild-type virus having an FCS – they are found in influenza where they enhance virulence, and in other CoVs, including MERS-CoV, and a Rat coronavirus we discovered in China, in wildlife farms, hotels and train stations and published during 2021. There are now peer-reviewed scientific papers demonstrating that bat-CoVs closely related to SARS-CoV-2 have mutations around the site where the FCS in SARS-CoV-2 is found, that are a few mutations away from a true FCS, indicating that this could have easily evolved in nature. These mutations around the polybasic cleavage site are found in many of the viruses closely related to SARS-CoV-2 from SE Asia, and in CoVs from European bats. Other theories about the FCS being incredibly efficient at binding to human cells, or being enhanced easily in a lab, have been refuted in these and other papers.
- Inappropriate legal basis to investigate scientists when no evidence of a lab leak has been proffered: At the moment, it is a fact that there's simply no verifiable evidence whatsoever that a lab leak occurred leading to COVID-19. We have accusations from Secretary Pompeo that people at WIV were sick from COVID in November 2019, but these are allegedly classified. We have stories about the motivations of Chinese scientists in pulling down a database, not citing papers correctly, or removing genomic data from Genbank, but all of these (and all others) can be easily explained by the normal process of doing science, and each of them has occurred many times before with other labs and other circumstances. Many of us, and many other leading scientists have spent countless hours explaining why the theories around lab leaks do not amount to "evidence of a lab leak". Without this it would be massively inappropriate for federal authorities, including the OIG, the FBI or other agencies to launch official investigations into US scientists or US organizations. That's why they haven't, and that's why the public haven't been informed of any investigations.

In addition to these issues, there are multiple factual inaccuracies in the paper that are extremely important, because some of them are used to provide justification for the lab leak theory. For example, here is an inexhaustive list, just by looking at half of one page of the paper:

- "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the United States and China, *has not been disclosed for independent analysis.*" ***This is not true because details of field and laboratory work have been published repeatedly in scientific papers in the last 15 years, in reports to NIH and USAID, and are laid out in proposals that include pages of details on human subjects, animal use, biosafety and select agent use etc. These are all now public.***
- "Much of the work on SARS-like CoVs performed in Wuhan was part of an active and highly collaborative

US–China scientific research program funded by the US Government (NIH, *Defense Threat Reduction Agency [DTRA]*, and US Agency for International Development [USAID]), coordinated by researchers at EcoHealth Alliance (EHA), but involving researchers at several other US institutions." ***False - DoD DTRA do not and have not funded work in China through EHA. This is an easily verified issue, and is a mistake that causes damage because conspiracy theorists globally are on the lookout for linkages to DoD, which leads to damaging narratives such as the Ukraine Biolabs conspiracy theories. The way to check this is that DTRA are NEVER cited on any publication resulting from the work in China.***

- "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, *including the full array of viruses collected from the field* and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, *remains unknown*." ***Not true. It is a widely circulated myth that our work involved 'collection of hundreds of viruses from bats'. In fact, there were only 3 isolates of SARSr-CoVs from our work. All of these have been published and some shared with labs in the USA where they were used to test Remdesivir, Molnupiravir, COVID-19 vaccine candidates and monoclonal therapies like ADG20. This work has had a direct benefit to public health and has saved lives of US citizens!***
- "These research proposals make clear that the EHA-WIV-UNC collaboration *was involved in the collection of a large number of so-far undocumented SARS-like viruses* and was engaged in their manipulation within biological safety level (BSL)-2 and BSL-3 laboratory facilities, raising concerns that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker (9)" ***Not true – there were only 3 SARS-related CoVs isolated in China. All the rest are genetic sequences of a short read of the RdRp gene, with a few dozen full genomes. It's documented repeatedly in the scientific papers we published in collaboration with WIV, in mainly US journals, all of which are available publicly on PubMED and on our website. All sequences were uploaded into the US Genbank database and have been freely available for other scientists to peruse and use.***

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 8:13 AM
To: 'Jeffrey Sturchio'[b6]'Hotez, Peter Jay'[b6]
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich'[b6]; 'David Morens' <[b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T' <

b6 >; Aleksei Chmura <b6
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

I don't think PNAS would retract – Sachs is well-known, and this paper will be cited, so it's good for business.

We could ask them to correct, but I think Peter's idea is a good one – a response that's carefully worded, that corrects the errors, and explains why the general approach of investigating scientists based on no evidence would be flawed and damaging to medical progress.

I'm sending some bullets to Rich this morning and will share them with you as a start to addressing some of the errors.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Jeffrey Sturchio <b6>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 7:15 AM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 David Morens b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Peter: I think a response along the lines you suggest would be a good idea. Sachs's piece is so egregious it shouldn't be allowed to stand. Perhaps even better would be a sharp letter to the editor(s) of PNAS explaining why a retraction is necessary. As you and Peter D point out, his argument is based on a number of readily refuted erroneous assertions – it's surprising that PNAS would have published it in the first place.

As ever,
Jeff

From: Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 7:09 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Roberts, Rich <b6>; David Morens <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Jeffrey Sturchio <b6> Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: Re: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Potentially we could write a response or a commentary piece in PNAS refuting the nonsense, one that begins with the talking points in my Twitter thread.

There is also suggestion from a Nature article that even SARS 1 exhibited some degree of furin cleavage but that with SARS 2 it accelerated and of course evolved even further with alpha then delta to make it more transmissible.

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-02039-y

I could have added that as well. The point is it's not an all or none phenomenon as the Sachs article suggests. He wrote an awful paper that needs to be retracted.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
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iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 9:13 PM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

I appreciate that Rich.

I understand his motivations – he believes that all data should be put forward because the pandemic makes this an emergency and unprecedented global concern. However, there is no getting away from the fact that there's simply no evidence whatsoever for a lab leak, so no matter how much data or emails I and other labs are forced to turn over, it will never disprove the negative. We can't prove that China didn't release a virus accidently or by design – that's the nature of scientific hypothesis testing. Meanwhile, every email, report or unpublished paper I'm forced to turn over is used over and over again by the political forces to attack science – misquoting, using innuendo and assumptions of motives. It's a naïve argument from Jeff Sachs at best, and one based on a series of easily refutable errors in black and white, in his paper.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 8:34 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Jeffrey Sturchio < b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

Peter:

Thanks. I intend to take this up with Jeff.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 6:41 PM
To: Roberts, Rich < b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay < b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Jeffrey Sturchio < b6 >; Aleksei Chmura < b6 g >
Subject: Peter Hotez' tweet and Jamie Metzl's

EXTERNAL SENDER

This might work to see the tweet – it won't take you to Twitter – it's on a webpage now

https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1527398466305105921.html

and here's Jamie Metzl's commentary – says it's a 'critically important new opinion piece'!!

https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1527404374804287495.html

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:48 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

Peter:

I don't do Twitter. Can someone send me Peter's piece please?

Thanks

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:41 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6; David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just read it now Peter – it's already getting amplified. Extremely glad you did this.

The response from virologists on the furin cleavage site garbage in his PNAS piece will be pretty damning…it's been discussed, debated and debunked for 2 years now!

Meanwhile, the witch hunt continues…

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6; David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 >; Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

I just put out a thread on Twitter to point out why Jeff's article does not hold much water even on scientific grounds

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

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On May 19, 2022, at 4:27 PM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

What's really irksome is that this article in PNAS is full of errors and misunderstandings.

I haven't read the whole thing, but just about every paragraph contains an erroneous assumption that could easily be refuted, e.g.:

- "EHA, UNC, NIH, USAID, and other research partners have failed to disclose their activities to the US scientific community and the US public, instead declaring that they were not involved in any experiments that could have resulted in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2." BS – we published dozens of papers on our work (they're on our website!) and sent reports in to NIH each year. We also gave hundreds of public lectures on this and spoke with the intelligence agencies about it.

  "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the United States and China, has not been disclosed for independent analysis." BS – that's what happens when you publish peer-reviewed papers. Maybe Sachs has forgotten how that works!

  "Much of the work on SARS-like CoVs performed in Wuhan was part of an active and highly collaborative US–China scientific research program funded by the US Government (NIH, Defense Threat Reduction Agency [DTRA], and US Agency for International Development [USAID]), coordinated by researchers at EcoHealth Alliance (EHA), but involving researchers at several other US institutions." Wrong again – DoD DTRA do not and have not funded work in China, let alone the Wuhan lab.

  "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, including the full array of viruses collected from the field and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, remains

unknown." BS – all 'viruses' collected from the field have been published already.

"These research proposals make clear that the EHA-WIV-UNC collaboration was involved in the collection of a large number of so-far undocumented SARS-like viruses and was engaged in their manipulation within biological safety level (BSL)-2 and BSL-3 laboratory facilities, raising concerns that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker (9)" BS – there were only 3 SARS-related CoVs isolated in China. All the rest are simply genetic sequences of a short read of the RdRp gene, with a few dozen full genomes. It's all in the scientific papers that Sachs hasn't bothered to read.

And so on, and so forth.

Honestly, it would take me about a day to go through this paper and rebut every single error and misconception, but who's got time for that!

By the way – all of these questions have been asked repeatedly on Twitter, by journalists, by the FBI and CIA, and by hundreds of people who've spoken with me over the last 2 years. I've answered them all, now I have to do it all again, and again, and again. Problem I see here is that he just doesn't believe me, so the only option is for my laptop to be downloaded in front of a Great Inquisition, led by an eminent person such as…dare I say…Professor Sachs himself.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 4:58 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6; David Morens b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Jeffrey Sturchio b6; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article

How could PNAS publish this crap?

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
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iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 3:54 PM, Roberts, Rich b6 wrote:

Peter:

As you say more nonsense. My opinion of Sachs is waning rapidly.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
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email b6

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6 David Morens b6
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 ; Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Jeff Sachs causing trouble via a PNAS article
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Looks like Sachs has been taken down yet another rabbit hole by a scientist at Columbia (Harrison) who doesn't work in the field, and is just plain wrong. It's the old Furin cleavage site hypothesis again, without any new data or evidence. Of course, that's their point – the lack of evidence means we're all hiding information and need to be hung, drawn and quartered.

They've published an opinion piece in PNAS (attached) and there's this article in 'The Intercept'. Ebright is quoted, of course!

https://theintercept.com/2022/05/19/covid- lab-leak-evidence-jeffrey-sachs/

All this will be put straight into the subpoena letters that we've been told by Democrat staffers to expect to arrive in Jan/Feb 2023 when the Republicans take over the house (their words, not mine).

Blue/Bloomberg via Getty Images

JEFFREY SACHS PRESENTS EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE LAB ORIGIN OF COVID-19

An article in the Proceedings of the National Academy

of Sciences calls for an independent investigation of information held by U.S.-based institutions that could shed light on the origins of Covid.



Sharon Lerner
May 19 2022, 4:00 p.m.

IN AN ARTICLE published Thursday, economist Jeffrey Sachs called for an independent investigation of information held by U.S.-based institutions that could shed light on the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic. Writing in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Sachs and his co-author, Neil Harrison, a Columbia University professor of molecular pharmacology and therapeutics, said that federal agencies and universities possess evidence that has not been adequately reviewed, including virus databases, biological samples, viral sequences, email communications, and laboratory notebooks. Sachs and Harrison also highlighted a tantalizing scientific detail that may be an indication that SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes Covid-19, originated in a laboratory: a sequence of eight amino acids on a critical part of the virus's spike protein that is identical to an amino acid sequence found in cells that line human airways.

Sachs and Harrison are hardly the first to suggest that SARS-CoV-2 might have been created in a lab. Since its genetic sequence was first published in February 2020, scientists have puzzled over the furin cleavage site, an area on the virus's spike that allows it to be broken apart by a protein on the membrane of human cells and makes the coronavirus particularly dangerous to people. Once split, the virus releases its genetic material into the cell and reproduces. While all viruses work by attaching themselves to cells, breaking apart, and releasing their genetic material, SARS-CoV-2 is the only one of its class, sarbecoviruses, to use this particular mechanism to do so.

As with past discussion of a possible lab origin of SARS-CoV-2, this latest theory has already been met with considerable pushback. Even some scientists who are open to the idea that a lab accident could have sparked the pandemic remain unconvinced by the particular trail of evidence laid out by Sachs and Harrison.

The journal article offers a scientific road map for how this unusual sequence of amino acids could have made its way into the furin cleavage site, or FCS, of the virus. Sachs and Harrison acknowledge that the sequence could have arisen naturally. But they also lay out another possibility: that scientists might have purposefully inserted this particular string of amino acids into a bat coronavirus in the course of their work. They focus particularly on scientists who submitted an unfunded grant proposal to a division of the Defense Department called the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, laying out plans to insert a furin cleavage site into a bat coronavirus.

"We do not know whether the insertion of the FCS was the result of natural evolution — perhaps via a recombination event in an intermediate mammal or a human — or was the result of a deliberate introduction of the FCS into a SARS-like virus as part of a laboratory experiment," Sachs and Harrison write. "We do know that the insertion of such FCS sequences into SARS-like viruses was a specific goal of work proposed by the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership within a 2018 grant proposal ("DEFUSE") that was submitted to the US Defense Advanced Research Projects (DARPA)."

EHA is a reference to EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit research group based in New York City that has received more than $118 million in grants and contracts from federal agencies. WIV, or the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is a Chinese research organization that collaborated with EcoHealth Alliance in the past and was listed as a subcontractor on the DARPA grant. UNC is mentioned because Ralph Baric, a molecular biologist at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, was to have conducted part of the work pitched to DARPA. The grant proposal touted Baric's "two-decade track record of reverse engineering [coronavirus] and other virus spike proteins."

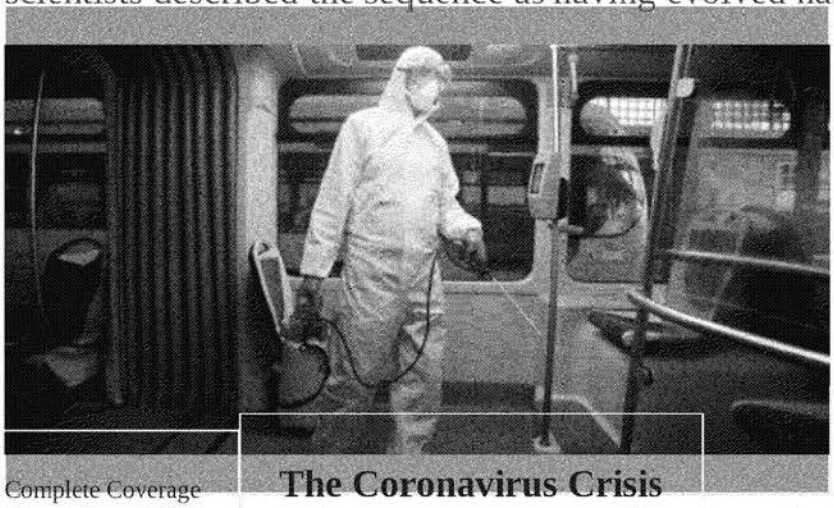
The intent of the DARPA proposal was to prevent emerging pathogenic threats, but the work, if conducted, could have created a novel virus capable of infecting humans. "We will introduce appropriate human-specific cleavage sites and evaluate growth potential in [a type of mammalian cell commonly used in microbiology] and [human airway epithelial cell] cultures," the proposal stated.

Several scientists interviewed about the DARPA proposal in September told The Intercept that scientists often begin research before seeking funding and thus that some of the experiments described in the proposal could have already been completed. But when asked about that possibility in an interview, Peter Daszak, the president of EcoHealth Alliance, rejected it: "The DARPA proposal was not funded. Therefore, the work was not done. Simple."

A Rational Choice

As Sachs and Harrison note, the part of a protein on the cell membrane that shares its amino acid sequence with the bat coronavirus is critical for lung function. Known as an epithelial sodium channel-alpha, or ENaC-alpha, it is found in human airway cells, as well as in human kidneys and colons. Intriguingly, like SARS-CoV-2, ENaC-alpha, which facilitates the absorption of fluid in cells, is also activated by the unusual furin cleavage site. Harrison, a physiologist affiliated with Columbia's Department of Molecular Pharmacology and Therapeutics, studies ion channels, the larger category to which ENaC-alpha belongs.

Other scientists have already pointed out the match between the amino acid series in the furin cleavage site of SARS-CoV-2 and the ENaC-alpha found in human airways. In 2020, a team from the biomedical company Nference suggested that the overlap between the virus and the sequence found in human lungs is part of the reason that Covid-19 is so damaging to the respiratory system. Those scientists described the sequence as having evolved naturally.



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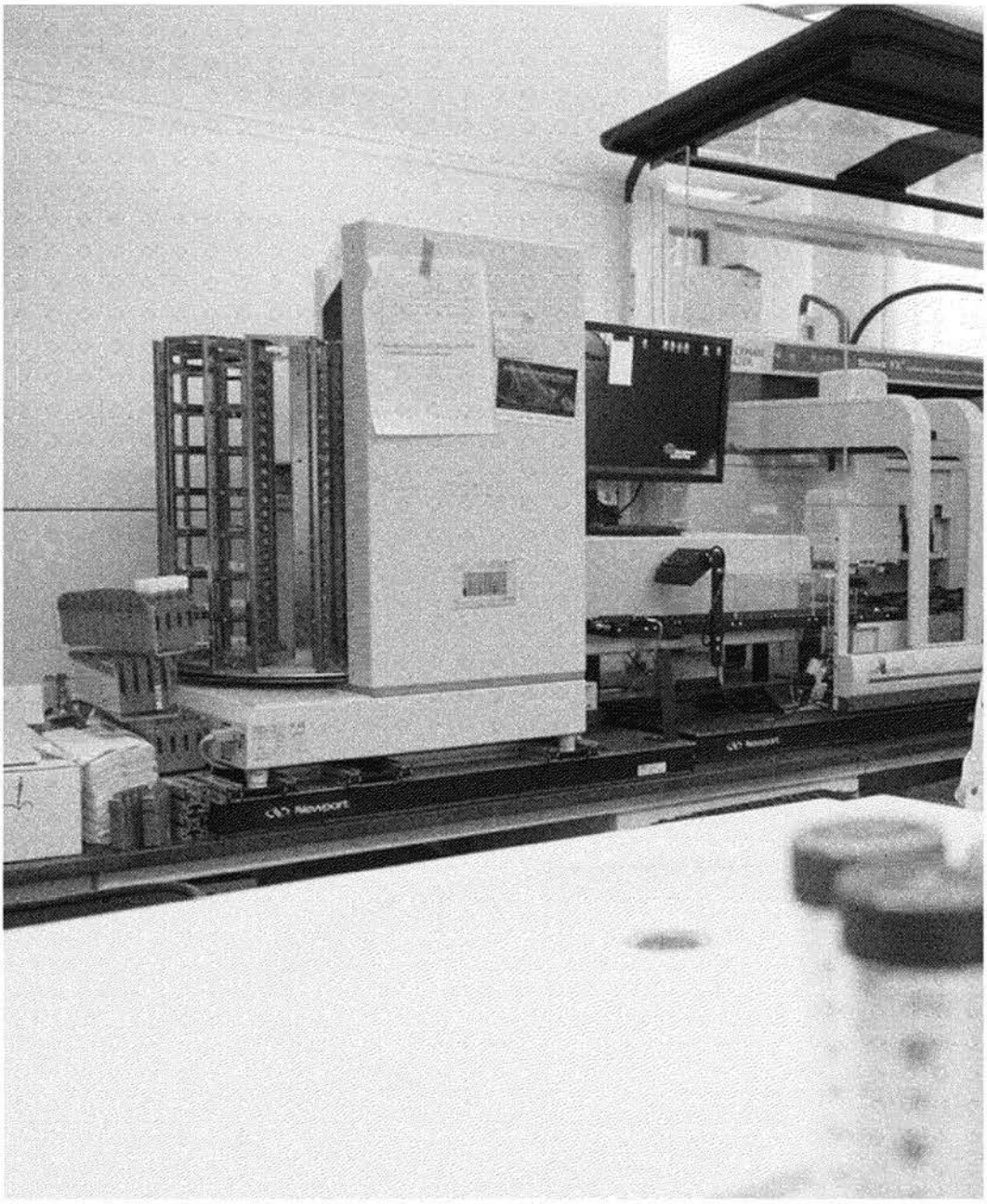
Sachs and Harrison, in contrast, suggest that researchers may have

inserted the string of amino acids into a bat coronavirus precisely because of its known importance to lung function. "For a research team assessing the pandemic potential of SARS-related coronaviruses, the FCS of human ENaC — an FCS known to be efficiently cleaved by host furin present in the target location (epithelial cells) of an important target organ (lung), of the target organism (human) — might be a rational, if not obvious, choice of FCS to introduce into a virus in order to alter its infectivity, in line with other work performed previously," they write.

Such a choice, they point out, would have been in keeping with another viral research project on which EcoHealth Alliance, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and UNC's Baric collaborated: a 2014 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases that involved increasing the transmissibility and pathogenicity of bat coronaviruses.



Ralph Baric, a researcher at the University of North Carolina's Gillings School of Global Public Health, in Chapel Hill, N.C., on Feb. 14, 2020.

Photo: Christopher Janaro/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Growing List of Coincidences

The intriguing theory of viral engineering hinges on two observations: that the amino acid sequences match and that experts in both the ENaC-alpha furin cleavage site and the insertion of genetic

sequences into bat coronaviruses happen to work at the same academic institution: the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Baric, whose work aims to prevent and create treatments for viral outbreaks, has previously inserted segments of DNA and RNA into viruses and created an infectious clone of SARS using his own patented "No See'm" method of inserting genetic materials without a trace. He has also collaborated on coronavirus research with scientists from a center for lung studies at UNC-Chapel Hill who are knowledgeable about ENaC-alpha. In one 2016 study, the scientists created a new virus using the spike of a bat coronavirus that had been isolated and characterized by the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The experiment found that the new virus "replicated efficiently" in human airway cells that were cultured in a lab.

In another paper, published a year earlier, Baric, along with the Wuhan Institute of Virology's Shi Zhengli and a lung expert UNC-Chapel Hill's lung institute, described creating a hybrid virus using a SARS-like virus from a bat and a "mouse-adapted" coronavirus. The new virus caused mice to get sicker than those exposed to the original virus. The goal of these experiments was to prepare for the possibility that a virus might jump naturally from animals to humans, as SARS had in 2003. But even before the pandemic, the experiment drew criticism from other scientists, who were concerned because the researchers had created a virus that was able to spread in humans.

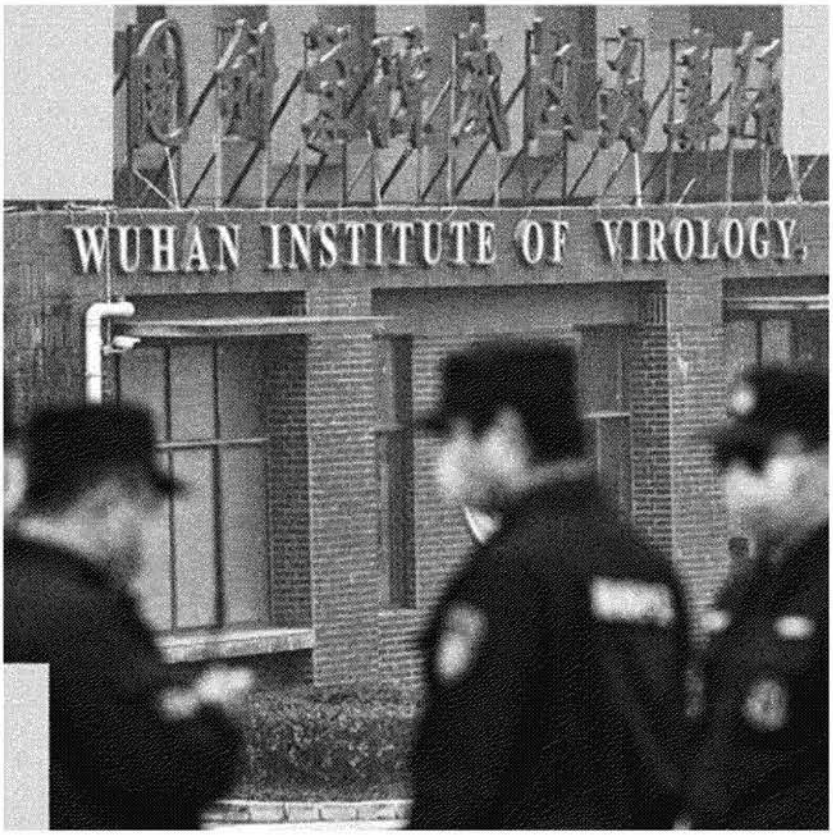
Sachs and Harrison note that the scientists who co-authored the DARPA grant proposal would have been aware of research on coronavirus furin cleavage sites, including one 2006 experiment in which a furin cleavage site was inserted into a coronavirus. "The research team would also have some familiarity with the FCS sequence and the FCS-dependent activation mechanism of human ENaC, which was extensively characterized at UNC," they write.

"The list of coincidences is getting verrrrrrrrrry long."

Still, both the overlap in the amino acid sequence and the fact that experts in the furin cleavage site of the ENaC-alpha and insertion of genetic material into bat coronaviruses work at the same university could be coincidental, as Harrison and Sachs acknowledge. Some virologists, though, say that the coincidence strains credulity.

"Could be," Richard Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University, wrote in an email to The Intercept when asked about the possibility that these things are both chance occurrences. "But the list of coincidences is getting verrrrrrrrrry long."

Ebright, a vocal proponent of the lab-leak theory whom Harrison and Sachs thank "for helpful commentary on the manuscript," spelled out some of the other Covid coincidences that he considers questionable, including its initial outbreak in a city that, well before 2019, had already been pegged as a biosafety risk. Ebright also noted Wuhan's 1,000-mile distance from the nearest wild bats that carry the type of SARS-related coronaviruses that caused the pandemic. And he pointed to the particular coding of the amino acids in the furin cleavage site of SARS-CoV2.



Related

The Lab-Leak Theory Is Looking Stronger by the Day. Here's What We Know.

"The sequence encoding the FCS of the pandemic virus contained two consecutive CGG arginine codons," Ebright explained in his email. (A codon, or a combination of three nucleotides, supplies the genetic code for a single amino acid, though most amino acids can be

represented by multiple different codons. Each nucleotide is represented by a letter — for RNA, either A, C, U, or G.) "This codon usage is unusual for a natural bat SARS-related coronaviruses (for which fewer than 1 in 30 arginine codons are CGG) but is optimal for humans (for which most arginine codons are CGG codons)."

Still, Ebright said that at first he didn't see the identical amino acid sequences as particularly suspicious. "I had known for more than a year that there was a perfect match to an eight-amino acid sequence present in human ENaC. What I had not known was that the sequence was known to be a functional furin cleavage site and that it was a sequence extensively studied at UNC," he said. "The crucial point that the ENaC sequence was a known functional site, not just that there happens to be a match to a protein that happens to be in humans. … That suddenly turned it from what I thought to be largely irrelevant to being a logical and obvious choice to proceed."

Ralph Baric and the University of North Carolina did not immediately respond to requests for comment.



The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, on June 24, 2021.

Photo: Kyodo via AP Images

Name Calling

Other scientists dismiss the idea that the ENaC sequence might have been purposefully inserted into a coronavirus. Scientists who are already convinced that the new coronavirus emerged naturally are unlikely to be persuaded by Sachs and Harrison's article, which appears in the opinion section of the esteemed journal. Over the past year, many scientists involved in the debate over the origins of the

pandemic have settled into an increasingly acrimonious, coarse, and unyielding opposition.

Some proponents of the natural origin theory became particularly dismissive of those open to the possibility of a lab leak after the February release of two pre-print studies mapping the early spread of the virus at the Huanan market in Wuhan. Angela Rasmussen, one of a team of virologists who worked on the project, described it on Twitter as "dispositive evidence of a zoonotic origin" that will "drive those with personal interest in the lab leak hypothesis out of their goddam minds." In another tweet, Rasmussen referred to proponents of the lab-leak theory as a "pack of ghouls, who through gullibility, stupidity, & conspiracist thinking have decided this is their thing despite zero expertise."

Although the pre-prints had not been peer-reviewed and may have simply illustrated the spread of the virus rather than its original outbreak, the New York Times ran a front-page story about them that quoted an epidemiologist as saying that the origins debate "has been settled with a very high degree of evidence." The story, which was announced by a push notification from the paper, also noted a lack of direct evidence for a lab leak.

Meanwhile, Kristian Andersen, another co-author of the pre-prints and a virologist at the well-regarded Scripps Research Institute, used the "poop" emoji to criticize a deeply researched article by Katherine Eban about EcoHealth Alliance. On Twitter, Andersen tarred Eban, New York Times columnist Zeynep Tufekci, and others reporting on biosafety issues that could have led to the release of SARS-CoV-2 as "deep in conspiracy theories" and on the other side of "a clear split" from journalists who dismiss the possibility of a lab origin, whom Andersen referred to as "science-based."

Even some scientists who have been vocal about the possibility that the pandemic may have been sparked by research have expressed skepticism about the theory suggested by Harrison and Sachs. "I'm sure that these authors believe in their own hypothesis and arguments, but to me, it's not one that is particularly convincing," said Alina Chan, a scientist who laid out a number of possible routes for how the coronavirus might have emerged through research-related incidents in her recent book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19."

“There’s no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses.”

While she is open to the possibility that the furin cleavage site might have been purposefully inserted into the coronavirus, Chan said there was no reason to think that researchers would mine humans for such material. “These scientists literally had access to hundreds of SARS-like viruses and sequences,” said Chan, referring to the vast collection of coronaviruses from bats and other animals that researchers amassed at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. “There’s no need for them to go hunting inside the human protein catalogue to look for cleavage sites to put into viruses.”

Jack Nunberg, a virologist at the University of Montana, was also not immediately persuaded by the theory of engineering suggested by Sachs and Harrison. “It’s possible,” Nunberg said of the idea that the ENaC segment was inserted into a bat coronavirus as part of research designed to gauge the pandemic potential of a virus. “But I don’t find their evidence on ENaC compelling because furin cleavage sites have a lot of common amino acids, and therefore it may just have happened by chance.”

Others say that the article adds noteworthy information to the public conversation about the origins of the pandemic. “The defenders of the natural origin indicate that the virus on which this type of experiment could have been done — the backbone — has never been published and that specialists in the furin cleavage sites would have chosen a more commonly used furin cleavage site like RARR rather than PRRAR. The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article contradicts this argument and indicates that specialists knew that the RRAR’SVAS site was efficiently cleaved by furin,” Etienne Decroly, director of virology research at the Aix-Marseille Université in France, wrote in an email to The Intercept.

Decroly added, “It is impossible to decide on the basis of the information currently available and it is urgent that the WHO Special Advisory Group for the Origins of Novel Pathogens investigate this question.”

On the suggestion of an investigation, Nunberg is in agreement. "You can't argue with that," he told The Intercept. "Who's going to argue for burying one's head in the sand?"

For their part, Sachs and Harrison emphasize that they're not saying laboratory manipulation was involved in the emergence of the pandemic virus, only "that it could have been." They also give a nod to other possibilities, including that an airborne virus might have infected a laboratory worker. Rather than argue that any of these conceivable scenarios happened, they present the clues of the matching amino acid sequences to argue for an independent and transparent scientific investigation of the U.S.-based evidence related to the origins of the virus.

Among the institutions that Sachs and Harrison list as possibly having "knowledge of the detailed activities that were underway in Wuhan and in the United States" are the National Institutes of Health; the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which has provided grant funding to EcoHealth Alliance; the Department of Homeland Security; DARPA; the U.S. Agency for International Development, which funded the $200 million PREDICT program that catalogued potential pandemic viruses; and the University of California, Davis, which participated in that program.

The authors suggest that EcoHealth Alliance and UNC may have particularly important untapped resources. "The exact details of the fieldwork and laboratory work of the EHA-WIV-UNC partnership, and the engagement of other institutions in the US and China, has not been disclosed for independent analysis," they write. "The precise nature of the experiments that were conducted, including the full array of viruses collected from the field and the subsequent sequencing and manipulation of those viruses, remains unknown."



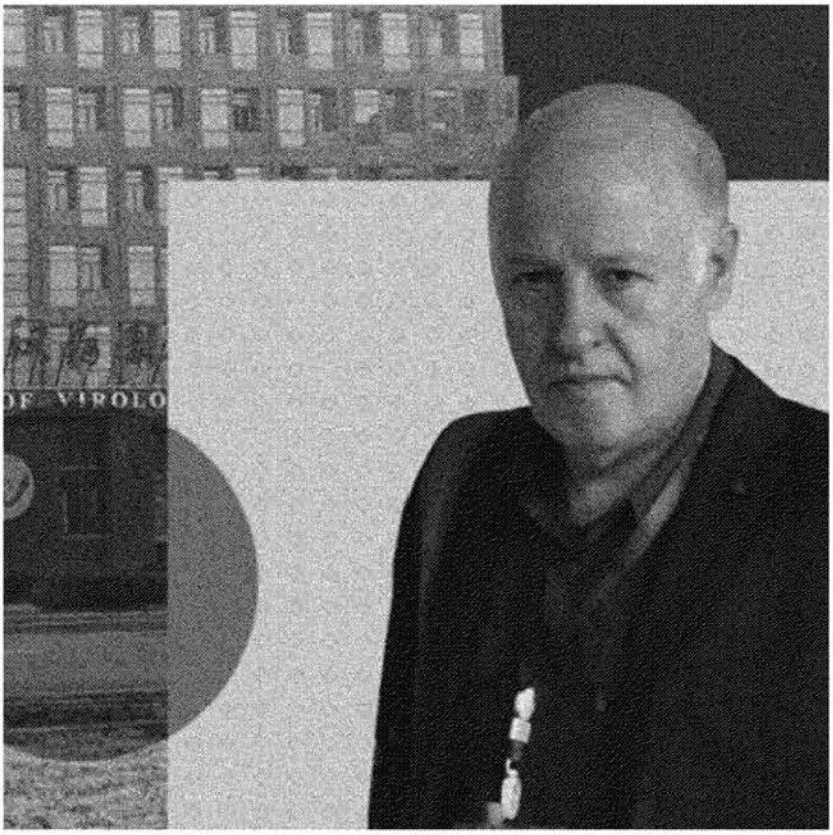
Peter Daszak, one of the members of the World Health Organization team investigating the origins of the Covid-19, on a balcony at a hotel in Wuhan, China, on Feb. 6, 2021.

Photo: Hector Retamal/AFP via Getty Images

A Reversal

The publication in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences marks a reversal of sorts for Sachs, the chair of the Lancet Covid-19 Commission who, in November 2020, appointed Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, to lead a task force to investigate the origins of the pandemic. Earlier that year,

Daszak had signed on to a public statement published in The Lancet on behalf of scientists who said they "condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin."



Related

Peter Daszak Answers Critics and Defends Coronavirus Research

Yet that early certainty about the pandemic's origins — and the sense of shared civic responsibility among members of the Lancet task force — soon disintegrated. In February 2021, emails revealed that Daszak coordinated the public statement in The Lancet tamping down suspicions of a lab leak. And by June 2021, Sachs was expressing his openness to the possibility of a lab origin, writing that NIH-funded research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology "deserves scrutiny under the hypothesis of a laboratory-related release of the virus." Three months later, he disbanded the task force that had been organized to "carefully scrutinize the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus" in the hopes of preventing future disease outbreaks, explaining that he had concerns that several members of the commission had conflicts of interest because of their ties to EcoHealth Alliance.

After leading the mainstream scientific inquiry into the origins of the

pandemic, Sachs is now skewering it. "A steady trickle of disquieting information has cast a darkening cloud over the agency," he and Harrison write of the NIH, going on to accuse the entire federal government of not doing enough to explore the possible role of its grantees in the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 and investigate "overlooked details" such as the matching amino acid sequences.

Noting that the NIH has insisted that "the pandemic virus could not have resulted from the work sponsored by" the agency, Sachs and Harrison write that "blanket denials from the NIH are no longer good enough."

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: b6
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 8:15 PM
To: David Morens b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Re: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

It's all so convoluted I can even understand it. We'll see if they pick Mary Klotman from Duke to be next NIH Director. I know her quite well, her husband is Baylor

President and my boss.

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

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Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On May 11, 2022, at 6:39 PM, David Morens b6 wrote:

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attachments you know are safe.

Yes, i know. I fail to understand why our nih leaders keep forming circular firing squads. one thing is for sure: in recent times nih has suffered abysmal leadership

It wasn't like that in the Varmus years. He didn't suffer any political fools no matter how high up, and was comfortable giving them all a big middle finger.
d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 11, 2022, at 18:37, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
>
> This is an utterly ridiculous set of BS. Jesse Bloom is the person driving it – he buys into the lab leak theory and found that some folks from WIV uploaded partial genomes early on, then added a bunch of more complete ones, and asked for the partial sequences to be removed. Absolutely normal, but he's trying to turn it into a 'mystery'.
>
> Of course, NIH makes it all worse by not releasing emails, redacting critical parts of them, and failing to explain why they follow the wishes of the submitter re. Genbank. It's perfectly logical really – if NIH now starts releasing sequences you as a submitter asked them to remove for whatever reason, submitters will think twice about using Genbank. We already have China working with its own database and all this BS will make them twice-shy about submitting.
>
> Even worse, Tabak now says that 'don't worry, we still have the data on back up tapes' so everyone now knows that NIH keeps the stuff you thought they agreed to delete, and no doubt has already handed it over to the FBI and the CIA.
>
> It's a conspiracy, wrapped within an enigma, encapsulating a riddle….
>
> PS – heres a cracker of an email from an NIH press office (?) person at O/D ripping into a journalist (Carl Zimmer) who wanted information on the 'missing' china sequences. Now it turns out that US submitters also deleted early COVID genomes…even more reason for the public to not trust scientists…:

From: Myles, Renate (NIH/OD
To: Carl Zimmer; Wojtowicz
Cc: Fine, Amanda (NIH/OD
Subject: RE: FW: Query from Ne
Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2

Hi Carl:

I saw your story. Just noting that it was withdrawn. Also, it didn't disa I know that Dr. Bloom is making th reporters not hype language.

Also, just to clarify, NLM conducte packages were withdrawn upon re included one requested by the sub the U.S.

Thanks,
Renate

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 5:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T < b6 >; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 >; peter hotez b6 >; Roberts, Rich <
Subject: Fwd: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

David M. Morens, MD
b6
b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** b6
Date: Wed, May 11, 2022 at 4:54 PM
Subject: FW: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists
To: David Morens b6

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[redacted] b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 4:12 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov >; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov >; NIAID OD AM < NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov >
Subject: NY Post: NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

NIH director confirms agency hid early COVID genes at request of Chinese scientists

By
Steven Nelson
May 11, 2022 3:47pm



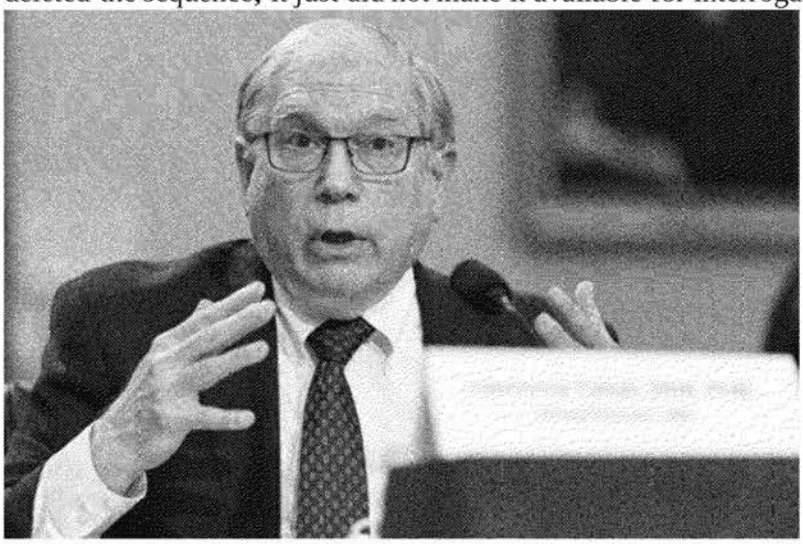
National Institutes of Health acting director Lawrence Tabak confirmed to lawmakers Wednesday that US health officials concealed early genomic sequences of COVID-19 at the request of Chinese scientists — but insisted the data remains on file.

Tabak told a House Appropriations subcommittee that the NIH "eliminated from public view" the data from the pandemic epicenter in Wuhan, China, before adding that researchers can still access it via an archaic "tape drive."

Vanity Fair recently reported that the information was hidden in response to a request from Chinese scientists, despite potentially resolving whether the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology or passed naturally from animals to humans.

Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Wash.) asked Tabek to explain why US officials would comply with such a request.

"There's no question that the communication that we had about the sequence archive — Sequence Read Archive — could have been improved. I freely admit that," Tabek said. "If I may, the archive never deleted the sequence, it just did not make it available for interrogation."



Lawrence Tabak, acting director of the National Institutes of Health, testifies on May 11. Jacquelyn Martin/AP

"So wait, you have the information still?" Beutler followed up.

"We have the information … Anybody who submits to the Sequence Read Archive is allowed to ask for it to be removed," Tabak explained. "And that investigator did do that. But we never erase it."

"So you don't have the information anymore?" Beutler asked.

"We do. We never erase the information. We keep it," Tabak clarified.

"So they were able to withdraw public viewing of it?" the congresswoman followed up.

"That's correct," he said.

"OK, so researchers can apply to the NIH and get the information from you?" Beutler asked.

"In the way that it was originally eliminated from public view, it was withdrawn, and that's the most difficult for people to access," Tabak replied. "The error that was made, and we found this out after a review of all of our processes, was it should have been suppressed. The distinction being that if it's withdrawn, it is kept archivally on a tape drive — old technology, but that's how it's done. But when it is withdrawn, it can still be accessed by accession number, and so researchers are able to access that information."



Security personnel keep watch outside Wuhan Institute of Virology during the visit by the World Health Organization on Feb. 3, 2021. Thomas Peter/REUTERS

"So the information is still there?" Beutler summed up.

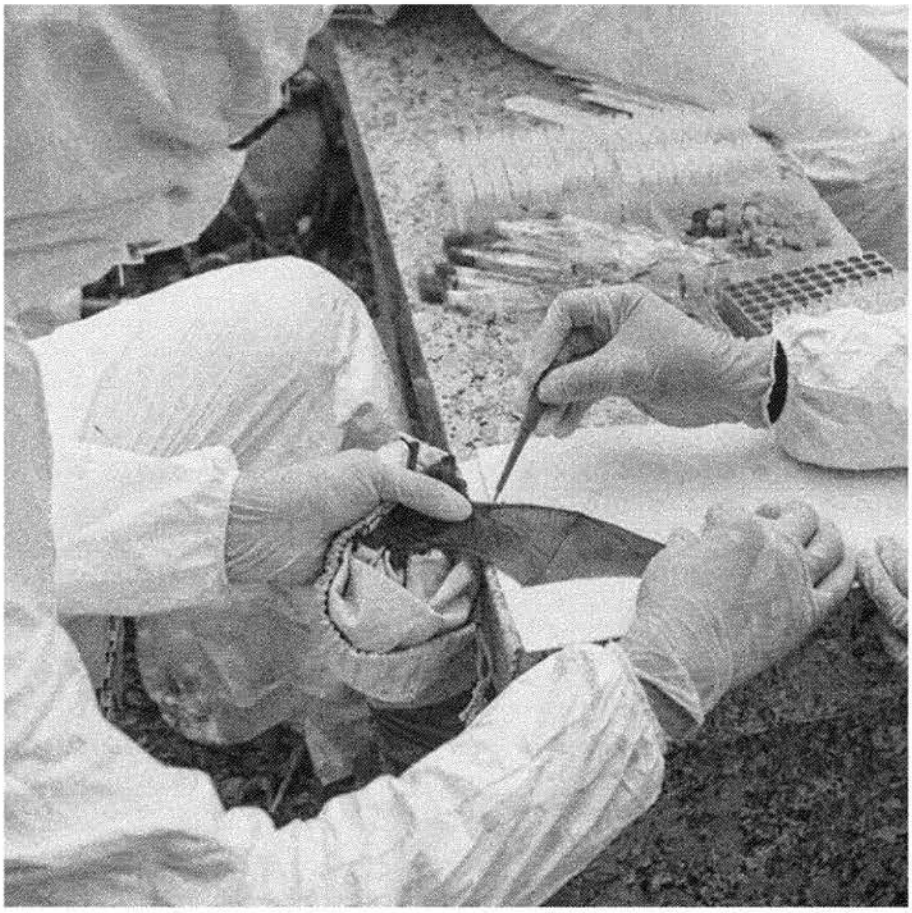
"That's correct. The information was never lost," Tabak repeated.

In a March 31 article, Vanity Fair reported that evolutionary biologist Jesse Bloom discovered last year that early COVID-19 sequences had disappeared from a federally run data repository.

When Bloom raised the issue, he was reportedly ganged up on by a group of researchers assembled by then-NIH Director Francis Collins and infectious disease institute head Dr. Anthony Fauci.

Bloom shared a draft academic paper with Collins and Fauci, who allegedly objected on a June 2021 Zoom video conference to Bloom's description of Chinese scientists "surreptitiously" removing the sequences. Fauci said the word was "loaded" and implied a coverup, the report said.

Evolutionary biologist Kristian Andersen, who was selected to participate on the call by Collins, allegedly told Bloom that the Wuhan team had a right to claw back early pandemic information and that it was unethical for Bloom to question it.



Tabak noted that while the request for information to be removed was honored, it was not erased fully.ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE

Andersen allegedly went so far as to offer to delete Bloom's article from a "preprint" server "in a way that would leave no record that this had been done."

China's government has refused to cooperate with an international investigation of the origins of the pandemic. The COVID-19 virus has killed about 1 million Americans since March 2020 and caused massive social, economic and educational disruptions.

The US intelligence community said in an August report that it's possible the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, calling the theory one of two "plausible" explanations along with natural transmission from animals.



Lawrence Tabak confirmed Wednesday that early genomic sequences of COVID-19 were concealed at the request of Chinese specialists.
Jacquelyn Martin/AP

President Biden rarely speaks publicly about wanting China to be transparent about the origins of the pandemic. Former President Donald Trump, by contrast, has demanded that China pay $10 trillion in reparations.

The Biden administration is considering undoing some of Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods "separately" from US pressure for coronavirus transparency, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told The Post on Monday.

Documents published in September by The Intercept revealed that US health officials indirectly funded so-called "gain of function" research at the Wuhan lab — including the modification three bat coronaviruses distinct from COVID-19 and the discovery that they became much more infectious among "humanized" mice when human-type receptors were added to them.

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Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2021 11:23:08 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 15 Jun 2021 11:22:53 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Could we set up a zoom call together?
From: Alison Andre [b6] >
To: David Morens [b6]

Dear David,

Both Peter D and Peter H are available next week on:

Monday June 21 at 5:00pm ET
Tuesday June 22 at 5:00pm ET
Wednesday June 23 at 11:00am ET

Would any of these options work for you? I am following up with the rest of the group now.

Many thanks,
Alison

On Tue, Jun 15, 2021 at 10:18 AM David Morens [b6] > wrote:
Peter, great, and count me in. My schedule isn't too bad in the next couple weeks
d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Jun 15, 2021, at 09:42, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> Dear Robert, Jerry, David, and Peter
>
> I had a good conversation with Peter Hotez at the end of last week – Peter's running a taskforce on the Lancet COVID-19 Commission, and has been following the media frenzy around the COVID origins with a keen eye. As you know, he's been talking publicly about the anti-vaccine movement for a long time, and sees strong parallels between the politically motivated anti-vaxxer movement, and the politically motivated COVID origins conspiracies. He's also dealing with intense harassment similar to the attacks I've been having recently.
>
> Peter and I would really appreciate an opportunity to all meet by Zoom to talk about what we can do together (and separately) to change the narrative and deal with the growing anti-science agenda. Peter is, like many of us, disappointed by the risk-averse nature of the academies (he's a NAM member) and many of the professional societies. He's also well aware of media messaging and how that can be used – he's a regular contributor to CNN and other TV networks. By the way, Peter is one of the inaugural Fellows of the ASTMH, as well as a past member of the NIH Council of Councils.

I've cc'd Alison and Aleksei who can help set up a time for a 1 hour zoom call either later this week or next week. I hope you'll be able to join and really appreciate your efforts.

By the way – Rich – thanks for putting me in touch with Ellie Dehoney at Research!America – she is on the case, albeit she's well aware of the political constraints and the timing right now.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Thu, 8 Jul 2021 1:18:28 PM -0400
Subject: RE: NAS workshop: Potential Benefits of Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3jY9zjM
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Keusch, Jerry b6
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Great to see this – I haven't had chance to read up on the pro-GoF arguments, and this is a good start…

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:04 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6 b6
Subject: FW: NAS workshop: Potential Benefits of Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3jY9zjM

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:12 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: NAS workshop: Potential Benefits of Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3jY9zjM

Potential Benefits of Gain-of-Function Research

The benefits that have resulted from the billions of dollars invested in biomedical research over the past several decades are seldom disputed. Biomedical research has made enormous contributions to the understanding of disease and the development of cures through the creation of countless innovations for improving and protecting human health, including new animal models and more effective vaccines and drugs. However, as pointed out by Dr. Ronald Atlas, from the University of Louisville and one of the symposium planning committee members, the benefits of basic biomedical research for medical practice and public health may be long term and their value not immediately evident. The results of particular types of research cannot always be predicted, and benefits are often serendipitous. Because it is not possible to predict what breakthroughs may occur as a result of fundamental research, it is impossible to quantify the benefits of fundamental research for risk/benefit analyses. Long-term research benefits are achievable, but it is not possible to specify what these are when the research is initiated.

Research using Gain-of-Function (GoF) techniques is no different with respect to what it can achieve in the long term, at least according to many of the symposium participants. Atlas noted that, although there was no attempt to achieve a consensus, no disagreement was voiced to the repeated claims of various presenters that in the short term GoF research is helpful for adapting viruses to growth in culture and for developing essential animal models for emerging pathogens, such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), and escape mutations to understand drug resistance and viral evasion of the immune system. In the long-term it may also allow the generation of information that is not obtainable through other methods, but whether all the long-term benefits envisioned for GoF research will actually be realized is still unclear. Vaccine producers in particular disagree on whether GoF methods are essential for vaccine development, so the contributions of GoF research to vaccine development need careful evaluation. Increasing reliance on gene sequences to predict phenotypes may increase GoF research's importance over time. As was clear from the presentations in Session 4 of the symposium, there is wide recognition that it is not yet possible to predict phenotype from genotype, but Dr. Philip Dormitzer, from Novartis Vaccines and a member of the symposium planning committee, noted that as more genotype-phenotype linkages are established, it may enable keeping certain viral characteristics out of vaccine strains.

Two symposium sessions were devoted to presentations on the potential benefits of GoF research, one focusing on the role of GoF in surveillance, detection, and prediction and the other on its role in treatment and response.

Go to:

SURVEILLANCE, DETECTION, AND PREDICTION

The first presentation in Session 4 was given by Dr. Stacey Schultz-Cherry, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, who discussed the information garnered from GoF studies about what she believes are its public health implications. Her home institution is one of five National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Centers of Excellence for Influenza Research and Surveillance in the United States and focuses on the animal-human interface. St. Jude is also a World Health Organization (WHO) collaborating center for studies on the ecology of influenza and is part of a global influenza surveillance and response system that includes six WHO collaborating centers and 144 national influenza centers throughout the world. St. Jude collaborates with colleagues in the animal health sector and their main role is to decide on the influenza strains that are incorporated into the seasonal flu vaccines. They also decide whether vaccines or candidate vaccine viruses are needed for emerging zoonotic threats.

The national influenza centers conduct viral strain surveillance throughout the year, looking at the genetic information from human as well as emerging zoonotic viruses. Every February and September, representatives from the WHO centers and central regulatory laboratories as well as animal health experts go through the surveillance data to decide on which viruses to choose as vaccine strains. This information is given to the vaccine manufacturers and regulatory agencies, and 6-9 months later the vaccines become available. She described many of the complexities of the process. She noted, in particular, that determining the function of amino acid changes in the viruses circulating in the field is one of the key tasks. As an example, she discussed an ongoing outbreak of H5 viruses in Cambodia. Through GoF research, it has been determined that the presence of certain genetic markers in the outbreak strain suggested that this particular virus could be more readily transmitted, at least in ferrets. This information has provided the persuasive factor to move forward with the development of a vaccine.

Schultz-Cherry noted that GoF research-derived information is also used for risk assessment. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a risk assessment tool, the Influenza Risk Assessment Tool, to rank the risk associated with particular viruses. She stated that the result of using the Tool is not a prediction of the next pandemic, but rather an objective means of prioritizing viruses for future risk management. The Tool looks at the properties of a virus. What kind of receptors does it bind to? Is it more mammalian or avian? Does it transmit in animal models, or does it have molecular signatures that would suggest transmissibility? What is its genomic variation? She stated that all of this information, especially the molecular determinants of transmissibility, has been generated through GoF studies at some point, perhaps even as far back as the 1970s. She stated that the ability to prioritize is important because of limited resources; vaccines cannot be made for every new emerging virus.

Schultz-Cherry's final points dealt with the limitations of these studies. Phenotype still cannot be predicted from genotype. We may know a lot from studies of particular amino acid changes in one strain of virus that may not apply to another strain. She noted that opponents of GoF research have said that this is a reason to not continue this work. She would argue, however, that inability to predict phenotype is precisely why GoF studies must continue so that eventually this inability can be overcome.

During the discussion following the presentations, Schultz-Cherry was asked what is the trajectory of the information being used for vaccine candidate selection? She explained that the risk assessment tool is continually updated to add new information about molecular determinants of virulence and transmissibility. She believes that the more information we have, the better we will be able to predict the risk of a pandemic and then use that prediction to prioritize vaccine strain selections and make the vaccines available.

Dr. Christophe Fraser of Imperial College, London next spoke about potential pandemics. He began by stating that he would scrutinize the benefits of GoF experiments using a narrow definition of GoF as dealing with the transmissibility of the highest risk potential pandemic pathogens (PPPs). He is the Deputy Director of the Center for Outbreak Analysis and Modeling, which is also a WHO Collaborating Centre for Infectious Disease Modelling, located in London. He and his colleagues at the Centre have worked on the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak, the initial response to the 2009 influenza pandemic, and have synthesized a variety of surveillance, neurological, and epidemiological information. In 2014, their work turned to both MERS, for which they were trying to quantify its transmissibility to humans, and Ebola as part of the WHO response team. He noted that, on a global scale, the interventions in the event of an outbreak are quite simple—well-organized classical public health tools. The key aspect is timeliness, and the classical tools are diagnostics, social distancing, and risk communication. Probably the area most lacking at the moment on a global scale is rapid diagnostics to allowed triaging of people, which has been made very clear with Ebola. Data systems, multidisciplinary validation, and sharing of data and samples are all required. There is also a huge role for basic science, but once an epidemic has started, the value of information from this limited realm of GoF work on transmissibility is unclear. The role of such work is clearly going to be in predicting pandemics. He stated, however, that H5N1, H7N9, MERS, and Ebola had all clearly been identified as threats prior to any GoF-PPP experiments, although this is less the case for the 2009 H1N1 outbreak and SARS. Nevertheless, the failure to predict outbreaks of the first four pathogens he listed was due to surveillance gaps, not a lack of understanding. Of the viruses that emerged in 2009, there were no closely related viruses found by surveillance in any swine populations for 12 years prior to the emergence of H1N1. MERS also emerged from a complete surveillance gap.

The next utility that has been claimed for GoF research-derived data is for predicting emergence. The data from the two experiments on H5N1 transmissibility were plugged into a model by Colin Russell and Derek Smith (Russell et al., 2012), who concluded that it is not possible to calculate the level of pandemic risk precisely because of uncertainties in some aspects of the biology. Fraser stated that he very much endorses that statement; it is not possible to calculate the level of risk from the mutational landscape. The aim in Russell et al. (2012) was to conduct basic science to understand the factors that increase or

decrease risk, not to assess the actual risk. Russell's work built on earlier work that attempted to predict pandemics. The earlier work from Jamie Lloyd Smith tried to establish a general rule, which is that infection begets transmission and transmission begets epidemics. Things that can cause transmission are much more likely to result in epidemics than things that are not already transmissible.

The WHO uses an empirical, rather than a theoretical, approach, meaning that alarm bells should be based on human cases and clusters and the key is surveillance and sharing of data. However, as Fraser had previously noted, there are limitations, especially given that for many years there was reluctance to acknowledge clusters of infections because of the fear of escalating the WHO alert levels and the resulting consequences. In terms of surveillance and response, it is of course very useful to know what viruses are out there, but it is promptness that is critical. To contain an epidemic at its source, there is a window of days in which to intervene. Once the epidemic gets going, the scale of the problem will double every week. The most suitable response would be based on the timely reporting of cases.

Fraser believes that pre-pandemic vaccine strain selection is the crux of the argument. Timely development of vaccines could be transformative. Vaccine seed stocks can speed this up, but there are other rate-limiting steps, especially international agreements on the regulation and conduct of human trials. He also believes that the objectives should be to:

- prioritize strains with evidence of infection and transmission;
- cover antigen space, and monitor antigenic drift;
- plug gaps in surveillance;
- make more/faster seed stocks (Dormitzer et al., 2013)?

Fraser concluded with the following:

- The direct benefits for enhanced surveillance and model-based prediction of GoF experiments with PPP should not be overstated.
- The indirect benefits of basic science are likely huge, but the rationale for working with dangerous pathogens requires benefits that outweigh risks and opportunity costs.
- The benefits of GoF with PPP for pre-pandemic vaccine production should be probed in depth.
- The risks are real and present (Lipsitch and Inglesby, 2014).

A participant asked Fraser about what he would require to be confident about using data from GoF or other experiments in his modeling? He responded that the tools required for this lengthy, although worthwhile, journey must be available. The issue centers on the risk taken at the beginning of the journey. Earlier in the morning, Fineberg mentioned that, by their nature, pandemics provide many years to think about the tools but only infrequent and limited time to acutally test them. Weather forecasting has improved dramatically because weather forecasters can test their models daily and receive many complaints when they are wrong. The situation with pandemics is not like that.

Dr. Colin Russell of Cambridge University Infectious Diseases responded to the two previous presentations as the last speaker of Session 4. He noted that both of the previous speakers touched on the ability to predict risks for pandemic viruses and on the ability to produce vaccines in a timely manner, and to ensure that there are enough vaccines to go around and provide a chance to mitigate the early spread of disease. However, the more we learn about nature, the more we understand that there are a vast number of undescribed viruses out there, many known only through sequence data. He stated that genotype to phenotype prediction is one of the holy grails of influenza biology research. However, much more research is required to reach this goal. He referred to a National Institutes of Health workshop for which he was lead organizer in the fall of 2013 that brought together experts in virology, epidemiology, and other fields. It included participants from both sides of the GoF debate, and a key focus of the meeting was to rectify the limitations in the ability to make inferences about the phenotype of influenza viruses from genetic sequence data alone. A full report of this workshop was published in October (Russell et al., 2014). A key question in the discussions was whether the effects of mutations are dependent on the viruses in which they occur. A variety of studies suggest that the effects of particular mutations are strongly likely to depend on the genetic context in which they appear. First, in 2006 Jane Stevens, Ian Wilson, and others published a paper in the journal *Science* (Stevens et al., 2006) about GoF research, investigating the potential for a virus to switch receptor binding from avian-like to human-like. This work was among the first to demonstrate that single amino acid substitutions could cause such a switch. But the authors concluded that knowledge of genetic changes in circulating virus isolates by themselves obviously cannot be used to predict the impact of receptor binding specificity, let alone affect the results of future mutations (Stevens et al., 2006). It is worth bearing in mind, Russell stated, that there is a great degree of genetic diversity in the H5 virus. Other studies have found that the effects of mutations in other H5 viruses depend on the clade of H5 viruses in which the substitutions were produced. These residues alone cannot be used as reference points with respect to specificity in H5N1 strains, but when combined with other data, the presence or absence of these mutations can be informative. None of this should be in any way construed to undermine the value of the studies, but highlight the impressive need for further work. In short, Russell believes that, given the incomplete state of knowledge, there is a risk of overestimating what is known based on sequence data alone. Focusing too much attention on the presence or absence of particular mutations may cause other mutations or even other traits yet to be identified to be overlooked.

Gavin Huntley-Fenner asked the panel members what sort of public health system would be needed to justify the status quo and whether the risks and benefits of GoF research are balanced from this public health perspective. Fraser answered that

transmissible viruses makes GoF research a very special case. In terms of general basic science, we never have to justify that to the same degree, luckily, because otherwise we would find it difficult to move forward. Basic science is a much broader portfolio where the risks are very small. The real crux of the GoF issue is separating out that very small number of experiments. We need a much wider frame for all experiments, where occupational health risks are not an order of magnitude higher than public health risks.

Laurie Garrett of the Council on Foreign Relations commented to Schultz-Cherry that her statement that the risk assessment model would be adjusted differently if H5 was in Canada speaks to the core of the whole problem. Risk is about rich people, which is about 5 percent of the global population, if that. She stated that we have never once delivered vaccine to poor people around the world for any epidemic/pandemic situation in the history of the planet, have never delivered clinical tools, and have never delivered diagnostic tools. Garrett had just come out of quarantine for Ebola, and there is nothing that can possibly be called a rapid diagnostic available for Ebola. So when the Council on Foreign Relations reviewed the whole question of GoF use and issued its memorandum to the White House (available at www.CFR.org), it concluded that the most fundamental problem is that the International Health Regulations have never been fully implemented. Garrett stated that none of the wealthy nations has assisted poor nations to raise them to capacity and that "none of the benefits will ever be available to the majority of planet Earth and none of them are getting the toolkit to minimize or mitigate risk. We are having a very American conversation that excludes the rest of the planet."

Schultz-Cherry responded that her remark about having H5 in Canada was designed to make people think about risk versus benefit and to reflect that doing more work can democratize the surveillance process. With more work, it could become cheap and easy to assess the threat of viruses. If this could be done, we could radically change the way we do surveillance worldwide and we would not have the same sort of geographic distributional issues that are of concern now.

Dr. Gregory Koblentz, George Mason University, asked Schultz-Cherry about the proven accuracy of the risk assessment tool used for selecting flu strains for yearly vaccines. She, in turn, called on Dr. Ruben Donis of the CDC to comment more about the risk assessment tool. Donis noted that the risk assessment tool is a product of the global community of scientists working on both human and animal health. It is a product of the realization of the gaps in surveillance that were noted in Fraser's presentation. It was developed to ensure that we have a comprehensive way of evaluating all the possible viruses that are circulating in animals that could reassort, recombine, and change the phenotype and eventually emerge as pandemic viruses. The tool attempts to develop a comprehensive review of all of the potential threats.

Via the web, Dr. Daniel Perez, University of Maryland, asked whether the potential of strains that resulted in past pandemics to affect humans would have been moderated if we had had the opportunity to sequence them. Fraser stated that understanding how a virus expands its host range from swine to humans requires a lot of information. The validation of the genotype to phenotype prediction tools really should address that question. Russell added that he did not think that having sequence information at the time of earlier pandemics would have forewarned of the emergence of those viruses, which again speaks to the incomplete nature of knowledge and the critical need for further work.

Another participant pointed out that there is probably a very large number of variables involved in understanding viral pathogenicity. Given the number of variables, is there much chance of doing anything useful? Russell and Fraser both agreed that this is a very complicated problem, which is why more experimental work is needed to help reduce the dimensionality. But what we currently know cannot help us very much in understanding what will occur in the next 5 years. However, science is an incremental process. The increases in understanding that have been achieved from the work that has been done so far have been helpful. In terms of translating directly into public health improvements, that is a pretty substantial leap to make. But saying we will not get there will not undermine science. Nevertheless, tools that can deal with perhaps thousands of genetic traits and phenotypes are needed. It is not about the mutations but rather about the function of the mutations. We could reach the state where we sufficiently understand the traits that a virus needs to adapt to humans and identify ways to test for those that are either independent of sequence or a metalevel of sequences.

Another participant made the point that had the 2009 pandemic strain been seen in animals instead of humans, it might have been falsely viewed as having low virulence and transmissibility and would have been discounted. Fraser agreed that the fact that our knowledge is incomplete right now creates a risk of discounting viruses that lack a certain number of substitutions when in fact we should be concerned about the risk.

Dr. Ron Fouchier, Erasmus MC, commented that he believes a lot is being asked of papers that were only published in 2012 and for which the follow-up work has been shut down twice for extended periods. This is work in which the phenotypes, not just the genotypes, are being studied. He agreed with Fraser that although he cannot yet predict phenotypes from genotypes, the assays produced by his work are being used to look at phenotypes in surveillance, which means a better job is already being done. He made a plea for more basic science to follow up on his work, which is still in the early stage. Fraser responded that the basic science is not under question. The question is: Should we be starting with experiments that have orders of magnitude higher risk than other work in the area?

Go to:

TREATMENT AND RESPONSE

Session 5, moderated by Baruch Fischhoff, consisted of a panel discussion with four speakers. Each panelist was given about 5 minutes and then the session was opened up for discussion.

The first speaker was Philip Dormitzer, who described how GoF research and the regulation around research affect the real-

world case of trying to apply virology to a public health situation. For the purpose of his talk, Dormitzer described the chronology for the production and delivery of the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic vaccine, an "historical reminder," for which the response was the "fastest ever, but still came after the disease peaked" (Borse et al., 2013). In fact, an estimate published in *Emerging Infectious Diseases* (EID) showed that for every week of acceleration of vaccine supply, an additional 300,000 to 430,000 U.S. cases could have been prevented. Dormitzer explained that Novartis, in collaboration with the J. Craig Venter Institute (JCVI) and Synthetic Genomics Vaccines (SGVI), are now working together to establish a process for rapid generation of synthetic influenza viruses that includes GoF studies based on sequence motif data to guide the genetic assembly of the vaccine. For instance, the Novartis research team routinely screens for phenotypic traits of interest and can specifically remove or mutate strains with either polybasic cleavage sites in the hemagglutinins (HA) (found in highly pathogenic avian influenza viruses [HPAIV]) or neuraminidase (NA) gene markers of resistance. For that specific example, Dormitzer explained that the process from the identification of the relevant HA and NA sequences for the new influenza strain to the genetic identity confirmation of the vaccine virus lasted about 1 week. However, the next phase leading to the first large-scale clinical trial took months because of various well-intentioned regulations and policies to protect the food supply in the United States. Notably, because Novartis could not obtain a U.S. Department of Agriculture permit, this phase involved international research collaboration with Germany before taking the vaccine back to the United States, which unintentionally slowed down the human vaccine development. Under U.S. government regulations on select agents, vaccine development against HPAIV is counter-productive because "you can't really put an entire manufacturing facility under select agent conditions and still have a factory that can produce seasonal vaccines in an economically competitive way" and in a timely manner. Also, as Dormitzer pointed out, he "couldn't apply any of this [GoF research] technology." Therefore, if adaptation of vaccine virus to increase yield or more modern synthetic biology were captured by GoF regulations, then additional unintended impediments to timely vaccine supply could be created.

Next, Ralph Baric presented his view on the impact of GoF restrictions to the emerging coronavirus vaccine and therapeutic research. Baric started his talk by reiterating that no vaccine has been approved for MERS-CoV or SARS-CoV in the midst of an ongoing MERS-CoV outbreak. Baric explained how new restrictions reduce public health preparedness to respond to future SARS-like CoV outbreaks. He explained that the original vaccine target for the SARS-CoV outbreak 2002-2004 strain was 99 percent identical between human and civet (Ge et al., 2013). However, metagenomic sequencing showed that bat SARS-like CoV (SL-CoV) with 65 percent to 95 percent sequence homology, can constitute a large pool of strains with pandemic potential against which countermeasures need to be developed. To evaluate whether the existing vaccine and drugs work on these strains, Baric's team and others used two types of approaches. The first was based on the production of CoV pseudotypes coated with virus spike-like proteins that can potentially engage the human angiotensin converting enzyme II (ACE2), which is the SARS-CoV cellular receptor molecule. This method constitutes a safe and ethical research alternative approach. Similarly, chimeric recombinant viruses that encode spike-like proteins as part of the virus particle can also be used. While studies using pseudotypes and structure-based prediction confirmed the existence of a bat SL-CoV that can infect human cells, only studies using GoF chimeric virus identified an additional bat SL-CoV as a potential threat. Baric noted that both bat SL-CoV were less virulent in a mouse model. Importantly for public health implications, data further showed that existing vaccine and human monoclonal antibody therapy failed to protect against these two newly identified bat SL-CoVs, leading Baric to point out that "we are vulnerable" to SL-CoV bat strains that currently exist in nature. The second part of Baric's talk described how robust animal models are essential for vaccine/drug design, safety testing, and performance outcomes. He explained that SARS-CoV replicates poorly in mice (Frieman et al., 2012) and although his team and Subbarao's lab have developed mouse-adapted strains, the in vivo correlates of infection vary widely depending on the model used. For example, he described some collaborative work done on inbred and outbred mice demonstrating that in some cases the vaccine could have caused increased mortality in some individuals and emphasized the need for better animal models for SARS-CoV vaccine research. In the case of MERS-CoV, the epidemic is ongoing and no robust animal model exists because routine GOF studies, including passage in small animal models, have failed. Baric called for an immediate lifting of the restrictions on MERS-CoV research on animal model development. This was echoed by other participants during the final discussion. For example, Peter Hale of the Foundation for Vaccine Research stated that he thought the inclusion of the coronaviruses in the "pause" was "muddying the waters" and that he did not detect any enthusiasm among SARS and MERS investigators to increase their transmissibility. This point was also made strongly during the discussion following the session.

The next speaker was Dr. Jerry Weir from the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, whose team participates in the selection of strains for the yearly influenza vaccines and regulates viral vaccines to ensure that they are safe and efficacious for human use. Weir offered some comments about how the regulatory process views some of the experiments and techniques addressed by the symposium speakers. He stated that there are actually not very many, if any, regulatory issues associated with the type of virus manipulations that were under discussion (i.e., improved types of seed development, reverse genetics, manipulation of virus genomes to improve vaccine virus stability or performance). Manufacturers already licensed can submit a supplement to the license that is evaluated for using a fairly standard process. In lieu of giving examples of how GoF research can influence a process, Weir mentioned a few challenges that still remain in vaccine development for the influenza virus. In general, for the seasonal strain selection and the preparation of pandemic vaccine strains, the major challenge is the existence of very large gaps in our knowledge of how genotype sequences relate to phenotypic changes. Weir stated that strain prediction and selection remain a "guessing game … for which improvements are desperately needed." In addition, for other factors such as transmissibility or virulence, a lot is not known and improvements are also needed

there. To complicate the matter, the incorporation of four, instead of three influenza strains in the seasonal vaccine is a challenge every year for the different players in the global community that pick the vaccine strains as well as the manufacturers who need to deliver the vaccines in a timely manner. For them the yields of vaccine viruses need to be improved with the challenge of limiting factors such as poorly growing strains among the four chosen. In his view, Weir believes that, as broadly defined, "GoF studies have had an enormous influence on how we develop vaccines over the years … and can help improve the process with the challenges that we still face."

The final speaker was Mark Denison, who explained his view of GoF studies in MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV countermeasure development and how oversight or regulation might be limiting. Denison reminded the audience about the basic research and ongoing challenges that remain in the development of therapeutics to SARS and MERS-CoVs, emphasizing, like other speakers, the need for in vivo and in vitro models to identify common mechanisms and determinants of resistance. He then moved to a case study involving GoF research and asked the audience whether they would consider giving or taking "a live vaccine with a virus that has an engineered increased mutation rate," for which only a few people raised their hands. The question was an introduction to a series of studies showing that CoVs, contrary to other viruses, express a proofreading exonuclease (ExoN) normally only found in bacteria and eukaryotes. When this ExoN was inactivated, the CoV mutation rate was increased by 20-fold. Normally, mutations allow tremendous variation in viral populations and presumably increase adaptation, fitness, virulence, and therefore public health risks. However, GoF studies demonstrated that SARS-CoV with the inactivated ExoN were less fit, attenuated in a mouse model of lethal SARS-CoV, could not compete with the wild-type virus, and could therefore be used as a target for therapeutics development. This work was also adapted to other RNA viruses with encouraging results. Denison used this case study to reflect on the implications of new regulations and guidelines if he wanted to create a mutated strain of a virus and test it in an animal model. In conclusion, Denison stated that he believes that because assumptions are usually wrong, GoF research that includes "passage for adaptation and resistance in in vitro and animal models are essential components of therapeutics development" and that to his knowledge no bioinformatics or predictive safer alternative approaches are effective to develop new countermeasures.

Following the panel member's presentations, there was discussion with the audience. Fraser asked Dormitzer how he would propose to reconcile, practically, the need to conduct very dangerous research without casting the net too wide. Dormitzer responded that what is first needed is a very clear and limited definition of the sorts of research that require particular attention. As Relman discussed, experiments that combine increased transmissibility, virulence, and and lack available countermeasures are very concerning. But we have to make sure that the definitions are not too broad so that they do not capture a lot of other work. Second, there needs to be a distinction between the highly diverse work performed for basic research and the much more restricted, but more urgent, work needed for vaccine development. A classic example is H5N1 vaccine development. There have been at least 26 H5N1 strains that have been attenuated all in the same way. But for the 27th one, the often months-long routine must be goone through again. We need clearly established, well-defined pathways to get vaccines quickly and not encumber the process with regulations.

Relman also stated that he does not think that there is a major question about the value of MERS and SARS research, even that research that currently falls under the rubric of GoF. Restrictions do, in fact, hamper the quest to develop countermeasures, etc. What he thinks is a more interesting question is whether there is a very discreet and specific set of experiments with MERS and SARS that you might not want to see undertaken. For example, would it be appropriate to deliberately start with a highly virulent human isolate of MERS and then attempt to add to that much enhanced human-to-human transmissibility by the respiratory route? Baric responded that he did not know of anyone doing transmissibility studies with the human coronaviruses. Unlike flu, there are currently no small animal models suitable for MERS or SARS transmissibility assays. This is mostly due to receptor incompatibility between the human and any small animal models. Optimization assays to enhance virus transmissibility between ferrets, for instance, would probably decrease the ability of that modified virus to bind to the human ACE2 receptor. Relman reformulated the question to include the possibility of using transgenic ferrets with the human receptor, but Baric explained that the human receptor itself is not sufficient and that other proteins are essential for viral transmissibility and, therefore, the results in transgenic models would not be predictable.

Denison added that nobody would have as a goal or would support trying to increase virulence and transmissibility of MERS or SARS. That is why he recommends the use of a case-based approach that looks at how we really do science. Denison shared his approach when sending a proposal through study sessions or review process at a funding institution. For him, instead of trying to define "boundaries of absolute," the real question should always be, "What is the best approach to answer that question?" Then, depending on the stage of the review process, the response should be iterative to be adequately addressed.

Inglesby asked Dormitzer whether the annual process of production of flu vaccine relies on research using highly transmissible and highly virulent strains. Dormitzer responded that this is not the case and that the goal is quite opposite—to take a strain found in nature and transform it into something that can be manufactured efficiently by increasing its growth rate in cell culture or eggs. Inglesby then asked whether virulence and transmissibility are traits that can be distinguished from increased growth capability. Dormitzer stated that there is precedent that shows that adapting viruses to grow better in cell culture does not, in general, increase their virulence or transmissibility, whereas passaging from animal to animal often does. He stated that we also need to distinguish between two things: the need for very rapid production of new antigenic variants, which should start on the day it is found that there is a new variant causing disease, and the development of the vaccine backbone, which could be used in multiple variants and which you do not want to take forever. It is not the same issue when facing an emergency.

Dr. Simon Wain-Hobson, Institut Pasteur, echoed Denison's presentation by citing work done on polio by John Holland 15 years ago that showed that when chemical mutagenesis is combined with a rapidly evolving RNA virus such as polio, the fitness of the virus goes down. Several members of the panel agreed. However, Denison raised the issue of perception in the current environment and under the current policy circumstances. Such proposals might not necessarily be vetted even though most of the time we can not know the answers until the experiments are conducted.

Another questioner from the webcast asked Dormitzer whether, in his opinion, GoF research is essential for future development of intervention strategies against various pathogens. Dormitzer responded that he thinks it depends on whether you are talking about the short- or long-term. He stated that GoF research is not going to help pick next year's flu vaccine, but if one is making viruses for use in manufacturing and a certain genetic motif that correlated with high transmissibility is known, then one could make sure that the motif is not included in the vaccine strain. GoF research has utility for such purposes. The other thing is that vaccine manufacturers are increasingly figuring out how to take genetic data and use it to predict what they want to make. That would be a genuine utility if it could be done. The question is whether we can do that kind of science in a way that does not create more problems than it solves. There is potential for GoF research to improve vaccine production, but it is not today except for limited instances; it has long-term potential for this purpose as long as the work can be done without inordinate risk. Denison asked whether any "bad" GoF experiments were performed to discover the polybasic cleavage site associated with high virulence. Dormitzer listed what is believed to have led to this discovery, including studies on correlations between the presence of these sites and clinical observation of virulence in birds; discovery of plausible mechanisms looking at cleavage proteins expressed in different cells; and loss-of-function and GoF studies to make sure that the gene identified is the correct one. Denison 's point was that a series of experiment led to that conclusion.

It was clear, however, that there is a substantial disagreement over the value of GoF research for vaccine development. Lamb, in a later session (Session 8), stated that he thought we should modify the mantra that GoF research is useful for vaccine and antiviral drug development. He thinks that this point is overused and oversold. Hale also commented during the final discussion that he agreed with Lamb, we do need to modify the mantra that this research will help develop vaccines and antivirals. He said that he and his Foundation fully endorse that sentiment. It is an argument that is made over and over again without evidence to substantiate it. He believes that in terms of development of better vaccines, GoF research has little or no benefit, and if there is any benefit, then it is tiny and way down the road. In the meantime, he said, it is not worth the risk and there are other priorities. Dormitzer responded to the latter comment and acknowledged that the community of people who make vaccines is divided just as much of the symposium audience was divided. He stated that the basis for that division is informative. Flu vaccines today are still made by very, very old techniques. One looks at what is spreading, sees if it has changed, and then picks the strain. There is not a lot of basic science in this; rather it is 1960s science. In 2009 we were not able to get the H1N1 vaccine out until after the outbreak had peaked, and many people have commented that the current flu vaccines, although somewhat effective, are not good enough. A lot of people who work on vaccines think we need to do things better. One way to do things better is to take advantage of the available information, particularly sequence-based information, so we can do things faster and make vaccines better. Information from GoF research can contribute to identifying risks earlier so countermeasures can be taken earlier. Dormitzer said he does not think it is the case that GoF research is essential to the current vaccine system as it is generally practiced today, but it is not useless. It is clearly part of the trend to understand and predict what can be done better and to help respond quickly. That does not mean it is open season to do what you want and forget the risks. A balance is needed. But he was firm in his statement that the vaccine producers are not universally of the opinion that there is no use for GoF research.

Koblentz asked whether the coronavirus researchers had a sense and could comment on why MERS and SARS were included in the "pause" on GoF along with influenza. Denison believes that, despite the circumstances, the inclusion of SARS- and MERS-CoV in the "pause" demonstrates that this is not about one virus but more about the issue of how we address critical questions in science and what constitutes appropriate review and safety among the different research institutions. He believes that whatever the question asked, whether about replication or virulence and transmissibility, the science should be the same and should follow an iterative process that incorporates risks, milestones, and points to change along the way.

As a follow-up from Relman's question on transmissibility in MERS and SARS animal models, Koblentz asked Baric to clarify which set of experiments he would use to study transmissibility. Baric explained that many variables are needed to make a model to enhance transmissibility, but if he had the perfect model to do these experiments he would not do them. Later during the discussion, prompted by Inglesby, Baric added that because the CoV interaction barriers are species specific, the only real absolute model that could be used would be human, so he certainly would not do the experiment.

Fraser asked Denison to clarify what he meant when he said that no one would want to increase the pathogenesis or transmissibility of MERS and, therefore, that the regulation should not apply to MERS and SARS research, especially because this is what the debate is about. Denison explained that he thinks that increasing transmissibility of human coronaviruses is not a goal. He then described the importance of research on wild-type or genetically modified animal models or cell cultures to understand determinants of pathogenesis or virulence factors. No one has the goal to increase these characteristics, but researchers need to be able to study the virus or they would need to rely on epidemiology and surveillance, which are not adequate to answer the question. Denison also stated that to his knowledge there is no other approach to develop countermeasures and vaccines.

Richard Roberts, New England Biolabs, asked whether experiments on dangerous traits that exist in highly pathogenic and virulent strains could also be done on strains that have already been incapacitated in some way. Denison agreed that on a case-

by-case basis, if it is possible, then a safer approach is always preferred, but that it depends on the genetic background of the strain of interest. As an example, Denison explained that sometimes a certain type of loss- or gain-of-function experiment is undertaken on BSL-2 strains that are 90 percent identical to more virulent strains, but that the small genetic background differences and therefore structure can greatly influence the outcome of the experiment. When one has strains that are not genetically identical or from the same clade, it may not be possible to make the right determination without doing the experiments.

A participant from the Department of State noted that although there may be ways to do the research in a safer manner, Denison had just argued that in a competitive environment the research question should be answered in the best and most direct way to get funding. The participant wondered whether, in this competitive context, a researcher would prefer the safest, but perhaps more indirect, option assuming it would get at the question. Denison commented that sometimes there are safer options such as when he used a mouse model for hepatitis virus to identify determinant proteins such as those for proofreading. This approach is of public health importance because it proves that certain mechanisms might be a useful target across multiple strains, including those we have not yet tested, such as the basic cleavage site. Returning to his earlier comment about the funding, Denison explained that professors not only try to educate students to do the best science in the best way, but also ask them about finding alternatives that will eventually answer the question in a less direct way. Dormitzer added that although one may get NIH funding through a grant that incorporates safety considerations, institutional safety boards and questionnaires about dual use research of concern are procedures already in place to make sure it is not only the most direct way to a scientific answer taken, but also that safety is considered.

Each of the panel members was then given an opportunity for closing remarks. Dormitzer's closing remarks were that he believes that there is long-term potential in GoF research. He believes that we must be very careful with any sort of restrictions or regulations to make sure we do not inadvertently capture a lot of work that is not only good for basic science, but also a core part of the public health response. He stated that as a practitioner of vaccine development, he has realized that there really are road blocks that were never intended by the people who drafted the restrictions.

Baric agreed with those comments and affirmed the importance of reverse genetics and GoF research in understanding viral pathogenesis as well as vaccine and therapeutic design. NIH should be very careful about delineating the boundaries of the restrictions to be placed on the research community because there could be dire consequences if these restrictions are too broad.

Weir affirmed one of his earlier points: if we had great vaccines for all of these agents, we might be having a different discussion, but the fact is that we do not.

Denison closed by proposing an iterative process whereby scientists do a review along the way. For critical pathogens of high human consequence there should be a mechanism that allows for a case-based, iterative approach that identifies problems along the way. Investigators need to have their research supported and be allowed to integrate best practices when doing GoF research.

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Date: Mon, 18 Oct 2021 1:35:34 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 18 Oct 2021 12:47:40 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
From: ROCHE Benjamin b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Peter Daszak b6; benjamin.roche b6 Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio b6

Dear David,

I hope this e-mail will find you well. Actually, Peter will not be able to come, but I will be glad to meet you to present the PREZODE initiative. By any chance, do you have some possibilities on Wednesday 20th? I'll be in DC

All the best,

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

b6
e-mail: b6
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

Le 22 sept. 2021 à 16:54, David Morens b6 > a écrit :

Peter, and Ben glad to meet you on email, and will be happy to come to the event.

Not sure what you mean by "represent at the event", but I suppose you mean represent NIH? Or NIAID? Anything I need to do other than just enjoy it?

TY, David

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not

correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, Sep 21, 2021 at 11:43 AM Peter Daszak [**b6**] wrote:

Hi David,

I'm introducing you by email to my colleague Dr. Ben Roche from IRD France. He is the PI of the new French Govt pandemic prediction initiative PREZODE. As you can see from the Email below mine, there is an event scheduled for October 21st at the French Embassy in DC. I'll be moderating the panel discussion and will be in DC in person (FINALLY!!).

Ben is looking for someone from NIH to represent at that event. I've suggested you would be perfect for that role, and wanted to introduce you to him now.

Full disclosure, Ben is working with EHA on joint projects and we signed an MOU with the French Govt IRD to stimulate joint efforts to predict and prevent pandemics. I've also cc'd Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio from EHA who I believe you've met in the past, who has worked closely on this initiative.

Hope you're available and look forward to seeing you while I'm in DC whatever the case!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: POIRIER Agnès b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:47 AM
To: Biffl, Claire b6
Cc: Liao, Julie b6 LIGEARD Christian b6
Subject: French Embassy: conference on the PREZODE Initiative (October 21st)

Dear Ms. Biffl,

As you well know, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of designing effective strategies for preventing and responding to health crises by taking greater account of the interactions between human health, animal health and environmental health.

In response to this emergency, the French President Emmanuel Macron launched the PREZODE initiative during the One Planet Summit on January 11, with the support of the Director General of the FAO and the President of the European Commission.

This initiative (see attached document) aims to network, on a global scale, research work and operational actions to prevent the risks of zoonotic emergencies and pandemics through the reduction of pressures on biodiversity, in accordance with the "One Health" approach. It will improve knowledge of the risks of emergence and spread of zoonoses, strengthen the surveillance activities of the networks that already exist and ensure greater compliance with prevention measures for future diseases.

The PREZODE initiative will strengthen cooperation with several regions of the world (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, America, Europe…) and will support the integration and strengthening of human, animal and environmental health networks. It will also support the work of the "One Health" High Level Panel of Experts proposed by France with the support of Germany, and launched by what we call the Tripartite + (WHO-FAO- World Organization For Animal Health-UN Environment Programme) on May 17 and 18.

The year 2021 is dedicated to building the strategic framework and the operation of the initiative, with

the objective of entering the operational phase from 2022.

In this context, the French Embassy is planning to host a conference (preferably an in-person event) to present the PREZODE initiative and discuss the possible involvement of US government and research institutions.

The event is scheduled for October 21, 2021, in the afternoon (2:30–5:30 pm) and would consist (see draft program attached) of two sequences of approximately one hour each:

- Presentation of the PREZODE initiative by representatives (scientific or institutional directors) of the three French research institutes involved, CIRAD (Agricultural Research Centre for International Development), INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), IRD (National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)

- Panel discussion on national and international initiatives: statements by DoS, DoD (DTRA), CDC, USDA, USAID, OHHLEP, the Tripartite+, the World Bank, private sector…

We are currently looking for a moderator for this event, and would be honored to involve an expert from the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Indeed, the Forum's work on these issues, its leadership and independence, and its broad audience seem to me to be perfect for our event. If you agree to this role, I would be happy to discuss further the organization of the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration and best regards,

Dr Agnès POIRIER, D.V.M.

Conseillère SPS / Counselor for sanitary and phytosanitary matters - USA / Canada

Conseiller agricole adjoint / Deputy Agricultural Counselor

Ambassade de France / Embassy of France

4101 Reservoir Road N.W.

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Cell: +1 [redacted]

www.ambafrance-fr.org

https://frenchtreasuryintheus.org

<image001.png>

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Date: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 4:34:50 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 4:33:20 PM -0400
Subject: RE: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Roberts, Rich (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) ;

That's exactly the problem David – the only person calling them out is me, and I'm just barraged by attacks because of it. It's logical because I was the only US member of the WHO team, and that's the political football at the moment, but it's making life extremely difficult and risky right now. I really need others to step up and talk out about what the reality is here.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 1:48 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Re: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.

I do NOT know him, but he can't be much worse than some of the other bozos.

Yes, I did see the NYT article this morning, although it is not much worse than alot of the other stuff from Ebright and company,

I think all this piling on is because no one is calling these alarmists out.

Sometimes, as they say in American football, the best defense is a good offense....

d

On 4/7/2021 12:47 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> I got a call from Drew Hinshaw at the WSJ for an interview on Tedros call for investigation of the lab origin story. It looks like we will talk in the morning.

Do either of you know him and how he approaches a story? Good guy or one to be wary of?

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 7, 2021, at 12:42 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

To add to that – another damaging article in the New York Times today.

https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/07/health/coronavirus- lab-leak-who.html

Please read the details and at the end the comment from Jamie Metzl – these people are lining up to shut down scientific research on viruses in wildlife – that's the exact opposite of what we'll need to do if we want to be prepared for the next pandemic.

I can't fight this fight on my own – I'm cited in this article as usual, along with Marion Koopmans – both of us under daily attack from these conspiracists. We need bigger and louder voices fighting against this movement before it starts to do damage to scientific research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 11:25 AM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'Keusch, Jerry' [b6]
Subject: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
Importance: High

Just read your email about being allowed to do interviews on the WHO report David. Interesting and disappointing. Clearly the issue of COVID origins is not the political problem – it's the WHO report that's the problem. It's quite telling really, that the Biden Admin decided the WHO report would be a political football and therefore NSC/White House agenda, not a scientific issue and therefore NIH/NIAID agenda.

This is a symptom of a bigger issues – over the last 2-4 weeks, all of the allies who would normally talk to reporters about the science have either been silenced/sidelined, or are following a political agenda, e.g. the White House, the WHO Director-General (who single-handedly threw the whole WHO expert team under the bus), the former CDC

director, and now NIAID – all following the political line.

The attacks reached a crescendo over this same period with daily op-eds in NY Post, WSJ, Daily Caller and other Right Wing papers bleeding over into CNN and even NPR. My Board are now beginning to get concerned and this puts me personally in a very difficult position – it's a risk to my job, my family's security, and my career. It's not a real problem yet – if the attacks die down a bit (which I believe they will), and if my Board continue to support me (I believe they will), the long game will win out.

But at this point I'm reaching out to call for help! Can we line up some allies who will help speak publicly about the science here on wildlife-to-human spillover vs. lab leak? Critically, there is still no evidence at all that a lab leak occurred, there is also no evidence at all that EcoHealth (or NIAID) funded or supported Gain-of-function work in China. Likewise, stories about EcoHealth 'hiding' DoD funding, being funded by China, not clearly indicating the source of funding on all public documents, etc. etc. are false and/or misleading. Still, the damage is being done and I'm worried that today the momentum is with the conspiracists.

Any and all ideas are welcome – ASTMH, NAM, NASEM, others?

Jerry – what about reaching out to Benjamin Corb and others?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6; Keusch, Jerry b6; Peter Daszak < b6 >
Subject: Fwd: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Guys, see below..... The Biden admin apparently won't let any of us at NIH, including Tony, discuss the WHO report....

On the surface this sounds bad, but there is the possibility they just want one org to manage the message because they are trying to put out a fire. Or am I just Pollyanna? d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 17:43:09 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
To: David Morens b6

<image001.gif>
David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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<image002.jpg>

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: NIAID OCGR NSWB <NIAIDOCGRNSWB@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens –

For your awareness (and in case she also reaches out to you directly), Mariana Lenharo followed up today on her request to speak with you or another NIAID expert about the WHO report, which as you know came out today. We've been asked to refer requests for comment about the report to the National Security Council, and we will be directing her there.

Best,
Hillary

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Thanks for the background! Once we know what the WHO report says, we'll be better poised to make decisions about how to handle requests to discuss it… as you note, it is a bit of a hot issue.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:46 AM
To: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

That's fine, although I think she wants me because I spoke to her before, and because I published the major paper dealing with it, along with Breman at FIC and ex-FIC director Keusch, and other authors.

Also, just off the record, we may want to not give this to Tony as he has been unfairly criticized over some of the issues. It could be a hot subject for him….d

---

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens,

Thanks for sending. I'll write back to this reporter and ask her to send a fresh request to the press office once the WHO report is available – we can at that time better assess whether it makes sense for you or another NIAID expert to speak with the media about it.

Best,
Hillary

Hillary Hoffman, Ph.D., Writer/Editor
Office of Communications and Government Relations, NIAID, NIH
5601 Fishers Lane #6G38
Rockville, MD 20852
b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:26 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
> **Date:** March 16, 2021 at 18:21:42 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
> **Subject: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview**
>
> Dear Dr. Morens,
>
> I hope you are doing well. It's been a few months since we spoke for the article on the origins of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Now, as the WHO mission to study the origins of the virus is about to publish their report, I'm planning to write a new article on the topic to analyze the mission's conclusions.
>
> I was wondering if you would be available for a new interview on this topic once the full report is published (it should be either this week or the next one).
>
> I'm very interested to get a sense of how the scientific community is evaluating the mission's effort into finding the origin of SARS-CoV-2.

Thank you so much,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. b6
Email | Twitter | Linkedin | Portfolio

On Wed, Oct 21, 2020 at 11:02 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Thanks, you did a great job!
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> - b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> - b6 b6 b6
> - b6
>
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>
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **From:** Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
> **Sent:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 9:18 AM
> **To:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
> **Subject:** Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens
>
> Dear Dr. Morens,
>
> The story for which I interviewed you was published this morning. Here is the link:
> https://elemental.medium.com/why- covid-19s-origin-story-is-still-a-mystery-46b0b336f122
>
> Thank you again for the collaboration and I hope to be able to interview you again for future stories.
>
> Kind regards,
>
> Mariana
>
> ---
>
> On Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:07 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:
>
> > I will be at b6 b6 b6 my cell…. ty

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Thank you, Dr. Morens. How about we schedule the call for tomorrow, Wednesday, at 12:30?

Should I reach you at your office number b6 b6 b6

Thank you very much!

Best,

Mariana

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:04 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Mariana, it looks like I have tomorrow from about 1215 to 130
>
> Late Thu might work after 4 or 5, not sure when earlier meeting will be done.
>
> Friday looks good except about 1 to about 4
>
>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health

Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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<image002.jpg>

From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:37 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

Thank you so much for getting back to me. I have a pretty open schedule in the next few days. These are the times I'll be available:

Wednesday: anytime after 8 am
Thursday: from 8 am to 9 am OR anytime after 1 pm
Friday: from 8 am to 3 pm

Please let me know if any of those work for you and how would you prefer to be contacted at that time.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. + b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:03 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Hi Mariana,
>
> Our media office indicated you would like to speak to me at some point this week. Let me know when. I am always busy and moving between various offices and meetings, bu5t I do have spaces of free time here and there. In general, mid afternoons, eg, from 130 until 330 or later, are not good….
>
> TY

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 2:50 PM
To: NIAID NEWS (NIH/NIAID) <NIAIDNEWS@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Hello!

My name is Mariana Lenharo, I'm a science and health journalist and I'm working on a story about the work of scientists investigating the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic. This story will be published in Elemental (https://elemental.medium.com/), a Medium publication focused on science-backed health coverage.

As I was reading about this topic, I came across this very interesting article, "The Origin of COVID-19 and Why It Matters" and I'd love to interview one of the authors, Dr. David M. Morens. This would be a 20-30-minute interview by phone/skype/zoom preferably this week. Please let me know if you think this would be possible.

Thank you very much!

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

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Date: Wed, 5 May 2021 11:39:39 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 5 May 2021 11:36:02 PM -0400
Subject: David Relman paper in Science next week
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>;

I heard David Relman and Jesse Bloom have a paper coming out in Science next week that will continue the campaign re. the Wuhan lab and Gain of Function. No further details, but something to watch out for.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 6:00 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: 'Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Reporter from Vanity Fair, Katherine Eban - please speak with her if she reaches out.
Importance: High

I spoke off-the-record with a reporter from Vanity Fair (Katherine Eban) who is a good health and investigative reporter, but just did the usual questions about the Wuhan lab. She told me she wants to do a deep dive on the origins of COVID, but didn't ask a single question about the wildlife farms of S. China (where the virus prob. came from). She told me a growing number of serious scientists are starting to speak about the lab leak – I asked who, her response David Relman (who I suspect she's interviewed). I explained he's not a virologist and approaches this from a mission of reducing biosafety labs and controlling gain-of-function work. I also explained that we don't do gain of function work in China, and that there is no evidence for it being involved in SARS-CoV-2, nor actually any evidence the virus escaped from a lab.

I have just sent her an email (below), giving her a list of people who she should talk with and I hope she'll reach out to you. Please talk with her if you can – we need a diversity of voices getting the message out there to journalists right now.

Here's what I wrote to her:

Dear Katherine,

Please consider this email off-the-record.

Apologies that I can't have a decent on-the-record conversation with you, but as I mentioned, my speaking about the lab leak hypothesis publicly doesn't help us get any closer to EHA's goal, which is to understand where COVID came from, and to prevent the next one. Every time I speak with the press on this issue, it brings more oppressive actions (e.g. bill to defund EHA) and more threats.

Here are some people that I hope are useful to you as you dig in on your story. Some of them I work with, others I don't. They are all aware of the issues, and all are bona fide researchers who have conducted significant work in their careers on viral emerging diseases:

- Members of the WHO team who were members of the Animal & Environment working group/veterinarians – Marion Koopmans; b6 ; Fabian Leendertz ; b6 ; David Hayman b6 ; or the lead of the team, Peter Ben Embarek ; b6
- Kristian Andersen - conducted substantial research on the genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 & repeatedly spoken out about how a lab leak is 'extremely unlikely' andersen@scripps.edu Twitter DM: @K_G_Andersen
- Trevor Bedford – as above ; b6 ; Twitter DM: @trvrb
- In the WHO report (here: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who- convened-global-study-of-origins-of-sars-cov-2-china-part) and the Annexes (here: https://www.who.int/docs/default- source/coronaviruse/who- convened-global-study-of-origins-of-sars-cov-2-china-part-annexes.pdf?sfvrsn=3065bcd8_5) the Joint Mission finds the most likely pathway that COVID took is from a bat via an intermediate host (e.g. those found in domestic wildlife farms) into people. In the annex (p. 191) there's a short statement from Prof. Eddie Holmes who visited the market in 2014 and found live mammals for sale of the type that carry coronaviruses. China denies that this was happening prior to the outbreak, but there is unsubstantiated evidence on the web that it was. I recommend talking with Eddie Holmes, who is very well known and gives great quotes: ; b6 ; Twitter DM: @edwardcholmes
- A good person to talk with about biosecurity labs and the NIH action is Jerry Keusch who set up and is now Director of the Boston BSL-4 lab: b6
- You also mentioned the termination of EcoHealth's NIH grant. There is a wealth of information (letters, responses etc.) on what happened with that NIH grant on the following websites run by the Nobel Laureate Campaigns group: https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant.html & https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant2.html .
- One of the Nobel laureates, Rich Roberts would be a good person to talk with – he's aware of the issues politically and has spoken out about them: b6
- Another key person might be David Morens, who works at NIAID (Dep. Director level for Tony Fauci), but would talk on background: b6
- Jerry Keusch (above re. biosecurity labs) incidentally was the head of an NIH center (Fogarty International Center) for many years and would also be able to speak knowledgeably about whether the NIH action was unusual or not.

Finally, I hope you take my conversation in the way it was intended – having seen this develop over the last 15 months, I've seen clear evidence that stories focusing on the idea that the virus escaped from a Wuhan lab do nothing to help us get any closer to understanding where it came from. There is no evidence for a lab leak, including of any lab anywhere in the world having a virus that could plausibly be a progenitor for SARS-CoV-2 prior to the outbreak. There is no evidence that the Wuhan lab had sequences or isolates (cultures) of SARSr-CoVs that they were hiding from us or not reporting, and as I mentioned, we published in early 2020, sequences of >150 novel SARSr-CoVs. Finally, despite the headlines, we have not been secretly 'funneling' or 'channeling' funding to WIV or 'hiding $40 million of defense funding' – all of our funding sources are publicly registered and reported on and our DoD funding is from the Defense Threat *Reduction* Agency which is well known for its work in trying to reduce the threat of bioweapons.

I strongly hope you are able to do a balanced job of reporting this. Some of the scientists above have been publicly vilified for speaking out about the lack of evidence on the lab leak theory, and they may be reluctant to talk. If so, please tell them I suggested their name and hopefully it will help.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 6:44:13 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 6:43:47 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.
From: Edward Holmes [b6]>
To: Garry, Robert F [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6] Jason Gale [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] angela.rasmussen@usask.ca; [b6]

And just to complete the circle, Hooper has weighed in on COVID origins. Have a wild guess if he thinks there has been a conspiracy:

http://www.aidsorigins.com/covid-19-and-the-origins-of-aids-debate/

http://www.aidsorigins.com/blunders-and-blunderbusses/

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T +61 2 9351 5591
E [b6]

On 18 Aug 2021, at 8:36 am, Garry, Robert F [b6] wrote:

Yes – Eddie and I have had some remembrances of our separate interactions with Hooper. There are a lot of parallels.

The current batch of Lab Leakers are giving Hooper a run for the money in the crazy Department.

I have nothing at all against people writing books [like Hooper or Sir Jeremy for that matter], but it's not a coincidence that several of the most annoying Lab Leakers are attempting to selling books.

b

From: David Morens [b6]
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 5:20 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale [b6], Peter Daszak [b6], Robert Garry [b6]
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

mber Nick was fired from the New York Times
and has a history of controversial stuff including truly appalling neo-eugenics crap.
Sadly, he has even influenced Don McNeil, another great journalist also fired from the NYT. I have always admired Don, a protege of sorts of the NyT's Larry Altman, but even he fell under the crazy spell

I greatly admire highly intellectual journalists as a whole, but as a group they seem to have a tenfency to go off the deep end

Is there something about this era? Did aliens put crazy-drugs in our drinking water???

Anyone remember Edward Hooper and The River, a best seller of 20+ years ago in which the author impugned, harassed, and nearly drove to the grave one of virology's heros, the late Hilary Koprowski. All from a cockamamie book length best selling slander that Hilary started the AiDS epidemic with 1950s polio vaccine trials

I knew Hilary well, the tragedy of slander by smart and smarmy journalists is real

You cannot make this shit up!!!!!

Something is very, very wrong about the interface between science and science journalism. Jason, we need folks like you to take note and follow breadcrumbs out of this forest. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 17, 2021, at 17:34, Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:

It really doesn't get much lower than Wade. It really doesn't.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

On 18 Aug 2021, at 7:00 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Please let me know when you can share it under embargo. I know Science goes mental when their own journos don't get stuff first. But it's helpful to have the luxury of time to properly read papers without the haste to get something out ASAP. JG

---- Original Message ----
From: Peter Daszak [b6]g>
To: JASON GALE,[b6], [b6]
CC: ang[b6]
At: 08/18/21 00:51:28 UTC+10:00

Add to that a preprint we'll be posting next week that suggests 50,000 – 400,000 people are actually infected by bat SARSr-CoVs in SE Asia each year, and a comment from the international members of the WHO team that'll be in Nature this week or next.

As long as these articles keep up their 'drip, drip' with actual new data and analyses, all the lab leak hypothesis has is re-hashing of the same innuendo-filled vitriol.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY [b6]
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:30 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc b6 b6 b6
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

Thanks Peter,

Totally agree that It's quite sad to see the attacks on scientists and science from Wade. It's the very basis for the "lab leak" hypothesis, so no surprise.

Wade is old enough to know this, but anyone that thinks that Jeremy Farrar and Tony Fauci are part of the "problem" has literally [in the case of Tony] not been paying attention for 50 years.

Looking forward to Wade and his ilk going ballistic as two new papers favoring natural origin appear shortly in *Cell* and *Science.*

Bob G.

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 7:40 AM
To: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6, Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6, " b6 Robert Garry <
Subject: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

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Nicholas Wade's at it again – another miserable innuendo-filled attack on science and the process by which scientists email, talk and come to decisions. Nothing new of course, just trash journalism published in a pseudo-scientific journal. Pretty shameless smear on some of us – no facts of course, no sue-able accusations, just snipey comments and excerpts from Social Media. It's as if we can't now be scientists and actually colleagues who break bread and share a glass any more.

https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/how-covid-19s-origins-were-obscured-by-the-east-and-the-west/

The irony is in the ending – he claims the lab leak is an albatross hanging around China's neck that they won't be able to shake off until they open up the lab videos, books, freezers etc. The truth is his and others continued attacks are what put the albatross there in the first place. Does anyone really believe that if China gave access to all the above and no further evidence was found, that these folks would simply say "OK, it wasn't a lab leak after all"!!!

Cheers,

Peter

How COVID-19's origins were obscured, by the East and the West

By Nicholas Wade | August 17, 2021

Error! Filename not specified. A bus carrying a team of experts from the World Health Organization departs an airport in Wuhan on Jan. 14, 2021, after arriving in the Chinese city to investigate the origins of the coronavirus pandemic. That investigation is widely seen as having been obstructed by Chinese authorities. (Photo by Kyodo News via Getty Images)

Some 20 months after the Covid-19 pandemic first broke out, its origins remain obscure. A vigorous campaign of concealment by the Chinese authorities is the principal reason. But China received considerable help, strange to say, from senior medical research officials in the United Kingdom and United States who mishandled and effectively derailed the initial inquiry into the virus's origins.

The mishandling began at a pivotal teleconference held on February 1, 2020. The organizer was Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, a large medical research charity in London. News of the conference emerged with the release this June of emails from the office of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Farrar supplied further information in his book *Spike*, published on July 22.

The conference was held to discuss the unanimous view of a group of virologists that the SARS2 virus had been manipulated in a lab. Yet within a few days of the meeting, the virologists abruptly reversed their conclusion. The meeting's participants were later involved in two letters to scientific journals that stated the virus must have emerged naturally and that condemned any suggestion of manipulation as a conspiracy theory. These two letters, to *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*, shaped the views of the mainstream media for more than a year.

Error! Filename not specified. Letters published by *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* in early 2020.

Even today, no one can say for sure whether the SARS2 virus emerged naturally or escaped from a lab. Much less could anyone have been sure back then. If the conferees had stuck to known facts, they would have left the question open to the two hypotheses, and the full exploration of the virus's origins might not have been sidetracked for over a year.

More significant, the Chinese government would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to manipulate the World Health Organization (WHO) into setting terms of reference that favored China's obstructive goals and kept WHO inspectors who visited China this February from accessing records vital to understanding the origin of the pandemic. China now insists those terms of reference cannot be changed, blocking further investigation into the origin of the SARS2 virus. "The two groups that produced the infamous letters in *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* paved the way for the Chinese government and helped enormously to facilitate all of that," says Milton Leitenberg, an arms control expert at the University of Maryland. The reversal of the virologists' conclusion about SARS2's artificial origin is thus a matter of some significance.

At 10:32 p.m. on the evening before the February 1 conference, Fauci had received an electrifying memo from Kristian G. Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research institute in California. Andersen reported that the virus seemed to be man-made. "The unusual features of the virus make up

a really small part of the genome," he wrote, referring presumably to a genetic component known as a furin cleavage site, which greatly enhances the virus's infectivity, "so one has to look really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentially) look engineered." **Error! Filename not specified.** A key email from Kristian Andersen to Anthony Fauci.

Andersen went on to note that "after discussions earlier today, Eddie, Bob, Mike and myself all find the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory"— meaning that, in their unanimous view, the virus didn't come from nature. "Those opinions could still change," Andersen added. Eddie is Edward C. Holmes of the University of Sydney. Bob is Robert F. Garry of Tulane University. Mike is Michael Farzan at Scripps Research.

The message sent Fauci into a whirlwind of activity. "You will have tasks today that must be done," he emailed his deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, two hours later at 12:29 am on February 1. One of these urgent tasks evidently concerned NIAID funds that had been passed, via the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, to Zhengli Shi, China's leading bat virus expert, at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci was doubtless anxious to check whether his agency's funding of Shi's work had complied with US law, which banned funding gain-of-function research from 2014 to 2017 and required it be reported to a government panel thereafter. "Gain of function" refers to research in which a pathogen's ability to cause disease is enhanced. Auchincloss replied a few hours later that efforts were underway to ascertain "if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Meanwhile Farrar, who had independently heard of the Andersen team's conclusion from Holmes, says in *Spike* that he arranged a teleconference set for 7 p.m. London time, convenient for both Washington and Australia, where Holmes was based.

The participants included Fauci and possibly his nominal boss, Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health. (Farrar says in *Spike* that Collins was present, but Collins's name is not on the list of invitees in the Fauci emails.) Officials on the UK side were Farrar and Patrick Vallance, the chief scientific adviser to the UK government. The others were mostly virologists, including Andersen, Holmes, and Andrew Rambaut of the University of Edinburgh.

Far from being selected at random, the conferees were associated through a complicated web of relationships, a sort of virologists' old boy network that included senior medical officials in China. Farrar was well acquainted with George Fu Gao, the head of China's counterpart of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has described Gao as an "old friend," who in fact had called a month earlier, on December 31, 2019, to tell Farrar about the initial cases in Wuhan of what turned out to be Covid-19. Farrar says in his book *Spike* that on the weekend of the teleconference, he called another highly placed Chinese official, Chen Zhu, China's minister of health from 2007 to 2013, to tell him of "rumours that the novel coronavirus could be the result of a lab accident." As for Holmes, he has published many papers both with Farrar and with Gao and has been a guest professor at Gao's CDC from 2014 until 2020.

Because of these varied connections, it seems likely that Chinese authorities knew about the conference almost from the moment it occurred and, if so, would have had the opportunity to influence deliberations that followed it.

At the conference there was a notable imbalance of power between the virologists and the officials. Fauci and Farrar together control a large portion of the funds available for virological research in the Western world. A virologist keen to continue his career would be very attentive to their wishes. Two of the conference participants had multimillion-dollar grant proposals under final review with NIAID at the time of the call.

Almost all references to what was discussed at the teleconference have been redacted from the Fauci emails under exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act. The conference would doubtless have included explanation from Andersen and Holmes as to why they had concluded the previous evening that the virus had been altered through laboratory manipulation. "Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call," Farrar writes in one of the Fauci emails.

RELATED:

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19

Error! Filename not specified. A Jeremy Farrar email about the teleconference.

Whatever was said at the meeting, it was followed by a remarkable and almost immediate about-face. By at most three days later, Andersen had executed a 180 degree turn in his views about the virus. In an email of February 4, 2020 to Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, which had directed NIAID funds to Shi, Andersen wrote, "The main crackpot theories going around at the moment relate to this virus being somehow engineered with intent and that is demonstrably not the case." The email was obtained by U.S. Right to Know, an investigatory group. Participants have not explained what was said at the meeting or found in the days immediately following it to induce the change of mind. Media offices at the Wellcome Trust and NIAID declined to comment on this article. Andersen, Holmes and Rambaut did not reply to emails seeking an account of the reversal.

Farrar, not Fauci, seems to have been the leader in the teleconference's deliberations. "This is not my area of expertise so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy," Fauci wrote on February 13 to a CDC official. US officials were not to take the lead in this pivotal inquiry.

Error! Filename not specified. Fauci's "leaving it all to Jeremy" email.

Farrar had a direct hand in the two letters that went out to the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*. He was a signatory of the *Lancet* letter, a draft of which Daszak, the organizer of the letter, began circulating just five days after the conference. The letter sought to squelch all discussion of the possibility that the virus had escaped from a lab by deriding it as a conspiracy theory. When Daszak wrote an article in the *Guardian* elaborating on the same theme, Farrar promoted it with a tweet, saying "as always worth reading @PeterDaszak."

Farrar also recruited the five authors who drew up the *Nature Medicine* letter, his spokesman told the writer Ian Birrell. (The spokesman referred to the *Lancet* letter but evidently meant the *Nature Medicine* letter, which has five authors.) The *Nature Medicine* letter, accepted on March 6 and published on March 17, 2020, presented a detailed and influential case that the virus had emerged naturally from animals. Its authors were Andersen, Rambaut, W. Ian Lipkin, Holmes and Garry.

In his book *Spike*, Farrar portrays the events between the February 1 conference and publication of the two medical journal letters as a judicious process in which he held an agnostic view and played no role other than asking questions. "On a spectrum if 0 is nature and 100 is release—I am honestly at 50!" Farrar says he emailed to Fauci and Collins a day after the conference. But if that were honestly so, he fails to explain his switch from 50 to 0 when signing the *Lancet* letter a few days later.

According to *Spike*, it wasn't until March, "after the addition of important new information, endless analyses, intense discussions and many sleepless nights" that Andersen and his four fellow virologists "were ready to pronounce on the origins of the novel coronavirus." Why then was Andersen, the virologists' leader, ready to pronounce just 3 days after the conference that lab release was a conspiracy theory? Farrar's account

does not match with the available facts.

Nor does Andersen's. In a June interview with the *New York Times,* he painted a picture that includes a change of mind on the possible engineering of the virus "in a matter of days, while we worked around the clock," and then that quick reversal being buttressed by drawn-out research.

"This is a textbook example of the scientific method, where a preliminary hypothesis is rejected in favor of a competing hypothesis as more data become available and analyses are completed," he said in a statement released by Scripps Research after his Jan 31 email to Fauci had become public. "I cautioned in that same email that we would need to look at the question much more closely and that our opinions could change within a few days based on new data and analyses—which they did," Anderson said in the *New York Times* interview. In that same interview, he also said that "more extensive analyses, significant additional data and thorough investigations to compare genomic diversity more broadly across coronaviruses led to the peer-reviewed study published in *Nature Medicine*."

These later data and analyses would not have been available three days after the conference, the date of Andersen's volte-face email to Daszak. And they would not have been available to Farrar as he signed the *Lancet* letter, which was published just 17 days after the teleconference.

More puzzling is Andersen's statement that in his preliminary studies "the genome of RaTG13, a SARS-related coronavirus found in bats, wasn't yet available." In fact its full sequence had been deposited by Shi in a data bank on January 24, 2020, a week before Andersen's report to Fauci, and Farrar says in *Spike* that he had seen the sequence by the time of the conference. RaTG13 is the closest known relative of SARS2, and the fact that it lacks the furin cleavage site found in SARS2 would have been a major reason for the Andersen group to suppose that this genetic element had been inserted into SARS2 in a lab.

Given his role in leading the February 1 teleconference, in presiding over the virologists' 180 degree change of views, and in arranging or influencing the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* letters, Farrar was evidently the driving force of the campaign to persuade the public that the SARS2 virus could not possibly have leaked from a lab. This was an unfortunate position for any scientist to take, given that he was assuring the public of something he could not be sure was true.

Farrar now says in *Spike* that, although natural emergence is more likely, "nobody is yet in a position to rule out an alternative." But his campaign sought very vigorously to do exactly that. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," Farrar and his cosignatories wrote in the *Lancet* on February 18, 2020. This lapse in scientific judgment reflects also on the other senior participants in the conference who saw what was happening but apparently took no steps to insist that scientific truth should take precedence over unjustifiable professions of certainty.

RELATED:

Caltech's David Baltimore discusses the debate over origins of SARS-CoV-2

The decision to quash any notion of lab escape seems to have brought relief all round. At least until the tide of opinion began to change a year later, Fauci and Collins didn't have to endure unpleasant questions about why they had been funding hazardous research in minimally safe conditions at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from a bat-to-human

spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Daszak emailed Fauci after a White House press briefing on April 17.

In August 2020 the NIAID announced it would award $82 million over five years to 10 participants in its new network for detecting infectious diseases. Among the lucky winners: Daszak, Andersen, and his associate Robert Garry.

The perturbing lab leak theory raised by Andersen and his colleagues on January 31, 2020 had been safely laid to rest. Farrar and his colleagues had succeeded in the one goal also pursued by the autocrats in Beijing, that of suppressing discussion of whether the SARS2 virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab.

Beijing's way of squelching inquiry about the virus was, unintentionally, somewhat more obvious than the methods used in London. Chinese authorities tried so hard to stamp out information about the virus's origin that they left a rather clumsy trail of footprints pointing to where they didn't want people to go.

One of the more informative suppressions of data was the closure of China's main database on bat and other viruses. Zhengli Shi, China's leading expert on bat coronaviruses, told the BBC that it was taken off line because of numerous hacking attempts. It's conceivable that in January 2020, after the pandemic broke out, people without authorized access might have tried to hack into the database. But in fact the database went off line on September 12, 2019. Who would have wanted to hack into a bat virus database back then? More likely, that is the date at which Chinese authorities realized they had a virus escape problem.

In February of last year, President Xi referred to the need to ensure biosafety and biosecurity, and the Chinese Communist Party followed by tightening up their biosafety rules in October 2020, accelerating a long planned revision. "To me, the fact that the CCP enacted a major series of laboratory biosafety regulations this past year is an indication that China's political leadership believes that a lab accident is likely to have caused the pandemic," says a biosurveillance expert who has monitored China's disease outbreak reporting for the past two decades.

Major clues as to what happened are evident in Shi's various pronouncements about the virus. The omissions and untruths in these statements are specific enough to outline the very body of facts the censors have sought to conceal.

Error! Filename not specified. Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli spoke about SARS during a Yixi event (comparable to a TED talk) on June 23, 2018. (Yixi video)

In looking at Shi's questionable statements, it's only fair to keep in mind that they may have been compelled. Her train of deceptions began immediately after the genetic sequence of the SARS2 virus was published on January 10, 2020, by Yong-zhen Zhang of Fudan University, against the wishes of Chinese authorities who subsequently closed his lab for a time. Where did this strange new virus come from? Shi wanted or was told to establish SARS2's pedigree as a bat virus, with an ancestry analogous to that of SARS1, the bat virus that caused an epidemic in 2002. In an important paper published on February 3, 2020, Shi reported that the genome of SARS2 is 96 percent similar to that of a bat virus, RaTG13, "which was previously detected in [the bat species] *Rhinolophus affinis* from Yunnan province."

Shi neglected to mention a salient difference between the two viruses, namely that SARS2 possessed a furin cleavage site and RaTG13 did not. Alina Chan, of the Broad Institute in Cambridge, has likened the omission to describing a unicorn by reporting all its horse-like features, but neglecting to mention the horn. Evidently the Chinese authorities were highly sensitive to the furin cleavage site's presence.

Shi also failed to say when and where she had discovered the RaTG13

virus, surely important data for the closest known relative of SARS2. In fact, she had found RaTG13 in 2013, in an abandoned mine in Tongguan —the same place where six miners had fallen sick the year before. At that time, she analyzed just one of its genes and reported the virus under another name, BtCoV/4991. Daszak, the holder of her NIAID grant, told the London Times, perhaps on misinformation from Shi, that the virus was then thrown in a freezer and forgotten about until 2020. This was untrue—the virus was of much greater interest. Shi had analyzed its full genome, probably by 2018, but did not publish it. It was only when she needed a bat virus pedigree for SARS2 that Shi released information about the virus, which she now renamed RaTG13. The fact that BtCoV/4991 and RaTG13 were one and the same was discovered by Monali Rahalkar and Rahul Bahulikar, two internet-sleuthing researchers in Pune, India.

It's not acceptable practice among scientists to report something already published under a different name as if were new. Shi's February paper had the goal of portraying SARS2 as just another bat virus while concealing the true provenance of its closest known relative—a cave known to harbor lethal viruses.

When RaTG13's connection to the Tongguan mine was pointed out, Shi still tried to conceal the lethality of the mine's bat viruses, saying the miners had died of a fungus infection. This untruth was corrected when a master's thesis by a Chinese doctor, Li Xu, was unearthed by the internet sleuth who calls himself TheSeeker268. The thesis reported that the miners had died of a SARS-related virus with symptoms identical to those of Covid-19 and with CT scans similar to those of Covid patients. The only evident difference between that virus's effects and those of SARS2 is that the miners' virus was not readily transmissible from one person to another.

The specificity of what Shi's statements concealed—the furin cleavage site, RaTG13's identity with BatCoV/4991, the latter's origin in the mine where six miners were infected, the death of the three miners from infection by a virus with symptoms very similar to those of SARS2—all point to the involvement of these elements in a scenario the Chinese authorities are determined to cloak. That scenario may have been the storage or generation of the SARS2 virus in Shi's lab from one of the many viruses recovered from the Tongguan cave.

The Chinese government's persistent stonewalling and Shi's pattern of evasions do not amount to proof that the SARS2 virus escaped from her lab. But they seem less like the actions of innocent people and more like attempts to cover up a fatal accident, one that has caused the deaths of maybe 10 million people and counting.

Perhaps proof will one day emerge that the virus emerged naturally. If not, the likelihood that SARS2 escaped from a researcher's laboratory is an albatross that will hang round China's neck in perpetuity. China's only hope of release from this terrible encumbrance lies in opening its laboratory doors and either establishing its innocence or admitting its fateful error.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 6:26 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6
b6 Garry, Robert F <b6
b6
Subject: RE: feedback on wild animals

Jason, not sure whose office politics is worse, but there is many a day I'd rather be in Australia, even if I had to drink that awful beer Fosters. (To quote Grouco Marx as he help up a glass of questionable beer: "last time I saw something like this, they had to shoot the horse")…. But I do have fond memories of Australia, and two of my closest freiends, both ex-students of mine, are out in Perth, the only large city there (if oy can call it that) I have never been, although it's high on my bucket list if this damn pandemic ever ends. He's an American public health physician and she's an Australian-Tongan PhD virologist, both wondeful smart people.

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David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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b6

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From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>

Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]u; Garry, Robert F [redacted]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Thanks, David.
I just got off a video conf call with the current editor in NY (the one asking all the latest questions). He's very nice and I feel like he gets its. He thinks it's a fascinating story.
Problem we have in journalism is that there are some people who aren't interested in actual journalism and telling stories; they want to climb to the top and manage people. I rejected the latter route 10 years ago, but am so grateful that I still get to meet so many remarkable people, visit cool places and see all aspects of humanity.

A difficulty working for a NY-based organization is that it's assumed that all the best people are in NYC, so being in Melbourne (where I need to be to be close to my kids in Adelaide), is that folks consider Australia a backwater and, by association, I mustn't be all that important/valuable. But my new role as "global biosecurity czar" is helping somewhat.
Ahhhhh... Office politics!

From: [redacted]gov At: 08/15/21 09:03:03 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: [redacted]g, [redacted], [redacted]
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

> Jason, all I can say is that it must be harder to be a journalist than a scientist…. I had no idea someone at your level would get pushed back.
>
> Usually i get from one to 4 reviewer responses to a ms. and three of those are out to lunch. Occasionally i get a reviewer who really understands the work: half of those are helpful, the other half are trashers.
>
> Maybe it's like being in the government where i am: there is endless push back, but the push-backers are brainless idiots who don't know what they are talking about.
>
> Do you ever get to a point where the editors leave you alone on the science? Or do they all think they are science geniuses? d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Aug 14, 2021, at 16:05, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Thanks, Bob. In journalism, getting to the truth even when it's genuinely and actively pursued, can be a tortuous process!

----- Original Message -----
From: Robert F Garry [b6]
To: JASON GALE, [b6]
[b6]
edward.holmes@sydney.edu.au, u6025689@utah.edu
At: 08/15/21 01:45:11 UTC+10:00

Looking forward to this important article. Truth is stranger than fiction.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:41 AM
To: [b6] [b6]
[b6]
[b6]
[b6] [b6]
[b6] [b6]
Garry, Robert F [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Fwd:Re:feedback on wild animals

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Hi guys, in case you have nothing better to read over the weekend, this is some of the dialog I am having with editors in the U.S. Essentially, my response to questions from editor #6.
I thought I could claim victory when it looked like the story could be published this morning, but the editor of Businessweek objected and thinks he can make it better with another revision and an ETA of Tuesday. Sigh.
Jason

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/14/21 16:36:58 UTC+10:00
To: Cristina Lindblad (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:), Eric Gelman (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: Joel Weber (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:feedback on wild animals

> Hi.
> Thanks for the feedback and the questions, which I have tried to answer in detail.
> It's often easier to have a conversation over Nexi or the phone to explain nuanced information, or details that are clear to me, but might not be to someone coming at this fresh, but that's tricky with the time difference.
> When you look back at what's happened here, it seems that in trying to deflect blame for the pandemic, which became increasingly vicious as the cataclysmic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded around March-April 2020, China tried to conceal a very obvious, very plausible source of the pandemic: it's flourishing wildlife trade (worth about $90 billion in 2016).

It was an obvious cause of the pandemic because an almost identical scenario triggered an international outbreak caused by a very similar coronavirus (SARS) in 2003-04. But in attempting to cover up the wildlife trade, and making like there were never any wild animals being sold in Wuhan's wet markets, things began to backfire on China; questions were raised about the nearby lab studying these coronaviruses. The more geopolitical, heated and vicious the arguments and accusations became, the less cooperative China became. In response, the more intent/adamant some groups have become in their belief that China is covering up a lab-leak. It's become a vicious circle. If China isn't coming clean on the wild animals, what else is it trying to hide?? China's defensiveness means we may never get the cooperation needed to find the answers. If China had been honest and transparent about the wild animals in the wet markets, it might not be in this mess now.

Anyway, here are my response to your queries in green.

By the way, I wonder if the current headline:
Delayed Paper Gives Credence to Wuhan Market Covid Origin Story
doesn't convey much more than what we had 2 months earlier when we reported Xiao's findings: China Markets Sold Mink, Civets, Stoking Natural Origins Theory Perhaps Obscured China Paper Scuppered Chance to Trace Covid Origins
would hits "China", "Covid" and "Origins" in a way that won't alienate people who already believe it was a lab-leak

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According to the report, minks, civets, raccoon dogs and other mammals known to harbor coronaviruses were sold in plain sight for years in shops across the city, including the now infamous Huanan wet market, to which many of the earliest Covid cases were traced. The evidence collected over 30 months by **Xiao Xiao** a I'D NAME HIM HERE [[i don't know that naming a researcher no one has ever heard of adds much]]researcher working at a lab affiliated with China's Ministry of Education was hastily drafted into a manuscript and submitted to a scientific journal [Joel, we cannot name the first journal they delivered it to because the authors decline to give us the name,

saying it may affect their future chances of being published] in February 2020, just weeks before the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

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While the study received wide attention when it was eventually released by a different publisher [Publisher (Springer Nature) and publication (Scientific Reports) are different. Might add confusion DO YOU WANT TO ADD NAME HERE?], its long and torturous journey to publication gave **Chinese officials an opportunity to weave alternative narratives in which the virus may have come** from abroad**, even from a U.S. Army biological research facility**. [the stuff in bold is not contested and we go on to show how that happened, documenting with links when available]I TWEAKED WORDING HERE BUT THIS STILL ISN'T QUITE RIGHT. IF THE REPORT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED EARLIER CHINESE OFFICIALS COULD STILL HAVE DONE WHAT THEY DID—THEY COULD HAVE JUST SAID THE REPORT WAS SHODDY, OR WHATEVER, AND THEY ALSO COULD HAVE JUST IGNORED IT. I disagree. The evidence that Xiao et al provide was meticulously documented and supported by photographs that would have been difficult/impossible for China to dismiss (as older published photos and media reports had been). What's more, Newman understands that Xiao collected blood-sucking ticks from the wild animals he studiously cataloged. His frozen tick samples could be tested for blood/antibodies/virus, which could be extremely helpful in identifying infected species PRIOR to December 2019. The WHO team knew nothing of this, so couldn't have asked China for this research or any results, had they actually done the research. The delay in the publication of Xiao's paper delayed the evidence that there were live animals sold in the Huanan market. The WHO researchers couldn't have asked about tests on wildlife that ostensibly were never there. Likewise, Chinese authorities couldn't have done the tests on animals that didn't exist. The problem is that in January and February 2020, it was widely assumed the animals HAD been there and that the necessary tests and tracing of animals (the sampling of animals on farms they were raised on, testing of farm workers, animal hunters, transporters and traders **had all been done** by researchers in China -- the very things that ultimately led to the discovery of the

origins of SARS and of MERS viruses. **None of these things were done** (or at least, there is nothing publicly available to show that they were done) **because the animals "weren't there"**. Now that we all know they were there, China as lost considerable face. The issue has become so political than there is much less/?no willingness to cooperate and conduct the additional research that the WHO-led team recommended. Ideally, Xiao's ticks should be studied, but it's doubtful that will now happen (I wouldn't be surprised if he's been ordered to incinerate them!) Hope this is clear.

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An international team of experts convened by the WHO traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to seek answers—a trip that might have yielded different results if the scientists had known about the work of Xiao Xiao, a virologist whose roles straddled epidemiology and animal research at the government-funded Key Laboratory of Southwest China Wildlife Resources Conservation and at Hubei University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.'MIGHT HAVE YIELDED DIFFERENT RESULTS' SEEMS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. WHAT RESULTS DID IT YIELD? I'D CUT THIS GRAF
As mentioned above, the WHO-convened team of researchers was told by market authorities, vendors and regular market visitors that there were no live animals sold in the Huanan market. That undermined completely the premise that the Huanan market was the kind of place where live animals from different species are stacked in cages, with urine and fecal material drips from one cage to the one below it, where there are splatters of blood and guts from animals, and lots of potential for the spread of diseases from one species to another (including Homo sapiens). Instead, the market (and one other one known to have been selling live wild animals in 2019) was presented as selling only frozen wild animals and aquatic species and things unlikely to be the source of SARS-CoV-2. The WHO researchers were told there were frozen ferret badgers and other wildlife found in freezers. Some of the carcasses actually came from Yunnan, the province where the closest coronavirus related to SARS-CoV-2 was found in bats -- thus establishing a potential route from Yunnan to Wuhan in wildlife. That was actually important. When the researchers showed their Chinese counterparts photos

of caged raccoon dogs taken in the Huanan market by Prof. Edward Holmes five or six years earlier, they were told by Chinese scientists that the photos may have been faked, and that the market had ceased selling such live animals anyway. The WHO researchers saw no evidence (empty cages, animal pelts, etc) to dispute what the Chinese scientists told them, although they did smell "animals" -- but were told they were smelling rotten meat, sewage etc. Three people associated with the WHO-led mission told me that they didn't believe the information they were given by anyone associated with the market. But since there was no evidence to the contrary, they were unable to push the Chinese scientists further on this. T**he fact that the mission concluded that frozen, not live wild animals were sold in the market undermined the thesis that Covid resulted from an animal spillover**. And the absence of strong evidence pointing to a spill over from wild animals to humans made the lab-leak theory look, in relative terms, more plausible.

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Six months and two revisions later, the journal's publishers rejected the paper. "They did not think it would have widespread appeal," says Newman, who declined to name the publication [do you want us to say why he won't name it? I don't think it's necessary. There's no upside for scientists to make a publisher look bad (most journals are published by a handful of publishers)] "It caused us, especially our Chinese co-authors, concern that these data would not be taken seriously."

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The manuscript underwent a third revision to include data on China's pangolin trade networks (an earlier study, later contested, had implicated pangolins in the virus's spread to humans)WHO ASKED THAT THIS INFO BE INCLUDED? (I did, because we're trying to explain here why WHO missed the significance of Xiao's evidence. The WHO was slammed by other papers being submitted PLUS Xiao's paper had a weird title. That title seemed relevant to the authors back in January-February 2020, when pangolins were considered a possible SARS-CoV-2-spreading culprit. But in October 2020, pangolins were off the hook, so the title

would have seem irrelevant/unimportant at first glance at WHO). It was then sent to the online journal *Scientific Reports*.

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The China-based researchers had reason to be cautious. In February 2020, the China Center for Disease Control (CCDC lets not use "CCDC". It's not commonly used like the U.S. "CDC" is, and it's going to force readers to go back and figure out what the "CCDC" is) prohibited scientists working on Covid-relate

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~~CCDC~~ Disease detectives arriving from Beijing (think this makes it clear that these are China's disease "feds" arriving) on the first day of 2020 ordered environmental samples to be collected from drains and other surfaces at the market. Some 585 specimens were tested, of which 33 turned out to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. “All current evidence points to wild animals sold illegally,” China CDC Director George Gao and colleagues wrote in the agency’s weekly bulletin in late January. All but two of the positive specimens came from a cavernous and poorly-ventilated section of the market’s western wing, where many shops sold animals.

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~~The information void kindled a raging political debate that’s already caused a trade war between China and Australia, as nations~~ demand to know ~~how Covid emerged.~~ Australia in April 2020 called for a global inquiryinto the origins of the pandemic, including China’s handling of the initial outbreak. Days later, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo used part of his Earth Day message to call on China to close its wet markets to “reduce risks to human health inside and outside of China.”

Based on a discussion today with someone with knowledge of the WHO-led mission to Wuhan in Jan-Feb 2021, a significant catalyst for China's defensiveness is the emergence of **claims for reparations** that extended from the finger-pointing at China's wet markets. These surfaced in April 2020, and have continued as recently as June 2021 (when Trump pushed for it again at a rally in the Midwest)

SO IS THIS THE POINT AT WHICH CHINA, WHICH

SEEMINGLY ACCEPTED THE WET MARKET HYPOTHESIS, BEGAN TRYING TO CREATE A DIFFERENT NARRATIVE? (I think it was incremental. I believe China was embarrassed that its citizens were still buying wild animals in wet markets to eat -- a well-known hazard for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago. But that embarrassment/humiliation morphed into rigid denial and obfuscation when governments began openly blaming the Chinese Communist Party and agitating for China to pay reparations for the pandemic. See these clips:

- USA Today: Blame the Chinese Communist Party for the coronavirus crisis: Coronavirus crisis proves communism is still a grave threat to the entire world. If Beijing had just been honest, the pandemic could be preventable. April 5, 2020
- Yahoo News: More than half of Americans think China should pay coronavirus reparations, poll shows April 9, 2020
- Voice of America: Americans Join Coronavirus Lawsuit to Make China Pay April 10, 2020
- Washington Post Opinion: China must pay reparations to Africa for its coronavirus failuresApril 16, 2020
- Reuters: In a first, Missouri sues China over coronavirus economic losses April 22, 2020
- Washington Post: Missouri is suing China over the coronavirus pandemic. It's the latest conservative gambit, April 22, 2020
- New York Post: Top German paper demands $165 billion coronavirus reparations from China April 22, 2020
- Attorney General Fitch Prepares to Sue China on Behalf of Mississippians April 22, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump on U.S. Seeking Compensation From China Over COVID-19: 'We Have Not Determined the Final Amount' April 28, 2020
- The Guardian: Trump says China could have stopped Covid-19 and suggests US will seek damages April 28, 2020
- Intelligencer: Trump Thinks He Can Make China Pay for the Virus Like Mexico Paid for the Wall, April 30, 2020
- Washington Post: U.S. officials crafting retaliatory actions against China over coronavirus as President Trump fumes April 30, 2020
- Lawfare: Does China Really Owe the

World Trillions of Dollars? May 7, 2020
- Fortune: Trump's demand that China pay coronavirus reparations evokes an ugly history May 8, 2020
- South China Morning Post: Why China won't be paying the West coronavirus reparations any time soon May 15, 2020
- Deccan Herald, India: Abhijit Bhattacharyya | Why China needs to pay reparations to the world June 4, 2020
- Why calls for reparations from China for coronavirus are an unfeasible distraction June 9, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump Demands China 'Pay Reparations' for COVID, Says $10 Trillion Not Enough June 12, 2021

In response, Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied "wildlife wet markets" existed in the country. Government researchersCAN WE BE MORE SPECIFIC? Twenty-two researchers from mostly nationally-funded laboratories (I think it's the Chinese equivalent of the NIH in the U.S.) and institutes attached to the Chinese Academy of Sciences) now dismiss the market hypothesis completely. "SARS-CoV-2 could not have possibly evolved in an animal market in a big city and even less likely in a laboratory," they wrote in a paper released last month ahead of publicationWHERE/WHENWILL IT BE PUBLISHED? It was released as a "pre-print" on a Chinese academic repository ahead of publication that appears to be managed/owned by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Papers are usually released in pre-print form before they have been accepted for publication or peer-reviewed as a way of expediting public access to the information. In this case, there is no information to suggest if, where or when the paper will be published.

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A more recent paperBY WHOM? (China CDC's Gao and eight other scientists mostly from the Chinese of Academy of Sciences' institutes) contends that the virus may have been imported from multiple locations worldwide, including parts of Europe where mink are raised in areas inhabited also by horseshoe bats known to harbor coronaviruses. "The official narrative changed not because the evidence changed," says Robert Garry, a professor of microbiology and immunology

at Tulane University's School of Medicine in New Orleans "A spillover from a wet market was what caused SARS, and, embarrassingly for China, those wet markets were never shut down." Garry is the co-author of one of the earliest papers on the origins of Covid but wasn't involved in the research on Wuhan's markets.

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I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT POINT THIS GRAF IS TRYING TO MAKE. This is intended to demonstrate the kind of gaslighting that has occurred. Some of the WHO-led researchers are veterinarians and zoologists -- they know what animals smell like, and could smell their lingering presence a year later, but were told essentially that it was impossible that they were smelling animals because **there "were no live animals there"**.) The researchers noted a mixed smell of animals and disinfectant in some areas of the market, but they were told by the market's manager that they were probably smelling the lingering stench of rotten meat and sewage, according to a joint WHO-China report. [should we add "according to Laing Wannian etc here? Liang Wannian was the leader of the Chinese research team collaborating jointly with the WHO-led research team. The source for the above description are in the annexes to the official joint WHO-China report released at the end of March 2021.]

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Earlier the same day, the international research team visited Wuhan's larger Baishazhou market, where Xiao had regularly surveyed two sellers of live wild animals. Yet the group was told only frozen food, ingredients, and kitchenware were on offer there. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist who led the Chinese experts collaborating with the WHO-convened team, says his group had no knowledge of Xiao's data either. [if the above information on what the delegation saw all comes from this same source, maybe we should include his name higher up (The source for the description of what the origins researchers saw on Jan. 31, 2021, comes from the official 120-page joint WHO-China report and its 193-page annexes, not from Liang. Since we are essentially accusing China of concealing the information that Xiao

documented, we asked Liang at a press conference in late July 2021 when the Chinese team first knew about Xiao's findings -- that the Huanan market and three others in Wuhan were selling live animals permissive to SARS-CoV-2 infection -- and what research China has done subsequently as a follow-up on this information? Liang gave a very long-winded response in Chinese in which he said essentially "we didn't have that information in January-February 2021 when the research team was in Wuhan". I think it's important we keep this to demonstrate that we have tried to ascertain what China knew/has done and have given the Chinese researchers the opportunity to respond. In addition, I have emailed China CDC Director George Gao at least twice and not received any response.]

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Among the earliest clusters of infections recorded in Wuhan, one involved three Covid cases among staff working at a stall in Huanan. One of the employees, a 32-year-old who fell ill on Dec. 19, traded goods back and forth between the Huanan and Baishazhou markets.
WHERE DOES THIS FACT COME FROM? NOT THE REPORT, RIGHT? WHEN DID IT FIRST BECOME KNOWN? This information was from the joint WHO-China report released in March 2021, however, the WHO-led researchers went to the Baishazhou market more as a demonstration by the China team of what a perfectly functioning large food market looks like. The WHO-led team was oblivious to Xiao's research that showed there were at least two stalls in Baishazhou that had been selling live wild animals for human consuption. So this detail and its significance was lost on the WHO researchers at the time.)

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A confirmed case linking two markets that sold wild animals is “very intriguing,”says Stephen Goldstein, a research associate in evolutionary virology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. But tracing any contact the employee might have had with infected wildlife is impossible now that the animals are long gone.WOULD TIMELY PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT HAVE CHANGED THIS? It's unlikely that Xiao et al's paper would have been *published* soon after It was drafted in February 2020,

but it could have been *released* as a pre-print ahead of publication and peer-review that same month. That would have **confirmed** what almost everyone had suspected: that there **was** a flourishing wildlife trade in Wuhan that provides a plausible pathway by which coronavirus-infected wildlife from Yunnan and beyond could have introduced the virus to the city, sparking the Covid outbreak. It's also possible that swift recognition of these potential wild-animal vectors could have allowed scientists to test them for the virus and for antibodies against the virus while they were still alive (perhaps not the ones from Huanan, but wildlife in the three other Wuhan markets). Because of the statements the Chinese authorities had been making in January and February that strongly supported the animal spill over theory, it was assumed that this research was being done. Of course, the pandemic was raging then, so it would have been challenging. But, because of the denial by Chinese researchers that wild animals were being sold in Wuhan wet markets before the pandemic, there was never that level of follow up. At least, if there was, it was never made public.)

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"It seems to me, at a minimum, that local or regional authorities kept that informationWHAT INFORMATION? (that Wuhan had a flourishing live wild animal business going on in its wet markets before the pandemic) quiet deliberately," Goldstein says. "It's incredible to me that people theorize about one type of cover-up, but an obvious cover-up is staring them right in the face."

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Date: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 2:24:11 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 2:21:52 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

I've got to say it's the first time I've heard a 324-word letter to lancet in support of foreign scientists being sent death threats "thuggery" and "bullying".

Meanwhile, after a terrible week, The Daily Mail reporters have now come to my house, taken pictures with a long lens as the cops came to move them on. They've also harassed both of my brothers in the UK and Sweden, and been calling my brother's wife in Sweden.

There's a concerted effort to get the Lancet authors to rescind authorship. Charlie Calisher told me this week he now is "leaning towards the lab leak". I've got Board members, partners, funders calling me up. At this point, I can't even speak out because when I do it's mis-quoted and used to drive more harassment.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:10 PM
To: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6] <
Subject: FW: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

O God!!!!! Not Peter P!

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <gfolkers@niaid.nih.gov>
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:02 PM
Subject: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

Friday, Jun 4th 2021

Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

- **EXCLUSIVE: Peter Palese has U-turned after claiming virus was natural in origin**
- **New York microbiologist signed letter in Lancet denouncing all other theories**
- **'Bullying' letter has been described as ostracizing dissenting voices in science**

By Joe Davies For Mailonline
Published: 12:11 EDT, 4 June 2021 | Updated: 13:46 EDT, 4 June 2021



Dr Peter Palese, a professor of microbiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, has U-turned after previously supporting a letter denying that COVID-19 could've leaked from a Wuhan lab

One of the 27 Covid lab leak deniers who signed a letter denouncing the theory that the virus escaped from a lab in Wuhan has now called for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origins, MailOnline can reveal.

Dr Peter Palese, a microbiologist at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, signed the letter in the Lancet in February last year claiming the virus could only have been natural in origin and to suggest otherwise would create 'fear, rumors, and prejudice'.

The 'bullying' letter was criticized by experts for ostracizing anyone offering different opinions on the virus' origins, dismissing them as conspiracy theorists.

It is only now, nearly 16 months after that letter was published in the world-renowned medical journal, that the theory Covid was accidentally leaked from a lab in Wuhan is being looked at seriously.

US President **Joe Biden** last week ordered intelligence agencies to launch a probe into whether Covid was man-made after all.

But China immediately hit back and called the suggestion a 'conspiracy'.

And now Professor Palese, 77, has made a significant U-turn, admitting all theories on how Covid came about now need proper investigating.

He told MailOnline: 'I believe a thorough investigation about the origin of the Covid-19 virus is needed.

'A lot of disturbing information has surfaced since the Lancet letter I signed, so I want to see answers covering all questions.'

Asked how he was originally approached to sign the letter and what new information had come to light specifically, Professor Palese declined to comment.

Palese spoke out as America's leading pandemic expert Dr. Anthony Fauci continues to face fevered calls to resign after emails revealed that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.

The emails also showed he communicated with Dr. Peter Daszak, the head of a non-profit that funneled U.S. taxpayer dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Biden through his support behind the embattled expert on Friday, saying: 'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci.'

Dr. Daszak - a key architect of the Lancet letter - runs the New York-based, tax payer-funded non-profit EcoHealth Alliance, which has funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Guardian forced to amend article it published by Peter Daszack to reveal his ties to Wuhan lab as Lancet editor voices support for lab leak theory denouncement

The Guardian was forced to amend an article it published by Dr Peter Daszack to include a reference to his work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

The article, published in June last year, was amended three days after its publication.

In the article titled 'Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn't created in a lab', Dr Daszack said the lab-leak theory was a 'chapter in a tale of blame, misinformation and finger-pointing'.

He characterised lab-leak theorists as 'conspiracy theorists' believing in 'frankenviruses'.

The Guardian was forced to amend the original article to highlight Dr Daszack's ties to the Wuhan lab from where some suggest

Covid was accidentally leaked.
The paper said: 'This article was amended on 11 June 2020 to make clear the writer's past work with researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Editor of the Lancet Richard Horton — who published the letter dismissing theories Covid may not have originated naturally in his prestigious scientific journal — Tweeted support for the piece.
He wrote: 'Peter Daszak rejects conspiracy theories about the origins of Covid-19 and he knows more than most of us about coronaviruses.'
Mr Horton has regularly criticised lab-leak theories during the pandemic.
He told the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post it was it is 'not helpful' and 'unfair' to blame China for being the source of the pandemic last year.
He worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli as they investigated and modified coronaviruses.
Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves.
Dr Daszak was one four Brits to sign the letter, including SAGE advisor Sir Jeremy Farrar and two other experts working for the Welcome Trust at the time. The letters' signatories included four others who worked for EcoHealth.
Jamie Metzl, who sits on the World Health Organization's advisory committee on human genome editing and is a form Bill Clinton administration staffer, said Dr Daszak's letter was a 'form of thuggery'.
He said: 'The Lancet letter was scientific propaganda and a form of thuggery and intimidation.
'By labeling anyone with different views a conspiracy theorist, the Lancet letter was the worst form of bullying in full contravention of the scientific method.'
MailOnline has approached the letters' other signatories for comment.
A Freedom of Information Act request revealed Dr Daszak told his fellow signatories in an email that the letter would not be sent under the EcoHealth logo 'and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization of person'.
The emails show he even considered not signing the letter himself, although in the end he did.
The idea, he said was for it to be coming from 'a community supporting our colleagues'.
The letter — titled 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting Covid-19' — praised the Chinese 'who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak'.
It went on to add: 'We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
'Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumors and prejudices that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight against the virus.'
It ended with the words: 'We declare no competing interests.'
The letter proved so influential that it virtually ended debate on the origin of Covid for more than a year.
Anyone who suggested it could have been man-made was shot down amid accusations of anti-Chinese xenophobia.
Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control told **Vanity Fair** he received death threats after floating the theory that the virus could have been man-made.
He said: 'I was threatened and ostracized because I proposed another hypothesis. I expected it from politicians. I didn't expect it from science.'
Dr Peter Daszak, 55, from Manchester, orchestrated a behind-the-scenes 'bullying' campaign to ensure blame for Covid was directed away from a Chinese lab with which he had worked closely.
Dr Daszack worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli (pictured left) as they investigated and modified coronaviruses. Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves
The theory the virus escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology was originally dismissed by left-leaning media outlets last year as a conspiracy theory after it was mentioned by then-President Donald Trump.
But they have now changed course with the launch of the US investigation.
Liberal US outlets, who slammed Mr Trump when he said a year ago said he had 'a high degree of confidence' that the virus escaped from a lab, have finally conceded that he may have been right — after a year ridiculing the suggestion.

Who signed the letter in The Lancet?

- Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Charles Calisher, Colorado State University
- Dennis Carroll, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, Texas
- Rita Colwell, University of Maryland
- Ronald Corley, NEIDL Institute, Boston
- Christian Drosten, Charité – Universitatsmedizin Berlin, Germany
- Luis Enjuanes, National Center of Biotechnology, Madrid

- Jeremy Farrar, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Hume Field, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Josie Golding, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Alexander Gorbalenya, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, Netherlands
- Bart Haagmans, Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- James Hughes, Emory University, Atlanta
- William Karesh, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Gerald Keusch, Boston University
- Sai Kit Lam, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Juan Lubroth, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy
- John Mackenzie, Curtin University, Perth, Australia
- Larry Madoff, Massachusetts Medical School
- Jonna Mazet, University of California at Davis
- Peter Palese, Icahn School of Medicine, New York
- Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa
- Leo Poon, The University of Hong Kong
- Bernard Roizman, University of Chicago
- Linda Saif, The Ohio State University
- Kanta Subbarao, The University of Melbourne, Australia
- Mike Turner, The Wellcome Trust, London

The lab-leak theory was bolstered last week after it was revealed three workers at the Wuhan lab were hospitalized in November, 2019, months before Covid was first discovered in China.

China claims the virus was transmitted to humans from an animal host, with bats and pangolins both named as potential sources. Many scientists agree that is the most likely theory.

Professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Cambridge Ravi Gupta, a member of Nervtag, said the theory has not yet been investigated with 'scientific rigor'.

He told **The Telegraph**: 'The possibility was not adequately explored due to lack of access to primary records by the WHO group. Lab leak has not been scientifically rejected as a cause using [the] scientific rigor that one would expect.'

A soon to be published report by a team of British and Norwegian experts suggests it is possible to trace the creation of the virus to research in China that began in 2008.

Professor David Relman, a microbiologist at Stanford University, said the theory needs to be investigated by an international consortium of scientists in collaboration with the UN.

He said: 'Ideally, an investigation would rely on an international consortium of scientists under the auspices of many national academies of science working in partnership, in collaboration with an international governance entity, the UN Secretary General's Office, or something of that sort.'

And Harvard epidemiologist Professor Marc Lipsitch said a lab escape scenario 'remains plausible enough that it should be looked into rigorously'.

He told the paper: 'This is not a fringe position, given that multiple European governments and Dr Tedros have said the same.'

He said that while scientists are not saying a lab origin is more likely than a natural one, a thorough investigation is needed to reveal the cause of the pandemic.

As Dr Daszak's links to the Wuhan lab become clearer, more questions are being asked about his influence over the WHO team that went to China in January and stayed for four weeks searching for answers.

The team was met with resistance in China. Authorities there made them quarantine for two weeks in Wuhan and barred two members completely after they tested positive for coronavirus antibodies.

But critics say the WHO researchers were too cozy with Chinese authorities, who are desperate not to shoulder the blame for a worldwide death toll now approaching 3.6 million.

They claim its members may have been influenced by a tour they took round a 'propaganda museum' which described Wuhan's fight against the virus and the leading role taken by President Xi Jinping.

While China has tried to insist the virus originated elsewhere, academics, politicians and the media have begun to contemplate the possibility it escaped from the WIV - raising suspicions that Chinese officials simply hid evidence of the early spread

The Wuhan Institute of Virology is about 20 miles from the Huanan Seafood Market where the first coronavirus cases are reported to have occurred

In recent weeks, the lab-escape theory has gained ground. Already British intelligence officials, who are helping the US search for the cause of the pandemic that has cost nearly 600,000 American lives, are said to be leaning towards the man-made scenario.

Last week MailOnline revealed two leading scientists had found 'unique fingerprints' in Covid samples that could only have come from lab manipulation.

British Professor Angus Dalgleish and Norwegian scientist Birger Sørensen, wrote that they have had 'prima facie evidence of retro-engineering in China' for a year — but were ignored by academics and major journals.

Did Covid originate in Chinese lab?

The Wuhan Institute of Virology has been collecting numerous coronaviruses from bats ever since the SARS outbreak in 2002.
They have also published papers describing how these bat viruses have interacted with human cells.
US Embassy staff visited the lab in 2018 and 'had grave safety concerns' over the protocols which were being observed at the facility.
The lab is just eight miles from the Huanan wet market which is where the first cluster of infections erupted in Wuhan.
The market is just a few hundred yards from another lab called the Wuhan Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (WHCDC).
The WHCDC kept disease-ridden animals in its labs, including some 605 bats.
Those who support the theory argue that Covid-19 could have leaked from either or both of these facilities and spread to the wet market.
Most argue that this would have been a virus they were studying rather than one which was engineered.
Last year a bombshell paper from the Beijing-sponsored South China University of Technology recounted how bats once attacked a researcher at the WHCDC and 'blood of bat was on his skin.'
The report says: 'Genome sequences from patients were 96% or 89% identical to the Bat CoV ZC45 coronavirus originally found in Rhinolophus affinis (intermediate horseshoe bat).'
It describes how the only native bats are found around 600 miles away from the Wuhan seafood market and that the probability of bats flying from Yunnan and Zhejiang provinces was minimal.
In addition there is little to suggest the local populace eat the bats as evidenced by testimonies of 31 residents and 28 visitors.
Instead the authors point to research being carried out within 300 yards at the WHCDC.
One of the researchers at the WHCDC described quarantining himself for two weeks after a bat's blood got on his skin, according to the report. That same man also quarantined himself after a bat urinated on him.
And he also mentions discovering a live tick from a bat - parasites known for their ability to pass infections through a host animal's blood.
'The WHCDC was also adjacent to the Union Hospital (Figure 1, bottom) where the first group of doctors were infected during this epidemic.' The report says.
'It is plausible that the virus leaked around and some of them contaminated the initial patients in this epidemic, though solid proofs are needed in future study.'
Professor Dalgleish, 71, a vaccine researcher and professor of oncology at St George's Hospital, last year struggled to find a publisher for his paper suggesting the virus's spike protein contains artificially inserted sequences.
He said the research was shunned by the scientific community, who did not want to threaten China or be seen to be agreeing with President Donald Trump — who was a big advocate for the theory the virus was leaked from a lab at the time.
The oncologist said: 'The changes required to infect humans are extremely unlikely to have occurred naturally.'
Professor Dalgleish — who ran for Parliament as a UKIP candidate in 2015 — said the President's use of the terms 'Wuhan flu' and 'China virus' damaged scientific debate on the subject.
He told **The Times**: 'I was basically ostracized. I was fearful — really frightened by the way I was being treated. I was told I was not an expert on coronaviruses and I should just shut up.
'We couldn't believe people with whom we'd collaborated and published papers with in the past would shun us — I was warned I was out of my depth and I shouldn't get into this and I'd make a fool of myself.'
And just last week President Joe Biden ordered another look at the theory as part of a wide-ranging intelligence investigation into the pandemic's origins. He felt it so urgent that he put a 90-day deadline for a conclusion.
Emails from Dr Anthony Fauci, Mr Biden's chief medical advisor, show that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
Fauci says those emails, obtained by Buzzfeed, have been taken out of context.
But he did U-turn about where the virus may have originated this week, saying 'you never know'.
One of them was from Dr Daszak, who thanked Dr Fauci for pushing back on the man-made theory.
In April, Dr Drazak wrote: 'I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for Covid-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Even WHO's Ethiopian director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the report was not extensive enough and more work needed to be done to discover the cause of Covid.
'As far as WHO is concerned, all hypotheses remain on the table,' he said.
'This report is a very important beginning, but it is not the end.'
America is looking at the theory seriously, leading to China hitting out at the 'dark history' of the US intelligence community after President Biden's probe was announced.
Lijian Zhao, foreign ministry spokesman who has been Beijing's point-man in trying to pin blame for the pandemic outside the country's borders, accused the US of trying to shift blame away from its own high Covid case and death counts - and suggested security services may be involved in a cover-up.
Meanwhile Hu Xijin, editor of the state mouthpiece Global Times newspaper, accused Biden of trying to discredit a WHO investigation which concluded that a lab leak is 'unlikely' — although critics have previously blasted that report as a China-centric

whitewash.
China's American embassy also hit out, accusing Biden and his security services of being 'fixated on political manipulation and (the) blame game' in a statement on its website.
No10 officials have called for investigators to probe all theories as to how the Covid pandemic began.
Dominic Cummings this week revealed the PM held meetings when the crisis first began to discuss whether it had 'escaped' from a laboratory and whether the disease had been 'engineered'.

The Lancet letter in full: 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19'

We are public health scientists who have closely followed the emergence of 2019 novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) and are deeply concerned about its impact on global health and wellbeing.
We have watched as the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China, in particular, have worked diligently and effectively to rapidly identify the pathogen behind this outbreak, put in place significant measures to reduce its impact, and share their results transparently with the global health community. This effort has been remarkable.
We sign this statement in solidarity with all scientists and health professionals in China who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak.
We are all in this together, with our Chinese counterparts in the forefront, against this new viral threat.
The rapid, open, and transparent sharing of data on this outbreak is now being threatened by rumours and misinformation around its origins.
We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
Scientists from multiple countries have published and analysed genomes of the causative agent, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), and they overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging pathogens.
This is further supported by a letter from the presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and by the scientific communities they represent.
Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumours, and prejudice that jeopardise our global collaboration in the fight against this virus.
We support the call from the Director-General of WHO to promote scientific evidence and unity over misinformation and conjecture.
We want you, the science and health professionals of China, to know that we stand with you in your fight against this virus.
We invite others to join us in supporting the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of Wuhan and across China. Stand with our colleagues on the frontline!
We speak in one voice. To add your support for this statement, sign our letter online. LM is editor of ProMED-mail. We declare no competing interests.

Sen. Rand Paul says Fauci's emails paint a 'disturbing picture' about what he knew about work inside the Wuhan lab

Sen. **Rand Paul** continued his blitz on Dr. **Anthony Fauci** in the wake of Fauci's email dump, telling Fox that Fauci knew the US was funding gain-of-function research in Wuhan even though he continues to deny it.
The Republican from **Kentucky** told Fox Thursday night that Fauci's emails 'tell me early on that he was very worried' before the pandemic even started.
'There's a disturbing picture. He gets an email or he gets notification of what's going on in Wuhan and immediately sends something to his assistant saying, "We must meet immediately." And in the subject line it says gain of function research in Wuhan.'
While Paul and other Republicans have come after Fauci, Biden reaffirmed his confidence in Fauci in a Friday morning press conference.
The president had actually left the room where he gave the speech when DailyMail.com shouted a question to him about the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.
President Biden stuck his head back in to answer.
'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci,' he said.
Paul's Thursday night interview on Fox - and weeks of public comments that - makes it clear that senator doesn't share have the same faith in Fauci, and he alluded to a February 1, 2020 email exchange between Fauci and Principal NIAID Director Dr. Hugh Auchincloss.
Auchincloss wrote to Fauci to discuss a paper Fauci sent him appearing to question if National Institute of Health (NIH) grants funded gain-of-function research relating to coronaviruses.
In the email to Fauci, Auchincloss said, 'The paper you sent me says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but have since been reviewed and approved by NIH.'
He also noted that a colleague would 'try to determine if we have any distant ties to this work abroad.'
This was one of the 3,200-plus emails obtained and published by Buzzfeed News on Tuesday.
The NIH awarded a $3.7 million grant to EcoHealth Alliance, which is based in the United States, to study the risk of coronaviruses emerging from bats in 2014. EcoHealth Alliance in turn distributed nearly $600,000 of that funding to its collaborator, the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

The senator also took a shot Thursday at the embattled chief medical advisor on Twitter after Amazon and Barnes & Noble pulled his book from their sites because it wasn't supposed to be released until November: 'Oh, I don't know. I think they should publish it. I love science fiction.'

Paul's interview came after Fauci dismissed the recent revelations that he was warned that COVID-19 may have been 'engineered' and said that the emails are easily misunderstood.

During a Wednesday interview on the Donlon Report, Fauci said of the emails, 'The only trouble is they are really ripe to be taken out of context where someone can snip out a sentence in an email without showing the other emails, and say "based on an email from Dr. Fauci, he said such and such" where you don't really have the full context.'

Fauci added that the Wuhan lab 'is a very large lab to the tune of hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars.'

'The grant that we're talking about was $600,000 over five years for an average of about $125,000 to $140,000 a year,' he said.

Fauci also said on Donlon that he 'can't guarantee everything that is going on in the Wuhan lab.'

Paul has been on Fox twice since a trove of Fauci's emails - dating from January to June 2020 - were obtained and published by Buzzfeed on Tuesday.

Within hours of publication, Paul tweeted '#firefauci' and other Republicans, like Majorie Greene Taylor, followed suit.

Until recently, the Wuhan lab leak was at best a fringe theory, and it has been mostly laughed off by many scientists. The general consensus on COVID-19's origin was that it jumped from a bat to a human in the Wuhan market.

Despite the recent scrutiny, Fauci continues to say that's what he believes happened.

During Senate committee hearings in early May, Paul sparred with Fauci over the two origin theories and said the lab leak is a real possibility that's not being acknowledged.

Instead of investigating the cause of COVID-19 'government authorities - self-interested in continuing gain of function research - say there's nothing to see here,' Paul said during the May 11 hearing.

'To arrive at the truth, the U.S. government should admit that the Wuhan Virology Institute was experimenting to enhance the coronavirus' ability to infect humans,' he said.

The lab leak theory is now one that President Joe Biden wants investigated.

Last week, Biden ordered a 90-day review to investigate the possibility and several high-profile public health experts have come out in recent months saying they believe that's how COVID-19 started.

British intelligence also reportedly assessed the theory recently and upgraded its likeliness from 'remote' to 'feasible'.

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Date: Wed, 28 Apr 2021 1:01:04 PM -0400
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments: U.S. Aims to Shape New Phase of WHO-Led Probe Into Origin of Covid-19 - WSJ.pdf

The WSJ article is probably this one, which came out yesterday and represents a bit of a winding back of the US State Depts hard stance on WHO origins mission report:

https://www.wsj.com/articles/u- s-aims-to-shape-new-phase-of-who-led-probe-into-origin-of-covid-19-11619547836?reflink=desktopwebshare_twitter

I've attached it as a pdf also.

Despite the headline, it says that the US will not be pushing for an independent investigation of a lab leak from WIV, that this now would need a whistleblower to find out more info. They call for full and rapid phase 2 of the WHO work. That's exactly what the report says needs to be done, and by the way, exactly what we're doing – weekly calls to design next phase of work. It makes you realize that the whole US stance was pure politics to make Biden look strong against China to continue to build his narrow support in the independents…

The 'whistleblower' comment is a bit of a cop out from my point of view – either they believe there is a lab leak and should demand an investigation, or they basically know there wasn't and should stop implying it – it's bad for public health to push conspiracies!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 11:05 AM

To: Peter Daszak [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6] g >; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today

And what article in WSJ is this referring to? If you also have a link send it on. Thanks.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6] Rich Roberts < [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today
Importance: High

Really good to see that language below. Is this related to Francis Collins testifying before House Energy & Commerce Committee today (11am) on Long Covid?

https://energycommerce.house.gov/committee- activity/hearings/hearing- on-the-long-haul-forging-a-path-through-the-lingering-effects-of

Looks like all of this US undermining the WHO report was simply political activity from State Dept to beat their chests re. China and keep the moderate Republican vote.

I hope this can be pulled back round – it's done some serious damage to the WHO report.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:20 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 g >; Gerald Keusch b6 >; Rich Roberts b6 ;
Robert Kessler b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Fwd: WSJ COVID origins article today

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >
> **Date:** April 28, 2021 at 10:18:03 EDT
> **To:** David Morens b6
> **Subject: Fwd: WSJ COVID origins article today**

> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:

> > **From:** "Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> > **Date:** April 28, 2021 at 09:57:33 EDT
> > **To:** NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov >
> > **Subject: FW: WSJ COVID origins article today**

> > ---

> > **From:** Mciff, Colin (HHS/OS/OGA) b6
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021 9:55 AM
> > **To:** Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Hall, Bill (HHS/ASPA) b6
> > Pace, Loyce (HHS/OS/OGA) b6 Tatem, Anne (HHS/OS/ASL b6
> > Espinosa, Kimberly (HHS/ASL) b6
> > **Cc:** Berger, Sherri (CDC/OCOO/OD) b6
> > **Subject:** RE: WSJ COVID origins article today

> > All, here are the points you are cleared to use for the hearings this morning.

> > - **Since the release of the Phase 1 WHO-led study and report into the origins of COVID-19, U.S. government scientists and experts have continued to evaluate it, to provide an independent technical assessment of the evidence provided, including what further studies would be critical in determining the source of the virus.**
> > - **In the U.S.-led joint statement signed by a cross-regional coalition of 13 other countries, we urged the WHO to commence phase 2 without further delay, in a way that is transparent, expert-led, and free from interference.**

- **The origins inquiry must be science-based and have access to the best information available.**
- **It is a *completely normal scientific process*—in the middle of an ongoing pandemic no less—to have experts review emerging data and information, and discuss openly the optimal studies for better understanding the origins of the pandemic.**
- **To that end, the United States stands ready to collaborate with the WHO and other Member States on key elements that would strengthen experts' ability determine the origins of the virus as they embark on phase 2 of the study.**

Let us know if you have any questions or need additional follow up,

Colin

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Date: Tue, 1 Jun 2021 8:29:42 AM -0400
Sent: Tue, 1 Jun 2021 8:29:41 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Vanity Fair journalist: quick question....
From: David Morens [b6]
To: Katherine Eban [b6]
BCC: [b6]

Not sure i understand the question. Initially it would have been examined for gof issues but none were found

when the grant was terminated there were said to be gof issues, but when challenged, nih backed down and said it was not terminated, but restored, but not funded, apparently as a way of avoiding breaking nih rules. At no point did it get reviewed under P3CO, as far as i know, since there was never anything in it that was anywhere near gof. It's my understanding that Ralph Baric's chimera work with EHA viruses was done separately, but that was blessed by NIH as non gof. It might have gone to P3CO but if it did it passed muster

I must say these are details i am not sure about; if important you would need to ask Peter or Peter and Ralph

d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 1, 2021, at 07:58, Katherine Eban [b6] > wrote:

David, a quick question for you. Do you know if EcoHealth Alliance's NIAID grant was not reviewed/suspended under the GOF moratorium, or reviewed under P3C0, because it was focused on animal viruses, not human ones?

All best, Katherine

On Sun, May 30, 2021 at 1:50 PM Katherine Eban [b6] wrote:
Thanks David!

On Sun, May 30, 2021 at 1:46 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

Hi Katherine, yeah, I think long-time NIH official or something like that is fine d

On 5/29/2021 8:23 AM, Katherine Eban wrote:

Good morning, David. I hope you're well.

The story we spoke for will likely be running this coming week. We spoke on background, as you recall.

I was hoping to use some of the quotes from our discussion, and wanted to know, could I attribute those to an unnamed long-time NIH official? Or to a longtime NIAID official (which is a slightly smaller, more specific circle)?

Happy to also get on the phone this weekend, if you prefer.

All best, Katherine

--

Katherine Eban
ph: b6
cell: b6
Contributing Editor, *Vanity Fair*
Author, Bottle of Lies: the Inside Story of the Generic Drug Boom
www.katherineeban.com

--

Katherine Eban
ph: b6
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Contributing Editor, *Vanity Fair*
Author, Bottle of Lies: the Inside Story of the Generic Drug Boom
www.katherineeban.com

Date: Sun, 24 Oct 2021 12:29:40 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 24 Oct 2021 12:29:32 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Good news from Wuhan re. the experiments that NIH is trying to throw us under the bus with...
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]; Matthew R.Torsiello [b6];

David - I saw that tony fauci was interviewed on HBO re Rand Paul's latest attack based on Tabak's letter. https://www.axios.com/fauci-fires-back-at-rand-paul-for-slam-on-tonights-axios-on-hbo-6450dec1-e977-46ae-bf37-84044ba9d8fd.html

His responses were great, directly refuting that our work (and NIAID funding) led to covid origins. But he then said this:

" Fauci added that the U.S. "knew what the risk was and what the oversight is" at the Wuhan lab. "Certainly, they should have put their progress report in a timely manner," Fauci said. "No denial of that, and there will be administrative consequences of that."

We'll be responding to Michael Lauer's letter, cc'ing dr Tabak on Wednesday or earlier, but I'll also make sure to send our response to the NIAID program staff incl Tony so they're aware that we DID follow reporting requirements, and that this experiment was notified to NIH 3 years and 6 months ago - on time!

David - could you give Tony a heads up about this so that he doesn't say the wrong thing publicly and also so it doesn't disparage ecohealth any further.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Oct 23, 2021, at 7:43 AM, David Morens [b6] > wrote:
>
> Great news! This what i suspected and hoped would be true. I still think that tactfully pushing back at nih being willful participants in your harassment, privately or otherwise, should be considered. NIH is supposed to be YOUR ally, not the ally of shameless witch hunters. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Oct 23, 2021, at 00:56, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Just wanted to give you some very good news from China just now.

We've checked with Wuhan and they only did the one experiment on humanized mice. It was done during year 4 of our grant and we reported initial results from this as soon as we received them back in 2019. They didn't do viral titers, just genome copies, and we reported lung tissue data and weight loss data. The figure in the year 5 report (filed in 2021 due to grant termination etc) is from the same experiment – it's simply the follow-up histopath and survival data from that same group of mice – all done under BSL3, and all permitted by NIH. I suspected as much today because the pattern is the same for all outcomes: Genome copies per gram in lung and brain, weight loss and survival all increase more rapidly in the chimera SHC014, but level off to insignificant differences by the end of the experiment.

This is good news because it means NIH's assumption that we failed to comply with timely reporting is dead wrong, and we can push back directly to Michael Lauer in our letter about both the timing of our reporting, and about the substance of it on that issue of titers vs. genome copies, and the fact that all variables had equalized by Day 6-8 of the expt.

Breathing a slight sigh of relief here. We'll still be pilloried in the press until this new information comes out, but it gives us a chance for strong but diplomatic pushback that can then be shared with reporters at some point next week…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak [b6] g >

Sent: Friday, October 22, 2021 8:58 AM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]>; 'David Morens' [b6]>
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' [b6] 'Robert Kessler ([b6])' [b6]>
Subject: FW: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Regarding R01AI110964

Jerry and David.

Michael Lauer is now demanding more from us, and has focused on another experiment that WIV did with similar chimeras in mice. He wants to know the date so he can try to claim that we didn't act appropriately and report it rapidly enough.

This experiment is Fig 13 in the progress report. It's genome copies per gram again but we do say in the text that the viral titer was increased. I'll get confirmation about this from Zhengli.

The interim progress report was submitted 2 years late. We started uploading it in July 2019 (on time), but never submitted it because our grant was renewed and there was no way to submit a normal annual report at that point – the system didn't allow it and we didn't realize what we were supposed to do. No one at NIH asked for this report and the fact that the new award was made suggested to us that all was well. We were in constant discussion with NIH staff at the time setting up our new grant details, but again no one clarified that they needed anything more from us. The only notice we got to submit this was a few weeks ago from Michael Lauer, at which point we had to work hard with NIH staff to get the system to accept our report.

Can we set up a zoom call this afternoon to look at these figures so you can advise me what I should say to Michael Lauer?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, October 22, 2021 6:12 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]

Cc: Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] b6
Subject: Please read and acknowledge receipt -- Regarding R01AI110964

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please:

- Confirm receipt of this letter, sent to you on Wednesday, October 20, 2021.
- Provide the dates of work for the experiments described in Figure 13 of the August 3, 2021, RPPR.
- Ensure that all sequences from all the work conducted under this grant are posted immediately to NCBI.

We continue to look forward to receiving all materials by close-of-business Wednesday, October 27, 2021.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
One Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
b6

From: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Date: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 1:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >, Aleksei Chmura < b6 g >
Cc: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" b6
Subject: Regarding R01AI110964

Dear Dr. Chmura and Dr. Daszak

Please see attached.

Sincerely,
Michael S Lauer, MD

Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone
Email b6

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Date: Wed, 26 May 2021 2:01:15 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 26 May 2021 1:58:56 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Invitation to the UK's Spectator podcast - lab leak theory
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6] >;

I also got that invite. I declined. Spectator is a right wing journal and they've published some pretty aggressive lab leak stories recently. Also, Matt Ridley's a full-on anti-China, lab leak aficionado from the early days of the outbreak – avoid like the plague. He's an awful conservative posh twat Brit of the very worst kind – went to Eton, mum and dad were Viscounts. He's not a scientist, but writes about it. He's also a strong Brexit proponent, so that's also pretty damning.

Robert – looks like I dodged a bullet here if they were going to put me in with Matt Ridley!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 11:52 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >; David Morens [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: FW: Invitation to the UK's Spectator podcast - lab leak theory

Gentlemen,
I received the invitation below. My present inclination is to decline this. But I don't know Cindy Yu or the UK Spectator Magazine and wonder if she/it is legitimate. If the answer is a known known and it is yes I will consider the request further, but with little enthusiasm for any press reporting.

Jerry

From: Cindy Yu [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 4:59 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Invitation to the UK's Spectator podcast - lab leak theory

Dear Professor Keusch,

I hope you are well. I'm the Broadcast Editor of the UK's Spectator magazine. We produce a weekly podcast discussing some of the issues in the magazine each week, and for the upcoming episode, I'm looking to produce a discussion on the lab leak theory, based on our upcoming cover article. The article argues that the idea of an accidental leak from the WIV can't – and hasn't – been ruled out by the existing evidence. I wondered if you might be interested in joining a podcast discussion with the author of the article, science journalist Matt Ridley, to discuss?

As a leading expert of infectious diseases, it'd be hugely instructive to hear from your expertise. I understand that there's been a lot of emotion and hyperbole when it comes to this topic (I'm Chinese!) but this article is clear that it is not saying that a) the virus was genetically engineered or b) the virus was deliberately released. Matt is arguing that its natural origins does not rule out an accidental leak, and Chinese opaqueness has made the issue worse, in reference to the WHO inquiry.

Might you be interested in joining? It will be a civil conversation even if you do disagree, as we would much prefer to shed light than heat, especially on controversial issues. It would be a 10 minute recording tomorrow down the line.

Do let me know what might be possible – we'd be honoured to have you.

Best,

Cindy

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Date: Sat, 5 Jun 2021 12:43:46 PM -0400

Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

To: Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6];
Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]; Karen Goraleski [b6]; Jacobson, Julie [b6] [b6]; Stephen Popper [b6]
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

CC: [b6] Dan Bausch [b6] [b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6] [b6];

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Phil here are my thoughts…..

I feel that "we" need to arrive at a consensus of what to do. We could do something, as many have suggested, or nothing at this time, as several have urged.

That Charlie Calisher (who coauthored our article last year) has had second thoughts, suggests that ASTMH members don't have consensus on at least some issues. To me that suggests it would be difficult to write something/things that take an ASTMH position, although views of individual scientists within ASTMH should be fine.

Of several related things that might be written about singly or together are:

Man-made virus origin

Lab leak origin

Grant termination issues

Gain of function issues

Importance of continuing collaborative international research on sarbeco- and merbeco-virus

Last year's two papers covered the first 3 of the items above, and my sense is that we may not have unanimity on the first two of those. If we did a one year update we might have to do some finessing.

The third issue, grant termination, is something I would personally have difficulty doing since my boss, Tony, might take the heat, and I can't throw him under the bus, especially as he is working hard behind the scenes to undo the damage.

Gain of function is something that could be written about, but it is a bit tangential and in any case related to the man-made virus issue.

The issue of the importance of continuing sarbeco research is the easiest life, and if the focus was on that it would perhaps be possible to slip in a side dish of the unlikelihood of the first 2 issues, and perhaps the others as well.

I think that if we do tackle the first two subjects it will be a problem representing the Society. In my view, it would ideally be a paper by scientists themselves, not the Society as a whole.

The one year follow up, which I and several others have raised, would have to be such a paper, but several of us on this email have advised against doing even that.

So, where are we?

I look to the leadership, you Phil, Presidents past present and future, Karen, and other leaders to help steer this forward.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) b6
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 10:19 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 >; Karen Goraleski b6 >; Jacobson, Julie b6 b6 >; Stephen Popper b6 >; b6 b6 b6 Dan Bausch b6 b6 >; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) ; Peter Daszak b6 b6 Rich Roberts b6 b6
Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

David, Jerry, et al,

I'm fully supportive of a follow-up article in the AJTMH on COVID origins. The sooner the better. I suggest working, despite the craziness, on a fully reasoned and rational discussion, admitting uncertainty, but not implying that uncertainty supports a possibility with no scientific support. After the long, thoughtful piece last year, we might go with a short editorial format (~1000 words) this year, but alternatively this piece could again be a longer Perspective if this seems appropriate. I'm happy to help with writing if desired, but of course I'm not an expert in this area, and we have many experts involved.

Regards,

Phil

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6

Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:14 PM

To: Keusch, Gerald T b6

Cc: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 Karen Goraleski b6 Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) b6 ; Jacobson, Julie b6 b6 ; Stephen Popper b6 b6 b6 Dan Bausch b6 b6 Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Peter Daszak ( ) b6 ; Rich Roberts b6

Subject: Re: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

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This message came from outside your organization.

Jerry, i think that's a good idea. I floated the thought of something similar a few days ago

Let's hear again from Karen, Phil, Julie, Joel, Dan Christine and the others. This is doable altho the details are to be determined.
d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 4, 2021, at 17:08, Keusch, Gerald T b6 wrote:

I was thinking along the same lines. At least today two Washington Post journalists said some rational things about the spillover of CoV-2 to the human population.

It seems to me there should be a one year reassessment of the article published last year, with all of us continuing to support the most likely evidence supported pathways rather than the evidence free lab leak scenario, and why the heat of the debate as currently being framed (it is essentially free of any light) will prevent any non-political international science based approach to move forward.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6

Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 4:35 PM

To: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 >; Karen Goraleski b6 >; Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) b6 >; Jacobson, Julie b6

b6 >; Stephen Popper [b6]
; Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6] ;
[b6] Dan Bausch [b6] k) <
[b6]

Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak ([b6]) [b6] >; Rich Roberts ([b6] [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Subject: FW: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

Dear ASTMH colleagues,

As of today, shockingly, our own Charlie Calisher, who has been involved in so-called GOF research, and who coauthored last year's ASTMH paper, and who has been an esteemed colleague of mine for 45+ years, told the press in two separate interviews that he now thinks the lab leak theory is possible. Peter Palese, an esteemed researcher who has done and been accused of GOF research today said the same. I am very depressed by this, as I know these men and their scientific creds and their integrity.

What is going on?

Possibility no. 1: I am totally crazy and the whole world is a conspiracy that I am blind to.

Possibility no. 2: this is a McCarthy-era witch hunt story and good people are being drawn into it from fear, moral confusion, or a weak inability to evaluate scientific evidence I (I rather hope it's not the latter)….

Before deciding on which of these two, I would recommend seeing the play, or more conveniently and quickly the movie made from it, of Arthur Miller's McCarthy-era classic "The Crucible". I went through all of this as a kid. This whole thing is to me déjà vu all over again.

I don't know what, if anything, ASTMH can or should do, but let us at least agree that this is one of the most dangerous attacks on science in memory.

Surely we should have a voice in some sphere.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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[b6]

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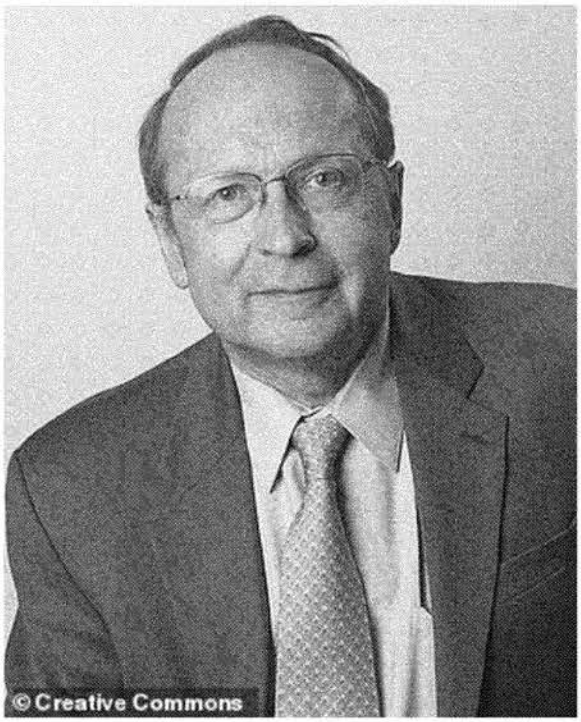
Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

- **EXCLUSIVE: Peter Palese has U-turned after claiming virus was natural in origin**
- **New York microbiologist signed letter in Lancet denouncing all other theories**
- **'Bullying' letter has been described as ostracizing dissenting voices in science**

By Joe Davies For Mailonline
Published: 12:11 EDT, 4 June 2021 | Updated: 13:46 EDT, 4 June 2021



Dr Peter Palese, a professor of microbiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, has U-turned after previously supporting a letter denying that COVID-19 could've leaked from a Wuhan lab

One of the 27 Covid lab leak deniers who signed a letter denouncing the theory that the virus escaped from a lab in Wuhan has now called for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origins, MailOnline can reveal.

Dr Peter Palese, a microbiologist at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, signed the letter in the Lancet in February last year claiming the virus could only have been natural in origin and to suggest otherwise would create 'fear, rumors, and prejudice'.

The 'bullying' letter was criticized by experts for ostracizing anyone offering different opinions on the virus' origins,

dismissing them as conspiracy theorists.
It is only now, nearly 16 months after that letter was published in the world-renowned medical journal, that the theory Covid was accidentally leaked from a lab in Wuhan is being looked at seriously.
US President **Joe Biden** last week ordered intelligence agencies to launch a probe into whether Covid was man-made after all. But **China** immediately hit back and called the suggestion a 'conspiracy'.
And now Professor Palese, 77, has made a significant U-turn, admitting all theories on how Covid came about now need proper investigating.
He told MailOnline: 'I believe a thorough investigation about the origin of the Covid-19 virus is needed.
'A lot of disturbing information has surfaced since the Lancet letter I signed, so I want to see answers covering all questions.'
Asked how he was originally approached to sign the letter and what new information had come to light specifically, Professor Palese declined to comment.
Palese spoke out as America's leading pandemic expert Dr. Anthony Fauci continues to face fevered calls to resign after emails revealed that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
The emails also showed he communicated with Dr. Peter Daszak, the head of a non-profit that funneled U.S. taxpayer dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
Biden through his support behind the embattled expert on Friday, saying: 'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci.'
Dr. Daszak - a key architect of the Lancet letter - runs the New York-based, tax payer-funded non-profit EcoHealth Alliance, which has funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Guardian forced to amend article it published by Peter Daszack to reveal his ties to Wuhan lab as Lancet editor voices support for lab leak theory denouncement

The Guardian was forced to amend an article it published by Dr Peter Daszack to include a reference to his work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
The article, published in June last year, was amended three days after its publication.
In the article titled 'Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn't created in a lab', Dr Daszack said the lab-leak theory was a 'chapter in a tale of blame, misinformation and finger-pointing'.
He characterised lab-leak theorists as 'conspiracy theorists' believing in 'frankenviruses'.
The Guardian was forced to amend the original article to highlight Dr Daszack's ties to the Wuhan lab from where some suggest Covid was accidentally leaked.
The paper said: 'This article was amended on 11 June 2020 to make clear the writer's past work with researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Editor of the Lancet Richard Horton — who published the letter dismissing theories Covid may not have originated naturally in his prestigious scientific journal — Tweeted support for the piece.
He wrote: 'Peter Daszak rejects conspiracy theories about the origins of Covid-19 and he knows more than most of us about coronaviruses.'
Mr Horton has regularly criticised lab-leak theories during the pandemic.
He told the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post it was it is 'not helpful' and 'unfair' to blame China for being the source of the pandemic last year.
He worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli as they investigated and modified coronaviruses.
Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves.
Dr Daszak was one four Brits to sign the letter, including SAGE advisor Sir Jeremy Farrar and two other experts working for the Welcome Trust at the time. The letters' signatories included four others who worked for EcoHealth.
Jamie Metzl, who sits on the World Health Organization's advisory committee on human genome editing and is a form Bill Clinton administration staffer, said Dr Daszak's letter was a 'form of thuggery'.
He said: 'The Lancet letter was scientific propaganda and a form of thuggery and intimidation.
'By labeling anyone with different views a conspiracy theorist, the Lancet letter was the worst form of bullying in full contravention of the scientific method.'
MailOnline has approached the letters' other signatories for comment.
A Freedom of Information Act request revealed Dr Daszak told his fellow signatories in an email that the letter would not be sent under the EcoHealth logo 'and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization of person'.
The emails show he even considered not signing the letter himself, although in the end he did.
The idea, he said was for it to be coming from 'a community supporting our colleagues'.
The letter — titled 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting Covid-19' — praised the Chinese 'who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak'.
It went on to add: 'We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
'Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumors and prejudices that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight

against the virus.'
It ended with the words: 'We declare no competing interests.'
The letter proved so influential that it virtually ended debate on the origin of Covid for more than a year.
Anyone who suggested it could have been man-made was shot down amid accusations of anti-Chinese xenophobia.
Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control told **Vanity Fair** he received death threats after floating the theory that the virus could have been man-made.
He said: 'I was threatened and ostracized because I proposed another hypothesis. I expected it from politicians. I didn't expect it from science.'
Dr Peter Daszak, 55, from Manchester, orchestrated a behind-the-scenes 'bullying' campaign to ensure blame for Covid was directed away from a Chinese lab with which he had worked closely.
Dr Daszack worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli (pictured left) as they investigated and modified coronaviruses. Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves
The theory the virus escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology was originally dismissed by left-leaning media outlets last year as a conspiracy theory after it was mentioned by then-President Donald Trump.
But they have now changed course with the launch of the US investigation.
Liberal US outlets, who slammed Mr Trump when he said a year ago said he had 'a high degree of confidence' that the virus escaped from a lab, have finally conceded that he may have been right — after a year ridiculing the suggestion.

Who signed the letter in The Lancet?

- Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Charles Calisher, Colorado State University
- Dennis Carroll, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, Texas
- Rita Colwell, University of Maryland
- Ronald Corley, NEIDL Institute, Boston
- Christian Drosten, Charité – Universitatsmedizin Berlin, Germany
- Luis Enjuanes, National Center of Biotechnology, Madrid
- Jeremy Farrar, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Hume Field, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Josie Golding, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Alexander Gorbalenya, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, Netherlands
- Bart Haagmans, Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- James Hughes, Emory University, Atlanta
- William Karesh, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Gerald Keusch, Boston University
- Sai Kit Lam, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Juan Lubroth, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy
- John Mackenzie, Curtin University, Perth, Australia
- Larry Madoff, Massachusetts Medical School
- Jonna Mazet, University of California at Davis
- Peter Palese, Icahn School of Medicine, New York
- Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa
- Leo Poon, The University of Hong Kong
- Bernard Roizman, University of Chicago
- Linda Saif, The Ohio State University
- Kanta Subbarao, The University of Melbourne, Australia
- Mike Turner, The Wellcome Trust, London

The lab-leak theory was bolstered last week after it was revealed three workers at the Wuhan lab were hospitalized in November, 2019, months before Covid was first discovered in China.
China claims the virus was transmitted to humans from an animal host, with bats and pangolins both named as potential sources. Many scientists agree that is the most likely theory.
Professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Cambridge Ravi Gupta, a member of Nervtag, said the theory has not yet been investigated with 'scientific rigor'.
He told **The Telegraph**: 'The possibility was not adequately explored due to lack of access to primary records by the WHO group. Lab leak has not been scientifically rejected as a cause using [the] scientific rigor that one would expect.'
A soon to be published report by a team of British and Norwegian experts suggests it is possible to trace the creation of the virus to research in China that began in 2008.
Professor David Relman, a microbiologist at Stanford University, said the theory needs to be investigated by an

international consortium of scientists in collaboration with the UN.
He said: 'Ideally, an investigation would rely on an international consortium of scientists under the auspices of many national academies of science working in partnership, in collaboration with an international governance entity, the UN Secretary General's Office, or something of that sort.'
And Harvard epidemiologist Professor Marc Lipsitch said a lab escape scenario 'remains plausible enough that it should be looked into rigorously'.
He told the paper: 'This is not a fringe position, given that multiple European governments and Dr Tedros have said the same.'
He said that while scientists are not saying a lab origin is more likely than a natural one, a thorough investigation is needed to reveal the cause of the pandemic.
As Dr Daszak's links to the Wuhan lab become clearer, more questions are being asked about his influence over the WHO team that went to China in January and stayed for four weeks searching for answers.
The team was met with resistance in China. Authorities there made them quarantine for two weeks in Wuhan and barred two members completely after they tested positive for coronavirus antibodies.
But critics say the WHO researchers were too cozy with Chinese authorities, who are desperate not to shoulder the blame for a worldwide death toll now approaching 3.6 million.
They claim its members may have been influenced by a tour they took round a 'propaganda museum' which described Wuhan's fight against the virus and the leading role taken by President Xi Jinping.
While China has tried to insist the virus originated elsewhere, academics, politicians and the media have begun to contemplate the possibility it escaped from the WIV - raising suspicions that Chinese officials simply hid evidence of the early spread
The Wuhan Institute of Virology is about 20 miles from the Huanan Seafood Market where the first coronavirus cases are reported to have occurred
In recent weeks, the lab-escape theory has gained ground. Already British intelligence officials, who are helping the US search for the cause of the pandemic that has cost nearly 600,000 American lives, are said to be leaning towards the man-made scenario.
Last week MailOnline revealed two leading scientists had found 'unique fingerprints' in Covid samples that could only have come from lab manipulation.
British Professor Angus Dalgleish and Norwegian scientist Birger Sørensen, wrote that they have had 'prima facie evidence of retro-engineering in China' for a year — but were ignored by academics and major journals.

Did Covid originate in Chinese lab?

The Wuhan Institute of Virology has been collecting numerous coronaviruses from bats ever since the SARS outbreak in 2002.
They have also published papers describing how these bat viruses have interacted with human cells.
US Embassy staff visited the lab in 2018 and 'had grave safety concerns' over the protocols which were being observed at the facility.
The lab is just eight miles from the Huanan wet market which is where the first cluster of infections erupted in Wuhan.
The market is just a few hundred yards from another lab called the Wuhan Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (WHCDC).
The WHCDC kept disease-ridden animals in its labs, including some 605 bats.
Those who support the theory argue that Covid-19 could have leaked from either or both of these facilities and spread to the wet market.
Most argue that this would have been a virus they were studying rather than one which was engineered.
Last year a bombshell paper from the Beijing-sponsored South China University of Technology recounted how bats once attacked a researcher at the WHCDC and 'blood of bat was on his skin.'
The report says: 'Genome sequences from patients were 96% or 89% identical to the Bat CoV ZC45 coronavirus originally found in Rhinolophus affinis (intermediate horseshoe bat).'
It describes how the only native bats are found around 600 miles away from the Wuhan seafood market and that the probability of bats flying from Yunnan and Zhejiang provinces was minimal.
In addition there is little to suggest the local populace eat the bats as evidenced by testimonies of 31 residents and 28 visitors.
Instead the authors point to research being carried out within 300 yards at the WHCDC.
One of the researchers at the WHCDC described quarantining himself for two weeks after a bat's blood got on his skin, according to the report. That same man also quarantined himself after a bat urinated on him.
And he also mentions discovering a live tick from a bat - parasites known for their ability to pass infections through a host animal's blood.
'The WHCDC was also adjacent to the Union Hospital (Figure 1, bottom) where the first group of doctors were infected during this epidemic.' The report says.
'It is plausible that the virus leaked around and some of them contaminated the initial patients in this epidemic, though

solid proofs are needed in future study.'
Professor Dalgleish, 71, a vaccine researcher and professor of oncology at St George's Hospital, last year struggled to find a publisher for his paper suggesting the virus's spike protein contains artificially inserted sequences.
He said the research was shunned by the scientific community, who did not want to threaten China or be seen to be agreeing with President Donald Trump — who was a big advocate for the theory the virus was leaked from a lab at the time.
The oncologist said: 'The changes required to infect humans are extremely unlikely to have occurred naturally.'
Professor Dalgleish — who ran for Parliament as a UKIP candidate in 2015 — said the President's use of the terms 'Wuhan flu' and 'China virus' damaged scientific debate on the subject.
He told The Times: 'I was basically ostracized. I was fearful — really frightened by the way I was being treated. I was told I was not an expert on coronaviruses and I should just shut up.
'We couldn't believe people with whom we'd collaborated and published papers with in the past would shun us — I was warned I was out of my depth and I shouldn't get into this and I'd make a fool of myself.'
And just last week President Joe Biden ordered another look at the theory as part of a wide-ranging intelligence investigation into the pandemic's origins. He felt it so urgent that he put a 90-day deadline for a conclusion.
Emails from Dr Anthony Fauci, Mr Biden's chief medical advisor, show that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
Fauci says those emails, obtained by Buzzfeed, have been taken out of context.
But he did U-turn about where the virus may have originated this week, saying 'you never know'.
One of them was from Dr Daszak, who thanked Dr Fauci for pushing back on the man-made theory.
In April, Dr Drazak wrote: 'I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for Covid-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Even WHO's Ethiopian director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the report was not extensive enough and more work needed to be done to discover the cause of Covid.
'As far as WHO is concerned, all hypotheses remain on the table,' he said.
'This report is a very important beginning, but it is not the end.'
America is looking at the theory seriously, leading to China hitting out at the 'dark history' of the US intelligence community after President Biden's probe was announced.
Lijian Zhao, foreign ministry spokesman who has been Beijing's point-man in trying to pin blame for the pandemic outside the country's borders, accused the US of trying to shift blame away from its own high Covid case and death counts - and suggested security services may be involved in a cover-up.
Meanwhile Hu Xijin, editor of the state mouthpiece Global Times newspaper, accused Biden of trying to discredit a WHO investigation which concluded that a lab leak is 'unlikely' — although critics have previously blasted that report as a China-centric whitewash.
China's American embassy also hit out, accusing Biden and his security services of being 'fixated on political manipulation and (the) blame game' in a statement on its website.
No10 officials have called for investigators to probe all theories as to how the Covid pandemic began.
Dominic Cummings this week revealed the PM held meetings when the crisis first began to discuss whether it had 'escaped' from a laboratory and whether the disease had been 'engineered'.

The Lancet letter in full: 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19'

We are public health scientists who have closely followed the emergence of 2019 novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) and are deeply concerned about its impact on global health and wellbeing.
We have watched as the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China, in particular, have worked diligently and effectively to rapidly identify the pathogen behind this outbreak, put in place significant measures to reduce its impact, and share their results transparently with the global health community. This effort has been remarkable.
We sign this statement in solidarity with all scientists and health professionals in China who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak.
We are all in this together, with our Chinese counterparts in the forefront, against this new viral threat.
The rapid, open, and transparent sharing of data on this outbreak is now being threatened by rumours and misinformation around its origins.
We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
Scientists from multiple countries have published and analysed genomes of the causative agent, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), and they overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging pathogens.
This is further supported by a letter from the presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and by the scientific communities they represent.

Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumours, and prejudice that jeopardise our global collaboration in the fight against this virus.
We support the call from the Director-General of WHO to promote scientific evidence and unity over misinformation and conjecture.
We want you, the science and health professionals of China, to know that we stand with you in your fight against this virus.
We invite others to join us in supporting the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of Wuhan and across China. Stand with our colleagues on the frontline!
We speak in one voice. To add your support for this statement, sign our letter online. LM is editor of ProMED-mail. We declare no competing interests.

Sen. Rand Paul says Fauci's emails paint a 'disturbing picture' about what he knew about work inside the Wuhan lab

Sen. **Rand Paul** continued his blitz on Dr. **Anthony Fauci** in the wake of Fauci's email dump, telling Fox that Fauci knew the US was funding gain-of-function research in Wuhan even though he continues to deny it.
The Republican from **Kentucky** told Fox Thursday night that Fauci's emails 'tell me early on that he was very worried' before the pandemic even started.
'There's a disturbing picture. He gets an email or he gets notification of what's going on in Wuhan and immediately sends something to his assistant saying, "We must meet immediately." And in the subject line it says gain of function research in Wuhan.'
While Paul and other Republicans have come after Fauci, Biden reaffirmed his confidence in Fauci in a Friday morning press conference.
The president had actually left the room where he gave the speech when DailyMail.com shouted a question to him about the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.
President Biden stuck his head back in to answer.
'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci,' he said.
Paul's Thursday night interview on Fox - and weeks of public comments that - makes it clear that senator doesn't share have the same faith in Fauci, and he alluded to a February 1, 2020 email exchange between Fauci and Principal NIAID Director Dr. Hugh Auchincloss.
Auchincloss wrote to Fauci to discuss a paper Fauci sent him appearing to question if National Institute of Health (NIH) grants funded gain-of-function research relating to coronaviruses.
In the email to Fauci, Auchincloss said, 'The paper you sent me says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but have since been reviewed and approved by NIH.'
He also noted that a colleague would 'try to determine if we have any distant ties to this work abroad.'
This was one of the 3,200-plus emails obtained and published by Buzzfeed News on Tuesday.
The NIH awarded a $3.7 million grant to EcoHealth Alliance, which is based in the United States, to study the risk of coronaviruses emerging from bats in 2014. EcoHealth Alliance in turn distributed nearly $600,000 of that funding to its collaborator, the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
The senator also took a shot Thursday at the embattled chief medical advisor on Twitter after Amazon and Barnes & Noble pulled his book from their sites because it wasn't supposed to be released until November: 'Oh, I don't know. I think they should publish it. I love science fiction.'
Paul's interview came after Fauci dismissed the recent revelations that he was warned that COVID-19 may have been 'engineered' and said that the emails are easily misunderstood.
During a Wednesday interview on the Donlon Report, Fauci said of the emails, 'The only trouble is they are really ripe to be taken out of context where someone can snip out a sentence in an email without showing the other emails, and say "based on an email from Dr. Fauci, he said such and such" where you don't really have the full context.'
Fauci added that the Wuhan lab 'is a very large lab to the tune of hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars.'
'The grant that we're talking about was $600,000 over five years for an average of about $125,000 to $140,000 a year,' he said.
Fauci also said on Donlon that he 'can't guarantee everything that is going on in the Wuhan lab.'
Paul has been on Fox twice since a trove of Fauci's emails - dating from January to June 2020 - were obtained and published by Buzzfeed on Tuesday.
Within hours of publication, Paul tweeted '#firefauci' and other Republicans, like Majorie Greene Taylor, followed suit.
Until recently, the Wuhan lab leak was at best a fringe theory, and it has been mostly laughed off by many scientists. The general consensus on COVID-19's origin was that it jumped from a bat to a human in the Wuhan market.
Despite the recent scrutiny, Fauci continues to say that's what he believes happened.
During Senate committee hearings in early May, Paul sparred with Fauci over the two origin theories and said the lab leak is a real possibility that's not being acknowledged.
Instead of investigating the cause of COVID-19 'government authorities - self-interested in continuing gain of function research - say there's nothing to see here,' Paul said during the May 11 hearing.
'To arrive at the truth, the U.S. government should admit that the Wuhan Virology Institute was experimenting to enhance

the coronavirus' ability to infect humans,' he said.
The lab leak theory is now one that President Joe Biden wants investigated.
Last week, Biden ordered a 90-day review to investigate the possibility and several high-profile public health experts have come out in recent months saying they believe that's how COVID-19 started.
British intelligence also reportedly assessed the theory recently and upgraded its likeliness from 'remote' to 'feasible'.

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From: Keusch, Gerald T
To: Peter Daszak
Cc: Aleksei Chmura
Subject: RE: Draft response to Michael Lauer - please review
Date: Monday, October 25, 2021 4:25:31 PM

I just spent some time on the phone with David. He is concerned about the privacy of text and other messages from his cell phone to you and me because he has been using a government phone which permits personal conversations as well. So even things via gmail sent and received on his cell phone could be FOIA'able. This came from Tony in their conversation this morning.

David has multiple things going on this week, including medical appointments, closing on house, and the need to get himself a personal smart phone, and Tony has told him not to be in touch with you and EHA for the time being. He will stay connected to me and via me to you. He wanted to reiterate a couple of things. First, on the timeline to make it more specific with dates and details. Getting in touch with Stemmy is really important and being sure he is well informed, acknowledges the timeline and the communications you mention, and is on board because he will certainly be questioned. He also suggested that you discuss with him the need for NIH to check the records and to confirm when documents were filed and acknowledged. And that when you were aware that it was necessary to file the 5 year report the system shut you out and you presumed that was normal process as you were then into the new grant year 1.

Jerry

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 9:36 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Draft response to Michael Lauer - please review

Peter, i will be meeting with Tony about this later on

Does Stemmy know about this new timeline and will he back you up, including the problem with being shut out of the electronic report system? d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Oct 25, 2021, at 06:37, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Yes – I think you're right. I'm trying to walk the line in this letter between clearly stating that EcoHealth didn't breach reporting requirements, and not causing any damage to NIH, but I do have to respond if they're going to be out there with comments to the press like Francis who is quoted in the Washington Post as saying there'll be consequences for us for 'messing up':

> The grant to EcoHealth has been suspended, Collins said Thursday. "They messed up here. There's going to be some consequences for EcoHealth," he said. But he also said that, had the experimental result been reported earlier, "it would not have been a reason to sort of hit the panic button and say my god this is dangerous stuff."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/10/21/nih-ecohealth-alliance-coronavirus/

I get it that the consequences may not amount to much, but if the public is being told we did risky research and didn't monitor it well, they'll not support us if NIH cancels all our funding.

Please tell Francis, Tony, Dr. Tabak and all that my whole family is being affected when they read comments like this in the press. The toll is awful, and the language they are using is just not fair. We're a $10 million a year non-profit – they represent NIH.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens <b6
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 6:27 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Aleksei Chmura
b6
Subject: Re: Draft response to Michael Lauer - please review

Guys, i will try to weigh in later today as i will be fully swamped until then

Peter, from Tony's numerous recent comments to me, and from what Francis has been vocal about over the past 5 days, they are trying to protect you, which also protects their own reputations

I hate to be too optimistic but maybe the tide is turning? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Oct 24, 2021, at 23:56, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
>
> Hi Jerry and David,
>
> I know it's expecting a lot, but I'm trying to rapidly respond to Michael Lauer's letter demanding IACUCs and all unpublished data, as well as to Tabak's public statement that EcoHealth failed to comply with reporting restrictions.
>
> Please have a look through this letter, and use track changes or comment boxes to suggest where the language needs to be stronger or more wimpy. I'm trying to walk the line between clearly refuting the allegations, and not throwing NIAID program staff under the bus.

I'm hoping to submit this either Monday evening or Tuesday, ahead of the deadline, so we can remove ourselves from the press attacks quickly, and tell people publicly that we complied with reporting requirements.

David – I'll send some bullets for you to pass on to Tony later on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [redacted]
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Tue, 20 Jul 2021 4:52:55 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 20 Jul 2021 4:47:39 PM -0400
Subject: pangolins and early sequence data
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]

Re. the pangolins – there's definitely something interesting going on, but it may be that pangolins are simply getting exposed to bat CoVs as they travel through the wildlife trade. We sampled 100+ pangolins seized by customs in Malaysia before they go on their journey to China, and all were negative (10 yrs of sampling – these are rare animals). Also, we now have a new bat-CoV in Malaysia that falls out between the two pangolin viruses by RdRp short sequence. More work to do on that, but these facts, and the multiple recombination events that bat-CoVs undergo, suggest bats likely have all the elements of the pangolin CoVs genes just waiting to be discovered.

Re. the early sequences – I think you're talking about the deleted partial genomes from the uploaded full genome analyses that were in a paper by Bloom. The China team from the WHO mission has now re-analyzed their early case sequences (whole genomes) along with these partial genomes and while it does give more phylogenetic info, it doesn't change the picture of where the virus likely first started to be amplified significantly, which remains as a best guess Wuhan, but with possibilities of earlier clusters in Guangdong or other parts of China.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:57 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry, I talk to such reporters frequently, usually on background or off the record. I am willing to do that with any reporter you suggest, and may also be able to speak on the record. Yesterday I taped a follow up podcast, fully approved by NIH some months ago (I did the podcast 6+ months ago and so didn't have to go through

censorship for this follow up). In any case, I was very up front with her about this NOT being a lab virus and the danger of shutting down important research. I wasn't very diplomatic, although I will have editing rights before this airs. Time to take the gloves off.

I have spent the last two days ready over 50 manuscripts relating to SARS-CoV-2 origins, including the many complicated papers on phylogenetics of bat and pangolin viruses. This is in preparation from putting pen to paper soon... I have been more and more intrigued by the possibility that the virus is a near descendant of a recombinant bat virus with an imported RBD from a pangolin virus. I spoke with Eddie about that 2-3 weeks ago and he seemed to pooh pooh it, in part because the AA identity was not fully matched by nucleotide identity. But it seemed to me that if the recombination happened some time ago, that might allow for codon optimization. Our phylogeneticist here in the pathogenesis lab has been on vacation, but when he returns I will ask him to drop his flu work long enough to take a look at all these CoV papers. The repeated and growing finding of pangolin viruses from different areas at different times having CoVs with similar - almost identical to SARS-CoV-2 - RBD sequences has to be a clue to something. But pangolins are solitary animals and presumably have no way of interacting with and infecting each other over long distances, unless perhaps they are chronically infected and serve as a reservoir.... Very mysterious.

Peter, question for you: has it been settled about these early case discrepanacies where the Wuhan cases didn't match up with the sequences? Also, does this impact on Eddie's recent great publication and the maps of early cases?

TY, D

On 7/20/2021 12:39 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> I had a long talk with two CNN International reporters who are preparing a story essentially on the politics and the misinformation about the origins controversy. I was talking to them off the record but I decided they were legitimately exploring the issues and would likely be a voice of reason if they were given the necessary space to build their case and it was eventually shown.
>
> I mentioned Peter Hotez to them, among some others, and while I mentioned Peter D as well I also said you were under constant attack and it might well be better to allow others to take up the fight on your behalf. GOF and the Goffers were part of the chat. I have agreed to be interviewed on the record and potentially to do a video session as they were potentially interested in using some of that as part of the report. Rich, I didn't specifically mention your name, but if you would be willing to speak with them I can do that when I next connect.
>
> Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:30 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Tony Fauci's testimony today
Importance: High

I'm delighted to see Tony Fauci fighting to let everyone understand clear line between what is gain-of-function (work EcoHealth does NOT do), and what is not Gain of function (work EcoHealth did do with Wuhan).

It's a shame it will generate publicity, but he did this so well today that I'm hoping it might help get rid of the willful misinformation the Republicans are engaging in…

Here's a news piece on it https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/563874- fauci-paul-doesnt-know-what-hes-talking-about-and-i-want-to-say-that , and there's some pretty exciting video to watch.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFoaBV_cTek

Well done David on your briefing and practice runs!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: My AMA podcast on the origins of COVID19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14 &feature=youtu.be

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

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David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a 'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of

undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora < b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков < b6 ; Leendertz, Fabian [b6 ; Peter Daszak < b6 eendertzF < b6 Keith Hamilton < b6 John Watson < b6 >; DEBBICHE, Hassene < b6 ; Thea Kølsen Fischer [b6 >; BAERT, Primaël [b6 >; SHEATH, Danny < b6 ; Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) [b6 ; STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan < b6 >; DRURY, Patrick Anthony [b6 ; Ken Maeda [b6 >; M.P.G. Koopmans (b6) [b6 ; Hayman, David < b6 y.ac.nz >; IVANOVIC, Dragana [b6 Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Farag [b6 Dominic Dwyer [b6
Cc: RYAN, Michael J. < b6 Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria [b6 ; BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim [b6
Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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<C.L.28.2021 (Origins of SARS-CoV-2).pdf>

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David M Morens b6

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Date: Mon, 22 Feb 2021 12:35:19 PM -0500
Sent: Mon, 22 Feb 2021 12:35:17 PM -0500
Subject: RE: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Shameful. But then it's the NY Post, operating in an echo chamber, and not the Washington Post.

Maybe this calls for a letter of rebuttal to the Washington Post. Fuck the NY Post.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]gov>
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 12:24 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Subject: FW: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6](assistant: Whitney Robinson)
[b6] [b6] [b6]
[b6]

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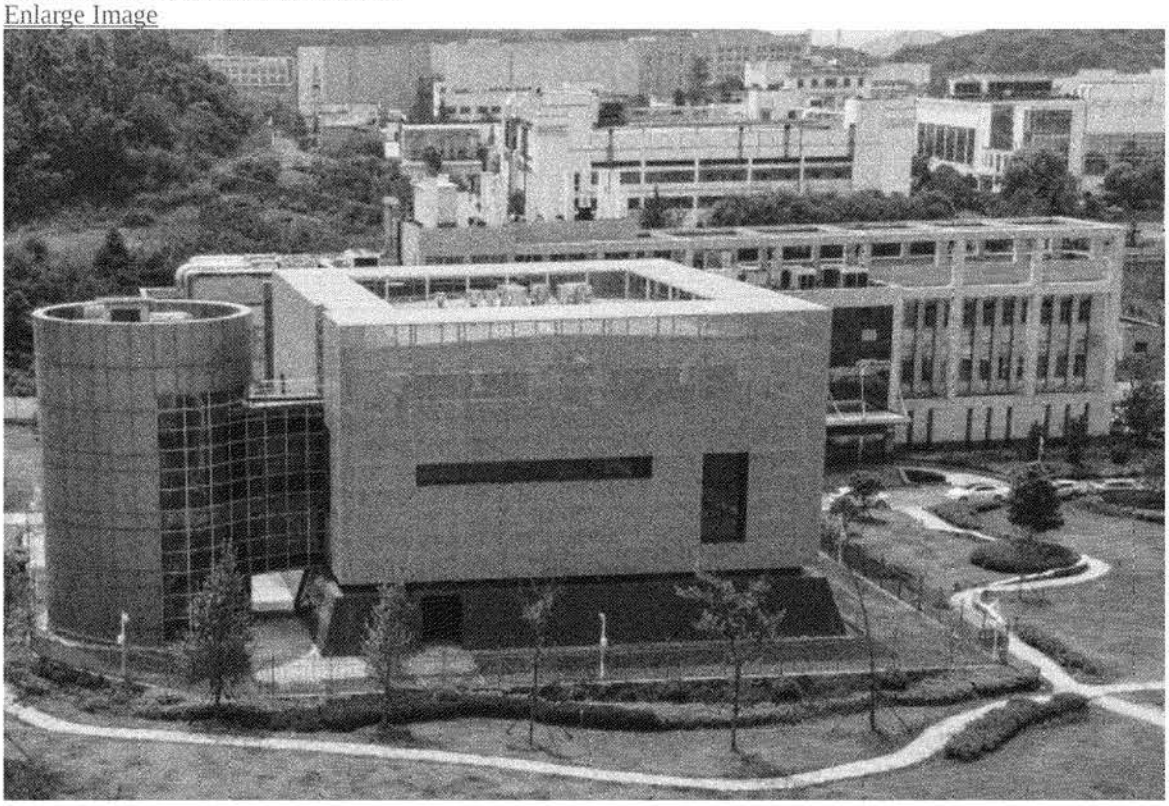
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 8:34 AM
Subject: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

By Post Editorial Board
February 21, 2021 | 5:37pm | Updated
Enlarge Image



The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China. Photo by HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP via Getty Images

The Wuhan Institute of Virology remains the most likely source of the coronavirus pandemic, yet it is set to receive US taxpayer dollars for the next three years. Worse, the cash will fund more animal research.

The National Institutes of Health told the Daily Caller that the Wuhan lab has an active Foreign Assurance file that authorizes it for US funding until 2024. When the virus first broke out, the Wuhan Institute had reportedly been testing coronaviruses in bats with $600,000 of US funding routed via the nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.

The NIH terminated that EcoHealth grant, with the promise to restore it if an independent investigation cleared the Wuhan Institute of involvement in the outbreak. Now a World Health Organization delegation tasked with investigating the lab has preliminarily concluded that a leak was "extremely unlikely," which may let the contract resume. Never mind that the head of the WHO and the US State Department remain unwilling to rule out that possibility.

Here's where it gets really swampy: Not only did the WHO delegation fail to do its own investigation, merely accepting reports from China's government, the WHO team's only American member happens to be the EcoHealth Alliance's president, Peter Daszak — who demands that Washington unequivocally accept the delegation's findings. (This also tells you how pathetic the whole WHO investigation was.)

Anthony Bellotti, who heads nonpartisan watchdog group White Coat Waste Project, called for EcoHealth to be stripped of funding and asked Congress to finally conduct a real investigation into how the pandemic really started.

If this grant goes ahead, you'll know the Biden administration is committed to restoring Washington business-as-usual in all its disgusting ingloriousness.

Filed under Coronavirus, editorial, taxpayers, world health organization, 2/21/21

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Date: Thu, 2 Dec 2021 5:43:14 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 2 Dec 2021 5:43:00 PM -0500
Subject: RE: follow-up from the NAM
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] David Morens [b6] >;
CC: keusch [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]

If any of you are willing to reach out to Victor Dzau, now would be a good time to do it. Right now, they're deciding whether to launch a full investigation into my potential 'misconduct' or not. Once they decide to do that, it will be a long protracted waste of time and energy that will generate negative publicity and more pain for us here at EcoHealth.

One thing you could mention to Victor is that, in addition to the outrageous and obvious lack of substance to these accusations, all of these issues have either already been investigated (e.g. by NIH), or are part of an HHS OIG audit of EcoHealth that's ongoing, or a GAO investigation into the cancelation of our NIH grant (report will come out in summer). In other words, why would NAM consider duplicating the work of these agencies? This could help give him an 'out'.

Another point is that if you actually read the accusations, they're not issues of scientific or professional misconduct (e.g. providing information to Republicans on a Committee is not obligatory), or have already been refuted publicly. You could also let him know that the letter was already made public by the House E&C Republicans, in case he thinks that we're making the NAM process too public. The Republicans already did!: https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/ec-republican-leaders-request-national-academy-of-medicine-investigate-ecohealth-alliance-president-peter-daszak-for-misconduct/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 5:11 PM
To: David Morens [b6] >
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] g >; keusch [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Re: follow-up from the NAM

I will phone you Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: b6

iPhone

On Dec 2, 2021, at 3:24 PM, David Morens b6 wrote:

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Sad..... One would think the NAM had more integrity than that. Guilty 'til proven innocent. Looking at all this from the outside, it doesn't exactly make your NAM club look like a stellar organization. Sorry to say. Time to go watch the fine movie made of Arthur Miller's play The Crucible, which was about the McCarthy era but presciently also about this one. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Dec 2, 2021, at 15:34, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Just keeping you abreast of what the NAM are saying. I don't have a response on my request for the specific policy that says I can't take part in NAM activities while these allegations are under review (I suspect there are none).

However I did get the weird email below saying I should keep all this confidential – maybe it's because Victor's seen your email Jerry.

I don't know if they realize that the Republicans already published the letter in full on their website! Maybe I should let her know that.

I also, ironically got a notice to cast my vote for NAM Home Secretary today, so I voted for this person's rival. I'm sure they'd be equally as opaque, but it's at least some empowerment.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena [b6]
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 1:45 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: follow-up

Peter,

The conduct review process is handled with extreme confidentiality within the NAM and I would

ask that you also consider it a highly confidential process, not to be shared with anyone.

Elena

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH
NAM Home Secretary
University of California, San Francisco

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 3:48 PM
To: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena
Cc: Aleksei Chmura
Subject: RE: follow-up

Thank you for the call today Elena. I've cc'd our Chief-of-Staff, Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who also joined us. I appreciate your explanation and will do my best to adhere to the policies of the NAM as we go through this process.

My only hope is that the review can be as rapid as possible. Our organization has been the focus of a horrific series of political attacks from the hard right wing as part of their political goals regarding Dr. Fauci, NIH and ultimately the Biden administration. These tie up resources and staff answering pages upon pages of false accusations, all carefully worded to give the impression of a thoughtful and sincere inquiry.

Again, I want to reassure you that none of the accusations from Republicans on the House E&C Committee have the slightest bearing in fact. We have acted honorably and with the highest scientific integrity throughout the pandemic, and simply want to be allowed to continue our work without constant, politically-motivated harassment.

sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena b6

Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 6:25 PM
To: b6
Subject: follow-up

Dr. Daszak,

Thank you for speaking with me this afternoon.

In accordance with the NAM's policy related to conduct, I am writing to inform you that we have received written allegations of misconduct. As we undertake our review process, you are not eligible to participate in any NAM and/or NASEM activities for the duration of the review.

Best,
Elena Fuentes-Afflick

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH
NAM Home Secretary
University of California, San Francisco

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Date: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 11:12:48 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 11:12:42 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs.
From: Peter Daszak <[redacted]>
To: Roberts, Rich [redacted]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] Hotez, Peter Jay [redacted] David Morens [redacted]>; Robert Kessler [redacted]>; Jeffrey Sturchio [redacted]

I agree Rich and look forward to working with you on this.

I will send back the document re. an NASEM "Attacks on science" meeting later today with a couple of extra names and the edits others have sent.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Jun 28, 2021, at 9:22 AM, Roberts, Rich [redacted]> wrote:
>
> Peter:
>
> I have been following all of the emails racing back and forth, but find myself overwhelmed by the vitriol that is playing out though the media, including what might have been once considered reliable sources. At this point I do not see a clear path forward that would not just invite further polarization and more attacks.
>
> As for Jeff Sachs, my own reaction would be to tell him to go to hell and just recuse yourself from any role in his commission. After all, it seems unlikely they are going to get any closer to finding out what really happened, especially in terms of getting evidence for a natural origin.
>
> I'm happy to continue to find solutions, but would prefer a route that supported science generally rather than continuing to fan the flames of the lab leak.
>
> Rich
>
> Richard J. Roberts
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:41 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 ; Robert Kessler b6 ; Jeffrey Sturchio b6 >
Subject: Jeff Sachs.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Please see his email to me below, just now.

He's proposing I step off as a commissioner, recuse myself from the origins work and then am put on the one health part of the taskforce. He will also bring on biosafety people.

This would be seen widely as a further step down for me and is not acceptable in my opinion.

He's trying to bully me into a quick response.

I think he's trying to line this up as a done deal before his Wednesday morning call with the rest of the Commissioners.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Jeffrey Sachs b6
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:24 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Ozge Karadag b6 ; Bagenal, Jessamy (ELS-LOW) b6 >; Yanis Ben Amor b6
Subject: Continued work on the task force

Dear Peter,

I would like to pursue a way forward in which you would continue as a member of the task force to provide expertise and inputs on the One Health approach to pandemics, while you would step away from being a commissioner and would recuse yourself from the task force's work on the question of origins of SARS-CoV-2. Hume similarly would recuse himself from any work on the origins question. I will appoint a new acting chair or co-chairs of the task force following consultations with the task force.

I am proposing this two-track approach so that the controversies and issues surrounding your work do not envelope the Commission's work and its final report, while at the same time enabling you to contribute your considerable expertise and experience to the important issues of One Health and the ecology of emerging infectious diseases.

I hope that you find this approach to be satisfactory and reasonable under the circumstances. It is my deeply considered view on how to achieve several important objectives going forward.

I will move forward expeditiously on these issues one way or another, so I would deeply appreciate your timely response.

With best wishes,

Jeff

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Date:	Wed, 4 Aug 2021 2:08:33 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 4 Aug 2021 2:05:52 PM -0400
Subject:	Another personal attack - Rep. Gallagher Today.
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC:	David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments:	image003.png; image004.gif; image005.jpg

The Serengeti metaphor is unfortunately way too realistic here. Here's a statement today from Republican Representative Gallagher. They might as well declare hunting season open to the people who believe these conspiracies and happen to have automatic rifles.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) today released the following statement regarding a new House Foreign Affairs Committee **report** that shows the CCP covered up the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, which likely began at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I commend Rep. McCaul for his work to uncover the origins of COVID-19, pushing forward despite Democrat obstruction. His new report outlines the role Peter Daszak played in spreading disinformation during the critical early days of the pandemic. As evidence mounts in favor of the lab-leak hypothesis, Congress should use every tool at its disposal to understand what happened in Wuhan, why the intelligence community missed it, and how U.S. taxpayer dollars funded dangerous gain-of-function research in Wuhan. Issuing a subpoena to Peter Daszak is an obvious and appropriate next step to get these answers."

Rep. Gallagher has led the charge in investigating the origins of COVID-19. In recent months, he has:

- **Demanded answers** on whether U.S. taxpayer dollars funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology,
- **Highlighted** how Dr. Fauci is not being forthcoming about the government's support of gain-of-function research in Wuhan,
- **Introduced legislation** to declassify all the relevant intelligence surrounding the lab-leak hypothesis,
- **Called** on U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin to release information regarding a cluster of illnesses associated with the October 2019 World Military Games in Wuhan,
- **Introduced** legislation to sanction CCP officials and scientists for lack of COVID-19 transparency,
- **Testified** before the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis about the origins of COVID-19,
- **Outlined** Democrats lack of urgency to hold the CCP accountable for its coverup, and
- **Explained** why understanding the origins of COVID-19 should matter to all Americans.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 12:47 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 >; Peter Daszal b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 ; Aleksei Chmura < b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: House report on Origins

It's just awful, the hate emails I'm getting after the new PLOS Biology piece defending science and scientists are really troubling

Peter Hotez , MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor, Baylor University
Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health
Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6

Fax: 713-798-2299

Baylor College of Medicine | Texas Children's Hospital | BAYLOR UNIVERSITY | TROPICAL MEDICINE

From: Roberts, Rich <b6>
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 11:11 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>
Subject: RE: House report on Origins

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Peter:

It never stops. Best to lie as low as possible – something that animals in Africa learned a long time ago.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 5:59 PM
To: Roberts, Rich <b6>; Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>
Subject: FW: House report on Origins

EXTERNAL SENDER

More attempts to discredit me from the Republicans.

Just forwarding this to Rich and Peter. The Republicans in the House Foreign Affairs Committee have released a 'Covid-19 origins report' in advance of the White House intel report. It re-hashes all the usual conspiracies with no new information at all. However, they are now accusing me of following orders from China in 'covering up' COVID's origins and asking for me to be subpoena'd. Today I've been called the 'Public Face of China's Disinformation Campaign' by one right wing press outlet, and I expect this will drive a follow up cycle of abuse and offense from the Murdoch Press. In fact, I've received multiple requests for comment from reporters already including Josh Rogin in the Washington Post, reporters in the Washington Examiner etc.

Here are some articles:

https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/house- report-names-public-face-of-chinas-disinformation-campaign-on-covid-origin/

https://news.yahoo.com/peter- daszak-subpoenaed-wuhan-lab-183600491.html

https://nypost.com/2021/08/02/gop- investigation-proves-covid-leaked-from-wuhan-lab-report/

https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world- news/2021/08/02/covid- did-leak-wuhan-lab-say-republicans-want-subpoena-british/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:24 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6); Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) b6; Kessler, Robert b b6; Wang Linfa b6
Subject: FW: House report on Origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.

CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:19 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: House report on Origins

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From:	David Morens
To:	Peter Daszak
Cc:	Keusch, Gerald T; Aleksei Chmura
Subject:	Re: Draft response to Michael Lauer - please review
Date:	Monday, October 25, 2021 6:27:47 AM
Attachments:	01 Tabak to Comer Letter.pdf Untitled attachment 25763.htm 02 eRA Commons Year 4 Report Submission Date.pdf Untitled attachment 25766.htm 03 Daszak to Stemmy Email.pdf Untitled attachment 25769.htm 04 Rationale for recombinant virus experiments.pdf Untitled attachment 25772.htm 05 eRA Commons Year 5 Report Submission Date.pdf Untitled attachment 25775.htm 06 SADS and HKU2 data and analyses.pdf Untitled attachment 25778.htm 07 Southeast Asia SARSr-CoV Spillover hotspots analysis.pdf Untitled attachment 25781.htm 08 IACUC & IIAs.pdf Untitled attachment 25784.htm Response to Dr. Lauer October 2021 DRAFT.docx Untitled attachment 25787.htm

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Guys, i will try to weigh in later today as i will be fully swamped until then

Peter, from Tony's numerous recent comments to me, and from what Francis has been vocal about over the past 5 days, they are trying to protect you, which also protects their own reputations

I hate to be too optimistic but maybe the tide is turning? d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Oct 24, 2021, at 23:56, Peter Daszak (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) wrote:

Hi Jerry and David,

I know it's expecting a lot, but I'm trying to rapidly respond to Michael Lauer's letter demanding IACUCs and all unpublished data, as well as to Tabak's public statement that EcoHealth failed to comply with reporting restrictions.

Please have a look through this letter, and use track changes or comment boxes to suggest where the language needs to be stronger or more wimpy. I'm trying to walk the line between clearly refuting the allegations, and not throwing NIAID program staff under the bus.

I'm hoping to submit this either Monday evening or Tuesday, ahead of the deadline, so we can remove ourselves from the press attacks quickly, and tell people publicly that we complied with reporting requirements.

David – I'll send some bullets for you to pass on to Tony later on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date:	Wed, 15 Sep 2021 2:53:52 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 15 Sep 2021 2:53:49 PM -0400
Subject:	FW: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP
From:	"Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6] [b6];
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 10:29 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6] Sturchio, Jeff [b6] [b6]>
Subject: RE: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research

https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

I wouldn't trust them either, given their history which I didn't know. I'll try to remember to copy Robert K, and ping me if I forget.

Many of these things come from our OD news sweeps, which go on 24-7. But they don't get anywhere near everything, as they are more interested in Ton's press coverage than science itself.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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- b6 ssistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 10:10 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6
Cc: Robert Kessler b6 ; Jeff Sturchio b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research
https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

Thanks for sharing David. Please cc Robert Kessler in on these in case he also misses them. I'm also cc'ing Jeff Sturchio who's

working with us to navigate the media attacks at the moment.

This reporter contacted me, and I refused to talk, even though I suspected he would do a decent job. I think I'm the person he says 'supports this sort of research but has been worn down by death threats'.

I actually like the tenor of the story – it's factually correct and points out the danger of people like Lipsitch and Ebright using a false premise to support their efforts to re-litigate 'gain of function'. It's good to see Lipsitch having to be factually correct here and agree that Rand Paul massively overstated their case!

One of the reasons I didn't speak with this reporter, by the way is that the journal (The Intercept) is one of the orgs that's FoIA'd 38 of EcoHealth's NIH grants and annual reports going back to 2001– just wasn't sure I could trust their motives!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 9:55 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Keusch, Jerry <b6
b6
Subject: FW: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
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National Institutes of Health
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
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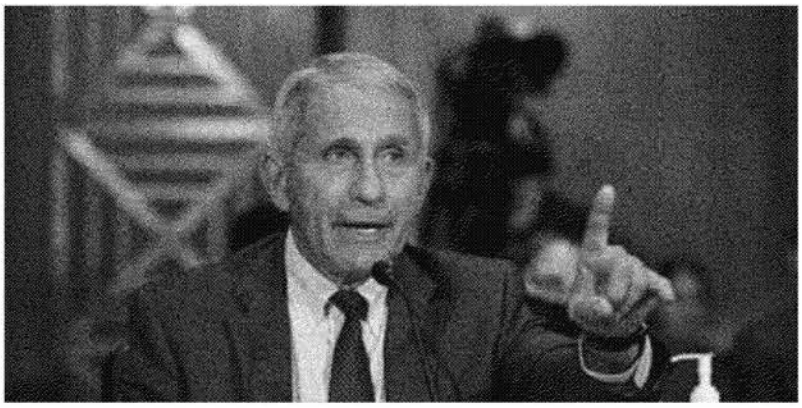
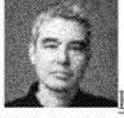
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 2:48 PM
Subject: The Intercept: Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research
https://bit.ly/3iR7zHP



At a Senate hearing on July 20, 2021, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told Sen. Rand Paul that he resented the suggestion that he had lied to Congress. Photo: J. Scott Applewhite/Pool/AFP via Getty Images

Rand Paul's Attack on Anthony Fauci Chills Scientific Debate Over Gain-of-Function Research

By politicizing the debate over virus-modifying research, the senator has thrilled conservatives but discouraged scientists from weighing in.


Robert Mackey
July 27 2021, 10:14 a.m.

A decadelong debate over pandemic preparedness that has divided some of the world's leading biologists into opposing camps, for and against so-called gain-of-function research — in which deadly pathogens that could cause pandemics are artificially enhanced for study in the lab — has all but ground to a halt in the past week, thanks to Sen. Rand Paul.

That's because the Republican senator from Kentucky politicized the argument last week, by cherry-picking expert opinions from critics of the research who call it too risky to pursue, to publicly accuse Dr. Anthony Fauci of lying to Congress, when he said that his National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases had never funded gain-of-function studies at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China.

Paul's made-for-television broadside against Fauci thrilled Fox News hosts and colleagues like Rep. Jim Jordan, the Ohio Republican who has also pushed the debunked conspiracy theory that research financed by Fauci's agency, which some experts describe as gain-of-function, could have led to the development of SARS-CoV-2, the deadly coronavirus that causes the disease Covid-19, in the Wuhan lab. Fauci rejected Paul's claim that research carried out in Wuhan before 2017 with some support from the NIAID met the definition of gain-of-function and pointedly explained that it was impossible to make SARS-CoV-2 from the coronavirus used in that study.

Almost as soon as the heated exchange concluded, the senator's staff uploaded a truncated version of the video on his YouTube channel under the headline, "Dr. Fauci Caught Lying about NIH Funding in Wuhan."

That video was edited by Paul's staff so that it ends before Fauci responded to the senator's harangue by saying, "I totally resent the lie that you are now propagating, senator, because if you look at the viruses that were used in the experiments … it is molecularly impossible … to result in SARS-CoV-2."

On social networks, Republican operatives unconcerned with the facts — like Richard Grenell, the Twitter troll who served as Donald Trump's director of national intelligence for three months — cheered on Paul's attack.

But Paul's false claim that Fauci's supposed support for gain-of-function studies gave him "responsibility for 4 million people dying around the world from a pandemic," and the ensuing frenzy in the conservative media, also caused some previously outspoken biologists who have made the case against such experiments to fall silent.

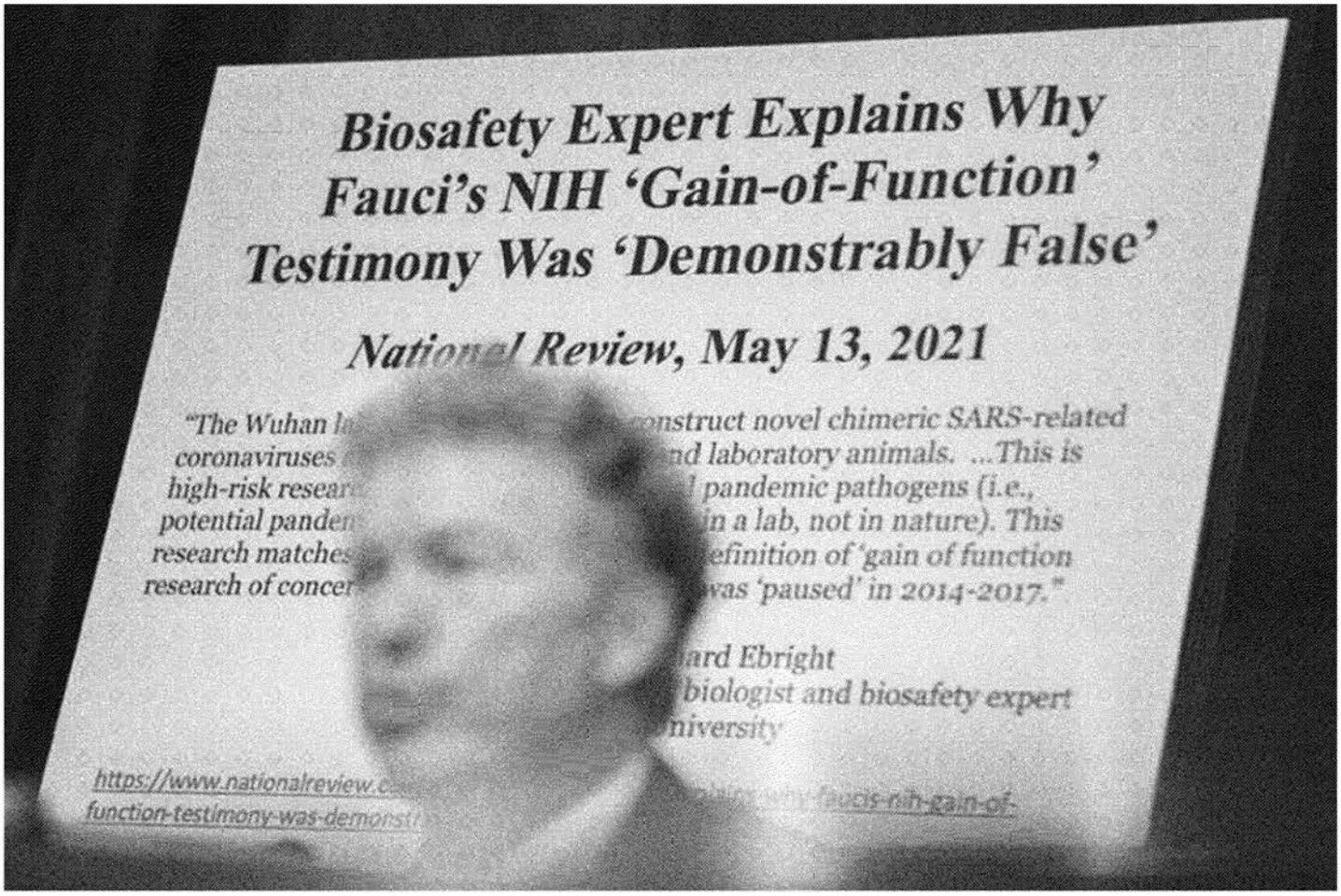
In the wake of Paul's attack on Fauci, several prominent scientists who question the wisdom and safety of gain-of-function experiments — in which biologists deliberately create pandemic-causing pathogens in the lab in order to better prepare to combat them should they evolve in nature — refused to speak to me on the record. One after another, they said Paul's patently false claim that Fauci was to blame for the pandemic, and his selective outrage at gain-of-function research only when conducted in China, made it all but impossible for them to say anything about the pre-pandemic experiments in Wuhan without being vilified by partisans.

One biologist who supports such research told me that he would have liked the opportunity to correct what he called misinformation about the experiments, but had been worn down by death threats.

To recap, at a hearing in May, Paul first accused Fauci of having supported gain-of-function research in Wuhan, which the senator, who is also a doctor, misleadingly defined as "experimenting to enhance the coronavirus's ability to infect humans." In fact, the coronavirus that researchers experimented on between 2014 and 2017 at the Wuhan Institute, with some financial support from the NIAID, was from a strain found in bats that is not closely enough related to SARS-CoV-2 to have been used to fabricate the virus that causes Covid-19 in a lab.

Fauci also insisted that his agency, which is part of the National Institutes of Health, had never funded gain-of-function research in Wuhan.

When Fauci returned to the senate committee last week, Paul confronted him with the words of Richard Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University and a longtime critic of gain-of-function studies, who told the conservative magazine National Review that Fauci's testimony in May was "demonstrably false," since, in Ebright's opinion, the experiments at the Wuhan Institute, indirectly funded by the NIAID as part of a project to head off a pandemic, were "unequivocally" gain-of-function in nature.



Sen. Rand Paul, a Kentucky Republican, used a visual aid to accuse Dr. Anthony Fauci of lying to Congress during a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing on July 20, 2021.
Photo: Stefani Reynolds-Pool/Getty Images

Fauci insisted that the biologist Paul cited was simply wrong, saying experts at the National Institutes of Health had evaluated the Wuhan project and concluded that the experiments there did not meet the criteria for gain-of-function research used by the United States government.

The exchange between Paul and Fauci got even more heated when the senator seemed to imply that this research funded by Fauci's agency could have led to the development of SARS-CoV-2, the deadly coronavirus that causes Covid-19, in the Wuhan lab.

As Fauci correctly noted, that speculation was wildly misleading, since it was "molecularly impossible" for the type of coronavirus used in the pre-2017 experiments to have been manipulated in the lab to create SARS-CoV-2.

On that point, even some of the most outspoken critics of gain-of-function research on potential pandemic pathogens agree with Fauci. Kevin Esvelt, an MIT biologist who told PolitiFact in May that the experiments conducted in the Wuhan study should be considered gain-of-function also emphasized that those experiments "definitely did NOT lead to the creation of SARS-CoV-2." (Esvelt, who worries that viruses developed through gain-of-function experiments in a lab could one day be used as weapons, told "The Open Mind" on PBS in March that whether the virus that caused the Covid-19 pandemic came from an animal or came from a lab, "it was not designed to be a weapon — because anyone good enough to make this thing could make a more devastating weapon.")



Read Our Complete CoverageThe Coronavirus Crisis

Paul was also rebuked in May by Marc Lipsitch, a microbiologist and professor of epidemiology at Harvard University who brought together hundreds of scientists and experts in law and ethics in 2014 to call for a moratorium on gain-of-function experiments that could create highly transmissible, novel strains of dangerous viruses in laboratories.

Lipsitch wrote in a Twitter thread that in his attack on Fauci in May, Paul had "FALSELY" claimed that the working group Lipsitch assembled had "characterized work at the Wuhan Institute of Virology as gain-of-function." While he and many members of the working group "support proper investigation of SARS-CoV-2 origins including the lab leak hypothesis and continue to oppose many forms of GOF research," he added, "it is just fabrication to say we have made any statement as a group about work in Wuhan."

Fauci did not get a chance to explain during the hearing what the scientific basis was for the determination by NIAID biologists that the experiments conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, described in a paper published in 2017, were not subject to a temporary pause on the funding of gain-of-function research imposed during the Obama administration in 2014, which was lifted in 2017 after Trump became president.

But in a statement provided to The Intercept on Monday, NIAID explained the reasoning behind its review of the experiments conducted at the Wuhan Institute on behalf of EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit in New York that works with researchers in China to study viruses that have the potential to jump from bats to humans. The agency wrote that its scientists had concluded the pre-2017 experiments in Wuhan were not barred by the temporary pause on gain-of-function research, "because they were not reasonably expected to increase transmissibility or virulence of these viruses in humans."

"Under the grant, EcoHealth Alliance proposed research to create chimeric viruses by placing a small portion of newly identified, evolutionarily distant, bat coronaviruses into another well characterized bat coronavirus that has never been demonstrated to infect humans called WIV1," NIAID wrote. "The purpose of this work was to examine whether the newly discovered viruses were able to use the human ACE2 receptor like WIV1 and other SARS-related coronaviruses already do. In the context of these experiments, this well-characterized bat coronavirus would be considered the parental strain against which the function of the new chimeric viruses would be assessed. With this comparison, the newly created chimeric viruses did not gain any function relative to the parental strain; the chimeric viruses did not replicate in cell culture any better than the parental WIV1. In addition, research that had been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals demonstrated that viruses similar to those proposed under the grant had reduced pathogenicity as compared to the parental viruses. For these reasons, it was not reasonably anticipated that the viruses involved in research under the grant would have enhanced pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in mammals via the respiratory route, and therefore did not meet the criteria for gain-of-function research described in the research funding pause."

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Date: Tue, 27 Jul 2021 2:23:29 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Fox: Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments: image004.gif; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.gif; image008.jpg

Another one I hadn't seen – key comment from CIA Director:

Burns, though, admitted it is "possible" that the intelligence community "may never be able to come to a definitive judgment" on the origins of COVID-19, but stressed that it is "not going to be for lack of hard work or effort on this issue to try to uncover as much as we can about what happened."

In other words – Biden successfully kicked the can down the road to the end of summer. Hopefully it'll reduce some of the ardor of the right wing nutjobs who keep pushing this. The fact that publications have now come out showing multiple new viruses in bats related to SARS-CoV-2, evidence of live wild CoV reservoir mammals in the markets, a review by eminent virologists, etc. etc. should help, but people aren't actually interested in the truth at this point I expect.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 12:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Subject: FW: Fox: Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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Office of the Director

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b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 11:43 AM
Subject: Fox: Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues

White House
Published 1 hour ago

Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues

Intel community has less than 30 days before Biden's deadline on COVID-19 investigation



By Brooke Singman |Fox News

China refuses to allow independent probe as COVID origins pressure mount

Fox News correspondent Rich Edson has the latest on China's accountability on 'Special Report'

President Biden is set to visit the Office of the Director of National Intelligence Tuesday afternoon amid the intelligence community's ongoing investigation into the origins of COVID-19.

The intelligence community is "aggressively" investigating the origins of COVID-19, after the president in May revealed that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" for the origins of COVID-19, "including whether it emerged from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident," and asked for "additional follow-up."

INTEL COMMUNITY 'AGGRESSIVELY' INVESTIGATING ORIGINS OF COVID-19

The president asked the intelligence community to "redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said.

It has been 62 days since Biden's announcement.

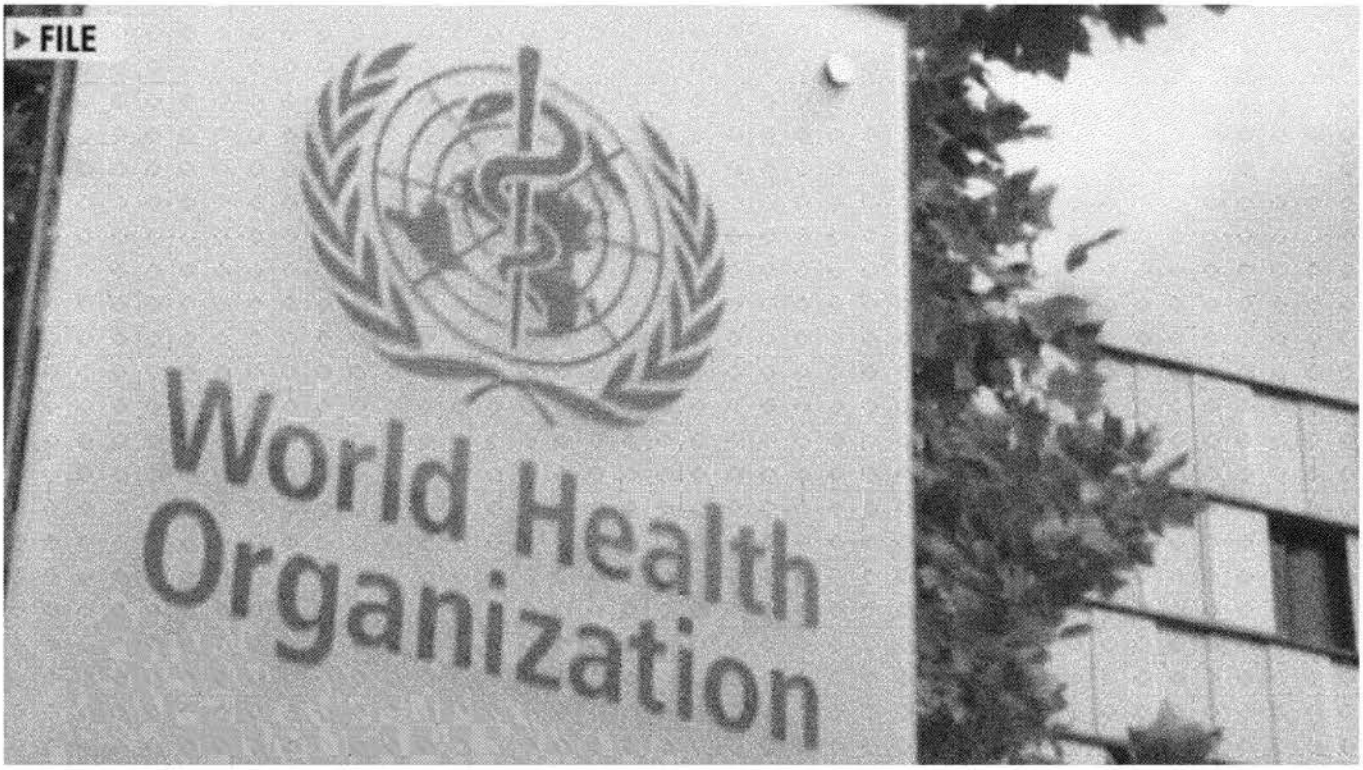
Last week during an interview with NPR, CIA Director Bill Burns said the intel community at this point "cannot offer a definitive conclusion about whether this originated in a lab accident or whether it originated in a natural transmission from infected animals to human beings."

"We are working very hard on this," Burns said. "It's not an academic problem. I mean, this affects not only the hundreds of thousands and millions of people around the world who have been affected by this, but it's also absolutely essential as we think ahead, not just to the United States, but in other parts of the world – about how do you prevent another pandemic crisis of this magnitude."

Burns said it is "extremely important to get to the bottom of this."

CHINA REFUSAL TO SUPPORT WHO COVID ORIGINS PROBE ACCELERATED BIDEN ANNOUNCEMENT ON US INVESTIGATION: OFFICIAL

"And the two realities are that the Chinese government has not been transparent, has not fully cooperated in the WHO's investigation initially — and it's more recently suggested it's going to refuse to cooperate in a follow up as well," Burns said. "And that is deeply unfortunate."



Video

He added: "We will continue to do everything we can to collect on this, work with the rest of the intelligence community and provide the best answers we can on this."

Burns, though, admitted it is "possible" that the intelligence community "may never be able to come to a definitive judgment" on the origins of COVID-19, but stressed that it is "not going to be for lack of hard work or effort on this issue to try to uncover as much as we can about what happened."

BIDEN: INTEL COMMUNITY TORN BETWEEN 'TWO LIKELY SCENARIOS' ON COVID-19 OUTBREAK SOURCE

Meanwhile, the president is set to address the intelligence community workforce and its leadership during his visit to thank them for their work in what the White House described as a "challenging time" for the community during the Trump administration.

"He's someone who believes in the role of the intelligence community of civil servants," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Monday in previewing the president's visit. "He believes they are the backbone of our government, and certainly he'll make that clear."

Psaki was asked whether Biden would have a different or contrasting message compared to his predecessor, former President Trump, who was skeptical of the intelligence community throughout his administration due to the investigation into whether his campaign colluded with the Russians to influence the 2016 presidential election, and the subsequent investigation into the origins of that probe and whether it began improperly.

Psaki on Monday replied, saying reporters can "make the inherent contrast" but said she did not believe that would be a "central part of his message" during Biden's visit to ODNI.

Brooke Singman is a Politics Reporter for Fox News. Follow her on Twitter at @BrookeSingman.

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Date: Tue, 5 Oct 2021 9:29:29 PM -0400

Sent: Tue, 5 Oct 2021 9:29:28 PM -0400

Subject: Fwd:Re:This was in the...

From: "Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)" <j.gale@bloomberg.net>

To: b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6 b6

JFYI. The story that keeps giving... Ugh...
Robert, Peter D -- is there an official response from EcoHealth Alliance on this?
Thanks,
Jason

From: Alex Millson (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 10/06/21 09:19:50 UTC+8:00
To: Emma O'Brien (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)

Subject: This was in the...

...Daily Telegraph (UK) a few hours back

Revealed: Wuhan and US scientists planned to create new coronaviruses

Scientists from Wuhan and the US were planning to create new coronaviruses that did not exist in nature by combining the genetic codes of other viruses, proposals show.
Documents of a grant application submitted to the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (Darpa), leaked last month, reveal that the international team of scientists planned to mix genetic data of closely related strains and grow completely new viruses.
A genetics expert working with the World Health Organisation (WHO), who uncovered the plan after studying the proposals in detail, said that if Sars-CoV-2 had been produced in this way, it would explain why a close match has never been found in nature.
So far the closest naturally occurring virus to Sars-CoV-2 is a strain called Banal-52, which was reported from Laos last month and shares 96.8 per cent of the genome. Yet scientists expect a direct ancestor to be around a 99.98 per cent match – and none has been found so far.
The Darpa proposals, leaked to the pandemic origins analysis group Drastic, show the team had planned to take sequences from naturally occurring coronaviruses and use them to create a brand new sequence that was an average of all the strains.
The grant application, submitted in 2018, states: "We will compile sequence/RNAseq data from a panel of closely related strains and compare full length genomes, scanning for unique SNPs representing sequencing errors.
"Consensus candidate genomes will be synthesised commercially using established techniques and genome-length RNA and electroporation to recover recombinant viruses."
Explaining the proposal, a WHO collaborator, who has asked not to be named for fear of reprisals, said: "This means that they would take various sequences from similar coronaviruses and create a new sequence that is essentially the average of them. It would be a new virus sequence, not a 100 per cent match to anything.
"They would then synthesise the viral genome from the computer sequence, thus creating a virus genome that did not exist in nature but looks natural as it is the average of natural viruses.
"Then they put that RNA in a cell and recover the virus from it. This creates a virus that has never existed in nature, with a new 'backbone' that didn't exist in nature but is very, very similar as it's the average of natural backbones."
The source said it was noteworthy that the cut-off for generating such an average sequence was viruses that only had five per cent genetic divergence from each other.
Last year, scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology said they had found a strain named RaTG13 in bat droppings in a cave in Yunnan province in 2013 which was a 96.1 per cent match to Sars-CoV-2. It means RaTG13 could have been included in a set of viral genomes to help create an average sequence.

Although the grant proposal was rejected in 2018, the Wuhan database of viral strains was taken offline prior to the Covid outbreak some 18 months later, meaning it is impossible to check which viruses the team was working on or had created. Wuhan scientists have consistently denied creating Sars-CoV-2 in a lab.

The WHO source added: "If Sars-CoV-2 comes from an artificial consensus sequence composed of genomes with more than 95 per cent similarity to each other… I would predict that we will never find a really good match in nature and just a bunch of close matches across parts of the sequence, which so far is what we are seeing.

"The problem is that those opposed to a lab leak scenario will always just say that we need to sample more, and absence of evidence isn't evidence of absence. Scientists overall are afraid of discussing the issue of the origins due to the political situation. This leaves a small and vocal minority of biased scientists free to spread misinformation."

The proposal was submitted by the British zoologist Peter Daszak on behalf of a consortium which included Daszak EcoHealth Alliance, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the University of North Carolina and Duke NUS in Singapore.

The plans are in addition to other proposals made in the Darpa documents, including inserting a section into existing viruses to make them more infectious to humans and inoculating wild bats with aerosolised engineered spike proteins from viruses.

Experts said if the ultimate aim of the proposal was to create a pan-coronavirus vaccine, constructing an "ideal" average virus would have been a good starting point.

Mr Daszak, currently a member of the WHO team investigating the pandemic's origins, was also behind a letter published in The Lancet which dismissed suggestions that Covid did not have a natural origin as a conspiracy theory.

The WHO source said he had struggled to raise the issue of a lab leak with other scientists and had been warned not to go on the record with his concerns.

The proposal team has been approached for comment but had not responded at the time of publication.

Alex Millson

News Desk Editor

www.bloomberg.com

Mobile: b6

Date:	Mon, 17 May 2021 2:26:43 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Didn't see that one. Vincent's right that EcoHealth was not part of any gain-of-function work. He's wrong that the work between Ralph and Zhengli was actually 'gain of function'. The chimeric virus (bat spike, SARS-CoV backbone) actually lost some replication capacity – more like 'loss of function'.

The interview video clip is one I recorded in Singapore in December 2019 at a Nipah meeting. I didn't use the phrase gain of function, and wasn't referring to work we did, as Vincent says. Quite ridiculous, but easy to fool the public with this…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:54 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

David

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:11 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research
https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research

In a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul, longtime NIAID Director Anthony Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied his institute has funded gain-of-function research.
By Daniel Payne

Updated: May 15, 2021 - 11:44am
A prominent Columbia University virologist claims that in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic a U.S. nonprofit funded coronavirus experiments in Wuhan, China the results of which were used in "gain-of-function" virology research at the University of North Carolina.
Dr. Vincent Racaniello made the claim amid ongoing controversy over a recently resurfaced interview between himself and Peter Daszak, the president of the U.S. infectious disease nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.
Both EcoHealth Alliance and the scientist leading the research at UNC have been heavily funded over the years by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which has been directed since 1984 by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the public face of the

federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic under Presidents Trump and Biden.
Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied that NIAID has funded gain-of-function research in a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) at a Senate hearing.
Racianello's half-hour interview with Daszak took place in early December 2019 at the Nipah Virus International Conference in Singapore. Significant attention has been given to a segment in which Daszak appears to allude to having participated in "gain-of-function" experiments, a type of procedure in which scientists increase a virus's pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in order to study its potential for human infection.
"You can manipulate [coronaviruses] in the lab pretty easily," Daszak says in the interview. "Spike protein drives a lot of what happens with the coronavirus, zoonotic risk. So you can get the sequence, you can build the protein — and we work with Ralph Baric at UNC to do this — insert into the backbone of another virus, and do, do some work in the lab."
Those remarks, when they resurfaced this week, caused considerable controversy due to Daszak's role in funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars through his EcoHealth Alliance to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to bankroll coronavirus experiments there. The Wuhan lab sits just a few miles from where the first detected outbreak of COVID-19 occurred.
Speculation has swirled over the last year as to what role, if any, the Wuhan lab may have played in the origin of the pandemic, including whether it was engaging in any gain-of-function experiments that may have posed a pandemic risk.

Experiments 'confer a new property to the original virus'

Racaniello said that Daszak in the December 2019 interview was indeed describing gain-of-function experiments.
"Here is the idea," he said in an email exchange this week. "You go into caves in China and sample bats for CoVs. You collect bat guano and sequence it to find the viruses. You don't actually have the viruses, just their genome sequences. You want to know if these viruses have the ability to infect human cells."
"Since you don't have the viruses," he continued, "you just take the spike sequence from all these viruses and put it into a coronavirus that you work with in the lab. Then you see if that recombinant coronavirus can infect human cells. It's all done under containment to prevent any release. If the spikes of the bat CoV can allow the CoV to infect human cells, then they have the potential to infect humans and we should be making antivirals against them to prevent a pandemic."
Those kinds of experiments, Racaniello said, "are considered 'gain of function' because they would confer a new property to the original virus."
That research, Racaniello said, "was done in the laboratory of Dr. Ralph Baric in [the University of] North Carolina and was not funded by EcoHealth Alliance." When pressed, Racaniello revealed that EcoHealth did have an indirect role in the funding of Baric's work.
"EcoHealth Alliance provided funds to Zengli Shi at the Wuhan Institute of Virology to conduct bat surveillance for SARS-like CoVs," he said. "Baric then received the spike sequences from Wuhan to do his experiments independently."
"Daszak and Baric did not work together on this project," he added.
Anna Marie Skalka, a professor emerita at the Fox Chase Cancer Center and one of the authors of the bestselling textbook "Principles of Virology," did not expressly deny that Baric's research constituted gain-of-function, though she claimed that the overall issue was more complex than that.
"I prefer to describe the research in broader terms, as gain-of-function seems too narrow and has acquired negative connotations," she said. "The aim of such research is to learn as much as possible about the gene/protein in question so that one can begin to develop possible therapeutic or vaccine-related approaches."
Queries to Daszak and Baric on Racaniello's claims went unanswered.
The assertions from Racaniello — a four-decade veteran of academic virology who along with Skalka is also an author of "Principles of Virology" — constitute the sharpest allegations yet that both EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were involved, even if adjacently, with gain-of-function research prior to the pandemic.
Baric's research, meanwhile, has been the recipient of millions of dollars in funding from the NIAID over the years, much of it focused on coronaviruses, including experiments in the "replication and pathogenesis" of those viruses.
Racaniello himself forcefully defended such research. "There is a very clear reason to do these experiments and if we had done them even more we could have prevented the current pandemic," he said.
EcoHealth, meanwhile, has been the focus of controversy for the past year due not merely to its alleged association with coronavirus experiments but also to the fact that its work was for years heavily funded by the federal government, specifically the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.
EcoHealth routed hundreds of thousands of NIAID dollars to the Wuhan lab in the years leading up to the pandemic to conduct coronavirus research there. Experts and commentators alike have called for a major investigation into the lab to determine if SARS-Cov-2 may have accidentally leaked from the facility and launched the pandemic.
The federal funding for the Wuhan project was pulled last year near the outset of the pandemic. Daszak himself told NPR last year that the Wuhan experiments were "funded entirely through the NIH grant," as the news service put it.
The lab was the subject of part of the World Health Organization's investigation into the origins of COVID-19. That probe concluded earlier this year and determined that a lab-leak theory was unlikely, though world officials have called for additional investigations into the facility.
The international team of investigators reportedly only spent a single day at the Wuhan lab. Among the team's members — and the only U.S. representative on it — was Peter Daszak.

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Date: Mon, 29 Mar 2021 11:25:39 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 29 Mar 2021 11:25:36 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Response to Michael Lauer letters
From: "Roberts, Rich" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6 David Morens b6
CC: Aleksei Chmura b6>;

Peter:

I will get back to you as soon as possible. I am tied up today, but can probably find some time tomorrow.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 2:10 AM
To: Keusch, Jerry b6 David Morens b6>; Roberts, Rich b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6>
Subject: Response to Michael Lauer letters
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Hi Jerry, David, and Rich

I can't remember which of you offered to review our draft response to Michael Lauer at NIH, but it would be very helpful if one of you could. I'm sending it to my pro bono lawyers as well, and they'll rip into it, but your advice and edits (using track changes) would be most helpful…

By the way, the WHO report comes out Tuesday morning our time (I think).

I'll have a final draft version tomorrow that I'll try to get out to you early.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date:	Thu, 10 Jun 2021 6:15:51 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu
From:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
To:	Peter Daszak b6
CC:	Keusch, Jerry b6 Rich Roberts b6
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image001.gif; image002.jpg; image001.gif; image002.jpg

wow. Really??? If so, how to light a fire under our NIH/ govt system????

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 10, 2021, at 18:02, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:

Very well put David.

Roughly translated – if you reinstate EcoHealth's NIH grant, we can probably find you the reservoir, the intermediate host and the first cluster of COVID during the project period!

Maybe not the 90 days that Biden's waiting for the Security report, but it will have some actual data in it!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6

b6 ; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 ssistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 4:23 PM
To: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

Greg, I just did a very quick read.

A bit hard to know what this means, as it is a very geeky "insider" paper.

But a first take is that this suggestes an even greater genetic turmoil in the already-complicated evolutionn of the sarbecoviruses.

It does the following (my provisoinal "take"):

moves us further in our certainty that SCV-2 is a naturally occurring virus (and I should add, it IS, as in really IS, already certain)

suggests an enormous degree of ferment and evolution with complex viral, bat, and secondary host evolution, including multiple avenues for cross-viral/cross-species exchanges, that would be expected to facilitate emergent viruses,

argues that among our HIGHEST research priorities is to start working collaboratively, collegially, and openly with colleagues from China and the other regional countries, to characterize the compex and enormous viral, reservoir, and human behavioral risks,

argues that the time to let China-bashing drive the research agenda should be over. The research findings and opportunities are too important to let political wackiness interfere witb pandemic control.

New pandemics are waiting in the wings. We need to get our act together and get cracking.

That's my off the top of my low-IQ head "take"….

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
● b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
● b6 b6 b6
● b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)>
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 3:24 PM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: DAvid m ------ Cell: Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses https://bit.ly/3w96uAu

We will no doubt be asked how/if this paper impacts the origins-of-covid discussions that are everywhere

What are your thoughts? What would u tell a reporter who called u?

Identification of novel bat coronaviruses sheds light on the evolutionary origins of SARS-CoV-2 and related viruses

- Hong Zhou [9]
- Jingkai Ji [9]
- Xing Chen [9]
- Yuhai Bi [9]
- Juan Li
- Qihui Wang
- Tao Hu
- Hao Song
- Runchu Zhao
- Yanhua Chen
- Mingxue Cui
- Yanyan Zhang
- Alice C. Hughes
- Edward C. Holmes
- Weifeng Shi [10]
- Show less
- Show footnotes

Published:June 09, 2021DOI:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2021.06.008

Highlights

- Four novel SARS-CoV-2 related viruses were identified in rhinolophid bats.
- RpYN06 is the closest relative of SARS-CoV-2 in most of the virus genome.
- A high diversity of bat coronaviruses was present in a very small geographic area.
- Ecological modeling reveals a broad range of rhinolophid bats in parts of Asia.

Summary

Despite the discovery of animal coronaviruses related to SARS-CoV-2, the evolutionary origins of this virus are elusive.

We describe a meta-transcriptomic study of 411 bat samples collected from a small geographical region in Yunnan province, China, between May 2019 and November 2020. We identified 24 full-length coronavirus genomes, including four novel SARS-CoV-2 related and three SARS-CoV related viruses. *Rhinolophus pusillus* virus RpYN06 was the closest relative of SARS-CoV-2 in most of the genome, although it possessed a more divergent spike gene. The other three SARS-CoV-2 related coronaviruses carried a genetically distinct spike gene that could weakly bind to the hACE2 receptor *in vitro*. Ecological modeling predicted the co-existence of up to 23 *Rhinolophus* bat species, with the largest contiguous hotspots extending from South Laos and Vietnam to southern China. Our study highlights the remarkable diversity of bat coronaviruses at the local scale, including close relatives of both SARS-CoV-2 and SARS-CoV.

Keywords

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Date:	Wed, 21 Apr 2021 1:36:01 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 21 Apr 2021 1:35:22 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Telegraph: Wuhan officials identified Huanan market as a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid emerged
From:	Roberts, Rich [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6] >; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] gov >; Keusch Gerald [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;
CC:	Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <taubenbergerj@niaid.nih.gov >;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Peter:

Very amusing!

Is there by any chance a brief description of the happenings following the release of the Nobel letter until now?
I would like to send a brief note to the NLs who signed up in support in case they would like to become more active in fighting this.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 1:22 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] >; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >; Keusch Gerald [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Telegraph: Wuhan officials identified Huanan market as a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid emerged

EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes – really glad Eddie has spoken out in this way. The same reporter approached me and just out of having too much to do last weekend I didn't respond so I'm not quoted – I think that's actually better – it's great to have other scientists speaking out and I'll try to do this a bit more often!

You're right about the politics, and also about the threats – Eddie's getting attacked also by the Miles Guo group (G-News) – the person on who's yacht Steve Bannon was arrested!.

These folks are very active on social media, producing videos and cartoons that are watched by millions.

Rich – you'll be very amused to see that the G-News cartoonists have decide myself and Zhengli Shi in China should be given Nobel Prizes…but this time for 'Acting' – see attached picture…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 10:21 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E b6 >; Daszak Peter b6 ; Keusch Gerald b6 Kessler Robert b6 ; Chmura Aleksei b6
>
Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Telegraph: Wuhan officials identified Huanan market as a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid emerged

David:

He really hits the nail on the head when he said that the more politics is involved the less likely there will ever be an answer from science.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 8:34 AM
To: Daszak Peter b6 ; Keusch Gerald b6 Roberts, Rich b6
Kessler Robert b6 g >; Chmura Aleksei b6
Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Subject: Fwd: Telegraph: Wuhan officials identified Huanan market as a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid emerged

EXTERNAL SENDER

This is interesting because like you, Peter, Eddie and his family have been under frightening death threats. when i approached him last summer about signing on as a co author he declined out of fear, but did help behind the scenes. he must be rethinking what role he should play. he also has the qualification of not being an American and is perhaps our leading viral phylogeneticists, who has trained some of the other leading phylogeneticists. d

Sent from my iPad
David M. Morens, M.D.

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: April 19, 2021 at 8:28:05 PM EDT
Subject: Telegraph: Wuhan officials identified Huanan market as a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid emerged

Wuhan officials identified Huanan market as a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid emerged

Experts say market was either the site of an initial 'spillover' of Covid, or 'amplified' early circulation through a super-spreading event

By Sarah Newey, Global Health Security Correspondent 18 April 2021 • 5:00pm



Members of the Wuhan Hygiene Emergency Response Team leaving the closed Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in mid-January 2020 Credit: NOEL CELIS/AFP via Getty Images

Health experts in Wuhan knew the wet market at the centre of the coronavirus outbreak was a pandemic risk at least five years before Covid-19 emerged, a British scientist has revealed.

In 2014 Dr Eddie Holmes, an evolutionary biologist and virologist, was taken to the Huanan seafood market by members of the Wuhan Centre for Disease Control, who used it as an example of the type of place where a virus could "spillover" from animals to humans.

Dr Holmes, who now works at the University of Sydney, said the visit was part of a wider project to hunt for new pathogens with pandemic potential in China.

"The Wuhan CDC took us there, and here's the key bit, because the discussion was: 'where could a disease emerge?' Well, here's the place – that's why I went," Dr Holmes told *The Telegraph* in an interview.

"I've been to a few of these markets, but this was a big one – it felt like a disease incubator, exactly the sort of place you would expect a disease to emerge".



Live animals held in Wuhan's Huanan market in October 2014, taken by Dr Eddie Holmes during a visit to the site Credit: Eddie Holmes

Dr Holmes, who took pictures at the time, remembers the now shuttered market as a sprawling network of narrow covered streets in the heart of Wuhan. It was late afternoon and not particularly crowded, but there were "crates of wildlife stacked on top of each other", including fish, snakes, rodents and racoon dogs – a fox-like animal known to be susceptible to Covid-19.

Many of the creatures were alive, added Dr Holmes, who remembers seeing one bludgeoned in front of him.

"An animal had got out or something, and somebody was clubbing it," he said, mimicking the hand actions over Zoom. "I think it was a racoon dog, though I couldn't quite see. It was pretty confronting."

Dr Holmes added that he is unsure whether the Wuhan CDC ramped up disease surveillance or introduced new safety measures in the years preceding the pandemic, and the China CDC has not responded to *The Telegraph*.

The Huanan market gained global notoriety when the first cases of Covid-19 (initially reported as a "mystery pneumonia" on December 31, 2019) were found in people who worked and shopped there.

Of the initial 41 people hospitalised with pneumonia who were officially identified as having Covid, two-thirds were exposed to the market, which was closed and sealed off by the Wuhan authorities on January 1, 2020.



Inside Huanan food market in October 2014. Dr Eddie Holmes described the site as dirty, not particularly crowded, but with areas full of wild animals in crates Credit: Eddie Holmes

Experts believe the site played a significant role in the initial circulation of Covid-19, either as the site of the initial "spillover" event where an animal virus jumps to humans, or as an "amplifier" of the early epidemic.

A report from the World Health Organization (WHO) on the origins of Sars-CoV-2 provided crucial details. Though it said "no firm conclusion" could be drawn on the precise role of Huanan market, it found the virus most likely jumped from bats to humans via an as-yet-unknown animal.

The wildlife trade in general, and wet markets in particular, have long been linked to the emergence of new pathogens. There is evidence Sars jumped to humans at markets in Guangdong, China in 2002 and data points to similarly a significant role in 2019.

In early 2020 Chinese researchers collected close to 1,000 samples from Huanan market – swabbing everything from rubbish bins, doors and stalls to stray cats and mice – and found widespread contamination "compatible with introduction of the virus through infected people, infected animals or contaminated products".

Meanwhile, of the first 168 Covid-19 cases, roughly a third had a connection to Huanan market. Genome sequences from some of those in this group found eight of the earliest samples were identical, confirming there was an outbreak there.

Yet the first person with a known link to Huanan market became ill on December 12, four days after the first known case. This suggests Covid-19 may have been spreading under the radar in several parts of Wuhan simultaneously before Huanan market amplified circulation.

The joint WHO-China team also found no evidence that live wildlife was still sold at the market – though noted that both Dr Holmes' pictures and "unverified photographs and videos in media reports" suggest otherwise – and none of 457 animal samples taken from the market between January and March 2020 tested positive for Sars-Cov-2.

The report added: "The manager informed the teams the market was cleaned twice a day, morning and evening. Pests and rats are sought out and killed; holes were closed. Rigorous cleaning was done once or twice a week. Even though there are rooms above some stalls, vendors were not allowed to live in the market."

But Dr Holmes and others, including members of the WHO team, believe more samples need to be taken to "follow the animals", and caution that finding wildlife involved in the early transmission chain is like finding a needle in a haystack. It is also possible that the virus was introduced to the market by an already infected person involved in earlier stages of the wildlife trade.

Live wild animals in crates stacked ontop of each other, taken in October 2014 during Dr Eddie Holmes' trip to the market

Credit: Eddie Holmes

"We know how easily Sars-Cov-2 spread from minks to mink farmers in Europe," said Dr Dale Fisher, an expert in infectious diseases and chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network. "So it's likely this could happen on a farm, and the farmer was the index case who then took it to the market, where there was a super-spreading event.

"But evidence points towards wildlife. And whether it's been plague on rats, or Ebola on bats and primates, or Sars-1 on civet cats and bats, camels for Mers – historically these outbreaks all had species jumps and then amplification events," he told the *Telegraph*.

It is estimated that birds and mammals harbour roughly 700,000 viruses with the potential to jump to people, while 70 per cent of new emerging infectious diseases come from wild animals. Places where numerous species mix in close quarters with humans, with few biosecurity measures in place, are high risk.

Just this week, the WHO issued new guidance urging countries to crack down on wet markets and suspend the sale of captured live wild animals as an "emergency measure" to protect public health.

"In my mind, the wildlife trade is the most likely source of it. The role of that market is still uncertain, but there was clearly a lot of transmission and to me it smells like there's a strong link – we need to follow it through," Dr Holmes said.

"My concern is that the finger pointing has got so bad, will that happen? I think China just doesn't want it to be China… so then the question is, are we actually going to see all the data? I honestly don't know. But the more the politics gets into it, the less likely we will."

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Date:	Wed, 6 Oct 2021 2:47:06 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 6 Oct 2021 2:45:28 AM -0400
Subject:	RE: Final 4th batch of emails part 2 of 2
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6] Gerald Jerry Keusch [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;
CC:	Robert Kessler [b6] >; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Attachments:	RE_ Stepping Down as NIH Director.eml (12.3 KB).msg; RE_ Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei.eml (29.8 KB).msg; RE_ origins of SARS-CoV-2.eml (246 KB).msg; RE_ FW_ For final review_ Responses to questions from The Intercept.eml (9.32 KB).msg; Stories today re. FoIA'd grants, but not being widely amplified.eml (1.80 MB).msg; RE_ FW_ ASF --- foia.eml (1.45 MB).msg; RE_ Times, UK_ How US cash funded Wuhan lab dealing in deadly viruses.eml (121 KB).msg

4th batch Sept 1st 2021 to Oct 6th

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 2:34 AM
To: 'David Morens [b6] Gerald "Jerry" Keusch [b6] 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Cc: 'Robert Kessler [b6] >; Jeff Sturchio [b6] < [b6]
Subject: Final 4th batch of emails

In this pile (July 1st to Oct 6th 2021), we generally say similar gossipy stuff about various people and institutions.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Obtained via FOIA by Judicial Watch, Inc.

From:	Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]
To:	Collins, Francis (NIH/OD) [E]
Cc:	Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]; Tabak, Lawrence (NIH/OD) [E]; Hallett, Adrienne (NIH/OD) [E]
Subject:	FW: EcoHealth oversight response
Date:	Tuesday, July 28, 2020 4:53:51 PM
Attachments:	06.26.20 SST EC Letter to HHS[1].pdf EcoHealth Alliance narrative 7-27-20 Option 1c msl clean.docx

(b) (5)

Many thanks, Mike

From: "Hallett, Adrienne (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Date: Monday, July 27, 2020 at 3:58 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6), "Collins, Francis (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6) "Tabak, Lawrence (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Cc: "Lohmann, Larry (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6) "LaMontagne, Karen (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Subject: Re: EcoHealth oversight response

Attached is the incoming EcoHealth Alliance letter plus Mike's draft of the response, with some edits and additions from me.

(b) (5)

Please let me know how you would like to proceed.
Adrienne

MORENS_SUBPOENA_000317
MORENS_NIH_003677
REL0000476169

Obtained via FOIA by Judicial Watch, Inc.

From: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 6:29 AM
To: Adrienne Hallett (b) (6), Francis Collins (b) (6), Lawrence Tabak (b) (6)
Cc: "Lohmann, Larry (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6) Karen LaMontagne (b) (6), "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Subject: Re: EcoHealth oversight response

Thanks so much Adrienne! I'll draft something today.

Mike

From: "Hallett, Adrienne (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 1:50 PM
To: "Collins, Francis (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6), "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6), "Tabak, Lawrence (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Cc: "Lohmann, Larry (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6), "LaMontagne, Karen (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Subject: Re: EcoHealth oversight response

(b) (5)

From: Francis Collins (b) (6)
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 1:38 PM
To: Adrienne Hallett (b) (6), "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6) Lawrence Tabak (b) (6)
Cc: "Lohmann, Larry (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6), Karen LaMontagne (b) (6)
Subject: RE: EcoHealth oversight response

Sounds like a good plan. (b) (5)

FC

From: Hallett, Adrienne (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 12:59 PM
To: Collins, Francis (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6); Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6); Tabak, Lawrence (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6)

MORENS_SUBPOENA_000318
MORENS_NIH_003678
REL0000476169

Obtained via FOIA by Judicial Watch, Inc.

Cc: Lohmann, Larry (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6); LaMontagne, Karen (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6)

Subject: EcoHealth oversight response

Good news! (b) (5)

We are going to draft a response to the letter (b) (5)

Mike, can you help with the draft?

Thanks!
Adrienne

MORENS_SUBPOENA_000319
MORENS_NIH_003679
REL0000476169

Date:	Wed, 26 May 2021 3:59:52 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Finishing off my sentence…

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening…..That's straight from the WHA yesterday where apparently the Chinese delegate stated that "In the view of China, our role in the COVID-19 origins investigation is now over"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 3:43 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I sure do agree with the last complete sentence in Peters note. That's what I would hope to get across to the reporter tomorrow. I'll stay away from the science I sort of understand but not the granularity where all of the important insights reside. One of my mentors (not Donald Rumsfeld) always said "know what you know" as applied to clinical medicine. The implication was to also know what you don't know because that's what you need to add to the I know bucket.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]

Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:39 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Rich Roberts <b6>
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I was just talking about that statement with a couple of our Board members. My view is this is Biden's way of punting it down the road for 90 days, hoping the hype dies down, and hoping something shifts the narrative. He looks like he's doing something, while everyone knows that the US intelligence agencies are unlikely to get any more clarity in the meantime.

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening. That's a direct

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6 <b6>; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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- b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:09 PM
Subject: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

1 hour ago - World

Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins



Zachary Basu

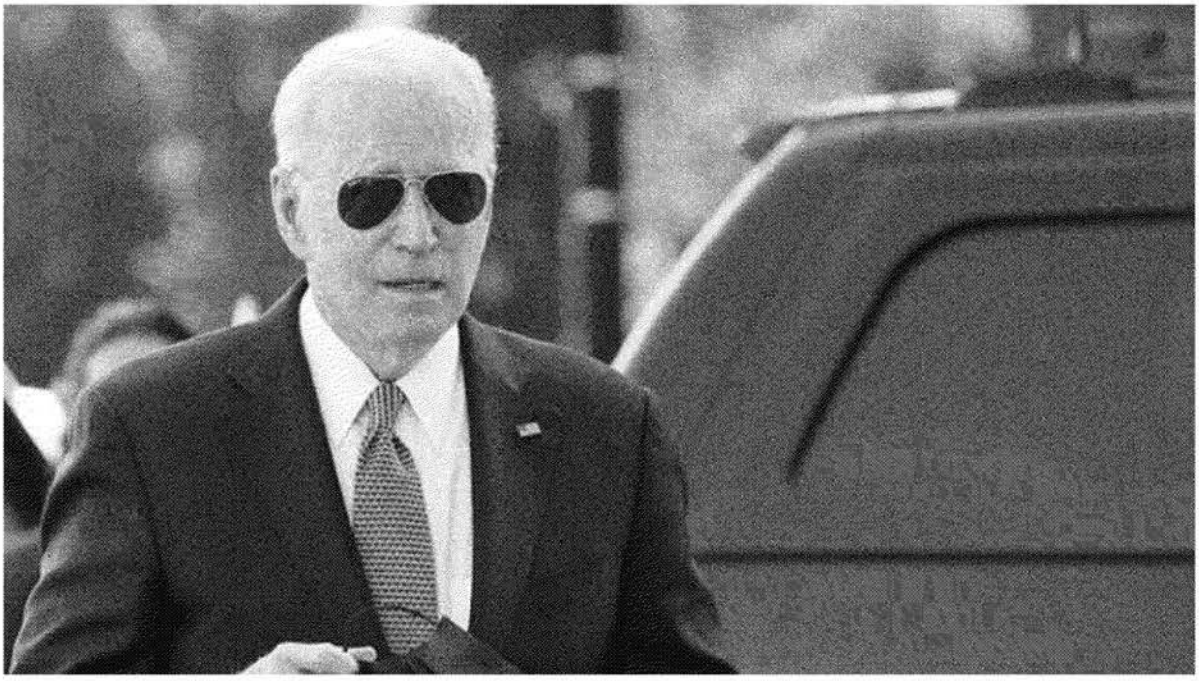

Photo: Win McNamee/Getty Images

President Biden announced Wednesday he has asked the U.S. intelligence community to "redouble their efforts" to investigate the origins of the coronavirus and provide a report within 90 days that "could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion."

Why it matters: The debate over the origins of COVID-19 has been reinvigorated in recent days by previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, that three researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology fell ill enough to be hospitalized in November 2019.

The state of play: Biden said in a statement that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" for the origins of the virus — one, that it emerged from human contact with an infected and animal, and two, that it was the result of an accidental laboratory leak.

- A joint team from the World Health Organization and China issued an inconclusive report in March that described the so-called lab-leak theory as "extremely unlikely."
- But the report has been criticized by the U.S. and WHO leadership for its methodology and lack of transparency from the Chinese government, and top U.S. officials have called for a new investigation.

What they're saying: Biden said the U.S. intelligence community's current position is that "while two elements in the IC leans toward the former scenario and one leans more toward the latter – each with low or moderate confidence – the majority of elements do not believe there is sufficient information to assess one to be more likely than the other."

- "I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said in a statement.
- "As part of that report, I have asked for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for China. I have also asked that this effort include work by our National Labs and other agencies of our government to augment the Intelligence Community's efforts. And I have asked the Intelligence Community to keep Congress fully apprised of its work."

Our thought bubble: Whether COVID-19 ultimately originated in an animal or in a lab, the bulk of the evidence is in China, which limits what the U.S. can find out. But Biden's statement underscores the fact that this debate will not end any time soon, and that the U.S. could ramp up pressure on China to cooperate.

Go deeper: The COVID lab-leak theory goes mainstream

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Date: Sat, 13 Mar 2021 7:09:49 PM -0500

Subject: RE: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

From: Peter Daszak [b6]

To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]

Attachments: [b6]

Basically, I'm a one-man 'news creation' machine for the rightwing press. All I have to do it send out a tweet pushing back at some whingeing criticism or other and it's a whole news article.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 4:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6]
Subject: FW: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

Dynamite!

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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Building 31, Room 7A-03

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b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 4:12 PM
Subject: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

by Jerry Dunleavy, Justice Department Reporter |

| March 12, 2021 01:57 PM

A key member of the World Health Organization team that investigated COVID-19's origins in China in early 2021 defended a Wuhan lab's removal of a viral sample database from public view and said it was the fault of "anti-China political rhetoric" that resulted in the Chinese Communist Party blocking an investigation for a year.

Officials from both the Trump and Biden administrations have said the Chinese government worked to thwart investigations into the origins of the virus, which has killed 2.63 million worldwide, and the WHO-China report is slated to be released next week. Both administrations said China was not transparent and is still concealing key data. Congressional reports blamed China's duplicity and the WHO's incompetence for an outbreak becoming a pandemic.

Peter Daszak, the leader of the EcoHealth Alliance, which steered at least $600,000 in National Institutes of

Health funding to the Wuhan Institute of Virology for bat coronavirus research, called the lab's decision to take down a public database containing thousands of viral samples "absolutely reasonable" during a Chatham House discussion Wednesday, claiming the lab did so because it was hit by hackers. The discussion seemed to preview the WHO's impending report, and Daszak attempted to justify the Chinese government's yearlong intransigence by pointing to alleged anti-China sloganeering, without placing blame on China.

Daszak previously criticized the Biden administration for appearing skeptical of the WHO's preliminary findings and defended China to CCP-linked outlets. U.S. Embassy officials in China raised concerns in 2018 about biosecurity at the lab led by "bat woman" Shi Zhengli.

"I asked the question in front of the whole team, both sides, while we were at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, about the so-called missing database. What we were told by Shi Zhengli was that there had been hacking attempts on it, about 3,000 hacking attempts, and they took down this Excel spreadsheet database. Absolutely reasonable," Daszak said Wednesday. "We did not ask to see the data, and, as you know, a lot of this work is work that's been conducted with EcoHealth Alliance. I'm also part of those data, and we do basically know what's in those databases. I gave a talk to both sides about the work we've done with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and I explained what's there. There is no evidence of viruses closer to SARS-CoV-2 than RaTG13 in those databases."

In February, NBC News reported "intelligence officials" pointed to the fact the Wuhan lab "removed from public view a database of 22,000 virus samples for security reasons, and has not allowed a detailed look at the lab's notes or other records." The outlet said the officials "say it's suspicious that the virus outbreak arose in Wuhan, a hub of virus research in China, while the bats that commonly carry coronaviruses are typically found in caves a thousand miles from that city."

A State Department fact sheet released in mid-January contended Wuhan lab researchers "conducted experiments involving RaTG13, the bat coronavirus identified by the WIV in January 2020 as its closest sample to SARS-CoV-2 (96.2% similar)" and that the lab "has a published record of conducting 'gain-of-function' research to engineer chimeric viruses." The fact sheet added that the lab "has engaged in classified research, including laboratory animal experiments, on behalf of the Chinese military."

"The U.S. government has reason to believe that several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019, before the first identified case of the outbreak, with symptoms consistent with both COVID-19 and common seasonal illnesses," the State Department fact sheet said, arguing that "this raises questions about the credibility of WIV senior researcher Shi Zhengli's public claim that there was 'zero infection' among the WIV's staff and students of SARS-CoV-2 or SARS-related viruses."

Daszak claimed, "We sent a list of sites and people we wanted to talk to, and none were refused." He said that "in its essence that theory" — of COVID-19 escaping from a lab — "is not a conspiracy theory, but many many people have put that forward as a conspiracy theory in that the Chinese side conspired to cover up evidence of that." Daszak lamented his previous work with the lab had been criticized, calling it "quite ironic."

He also blamed former President Donald Trump; former Trump campaign CEO Steve Bannon, who runs the *War Room: Pandemic* podcast; Bannon ally and exiled Chinese billionaire Guo Wengui; and the Falun Gong, a religious movement that is persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party and funds the *Epoch Times,* for why China hadn't allowed an investigation sooner, citing their "anti-China political rhetoric."

"Science has been, to some extent, caught up in that, to other extents absolutely crushed by it," Daszak claimed. "We've not had access to work in China on the origins for the last 12 months, which is ironic because we could've been on the ground there working with our Chinese colleagues, and by now we may have had some really important answers as to how it emerged, and the rhetoric has held that up. These politics are not there to help find the origins. They're simply there to help one political party win."

Daszak said China swabbed 900 samples from the Huanan seafood market and said Zhengli went into Hubei province and looked at over 1,100 bat samples, concluding it wasn't a local virus carried by bats into the market.

"That a bat or other wildlife species carried a virus that is a progenitor of SARS-CoV-2, it got into domestic animals, wildlife, bred in farms, perhaps, or people associated with that, and got into the Wuhan market that way, I think that's the most likely scenario," Daszak said.

He said that "within the next few years, we're going to have real significant data on where this came from."

During a February interview on *Face the Nation* on CBS, Matthew Pottinger, Trump's deputy national security

adviser, said that "the ledger on the side of an explanation that says that this resulted from some kind of human error, it far outweighs the side of the scale that says this was some natural outbreak." Pottinger said in January that the WHO investigation was a "Potemkin exercise."

Biden national security adviser Jake Sullivan criticized China for blocking data on the origins of COVID-19 but declined to stand by declassified U.S. intelligence.

Peter Ben Embarek, head of the WHO group that investigated the origins, said in late February that "we didn't do an audit of any of these labs, so we don't really have hard facts or detailed data on the work done" at the Wuhan lab. In early February, Embarek said the possibility that the coronavirus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab was "extremely unlikely" and didn't merit further inquiry, but WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said more study was needed.

Two other WHO investigative team members, Marion Koopmans, head of the Department of Viroscience at Erasmus University Medical Center, and John Watson, senior medical adviser at Public Health England, also weighed in Wednesday.

Koopmans said it is a "misunderstanding" to think of the WHO investigation as an "inspection." She said that "we see it is a starting point, not the mission that will get the answers." She admitted the WHO team had the "handicap" of being in "full-blown quarantine" for its first two weeks in China and then had "restrictions in the second half of our visit."

Watson repeatedly stressed that it was a "joint study" with "our Chinese counterparts" and said the WHO team members were independent. He claimed that "it was slow, but despite that, we were shown a great deal. … So I was not at all disappointed."

"What this was not set up as was an external group coming in to investigate and to point fingers with the hope of identifying a smoking gun," Watson said, adding that there was "a popular perception about a group of Sherlock Holmes going in with magnifying glasses and swabs to identify something."

Koopmans said that "China has done … something like 30,000, a lot of testing of animals across the country, not finding such evidence" of the virus in domesticated animals. She said they were told, "Around 1,000 people have worked to get the data to the point where we could discuss and scrutinize and review them" and said they spoke with staff from Wuhan CDC, Hubei CDC, China's national CDC, and Wuhan labs.

"So we have visited the three laboratories that have been actively working, including the laboratory sitting close to the market, including the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Koopmans said. "We have discussed their research programs, their routine testing programs, the way they work, what they had done in terms of health monitoring and testing of staff, and based on that, we concluded that it's extremely unlikely that there was a lab incident."

Trump officials such as former Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have pointed to evidence suggesting COVID-19 might have originated in a Wuhan lab. The Chinese government denies this and has cast doubt on it originating in China.

Date: Wed, 9 Jun 2021 11:33:29 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 9 Jun 2021 11:31:59 AM -0400
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week
From: Peter Daszak {b6}
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] {b6}; Roberts, Rich {b6}
CC: Keusch, Jerry {b6}
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Will do.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] {b6}
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 8:40 PM
To: Roberts, Rich {b6}
Cc: Peter Daszak {b6}; Keusch, Jerry {b6}
Subject: Re: We've lost two significant funders this week

Peter, i had some long discussions with the Trop med folks today

They want me to write something, a follow up to what we did last july.

But they are 14 leaders not on the same page

I suggested a follo
w up one year later that does NoT emphasize rebutting the crazies but says here is what is needed now, urgently, and includes 5-10 things such ad 1 international open collegial collaboration
with China and other countries in the region, wider sampling/sequencing to look at the sarbecovirus universe, phylogenetics, serosurveys, etc.
Can you and your folks help me compile a list of top research priorities with supporting data?

I would also ask for good msps of Rhinolophus range separated by those species that are and are not enzootic for SARS-like viruses

ETc….

The focus would be : proactive. This is an emsrgrncy. Science needs to get cracking! What must me do asap? (Funding you, and then what?). d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 8, 2021, at 19:54, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:

Peter:

OK – let me know. Before I would write anything it would be good to know exactly what they are proposing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:16 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week

EXTERNAL SENDER

That's a very kind offer Rich. I think it might be very helpful with Gates right now.

Let me get more information from Jon Epstein who manages the grant and find out who you could reach out to potentially.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Keusch, Jerry b6
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week

Peter:

I would be happy to write to these funders if you think it might help

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 11:59 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Keusch, Jerry b6; Roberts, Rich < b6 >
Subject: We've lost two significant funders this week
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks for sharing.

We're getting mounting damage at EcoHealth. One of our corporate funders has pulled out because of the news (Swiss Re). They donated $30K per year and I talked with the senior execs about pandemic risk.

We heard today that our brand new 3-year Gates Foundation grant for One Health work in India will now be "re-assigned". They're telling us they'll still fund us, but I think they're just being polite. This is a loss of $500K per year.

I'm extremely worried right now. People's jobs, careers, reputations are on the line, not just mine – the Gates grant is Jon Epstein's.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6) b6 >; Keusch, Jerry b6 b6 Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Miami Herald [Opinion]: Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6

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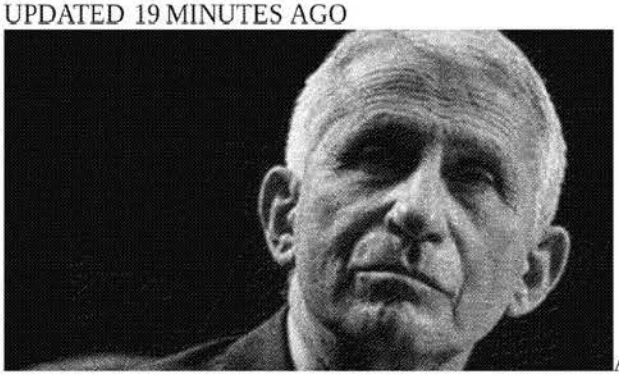
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:47 AM
Subject: Miami Herald [Opinion]: Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab

Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab | Opinion

BY ANDRES OPPENHEIMER
JUNE 08, 2021 09:13 AM,
UPDATED 19 MINUTES AGO


Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, says the coronavirus likely jumped species, from animal to human. *GETTY IMAGES*

Former President Trump, perhaps trying to divert attention from his own disastrous

handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, is now lashing out against Dr. Anthony Fauci for allegedly failing to seriously consider that the virus might have originated from China's Wuhan lab, rather than from an animal's transmission to humans.

But judging from what Fauci told me in a June 4 interview, the most

respected U.S. infectious diseases expert has not yet seen any convincing evidence that the virus may have escaped from a Chinese lab.

Fauci, who heads the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and is a top medical adviser to President Biden, said, "It is more likely" that — much like

SARS,
ebola,
influenza
and
HIV
—
COVID-
19
“originated
from
an
animal
reservoir
and
jumped
species
to
humans.”
He
added,
“There’s
the
possibility
that
it
came
from
the
lab,
but
I
believe
that
that’s
a
much
less
likely
possibility.”

In the interview, scheduled to be aired Sunday , June 13 n “Oppenheimer Presenta” on CNN en Español, Fauci said that it’s “important” to try to find out the exact origin of the pandemic, so that we can prevent it from happening again.

Biden
has
asked
U.S.
intelligence
agencies
to
investigate
the

origins of COVID-19 and come back with a report before the end of August.

Asked how the investigation into the source of the virus should be conducted, Fauci said that the World Health Organization has indicated that it will go back to China to continue its investigation.

"I think it needs to be done in a collegial way, with the collaboration of the Chinese scientists, because you're going to have to have cooperation and do it in a way that you

can
best
get
the
information,"
he
said.

Regarding
his
emails
obtained
by
BuzzFeed
and
the
Washington
Post
through
the
Freedom
Of
Information
Act,
Fauci
told
me
that
his
critics
"cherrypick
things
out
of
context"
when
they
claim
that
he
knew
more
than
he
was
saying
publicly
about
the
possibility
that
the
virus

came
out
of
a
Chinese
lab.

Stressing
that
he
never
totally
discarded
the
lab
theory
—
though
he
never
thought
it
was
a
major
possibility
—
Fauci
added
that,
“I
think
what
has
increased
is
the
interest,
not
necessarily
the
evidence.”

Right-
wing
media
have
had
a
field
day
with
the

Fauci emails, claiming that he was alerted about the "lab theory" early on and allegedly failed to take it seriously. Much of their claims are based on a Jan. 31, 2020, email, in which infectious-disease expert Kristian Andersen wrote to Fauci that some of the virus' features "[potentially] looked engineered."

But what most right-wing media fail to mention is that, a few weeks later, Andersen concluded, upon

further investigation, that the "lab theory" was implausible. So the criticism that Fauci was wrongfully hiding the "lab theory" from the public does not hold up.

Of course, Trump now is trying to paint Fauci as the culprit for the fact that America holds the world's record for COVID-19 deaths in absolute numbers. In a mass email on June 3, Trump claimed that "President Trump was right about the China Virus coming from the Wuhan

Lab," and suggested that Fauci was defending China.

But, until we see any hard evidence that COVID-19 emerged from the Wuhan lab, Trump's accusations should be seen as just another attempt to bypass science and divert public attention from the COVID-19 deaths caused by his failure to tackle the pandemic.

Remember,
Trump
knew
early
on
that
COVID
would
be
deadly
—
he
is
on
tape
telling
author
Bob
Woodward
this
in
February
2020
—
but
chose
to
lie
to
the
American
people
for
fear
that
it
would
ruin
his
re-
election
chances.
What's
more,
Trump
consistently
refused
to
wear
a
mask
or
preach

social distance, as scientists were recommending.

As I wrote at the time

Trump neglected his main duty — to protect the American people.

Granted, investigations into the origins of COVID-19 are justified and should continue. And there's no question that China's dictatorship is responsible for its delay in alerting

the
world
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it
started.

But
barring
solid
evidence
that
the
virus
originated
from
a
Chinese
lab,
Trump
remains
the
villain
—
and
Fauci
the
hero.

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Date:	Sun, 25 Jul 2021 3:13:15 PM -0400
Sent:	Sun, 25 Jul 2021 3:12:29 PM -0400
Subject:	Smaller file version - : Fauci defending the funding of EcoHealth's grant with WIV in the Right wing press
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC:	David Morens [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>;
Attachments:	Fauci then denounces inflammatory statements about him and U.S. funding in Wuhan as beneath him _ Daily Mail Online.pdf

Here's a smaller version of that pdf – without most of the extraneous rubbish….

Good to see Tony speaking up and defending NIAID's decision to fund this work (article attached as pdf). He's right – it was very highly scored.

My only question is…why not reinstate it!!!??? He could always specifically indicate "no chimeric virus work to be funded at WIV" or "only PCR studies" or some such. Just a thought…

Here's a key quote:

"Dr. Fauci attempted to explain the link between U.S. researchers and the Chinese laboratory clearly to Fox viewers and stress there was no 'risky research' involved.

'If you look at the research that was done, it was research that was highly recommended by peer review, our United States peer reviews. It got a very high score in the peer review system,' Fauci began.

'And the purpose of the research was very, very clear. It was to try to determine what was out there in the bat population that might be ultimately risky for us. It was done in the context of trying to find out what the precise environmental bat source was of SARS-CoV-1 so that we could prevent SARS-CoV-2.'

Dr. Fauci praised the 'qualified, highly respected Chinese scientists' that the National Institutes of Health had collaborated with at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and defended the funding of bat coronavirus research in China.

Fauci added: 'So, it was research that was done by qualified people. Right now, when there's all of this thing about China, that's a different situation now back then when you're dealing with qualified, highly respected Chinese scientists. So it isn't what was made out to be about dealing with really, really bad people. Because those scientists were very well-respected in the scientific community internationally. '"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 5:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Roberts, Rich b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: COVID origins issues and NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats

No relevant information I have heard of. It wouldn't surprise me as I know that Victor Dzau wants NAM to be engaged in these issues. I will ask my colleague Nicki Lurie if she is aware of any such initiative. She is on vacation in Europe now and may not be as rapidly responsive as she usually is.

Regarding the Academies, Victor is not only ambitious but also cautious and doesn't stick his head out very far. Marcia McNutt (NAS President) has been supportive of a rational science based inquiry into the origins and the separation of politics from science, sort of, but not very bold. John Anderson (NAE President) is the least engaged.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6; Keusch, Gerald T b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: COVID origins issues and NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats

Here's a request for any inside info you may have picked up.

I'm the chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Jerry used to be a member or Co-Chair and (ironically) David Relman was the Chair before me. The Forum is planning a workshop on COVID-19 for early Fall. I'm not on the organizing committee but heard they were planning a section on 'origins', then were told from the top (I believe Victor Dzau of NAM) that because there is no new research on this, it's not something that would be good for the workshop to publicly consider right now. They've dropped that session. I actually agree with this decision, but it certainly adds to the feeling that the NAM is being very hesitant on this issue.

Then I got an email from staff asking if I'd like to avoid giving my usual opening comments for the workshop as chair, given the nasty publicity I've been getting. I pushed back (strongly) and pointed out that a key goal of the conspiracy theorists is to attack, discredit and silence scientists who's opinions don't support their political agenda. Staff were very nice and somewhat apologetic about this and I'm now giving my usual opening.

They also mentioned that the academies (maybe NAM, but could be NASEM) are planning something on origins – maybe a consensus study, workshop or just a statement. I don't have more info, but the reason I'm concerned is that 1) David Relman is a member of the NASEM Intelligence Community Studies Board (science-intel agency interface) and he may be trying to use that to 'investigate' the lab leak agenda; or 2) there may be an effort for an NASEM committee to investigate COVID-19 origins. I note that in my last letter from the NIH office of the director, they requested an inspection of the Wuhan lab either by NIH

scientists or through the NASEM.

The way the NAM and NASEM operate is that USG agencies go to them, or they approach agencies with an idea for a consensus study or workshop and then they're funded to do one. It sounds likely that this is happening, and would likely end up as a forum for all the lab leak accusations and gain-of-function myths to be brought up by known scientists (e.g. Drs. Relman, Lipsitch, Ebright and others). This could end up putting me in the awful situation of either having to publicly defend EcoHealth's work and get attacked in the press for this, or decline to take part in a National Academy activity despite being a member. Not looking forward to that moment!

Have any of you heard anything about this?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 4:42 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' b6 'Keusch, Gerald T b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Cc: 'David Morens b6 ; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Harold Varmus has been spotted in CT!

One of my Board members, Amy Attas, who's a veterinarian to the pets of people like Mike Bloomberg's wife, Elton John etc. goes to a monthly lunchtime talk series near her summer home in CT (I think). Harold Varmus spoke there a couple of Sunday's ago. Amy asked the first question along the lines "I'm on the Board of an organization working to prevent pandemics..what are the best strategies to prevent the next COVID?" His response: "Is that EcoHealth Alliance?" "If so, what they're doing is exactly what should be done..." He then rolled off a series of key goals to prevent pandemics.

Amy was delighted, and a number of other donors expressed an interest. Please pass on my regards and gratitude to Harold – this is exactly the sort of word of mouth endorsement we need right now, rather than the other sort we're getting from Fox News!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; Peter Daszak b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

I haven't heard anything from Harold recently.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 Peter Daszak b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I totally agree with you that Tony was remarkable. I sent him a one word email, Bravo, and copied it to Patty Conrad so maybe he will see it as evidence of the support he has from the responsible scientific community.

Thanks for the response regarding the CNN reporters. I'll keep that in mind when I do talk to them and consider whether speaking with you might help them distinguish between good science and crap. I have no doubts about your expertise in science and knowing the difference between, well, good science and crap.

Harold is rather quiet – any sense of what he is up to?

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:50 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

Tony was excellent in confronting Paul! It's high time that these senators are told the truth directly.

As for speaking with the reporters, in general I am always prepared to do that, but in this particular case I don't feel my credentials are necessarily the best when dealing with specifics. I have very much been an onlooker and not directly connected to any of the research itself. Peter Hotez and Peter D. are clearly much better informed and have the appropriate expertise. There are plenty of authors on the recent Lancet piece that would be good to include. I am happy to speak as an outsider, but would not want to be considered a knowledgeable expert.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had a long talk with two CNN International reporters who are preparing a story essentially on the politics and the misinformation about the origins controversy. I was talking to them off the record but I decided they were legitimately exploring the issues and would likely be a voice of reason if they were given the necessary space to build their case and it was eventually shown.

I mentioned Peter Hotez to them, among some others, and while I mentioned Peter D as well I also said you were under constant attack and it might well be better to allow others to take up the fight on your behalf. GOF and the Goffers were part of the chat. I have agreed to be interviewed on the record and potentially to do a video session as they were potentially interested in using some of that as part of the report. Rich, I didn't specifically mention your name, but if you would be willing to speak with them I can do that when I next connect.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:30 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Robert

Kessler [b6]
Subject: Tony Fauci's testimony today
Importance: High

I'm delighted to see Tony Fauci fighting to let everyone understand clear line between what is gain-of-function (work EcoHealth does NOT do), and what is not Gain of function (work EcoHealth did do with Wuhan).

It's a shame it will generate publicity, but he did this so well today that I'm hoping it might help get rid of the willful misinformation the Republicans are engaging in…

Here's a news piece on it https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/563874- fauci-paul-doesnt-know-what-hes-talking-about-and-i-want-to-say-that , and there's some pretty exciting video to watch. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFoaBV_cTek

Well done David on your briefing and practice runs!

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: My AMA podcast on the origins of COVID19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14 &feature=youtu.be

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a 'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made

significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков b6 Leendertz, Fabian b6 ; Peter Daszak < b6 ; LeendertzF b6 ; Keith Hamilton b6 John Watson b6 ; DEBBICHE, Hassene b6 hea Kølsen Fischer < b6 ; BAERT, Primaël b6 SHEATH, Danny b6 ; Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) b6 ; STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan b6 ; DRURY, Patrick Anthony b6 Ken Maeda b6 ; M.P.G. Koopmans b6 b6 ; Hayman, Davic(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) ; IVANOVIC, Dragana < b6 Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Farag b6 minic Dwyer < b6
Cc: RYAN, Michael J. b6 Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria b6 BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim b6
Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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<C.L.28.2021 (Origins of SARS-CoV-2).pdf>

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Date:	Thu, 30 Dec 2021 11:18:17 AM -0500
Sent:	Thu, 30 Dec 2021 11:15:33 AM -0500
Subject:	RE: FW: NPR: Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg

V. important to see this in the flesh. I'll be citing this extensively over the coming years to ram home the message that deleting a whole line of valid research just because some paranoid political pundits think we should use science in a fake geopolitical battle, is dumb-as-a-rock.

BTW – Betsy McKay at WSJ will be publishing an article over the next few days with a similar message about what good science is lost when politics are inserted in such a toxic way.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, December 29, 2021 12:15 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: NPR: Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews

Guys, I guess this is old news now but attached is the NEJM draft with Tony as coauthor, notable because "he" says we should be doing international collaborative work to expand understanding of sarbecoviruses, exactly what you have been doing before we prised away your money.

The paper has gotten more than average press attention and both Tony and I have done a number of interviews about it.

One very small step for mankind... david

David M. Morens, MD
b6
b6
b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

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IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Tue, Dec 28, 2021 at 1:21 PM Keusch, Gerald T b6 wrote:

> We are good. Back from visiting our daughter in Durham, and now she is here in Boston visiting us.
>
> Wishing you both and all of your family a better 2022 than this year was.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Peter Daszak <b6
> **Sent:** Tuesday, December 28, 2021 1:11 PM
> **To:** David Morens b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
> **Subject:** RE: FW: NPR: Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews
>
> Enjoyed seeing this! Hope you're having a suitably festive couple of weeks….
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Friday, December 24, 2021 11:13 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Peter Daszak b6
Subject: Fwd: FW: NPR: Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

--------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** b6
Date: Thu, Dec 23, 2021 at 10:04 AM
Subject: FW: NPR: Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews
To: David Morens b6

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 10:55 PM
Subject: NPR: Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews

Fauci calls on Fox News to fire host who urged 'kill shot' in 'ambush' interviews

December 22, 20213:52 PM ET
Rachel Treisman
Twitter



Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has faced a barrage of conservative criticism and violent threats over the handling of the highly politicized coronavirus pandemic.
Greg Nash/Pool/Getty Images

Fox News host Jesse Watters is facing blowback for recent remarks he made at a conservative political conference, where he used violent rhetoric to explain how citizen journalists should confront Dr. Anthony Fauci with questions in the hopes of going viral.

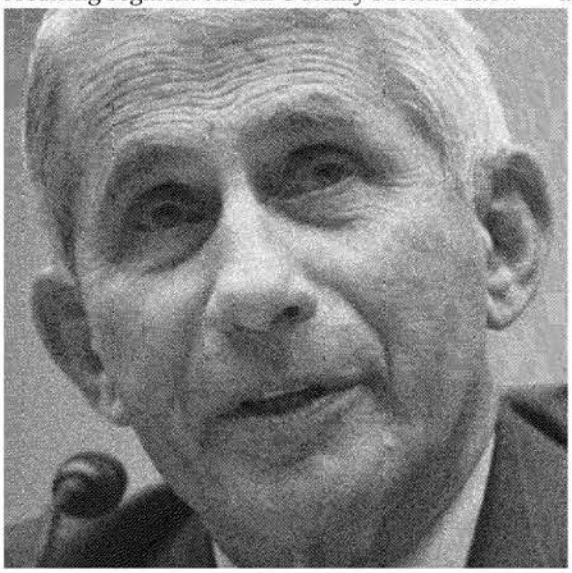
Speaking at Turning Point USA's Americafest over the weekend, Watters urged young conservatives to "ambush" the nation's

top infectious disease expert and "go in for the kill shot." He walked them through how to approach Fauci and how to phrase their questions, focusing on a conspiracy theory about the origins of the coronavirus pandemic.

"Now you go in for the kill shot. The kill shot with an ambush, deadly, because he doesn't see it coming," Watters said at one point, according to a transcript and a nearly six-minute video clip. "This is when you say, 'Dr. Fauci, you funded risky research at a sloppy Chinese lab, the same lab that sprung this pandemic on the world. You know why people don't trust you, don't you?' Boom, he is dead. He is dead. He's done."

Article continues after sponsor message

Watters — a regular commentator on the prime-time show *The Five* who made his name doing ambush-style interviews in a recurring segment on Bill O'Reilly's former show — also told audiences to be respectful and "just make sure it's legal."



Coronavirus Live Updates

Fauci Reveals He Has Received Death Threats And His Daughters Have Been Harassed

While it is clear from the full context of Watters' remarks that he was not explicitly calling for violence, the viciousness of the chosen metaphor was striking, particularly given that Fauci has spoken publicly about receiving death threats. He is among the public figures who have faced a barrage of conservative criticism and violent threats over their handling of the highly politicized coronavirus pandemic.

In a Tuesday appearance on CNN's *New Day*, Fauci called Watters' remarks "a reflection of the craziness that goes on in society."

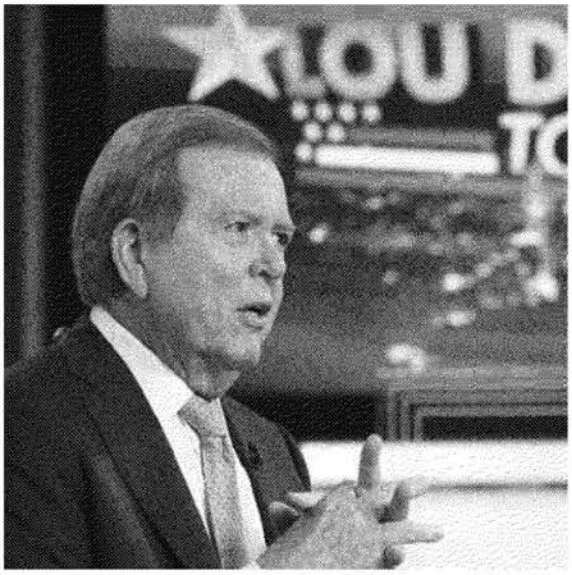
"The only thing that I have ever done throughout these two years is to encourage people to practice good public health practices: to get vaccinated, to be careful in public settings, to wear a mask," Fauci said. "And for that, you have some guy out there saying that people should be giving me a kill shot, to ambush me?"

He added that Watters "should be fired on the spot" but said the host was unlikely to be held accountable by his network.

Fox came to Watters' defense in a statement shared with NPR and other outlets.

"Based on watching the full clip and reading the entire transcript, it's more than clear that Jesse Watters was using a metaphor for asking hard-hitting questions to Dr. Fauci about gain-of-function research and his words have been twisted completely out of context," it reads.

Former government officials and public health authorities are among those slamming Watters' comments, which also follow recent revelations about how several prominent Fox News hosts figured into the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol.



Media

After Deadly Capitol Riot, Fox News Stays Silent On Stars' Incendiary Rhetoric

Text messages show that network personalities like Sean Hannity and Laura Ingraham privately pressured President Donald Trump to deescalate the day's events even though they downplayed his involvement on air in the months that followed.

Fox News hosts and guests also helped lay the groundwork for the insurrection by amplifying Trump's false claims of election fraud and by urging viewers to fight for their freedoms at the Jan. 6 protest that preceded the riot, as NPR's David Folkenflik and Tom Dreisbach have reported.

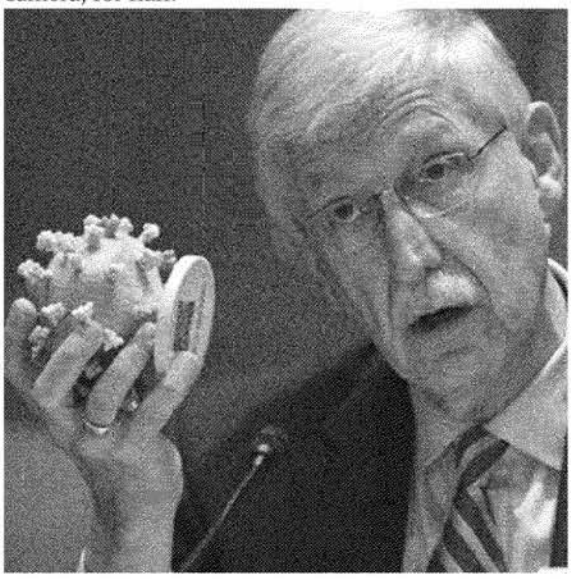
They also found that Ashli Babbitt, the U.S Air Force veteran who joined the protests and was shot and killed after storming the Capitol, was significantly influenced by Fox News coverage in addition to QAnon conspiracy theories.

How Watters urged his audience to confront Fauci

Watters opened his remarks by saying he was "sick and tired of conservatives always playing defense" and instructed the receptive crowd of students on how best to go on the offense.

He noted that politicians and other officials frequently speak at college campuses, and he encouraged students to "take advantage of that, make a name for yourselves." Then he proceeded to outline a series of tips for hypothetically engaging with Fauci, which escalated in intensity.

At one point, Watters told listeners to come equipped with a blank sheet of paper, refer to it as a research grant (again, related to the lab leak conspiracy regarding the National Institutes of Health's research in Wuhan) and "wave that in his face for the camera, for flair."



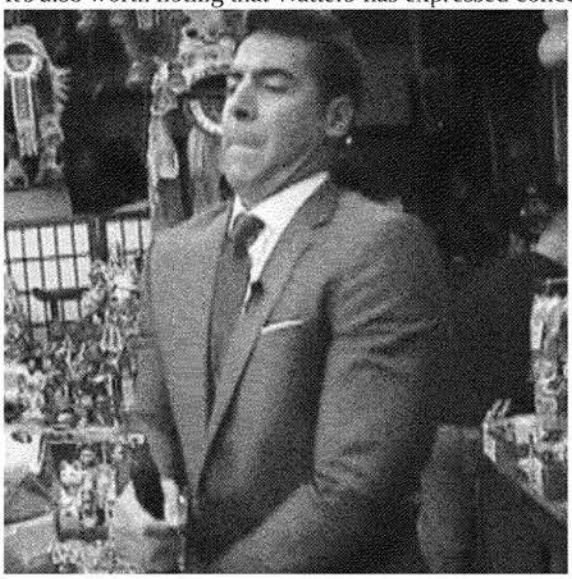
Coronavirus Updates

Outgoing NIH director implores Fox News viewers to stay focused on the real 'enemy'

As Watters described it, the goal is for students to capture the moment on their phone and send it out to any number of conservative media outlets for further reach.

"Imagine Tucker Carlson teases out of the A block, 'Coming up, brave college student confronts Lord Fauci at dinner. Exclusive footage, right back,'" he said. "Get us that! That's what we want. That changes the whole conversation of the country."

It's also worth noting that Watters has expressed concerns in the past about the vitriol people direct at public servants.



The Two-Way

Fox News Reporter: Sorry If 'Tongue-In-Cheek' Chinatown Segment Caused Offense

In 2018, for example, he railed against "the uncivil left" after staff at an upscale Lexington, Va., restaurant asked then-White House press secretary Sarah Sanders to leave.

"She's a public servant," he said to a commentator on the June 30 episode. "She has political beliefs that are different than yours and she is serving her country. Now, you may disagree with her policies, but that doesn't make her an evil person that deserves to be shunned and confronted."

People are technically allowed to "go up to someone on the street and yell nasty things in their face and surround their car," Watters acknowledged, but said that encouraging this type of behavior "is dangerous, and it's going to get out [of] control and something bad is going to happen."

Another Fox News personality recently compared Fauci to Josef Mengele

Late last month, Fox commentator Lara Logan faced fierce criticism for remarks she made on air comparing Fauci to Nazi doctor Josef Mengele.

During a segment accusing the Biden administration of overreacting to the new omicron variant, Logan said people tell her that to them, Fauci doesn't represent science but that he amounts to Mengele — who was known as the "Angel of Death" and conducted inhumane medical experiments on prisoners at the Auschwitz camp during the Holocaust.



Media

Fox anchor Neil Cavuto urged viewers to get vaccinated. Then came the death threats

"And I am talking about people all across the world are saying this, because the response from COVID, what it has done to countries everywhere, what it has done to civil liberties, the suicide rates, the poverty, it has obliterated economies," she said.
Her comments were swiftly condemned by the Auschwitz Museum and the Anti-Defamation League, among others.
Fauci told MSNBC days later that he was "astounded" that Fox had not taken any disciplinary action against Logan.
NPR has asked Fox whether that is still the case.
NPR's David Folkenflik contributed to this report.

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Date: Mon, 2 Aug 2021 1:07:35 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 2 Aug 2021 1:07:13 PM -0400
Subject: RE: House report on Origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Eddie Holmes [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >; Wang Linfa <[b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Thanks for sharing David – I saw the press this morning – so far it's only in the usual extreme Right wing papers, but no doubt will drip over to the more mainstream Murdoch press tomorrow. I'm amazed they are ready willing and able to spend so much time on this non-story, and come up with 83 pages based on misconstrued contents from a small number of emails, and innuendo they've built up around it.

This week we're submitting a paper that provides the most detailed analysis yet of spillover risk in Southeast Asia. We have credible estimates of an average of 400,000 (median 50,000) people infected by bat SARSr-CoVs each year in Southeast Asia/South China. It'll be up on bioRxiv preprint server the week of Aug 16th. I'll share a version with you next week prior to the preprint coming out (we might have last minute changes).

This, Eddie's review, other papers on new bat-CoVs related to SARS-CoV-2 and the continued lack of novel info re. the lab leak strongly suggest that the lab leak hypothesis is going nowhere serious, other than a pure political strategy, which it clearly is here.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:24 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) [b6]; Eddie Holmes [b6] >; Kessler, Robert [b6] Wang Linfa [b6] [b6]
Subject: FW: House report on Origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:19 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: House report on Origins

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Date: Sun, 3 Oct 2021 7:34:37 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 3 Oct 2021 7:33:55 PM -0400
Subject: Potential meeting with my Board.
From: Peter Daszak [redacted]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted] Hotez, Peter Jay [redacted]
CC: Roberts, Rich [redacted]; David Morens [redacted] Robert Kessler [redacted] Aleksei Chmura [redacted]

I really appreciate your offer to talk to my Board. Right now an email from you Jerry to Nancye would be great, so they realize that this is not just us against the rest of the world.

I have a group of three that we meet with regularly to go through the PR issue, and we'll meet this week. We then have a Board meeting in 2 wks, at which I'll propose a "Science & Policy" zoom meeting sometime in November so whomever of you are available can meet them at that point and give them your view on what's happening and why we're caught up in these two issues – the political agenda over the origins, and the hostile back and forth over lab biosafety rules and gain of function etc.

My Board is supportive but it's a constant worry for me that the continued media attacks just don't show them that there's an end in sight. Hearing from you will let them see that rational people who have standing in the community understand what's going on here.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 7:21 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [redacted]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [redacted]; Peter Daszak [redacted] David Morens [redacted]; Robert Kessler [redacted]
Subject: Re: The 'letter to EHA Board' is a damp squib after all.

And so would I. What's more effective, speaking or writing to them? Or both?

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 3, 2021, at 6:04 PM, Hotez, Peter Jay <b6> wrote:

Me too

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Oct 3, 2021, at 5:02 PM, Roberts, Rich <b6> wrote:

Peter:

I would be very happy to speak to your board if it might help.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 3:00 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay b6 Roberts, Rich b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; David Morens < b6
Cc: Robert Kessler b6 g >
Subject: The 'letter to EHA Board' is a damp squib after all.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear All,

I've attached the 'alleged' letter to the EHA board which was buried on the academic website "Research Gate" that's now being used by the lab leak folks to post articles that don't make it into the journals. it was NOT sent to all board members and is essentially a different version of the many nasty 'trolling' emails sent to me over the past few months. It's riddled with factual errors, hyperbole and innuendo and I believe is simply part of the orchestrated campaign to try and discredit our work to push the lab origin hypothesis. They cite the Jeff Sachs quote as part of their rationale for calling for me to be 'investigated'…

The authors are not well-known scientists, nor are they influential people – they're part of this so-called "DRASTIC" group of amateur internet searchers who are trying to dig up conspiracies around the Wuhan lab. They include a French mid-level data analyst working at a bank (Bank of New Zealand - Demaneuf), a retired professor from Belgium (Goffinet), a grad student (Colombo), a political activist who works on human genome engineering (Metzl), an ex-military anti-China guy who calls himself an 'historian and analyst' (Rixley) etc. Their online network includes people who the FBI is actively tracking, including one guy who's been in jail for a 7 year sentence for pedophilia – Daniel Sirotkin. It's a very ugly group of people who are on the fringes, but have also been able to get some support from scientists on the fringe to push this conspiracy.

I've sent it to my Board Chair Nancye Green, our Vice Chair and the head of our Communications Committee, strongly recommending that none of us respond to it, because that would serve no purpose other than to become another story in NY Post.

I'm talking to Nancye at some point today or tomorrow and will let her know that you've all spoken out on this email chain, on Twitter (thanks Peter!) and are willing to do so directly to the Board. I'll get back to you as soon as I hear what she thinks.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 1:51 PM
To: 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6; 'Roberts, Rich' b6 usch, Gerald T' < b6 ; 'David Morens' b6
Cc: Robert Kessler b6 >
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.

Thanks Peter.

Anything you can do is v. helpful to get the message across that these attacks on science are damaging and political – following the exact same playbook as the Climate change attacks. I'm hoping that you can talk to him without amplifying two things – 1) the political action to try to defund us, which we're working to try and remove and I don't want it to create a battle out of; and 2) the letter from the NY Post article, which I'll email you later about and I'm hoping will go no further.

I think Jon Cohen's focusing on the Jeff Sachs business – where he canceled the Lancet COVID origins taskforce and blamed it on having links to EcoHealth – as if we're one valid candidate for the origin of COVID!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 1:18 PM
To: Roberts, Ric b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 Peter Daszak <
b6 ; David Morens b6
Cc: Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: Good LA Times article.

FYI Jon contacted me and asked if we could speak, I gave him my cell

Peter Hotez , MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar

Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs

Texas A&M University

Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail b6

Twitter: @peterhotez

Skype: b6

Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48

Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez

Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano

b6

Phone: b6

Fax: b6

<image001.png>

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 11:09 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens < b6
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]>; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.

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Jerry:

I did get an answer from Elizabeth Warren's staff and anticipate a direct conversation soon.
The contact I have was passed from Seth Moulton's office in confidence so let me see if he would agree to converse with you directly after I have spoken with him.

I spoke with Jon Cohen yesterday and found him to be quite reasonable. He did agree to pass any quotes he might use past me before publishing. I specifically mentioned that it would be greatly appreciated if he could write something in direct support of Peter within the article.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs

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Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 6:20 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]; peter hotez [b6]
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.

EXTERNAL SENDER

I talk to him regularly, most recently about the attacks on Peter D and the task force we were on under the Lancet COVID Commission which Jeff Sachs has unilaterally terminated. I couldn't really allow him insights into where we are or to use anything I said (all off the record) because we are negotiating with Lancet for a different way to continue our work.

I think he is a decent guy. I know Peter D has concerns so if you do speak to Jon be careful about what you say and how you say it, and require him to run any quotes he plans to use by you. That's his general modus operandi.

What we need is to get the amendment out of the appropriations bill, and while the senators are important it may be somebody like Eric Lander who is a cabinet member to get them to pay attention. The administration is mightily distracted.

Rich, if you are able to share your entre to Elizabeth Warrens staff I would happily follow up. I have contacted them, Markey, and my representation and all I get back is the auto thank you reply.

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 3:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]; peter hotez [b6]
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.

Peter:

I just spoke with Jon Cohen from Science. I mentioned that you were being attacked completely unfairly and that it would be good if he could find some encouraging words to help you. I am wondering if one of you would also be prepared to talk to Jon.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
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USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:47 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; David Morens < b6
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Good LA Times article.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just saw a piece in the LA Times that sums up the state of the origins "debate" pretty clearly:

[b6] 09-28/evidence-against-a-lab-leak-as-covid-source

It's firewalled so here's the article:

Column: New evidence undermines the COVID lab-leak theory — but the press keeps pushing it

BY MICHAEL HILTZIK BUSINESS COLUMNIST
SEPT. 28, 2021 6 AM PT

When it comes to the pandemic, pseudoscience has outweighed real science at almost every turn. One of the best examples of that is the unsupported assertion that the virus causing COVID-19 escaped from a Chinese laboratory.

Despite mounting evidence that the virus reached humans through natural pathways — from infected animals such as bats — the lab-leak hypothesis recently jumped back into the news, thanks to CNN, the investigative news site the Intercept, and the Atlantic.

All treat the idea that the virus escaped from a lab credulously. They downplay or entirely ignore the latest scientific findings that support the theory that the virus' origin can be found in the animal kingdom — the view accepted by a preponderance of experts in virology.

It's a likely probability that this one originated from animals as well. But the possibility also remains that the virus leaked from a lab.
CNN'S SANJAY GUPTA OVERSTATES THE LAB LEAK THEORY

This is known as the zoonotic theory, from the term for a disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

We've reported before on the near absence of evidence for a lab leak, whether or not it's the product of a deliberate act.

Ever since the lab-leak claim first emerged during the Trump administration, where it was part of a White House information campaign demonizing China, one of the arguments in its favor has been that evidence for a zoonotic origin has also been spotty.

That argument has never been quite true — virologists know that animals have been the source of most of the viral diseases afflicting humanity — but it has become weaker than ever over the last year.

The question of the origin of COVID-19 isn't of merely academic interest. The answer could guide the world's preparation for future pandemics; if the virus emerged from a laboratory, then improving lab safety measures will be prioritized. If scientific opinion continues to coalesce around animal-to-human transmission, that will underscore the importance of regulating contact between humans and wildlife.

To put it another way, if we focus on the wrong answer, the right measures won't be taken. In a real sense, humankind's future depends on not being distracted by an unsupported, politically motivated claim about Chinese labs.

Before examining the flaws in the CNN, Intercept and Atlantic treatments, let's look at what's been published recently about the zoonotic path.

For context, keep in mind that the earliest cluster of COVID-19 cases, in late 2019, was identified in the environs of the Huanan seafood market in the Chinese metropolis of Wuhan. Lab-leak theorists find this significant, because it's 7.5 miles from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which does research on bat viruses.

A paper posted online earlier this month chiefly by researchers at France's Institut Pasteur and under consideration for publication in a Nature journal, however, reports that three viruses were found in bats living in caves in northern Laos with features very similar to SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19.

As Nature reported, those viruses are "more similar to SARS-CoV-2 than any known viruses."

Another paper, posted in late August by researchers from the Wuhan lab, reports on viruses found in rats also with features similar to those that make SARS-CoV-2 infectious in humans. Two other papers published on the discussion forum virological.org present evidence that the virus jumped from animals to humans at more than one animal market in Wuhan, not just the Huanan seafood market.

Given that these so-called wet markets have long been suspected as transmission points of viruses from animals to humans because they sell potentially infected animals, that makes the laboratory origin vastly less likely, according to a co-author of one of the papers.

"That a laboratory leak would find its way to the very place where you would expect to find a zoonotic transmission is quite unlikely," Joel Wertheim, an associate professor at UC San Diego's medical school, told me. "To have it find its way to multiple markets, the exact place where you would expect to see the introduction, is unbelievably unlikely."

As virologist Robert F. Garry of Tulane, one of Wertheim's co-authors, told Nature, the finding is "a dagger into the heart" of the lab-leak hypothesis.

Garry and Wertheim are among the 21 expert co-authors of a "critical review" of virological findings on the origins of COVID-19. The review concludes, "There is currently no evidence that SARS-CoV-2 has a laboratory origin."

Now let's look at the recent reporting in support of the lab-leak theory.

On Sept. 19, CNN aired an hourlong documentary entitled "The Origins of COVID-19: Searching for the Source." Hosted by the channel's star science anchor, Sanjay Gupta, the program carries the veneer of an evenhanded approach.

Proponents of the zoonotic origin theory are given airtime, including Kristian Andersen of the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla and Peter Daszak, a prominent grant maker in the virology field.

But so are proponents of the lab-leak theory. They include Alina Chan, a researcher at the Broad Institute, a biomedical research center, and Josh Rogin, a Washington Post columnist. Neither has any experience in virology. Chan is co-writing a book about COVID's origins that is expected to feature the lab-leak theory prominently, a fact not mentioned by CNN.

Yet at the top of the hour, referring to the common pattern of viruses jumping from animals to humans, Gupta says, "It's a likely probability that this one originated from animals as well. But the possibility also remains that the virus leaked from a lab."

By posing these two theories as simply two equally plausible solutions to a mystery, CNN glosses over the fact that the virological community regards the animal origin as vastly more likely than a lab leak. In fact, the two hypotheses are miles apart in credibility.

One of the program's chief targets is a report by a World Health Organization team issued in early 2021 that found spillover from an animal host to be "likely to very likely" and a laboratory incident an "extremely unlikely pathway."

Gupta calls the WHO report "the only scientific study of COVID's origins to date." That's not remotely accurate. There have been countless scientific studies, both before the WHO report and since. Indeed, Gupta mentions one of them, a seminal paper by Andersen and colleagues, published in March 2020. That paper termed the lab-leak theory "a speculative incomplete hypothesis with no credible evidence."

Much of the rest of the CNN program is filled with speculation about the Wuhan Institute, typically presented with portentous music on the soundtrack, suggesting subliminally that something sinister is going on there. The absence of information from the institute or the Chinese government is generally taken as tantamount to an admission of guilt.

"Over the course of 2020," Gupta declares, "more and more revelations emerged related to the

Wuhan Institute of Virology."

One of these revelations concerned three staff members who reportedly sought hospital treatment for a flu-like illness in November 2019, before the COVID pandemic emerged.

Nothing has ever transpired to suggest these workers had COVID — November is flu season, after all. That they sought treatment at a hospital is immaterial, since it is well-known that people in China often go to hospitals for primary care, which residents of other countries would tend to receive in a doctor's office.

A CNN reporter appearing on air overstated the case, saying the patients were "hospitalized with an unknown illness." There has been no evidence that they were admitted to the hospital or that their illness was "unknown."

CNN doesn't bring its audience up to date on any of the latest research supporting the zoonotic theory, though it was published well before the air date and superseded what Gupta described as "the only scientific study" of COVID origins.

More recently, the Intercept trumpeted a purported scoop based on a leaked document — a grant proposal submitted in 2018 by Daszak's organization, the EcoHealth Alliance, to the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA.

The proposal, for a laboratory manipulation of a virus related to SARS, the viral disease that caused an outbreak of pulmonary disease in China in 2003. DARPA rejected the proposal, however, and there's no evidence that it was submitted to, much less approved by, any other funding body.

"Many questions remain about the proposal, including whether any of the research described in it was completed," the Intercept acknowledged.

Commentators on the Intercept's disclosure have displayed, perhaps in spite of themselves, that they lack the courage of their own convictions. In an article published Sept. 24, the Atlantic, unable or unwilling to delve into what the Intercept's document actually meant, if anything, settled for declaring that it made the lab-leak debate "even messier."

The magazine's Daniel Engber and Adam Federman wrote: "Does the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic have an unnatural origin? The answer hasn't changed: probably not. But we have learned something quite disturbing in the past few days, simply from how and when this information came to light."

By pretending that the debate itself is important, as if both sides have something to offer, they manage to report on a claim that has no substance. The approach also protects journalists from their persistent fear of landing on the wrong side of things — the authors preserve an out in case the lab-leak hypothesis turns out to be true, as unlikely as that is. If that happens, they can point to their lily-livered observations and say, "See, we knew it all along."

In this debate, however, the zoonotic camp has evidence and the lab-leak camp nothing to offer but innuendo.

Here's the true state of the discussion. There is no evidence that the virus leaked from the Wuhan laboratory or any other lab. There is no evidence that the Wuhan lab was working with a bat virus that had anything but a very distant resemblance to SARS-CoV-2. Viruses that resemble it much more closely have been found in natural settings a thousand miles from Wuhan, as the crow, or bat, flies.

Evidence that artificial manipulation of a virus gave rise to SARS-CoV-2 has faded, as scientists find more evidence that features of SARS-CoV-2 thought to be unnatural occur in nature. Meanwhile, evidence for zoonotic transmission is constantly accumulating. No one who reports on the issue without acknowledging these two trends should be trusted.

Los Angeles Times columnist Michael Hiltzik writes a daily blog appearing on latimes.com. His seventh book, "Iron Empires: Robber Barons, Railroads, and the Making of Modern America," has just been published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/hiltzikm and on Facebook at facebook.com/hiltzik.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 11:29:23 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 28 Jun 2021 11:29:13 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs.
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" [b6]>
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>;
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]>;

Podcast I think out tomorrow

This from Bloomberg

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021- 06-27/did-covid-come-from-a-lab-scientist-at-wuhan-institute-speaks-out

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: [b6]
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: [b6]
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPlC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
[b6]

Phone: [b6]



Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 28, 2021, at 10:16 AM, Roberts, Rich [b6] > wrote:

Peter:

Could you send a link please?

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6]

From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2021 11:15 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6] >
Subject: Re: Jeff Sachs.

EXTERNAL SENDER

I just did a "new abnormal" podcast with Molly Jong-Fast that throws cold water on GOF or lab leaks, and reinforces Dr Anderson's interview just out in Bloomberg. So maybe change the tide in that way

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study

Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

> On Jun 28, 2021, at 10:12 AM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:
>
> *****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**
>
> I agree Rich and look forward to working with you on this.
>
> I will send back the document re. an NASEM "Attacks on science" meeting later today with a couple of extra names and the edits others have sent.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> Peter Daszak
> (Sent from my iPhone)
>
> President
> EcoHealth Alliance
>
> 460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA
>
> www.EcoHealthAlliance.org
>
> > On Jun 28, 2021, at 9:22 AM, Roberts, Rich <b6> wrote:

Peter:

I have been following all of the emails racing back and forth, but find myself overwhelmed by the vitriol that is playing out though the media, including what might have been once considered reliable sources. At this point I do not see a clear path forward that would not just invite further polarization and more attacks.

As for Jeff Sachs, my own reaction would be to tell him to go to hell and just recuse yourself from any role in his commission. After all, it seems unlikely they are going to get any closer to finding out what really happened, especially in terms of getting evidence for a natural origin.

I'm happy to continue to find solutions, but would prefer a route that supported science generally rather than continuing to fan the flames of the lab leak.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:41 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; Robert Kessler < [b6]; Jeffrey Sturchio [b6]
Subject: Jeff Sachs.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Please see his email to me below, just now.

He's proposing I step off as a commissioner, recuse myself from the origins work and then am put on the one health part of the taskforce. He will also bring on biosafety people.

This would be seen widely as a further step down for me and is not acceptable in my opinion.

He's trying to bully me into a quick response.

I think he's trying to line this up as a done deal before his Wednesday morning call with the rest of the Commissioners.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Jeffrey Sachs <b6
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:24 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Ozge Karadag b6 ; Bagenal, Jessamy (ELS-LOW) <
b6 >; Yanis Ben Amor <b6
Subject: Continued work on the task force

Dear Peter,

I would like to pursue a way forward in which you would continue as a member of the task force to provide expertise and inputs on the One Health approach to pandemics, while you would step away from being a commissioner and would recuse yourself from the task force's work on the question of origins of SARS-CoV-2. Hume similarly would recuse himself from any work on the origins question. I will appoint a new acting chair or co-chairs of the task force following consultations with the task force.

I am proposing this two-track approach so that the controversies and issues surrounding your work do not envelope the Commission's work and its final report, while at the same time enabling you to contribute your considerable expertise and experience to the important issues of One Health and the ecology of emerging infectious diseases.

I hope that you find this approach to be satisfactory and reasonable under the circumstances. It is my deeply considered view on how to achieve several important objectives going forward.

I will move forward expeditiously on these issues one way or another, so I would deeply appreciate your timely response.

With best wishes,

Jeff

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Date:	Sat, 13 Mar 2021 10:42:49 PM -0500
Sent:	Sat, 13 Mar 2021 10:42:45 PM -0500
Subject:	RE: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'
From:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]gov;
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Its wonderful! I'm still brainstorming how to revitalize the campaign to make NIH reverse its position.
I was in touch with Tony to congratulate him on the Research!America award. I took the opportunity to send him the pdf of the paper on global R&D reform (so he had it before it went online), and to suggest NIAID initiate a contract with NAM to do a consensus study on what happened with R&D in 2020, the good and the bad, with a view to make science based recommendations on how to move forward. The model was the committee on Clinical Research in the W Africa Ebola outbreak I co-chaired, which was supported by ASPR (Nicki Lurie) FDA (Lu Borio) and NIAID (Tony). While I had in mind the opportunity this would provide to explore the influence of politics on research grant funding, this was not directly noted. Tony surprised me by copying Francis on his response, which was first to thank for the congrats, and the paper. He then noted that Nicki had initiated the 2016 contract, and maybe such an initiative had to be above the institute which was the rationale to bring Francis in the loop. But Tony would know well, as would Francis, that I have been advocating his dismissal if NIH did not transparently report on what happened, and if the action was unjustified restore the grant and the reputation of EHA and Peter and colleagues. As we know, NIH OD/OER has done nothing of the sort, but rather has simply doubled down and more.

So I'm not sure what part of his butt Tony was covering, but I can't see Francis going along with it, especially with me anywhere near such a committee, much less chairing it – which is what I told Tony I wanted to do. I haven't had further conversation with Victor, so I don't know at this point what he wants to do, except that he wants NAM to be involved in the future evolution of the global initiative. If the paper is any good, or has any impact, he owes me and Nicki something because we worked hard on it. And all we are asking for is more work, but a chance to shape the Academy recommendations and that's worth a lot.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 7:10 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]gov>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

Basically, I'm a one-man 'news creation' machine for the rightwing press. All I have to do it send out a tweet pushing back at some whingeing criticism or other and it's a whole news article.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 4:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6
b6
Subject: FW: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

Dynamite!

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 4:12 PM
Subject: Washington Examiner: WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China

WHO origins investigator defends Wuhan lab and blames lack of access on 'anti-China political rhetoric'

by Jerry Dunleavy, Justice Department Reporter |

| March 12, 2021 01:57 PM

A key member of the World Health Organization team that investigated COVID-19's origins in China in early 2021 defended a Wuhan lab's removal of a viral sample database from public view and said it was the fault of "anti-China political rhetoric" that resulted in the Chinese Communist Party blocking an investigation for a year.

Officials from both the Trump and Biden administrations have said the Chinese government worked to thwart investigations into the origins of the virus, which has killed 2.63 million worldwide, and the WHO-China report is slated to be released next week. Both administrations said China was not transparent and is still concealing key data. Congressional reports blamed China's duplicity and the WHO's incompetence for an outbreak becoming a pandemic.

Peter Daszak, the leader of the EcoHealth Alliance, which steered at least $600,000 in National Institutes of Health funding to the Wuhan Institute of Virology for bat coronavirus research, called the lab's decision to take down a public database containing thousands of viral samples "absolutely reasonable" during a Chatham House discussion Wednesday, claiming the lab did so because it was hit by hackers. The discussion seemed to preview the WHO's impending report, and Daszak attempted to justify the Chinese government's yearlong intransigence by pointing to alleged anti-China sloganeering, without placing blame on China.

Daszak previously criticized the Biden administration for appearing skeptical of the WHO's preliminary findings and defended China to CCP-linked outlets. U.S. Embassy officials in China raised concerns in 2018 about biosecurity at the lab led by "bat woman" Shi Zhengli.

"I asked the question in front of the whole team, both sides, while we were at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, about the so-called missing database. What we were told by Shi Zhengli was that there had been hacking attempts on it, about 3,000 hacking attempts, and they took down this Excel spreadsheet database. Absolutely reasonable," Daszak said Wednesday. "We did not ask to see the data, and, as you know, a lot of this work is work that's been conducted with EcoHealth Alliance. I'm also part of those data, and we do basically know what's in those databases. I gave a talk to both sides about the work we've done with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and I explained what's there. There is no evidence of viruses closer to SARS-CoV-2 than RaTG13 in those databases."

In February, NBC News reported "intelligence officials" pointed to the fact the Wuhan lab "removed from public view a database of 22,000 virus samples for security reasons, and has not allowed a detailed look at the lab's notes or other records." The outlet said the officials "say it's suspicious that the virus outbreak arose in Wuhan, a hub of virus research in China, while the bats that commonly carry coronaviruses are typically found in caves a thousand miles from that city."

A State Department fact sheet released in mid-January contended Wuhan lab researchers "conducted experiments involving RaTG13, the bat coronavirus identified by the WIV in January 2020 as its closest sample to SARS-CoV-2 (96.2% similar)" and that the lab "has a published record of conducting 'gain-of-function' research to engineer chimeric viruses." The fact sheet added that the lab "has engaged in classified

research, including laboratory animal experiments, on behalf of the Chinese military."

"The U.S. government has reason to believe that several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019, before the first identified case of the outbreak, with symptoms consistent with both COVID-19 and common seasonal illnesses," the State Department fact sheet said, arguing that "this raises questions about the credibility of WIV senior researcher Shi Zhengli's public claim that there was 'zero infection' among the WIV's staff and students of SARS-CoV-2 or SARS-related viruses."

Daszak claimed, "We sent a list of sites and people we wanted to talk to, and none were refused." He said that "in its essence that theory" — of COVID-19 escaping from a lab — "is not a conspiracy theory, but many many people have put that forward as a conspiracy theory in that the Chinese side conspired to cover up evidence of that." Daszak lamented his previous work with the lab had been criticized, calling it "quite ironic."

He also blamed former President Donald Trump; former Trump campaign CEO Steve Bannon, who runs the *War Room: Pandemic* podcast; Bannon ally and exiled Chinese billionaire Guo Wengui; and the Falun Gong, a religious movement that is persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party and funds the *Epoch Times*, for why China hadn't allowed an investigation sooner, citing their "anti-China political rhetoric."

"Science has been, to some extent, caught up in that, to other extents absolutely crushed by it," Daszak claimed. "We've not had access to work in China on the origins for the last 12 months, which is ironic because we could've been on the ground there working with our Chinese colleagues, and by now we may have had some really important answers as to how it emerged, and the rhetoric has held that up. These politics are not there to help find the origins. They're simply there to help one political party win."

Daszak said China swabbed 900 samples from the Huanan seafood market and said Zhengli went into Hubei province and looked at over 1,100 bat samples, concluding it wasn't a local virus carried by bats into the market.

"That a bat or other wildlife species carried a virus that is a progenitor of SARS-CoV-2, it got into domestic animals, wildlife, bred in farms, perhaps, or people associated with that, and got into the Wuhan market that way, I think that's the most likely scenario," Daszak said.

He said that "within the next few years, we're going to have real significant data on where this came from."

During a February interview on *Face the Nation* on CBS, Matthew Pottinger, Trump's deputy national security adviser, said that "the ledger on the side of an explanation that says that this resulted from some kind of human error, it far outweighs the side of the scale that says this was some natural outbreak." Pottinger said in January that the WHO investigation was a "Potemkin exercise."

Biden national security adviser Jake Sullivan criticized China for blocking data on the origins of COVID-19 but declined to stand by declassified U.S. intelligence.

Peter Ben Embarek, head of the WHO group that investigated the origins, said in late February that "we didn't do an audit of any of these labs, so we don't really have hard facts or detailed data on the work done" at the Wuhan lab. In early February, Embarek said the possibility that the coronavirus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab was "extremely unlikely" and didn't merit further inquiry, but WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said more study was needed.

Two other WHO investigative team members, Marion Koopmans, head of the Department of Viroscience at Erasmus University Medical Center, and John Watson, senior medical adviser at Public Health England, also weighed in Wednesday.

Koopmans said it is a "misunderstanding" to think of the WHO investigation as an "inspection." She said that "we see it is a starting point, not the mission that will get the answers." She admitted the WHO team had the "handicap" of being in "full-blown quarantine" for its first two weeks in China and then had "restrictions in the second half of our visit."

Watson repeatedly stressed that it was a "joint study" with "our Chinese counterparts" and said the WHO team members were independent. He claimed that "it was slow, but despite that, we were shown a great deal. … So I was not at all disappointed."

"What this was not set up as was an external group coming in to investigate and to point fingers with the hope of identifying a smoking gun," Watson said, adding that there was "a popular perception about a group of Sherlock Holmes going in with magnifying glasses and swabs to identify something."

Koopmans said that "China has done … something like 30,000, a lot of testing of animals across the country, not finding such evidence" of the virus in domesticated animals. She said they were told, "Around 1,000 people

have worked to get the data to the point where we could discuss and scrutinize and review them" and said they spoke with staff from Wuhan CDC, Hubei CDC, China's national CDC, and Wuhan labs.

"So we have visited the three laboratories that have been actively working, including the laboratory sitting close to the market, including the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Koopmans said. "We have discussed their research programs, their routine testing programs, the way they work, what they had done in terms of health monitoring and testing of staff, and based on that, we concluded that it's extremely unlikely that there was a lab incident."

Trump officials such as former Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have pointed to evidence suggesting COVID-19 might have originated in a Wuhan lab. The Chinese government denies this and has cast doubt on it originating in China.

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Date: Sun, 11 Apr 2021 2:40:07 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 11 Apr 2021 2:36:47 PM -0400
Subject: McCarthyism looming - Bipartisan bill re. competition with China includes language on WIV and our work
From: Peter Daszak <[redacted]>
To: David Morens [redacted]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted]; Roberts, Rich [redacted]; Aleksei Chmura [redacted]; Robert Kessler [redacted]
Attachments: Risch, Menendez Strategic Competition Act.pdf

Here's a story from the lovely organization "White Coat Waste"

https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2021/04/09/breaking- bipartisan-senate-bill-calls-for-investigation-of-wuhan-animal-lab/

This is a large bill from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to deal with all sorts of US-China competition mainly around business, but into which some COVID-origins stuff has been inserted.

Please let others know and see if there is something that the societies involved in international scientific research might find they want to take issue with.

The pdf of the bill is attached. The relevant clauses are in Section 214, pages 118 & on…

I don't know what this would mean for EcoHealth, and I'm assuming if it passes that NIH will have to respond to any inquiries from this committee in the first instance.

I'm just MASSIVELY disgusted that our honorable work aimed at preventing pandemics is now under attack from the US govt as part of their wilfully building a cold war narrative against China. It's beginning to feel like McCarthyism and at the very least this will help shut down work to identify potential pandemic viruses and put us at risk of future pandemics.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens <[redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 5:40 PM
To: Peter Daszak <[redacted]>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [redacted]; Roberts, Rich <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.

Peter, you know i will do whatever i can possibly do, help me think what that might be. You know that as a govt employee relatively high up in our chain, i have to go through all kinds of approvals and permissions,to even whisper to the press, on background, same as Tony. That said, here are things i can perhaps do to help. 1. Talk on background to any reporter, i will just do it without permission. Send them to me!!!!!

2. Keep pushing the system for me to speak openly to reporters. You can clue them in as follows. It is important to understand how it works. If reporters try to talk to me i have to take them through clearance. The clearers, our nih office plus hhs, and occasionally the WH, will then tell the reporter that i am not authorized to speak on this subject. However, if the reporter is willing to be persistent, even nasty, they sometime relent if they feel they might be accused of censorship. Reporters seem not to understand this is a game and they are being used, but they can be tipped off, ahem, ahem.....

3. I am pretty sure i can write an editorial or a letter to the editor to the NYT, post, whatever, as long as i do not indicate i am a govt employee. But i can sign it as David Morens, Bethesda, MD, or use my unpaid appointment at Johns Hopkins. I can do this, but not signing my affiliation detracts somewhat, since i could be a nut job, thus it would be better to co-author with others, ideally luminaries like Rich or Jerry or others who can fully sign. Alternatively, i can help others put something like that together, but not sign, just help

4. I can write another paper like the one in ASTMH but make it even harder hitting, and put it in a more influential journal. I cannot imagine Tony being pissed if i did this, he has never tried to censor me or any other scientist here. When i did the earlier paper, on which Jerry was a coauthor, i tried to turn down the heat a bit to retain the buy-in of the 9 luminaries who joined me as co-authors. In a rebooted paper i could do it myself or, better yet, hand puck a few brave souls. By the way, have you discussed this with Ralph? I assume he is running scared since he depends on our grants....

5. I can bring in my close colleague and best friend Jeff Taubenberger. Jerry and Rich, Jeff led the team that resurrected the 1918 flu virus in the 1990s using Sanger sequencing of rna fragments of average length about 50 bases (!!!!!!!!!!), taking a team of 20almost 10 years. Then he was part of a new team to "resurrect" the virus using reverse genetics, and study it in experimental animals. The findings are still coming out (it is a bsl-4 agent, after all), and they are all game changing. Ever since, Jeff has been harassed as Dr. DEATH, and because of atacks and threats, has gone through periods of fear, depression, and repeated thoughts about just walking away from science.

He won't stick his neck out, but i feel sure he will help off the record. Maybe we should all discuss? I speak with Jeff about this every couple days and, remember, he was a coauthor on the astmh paper. He has a big picture view of all this, having first been Dr. Death for sequencing the 1918 virus, then coming close to having his career destroyed by the original GOF crap, led by Relman, Ebright and colleagues, 10 years ago

6. Peter, do not despair!!!!!! There IS, IS, light at the end of the tunnel, albeit far down the tunnel.... maybe you should come down here some weekend, soon, chill at the Cosmos Club, relax, brainstorm, discuss, raid the bar, sit in the garden, enjoy the early azaleas..... Bring your wife? I have never had the pleasure of meting her. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 7, 2021, at 16:34, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> That's exactly the problem David – the only person calling them out is me, and I'm just barraged by attacks because of it. It's logical because I was the only US member of the WHO team, and that's the political football at the moment, but it's making life extremely difficult and risky right now. I really need others to step up and talk out about what the reality is here.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 1:48 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6; Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: Re: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.

I do NOT know him, but he can't be much worse than some of the other bozos.

Yes, I did see the NYT article this morning, although it is not much worse than alot of the other stuff from Ebright and company,

I think all this piling on is because no one is calling these alarmists out.

Sometimes, as they say in American football, the best defense is a good offense....

d

On 4/7/2021 12:47 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> I got a call from Drew Hinshaw at the WSJ for an interview on Tedros call for investigation of the lab origin story. It looks like we will talk in the morning.
>
> Do either of you know him and how he approaches a story? Good guy or one to be wary of?
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> > On Apr 7, 2021, at 12:42 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
> >
> > To add to that – another damaging article in the New York Times today.
> >
> > https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/07/health/coronavirus- lab-leak-who.html
> >
> > Please read the details and at the end the comment from Jamie Metzl – these people are lining up to shut down scientific research on viruses in wildlife – that's the exact opposite of what we'll need to do if we want to be prepared for the next pandemic.
> >
> > I can't fight this fight on my own – I'm cited in this article as usual, along with Marion Koopmans – both of us under daily attack from these conspiracists. We need bigger and louder voices fighting against this movement before it starts to do damage to scientific research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 11:25 AM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' b6
'Keusch, Jerry' [b6]
Subject: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
Importance: High

Just read your email about being allowed to do interviews on the WHO report David. Interesting and disappointing. Clearly the issue of COVID origins is not the political problem – it's the WHO report that's the problem. It's quite telling really, that the Biden Admin decided the WHO report would be a political football and therefore NSC/White House agenda, not a scientific issue and therefore NIH/NIAID agenda.

This is a symptom of a bigger issues – over the last 2-4 weeks, all of the allies who would normally talk to reporters about the science have either been silenced/sidelined, or are following a political agenda, e.g. the White House, the WHO Director-General (who single-handedly threw the whole WHO expert team under the bus), the former CDC director, and now NIAID – all following the political line.

The attacks reached a crescendo over this same period with daily op-eds in NY Post, WSJ, Daily Caller and other Right Wing papers bleeding over into CNN and even NPR. My Board are now beginning to get concerned and this puts me personally in a very difficult position – it's a risk to my job, my family's security, and my career. It's not a real problem yet – if the attacks die down a bit (which I believe they will), and if my Board continue to support me (I believe they will), the long game will win out.

But at this point I'm reaching out to call for help! Can we line up some allies who will help speak publicly about the science here on wildlife-to-human spillover vs. lab leak? Critically, there is still no evidence at all that a lab leak occurred, there is also no evidence at all that EcoHealth (or NIAID) funded or supported Gain-of-function work in China. Likewise, stories about EcoHealth 'hiding' DoD funding, being funded by China, not clearly indicating the source of funding on all public documents, etc. etc. are false and/or misleading. Still, the damage is being done and I'm worried that today the momentum is with the conspiracists.

Any and all ideas are welcome – ASTMH, NAM, NASEM, others?

Jerry – what about reaching out to Benjamin Corb and others?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6 ; Peter Daszak < b6
Subject: Fwd: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Guys, see below..... The Biden admin apparently won't let any of us at NIH, including Tony, discuss the WHO report....

On the surface this sounds bad, but there is the possibility they just want one org to manage the message because they are trying to put out a fire. Or am I just Pollyanna? d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview
Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 17:43:09 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
To: David Morens b6

<image001.gif>
David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Cc: NIAID OCGR NSWB <NIAIDOCGRNSWB@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens –

For your awareness (and in case she also reaches out to you directly), Mariana Lenharo followed up today on her request to speak with you or another NIAID expert about the WHO report, which as you know came out today. We've been asked to refer requests for comment about the report to the National Security Council, and we will be directing her there.

Best,
Hillary

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Thanks for the background! Once we know what the WHO report says, we'll be better poised to make decisions about how to handle requests to discuss it… as you note, it is a bit of a hot issue.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:46 AM
To: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

That's fine, although I think she wants me because I spoke to her before, and because I published the major paper dealing with it, along with Breman at FIC and ex-FIC director Keusch, and other authors.

Also, just off the record, we may want to not give this to Tony as he has been unfairly criticized over some of the issues. It could be a hot subject for him….d

---

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens,

Thanks for sending. I'll write back to this reporter and ask her to send a fresh request to the press office once the WHO report is available – we can at that time better assess whether it makes sense for you or another NIAID expert to speak with the media about it.

Best,
Hillary

Hillary Hoffman, Ph.D., Writer/Editor

Office of Communications and Government Relations, NIAID, NIH
5601 Fishers Lane #6G38
Rockville, MD 20852

b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:26 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
> **Date:** March 16, 2021 at 18:21:42 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Subject: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview**
>
> Dear Dr. Morens,
>
> I hope you are doing well. It's been a few months since we spoke for the article on the origins of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Now, as the WHO mission to study the origins of the virus is about to publish their report, I'm planning to write a new article on the topic to analyze the mission's conclusions.
>
> I was wondering if you would be available for a new interview on this topic once the full report is published (it should be either this week or the next one).
>
> I'm very interested to get a sense of how the scientific community is evaluating the mission's effort into finding the origin of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Thank you so much,
>
> **Mariana Lenharo**
> Science and Health Journalist
> T b6
> Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Wed, Oct 21, 2020 at 11:02 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Thanks, you did a great job!
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03

31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
(assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6
b6
v

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<image002.jpg>

From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 9:18 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

The story for which I interviewed you was published this morning. Here is the link: https://elemental.medium.com/why- covid-19s-origin-story-is-still-a-mystery-46b0b336f122

Thank you again for the collaboration and I hope to be able to interview you again for future stories.

Kind regards,

Mariana

On Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:07 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6> wrote:

> I will be at b6 b6 b6 my cell…. ty
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> b6
>
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<image002.jpg>

From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Thank you, Dr. Morens. How about we schedule the call for tomorrow, Wednesday, at 12:30?

Should I reach you at your office number b6 b6 b6

Thank you very much!

Best,

Mariana

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:04 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 > wrote:

> Mariana, it looks like I have tomorrow from about 1215 to 130
>
> Late Thu might work after 4 or 5, not sure when earlier meeting will be done.
>
> Friday looks good except about 1 to about 4
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> b6 assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> b6
>
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>
> <image002.jpg>

From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:37 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

Thank you so much for getting back to me. I have a pretty open schedule in the next few days. These are the times I'll be available:

Wednesday: anytime after 8 am
Thursday: from 8 am to 9 am OR anytime after 1 pm
Friday: from 8 am to 3 pm

Please let me know if any of those work for you and how would you prefer to be contacted at that time.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:03 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 > wrote:

> Hi Mariana,
>
> Our media office indicated you would like to speak to me at some point this week. Let me know when. I am always busy and moving between various offices and meetings, bu5t I do have spaces of free time here and there. In general, mid afternoons, eg, from 130 until 330 or later, are not good….
>
> TY
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> ● b6 assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> ● [redacted]
> ● b6

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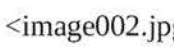

From: Mariana Lenharo <mariana.lenharo@columbia.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 2:50 PM
To: NIAID NEWS (NIH/NIAID) <NIAIDNEWS@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Hello!

My name is Mariana Lenharo, I'm a science and health journalist and I'm working on a story about the work of scientists investigating the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic. This story will be published in Elemental (https://elemental.medium.com/), a Medium publication focused on science-backed health coverage.

As I was reading about this topic, I came across this very interesting article, "The Origin of COVID-19 and Why It Matters" and I'd love to interview one of the authors, Dr. David M. Morens. This would be a 20-30-minute interview by phone/skype/zoom preferably this week. Please let me know if you think this would be possible.

Thank you very much!

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. + b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

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Date:	Mon, 17 May 2021 4:26:39 PM -0400
Subject:	Whether to [b6] cry!
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; E1naJVYWUAEcUJ3.jpg; E1naWEyX0AArF9p.jpg

OK, just when I thought this would be a quiet Monday…Checkout the lengths these folks are now going to so they can target the honorable Dr. Fauci via EcoHealth, via the Wuhan lab.

Story here… https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2021/05/17/wcw- dogs-fauci-over-wuhan-animal-lab-funding-for-tax-week/

Pictures attached. Brace yourself…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 4:20 PM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; 'Keusch, Jerry [b6]>; 'Rich Robert [b6] [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6] 'Robert Kessler ([b6]
Subject: Details of BSL-2/3/4 levels for viral cultures
Importance: High

Please have a look at the attached, ready for people asking you about comments from Ian Lipkin, Ralph Baric and others re China using BSL-2 level to culture bat-CoVs. This is now being used to suggest a lab-origin for SARS-CoV-2 is more valid. I list 7 reasons why this argument is flawed, and we cite a bunch of examples of viruses known to be lethal to people that are cultured at BSL-2 in the USA.

Hope all this helps, and thank you for your support and advice.

Each of these new conspiracy angles takes us multiple phone calls, a few hours of digging, and a not insignificant amount of emotional angst before we realize (as usual) that these are little more than hype, rhetoric and misinformation.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 2:27 PM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' b6; 'Keusch, Jerry b6 'Rich Roberts b6
Subject: RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Didn't see that one. Vincent's right that EcoHealth was not part of any gain-of-function work. He's wrong that the work between Ralph and Zhengli was actually 'gain of function'. The chimeric virus (bat spike, SARS-CoV backbone) actually lost some replication capacity – more like 'loss of function'.

The interview video clip is one I recorded in Singapore in December 2019 at a Nipah meeting. I didn't use the phrase gain of function, and wasn't referring to work we did, as Vincent says. Quite ridiculous, but easy to fool the public with this…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:54 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Jerry b6 b6 Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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- b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:11 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD

AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research
https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research

In a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul, longtime NIAID Director Anthony Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied his institute has funded gain-of-function research.

By Daniel Payne

Updated: May 15, 2021 - 11:44am

A prominent Columbia University virologist claims that in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic a U.S. nonprofit funded coronavirus experiments in Wuhan, China the results of which were used in "gain-of-function" virology research at the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Vincent Racaniello made the claim amid ongoing controversy over a recently resurfaced interview between himself and Peter Daszak, the president of the U.S. infectious disease nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.

Both EcoHealth Alliance and the scientist leading the research at UNC have been heavily funded over the years by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which has been directed since 1984 by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the public face of the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic under Presidents Trump and Biden.

Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied that NIAID has funded gain-of-function research in a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) at a Senate hearing.

Racianello's half-hour interview with Daszak took place in early December 2019 at the Nipah Virus International Conference in Singapore. Significant attention has been given to a segment in which Daszak appears to allude to having participated in "gain-of-function" experiments, a type of procedure in which scientists increase a virus's pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in order to study its potential for human infection.

"You can manipulate [coronaviruses] in the lab pretty easily," Daszak says in the interview. "Spike protein drives a lot of what happens with the coronavirus, zoonotic risk. So you can get the sequence, you can build the protein — and we work with Ralph Baric at UNC to do this — insert into the backbone of another virus, and do, do some work in the lab."

Those remarks, when they resurfaced this week, caused considerable controversy due to Daszak's role in funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars through his EcoHealth Alliance to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to bankroll coronavirus experiments there. The Wuhan lab sits just a few miles from where the first detected outbreak of COVID-19 occurred.

Speculation has swirled over the last year as to what role, if any, the Wuhan lab may have played in the origin of the pandemic, including whether it was engaging in any gain-of-function experiments that may have posed a pandemic risk.

Experiments 'confer a new property to the original virus'

Racaniello said that Daszak in the December 2019 interview was indeed describing gain-of-function experiments.

"Here is the idea," he said in an email exchange this week. "You go into caves in China and sample bats for CoVs. You collect bat guano and sequence it to find the viruses. You don't actually have the viruses, just their genome sequences. You want to know if these viruses have the ability to infect human cells."

"Since you don't have the viruses," he continued, "you just take the spike sequence from all these viruses and put it into a coronavirus that you work with in the lab. Then you see if that recombinant coronavirus can infect human cells. It's all done under containment to prevent any release. If the spikes of the bat CoV can allow the CoV to infect human cells, then they have the potential to infect humans and we should be making antivirals against them to prevent a pandemic."

Those kinds of experiments, Racaniello said, "are considered 'gain of function' because they would confer a new property to the original virus."

That research, Racaniello said, "was done in the laboratory of Dr. Ralph Baric in [the University of] North Carolina and was not funded by EcoHealth Alliance." When pressed, Racaniello revealed that EcoHealth did have an indirect role in the funding of Baric's work.

"EcoHealth Alliance provided funds to Zengli Shi at the Wuhan Institute of Virology to conduct bat surveillance for SARS-like CoVs," he said. "Baric then received the spike sequences from Wuhan to do his experiments independently."

"Daszak and Baric did not work together on this project," he added.

Anna Marie Skalka, a professor emerita at the Fox Chase Cancer Center and one of the authors of the bestselling textbook "Principles of Virology," did not expressly deny that Baric's research constituted gain-of-function, though she claimed that the overall issue was more complex than that.

"I prefer to describe the research in broader terms, as gain-of-function seems too narrow and has acquired negative connotations,

" she said. "The aim of such research is to learn as much as possible about the gene/protein in question so that one can begin to develop possible therapeutic or vaccine-related approaches."

Queries to Daszak and Baric on Racaniello's claims went unanswered.

The assertions from Racaniello — a four-decade veteran of academic virology who along with Skalka is also an author of "Principles of Virology" — constitute the sharpest allegations yet that both EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were involved, even if adjacently, with gain-of-function research prior to the pandemic.

Baric's research, meanwhile, has been the recipient of millions of dollars in funding from the NIAID over the years, much of it focused on coronaviruses, including experiments in the "replication and pathogenesis" of those viruses.

Racaniello himself forcefully defended such research. "There is a very clear reason to do these experiments and if we had done them even more we could have prevented the current pandemic," he said.

EcoHealth, meanwhile, has been the focus of controversy for the past year due not merely to its alleged association with coronavirus experiments but also to the fact that its work was for years heavily funded by the federal government, specifically the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

EcoHealth routed hundreds of thousands of NIAID dollars to the Wuhan lab in the years leading up to the pandemic to conduct coronavirus research there. Experts and commentators alike have called for a major investigation into the lab to determine if SARS-Cov-2 may have accidentally leaked from the facility and launched the pandemic.

The federal funding for the Wuhan project was pulled last year near the outset of the pandemic. Daszak himself told NPR last year that the Wuhan experiments were "funded entirely through the NIH grant," as the news service put it.

The lab was the subject of part of the World Health Organization's investigation into the origins of COVID-19. That probe concluded earlier this year and determined that a lab-leak theory was unlikely, though world officials have called for additional investigations into the facility.

The international team of investigators reportedly only spent a single day at the Wuhan lab. Among the team's members — and the only U.S. representative on it — was Peter Daszak.

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Date: Wed, 19 May 2021 11:16:20 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 19 May 2021 11:13:14 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Latest from NIH
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Agree with everything you say Rich. The statement is really good and useful, but doesn't clearly define GoF. I am 100% sure that our NIH grant did not fund GoF in the way it's been defined, but this is muddied by Ralph and Zhengli having conducted an experiment using a SARS-CoV backbone which was reviewed as potential gain of function, even though the result was loss of function in the chimera. Likewise, even though NIH didn't fund it, I believe WIV was either interested in or actually doing chimeric work with MERS, for example, which would have been considered GoF.

Clarity on definitions and who did what would help your colleague (Rich) understand that the NIH grant and NIH in general did not fund GoF at WIV, but I don't think it will help the general public who are being fed some serious misinformation in a continuous drip-feed from Fox News, Rand Paul, Devon Nunes, Washington Post etc….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 9:16 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Latest from NIH

Hi:

In case you didn't see this

Statement on misinformation about NIH support of specific "gain-of-function" research

In normal times this would be very helpful, but without a clear definition of what is meant by GoF research, this may only muddy the waters. One thing is clear though and that is that GoF is a hot button for many people thinking about this issue. I had a long conversation with David Lipman, who used to be NCBI Director, yesterday and it was GoF research that he felt was being carried

out at the Wuhan Institute that prompted him to tend towards belief in a lab-leak. It is going to be difficult to put that idea back in the bottle, but it would be helpful if there was a way to do so without compromising or even involving Peter.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

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Date: Sat, 20 Mar 2021 12:20:08 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 20 Mar 2021 12:20:04 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments: COVID RD Ecosystem. Lancet March 9 2021.pdf

Hi Rich, Peter,

I would like to bring Nicki Lurie into our conversation. She was ASPR during the Obama years and spearheaded many important scientific initiatives underlying preparedness, and she continues to have many important contacts including with people high up in the Biden administration. I have total confidence in her integrity and value her input. She also has the full trust of Victor Dzau at NAM, and could and would be influential if such a consensus report is commissioned. We have been working together to examine the R&D preparedness ecosystem, and just published the attached opinion/commentary in Lancet with Victor (Peter has seen it already), and she is ready to volunteer to co-chair a NAM investigation with me if we were asked. The way it works, I think, is NAM negotiates a contract to fund such a study and then NAM determines the chairs and the committee members, and staffs it with the appropriate expertise within the NAM staff. I think Nicki was on a call with Eric Lander, who you know will assume the position as head of OSTP, now a cabinet position under Biden, and she mentioned this in the course of another conversation. But this is a down the road exercise and will not have any immediate impact.

But I'm sure Eric could be enormously helpful once he is in place, which I gather will be after the current academic year is over, and if he is willing. Eric did work closely with Francis on the human genome project but that was two decades ago although it certainly had a major positive impact on Eric's rise at MIT. How much that translates into some sort of loyalty I just don't know, but is certainly possible. Rich, I don't know how well you know Eric, but if you do then at some point, maybe sooner than later, having a conversation to express concerns with the status quo stone-walling might do some good.

But first, are you both comfortable with having me talk to Nicki and see if she is in a position to strategize with us?
Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 11:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

Peter:

Thanks for sharing this. It is very discouraging to see these kinds of attacks continuing and very disturbing that Dave Relman is involved.

I am attaching an email I received on Wednesday from Francis in response to a letter I had sent to him (at the bottom of the thread). While at least he responded to this one it was merely a deflection.

As for another investigation, hopefully you will be able to convince them that it would be a huge waste of time and money. Unless the Chinese undergo a complete about turn, they are not going to be cooperative in any additional way over and above their response to the WHO investigation.

If you see any additional way in which I might help please do let me know.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6 n

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 9:08 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 David Morens b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

This letter from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce was filed yesterday. I don't know what normally happens with this, but I'm assuming NIH will respond and I won't have to do anything. Note that Dr. Relman is cited and center, and I believe he's agitating to head up an inquiry from the NASEM. I've thought this for a long time after he approached me a couple of times a year ago to inquire about my work in China.

This letter is part of a barrage of daily attacks at this point. Today, the US Right to Know filed a FoIA at Erasmus Univ Netherlands where Marion Koopmans (also on the WHO mission) works, for emails to me and the WHO people, adding to multiple broadsheet articles over the past week from WSJ and less sophisticated right wing papers. I don't know if they can FoIA a foreign Univ, but I've now got to spend hours of my time with their lawyers and ours to find out.

On the good side, I was asked to brief staffers at the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, which I'm assuming will be a positive experience, and I'm reaching out to the State Dept and NSC to offer briefings on WHO findings ahead of the report. Additionally, 60 minutes is doing a piece on the report and interviewed me, but I suspect they're going to dwell on the lab release hypothesis.

Meanwhile, I'm drafting a response to the 10 conditions from Collins & Lauer and will have a draft within a few days for your comments if that's ok. Given Biden's theatrical show at the China summit today, I don't hold up much hope that this sort of aggression is going to dissipate quickly…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Tue, 19 Oct 2021 6:19:50 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 19 Oct 2021 6:19:48 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
From: ROCHE Benjamin [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; benjamin.roche [b6] Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio [b6]

Perfect. It will be complicated for me after 2PM, so if it works for you at that time, that would be fantastic

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

[b6]
e-mail: [b6]
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

> Le 19 oct. 2021 à 14:58, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] > a écrit :
>
> Yes, I think so. What time, later is probably easier for me, but I think I can get free for an hour at ANY TIME D
>
> On 10/19/2021 12:18 PM, ROCHE Benjamin wrote:
>> Fantastic. I'm in downtown (near French embassy), but I can definitely come. Do you think that beginning afternoon could work ? (Something like 1:30PM)
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>> Best,
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>> Labs:
>>
>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>>
>> Postal address:
>> Centre IRD de Montpellier
>> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>> France
>>
>> [b6]
>> e-mail: [b6]
>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/

>>
>>> Le 19 oct. 2021 à 09:16, David Morens [b6] > a écrit :
>>>
>>> Hi Benjamin, I am sorry for being late in replying, because I was on
>>> leave with my family and just back at work and catching up now.
>>>
>>> As far as I know Cristina will be coming to the meeting.
>>>
>>> yes I will be arouind tomorrow although working at work. But I should
>>> be able to find some free time and would like to meet if possible.
>>> Where will you be? I am at NIH in Bethesda which takes a long time to
>>> go from downtown to here and back, if you are downtown in DC.
>>>
>>> But let me know. We have a Metro that normally works well although
>>> over the past few days it has been operating at half speed because of
>>> some safety issues.
>>> David
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>>> David M. Morens, MD
>>> [b6]
>>> [b6]
>>> [b6]
>>> [b6] [b6] [b6] (work)
>>> [b6] [b6] [b6] (cell)
>>>
>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which
>>> is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
>>> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
>>>
>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
>>> NIAID address
>>>
>>> On Mon, Oct 18, 2021 at 1:40 PM ROCHE Benjamin [b6] > wrote:
>>>> Dear David and Peter,
>>>>
>>>> Sorry for the organization has been a bit confusing. Actually, this is the NIH who has invited Cristina, but we still don't know if she's coming. Nevertheless, I'll be in DC for a couple of days (and pretty free this Wednesday), so if you are available, that would be a pleasure to present you this initiative.
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>>>> All the best,
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>>>> Labs:
>>>>
>>>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>>>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>>>>
>>>> Postal address:
>>>> Centre IRD de Montpellier

>>>> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
>>>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>>>> France
>>>>
[b6]
>>>> e-mail:r[b6]
>>>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/
>>>>
>>>>> Le 18 oct. 2021 à 19:32, David Morens [b6] > a écrit :
>>>>>
>>>>> Peter, yes, sorry to miss that. I may not be able to go either
>>>>> because the organizers invited Cristina Cassetti instead of me, but
>>>>> that is OK as she will be good.
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>>>>> David M. Morens, MD
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> [b6]
>>>>> [b6]
[b6] (work)
[b6] (cell)
>>>>>
>>>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which
>>>>> is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
>>>>> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
>>>>>
>>>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
>>>>> NIAID address
>>>>>
>>>>> On Mon, Oct 18, 2021 at 1:08 PM Peter Daszak
>>>>> [b6] > wrote:
>>>>>> Sorry I won't be able to make it to the event after all David. I'll be on a college visit with my daughter that day.
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>>>>>> Please say hello to all our colleagues and I hope you have a good opportunity to talk with Benjamin, who is heading up this really interesting and important initiative at IRD.
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>>>>>> Cheers,
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>>>>>> Peter
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>>>>>> Peter Daszak
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>>>>>> President
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>>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance
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>>>>>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>>>>>> New York, NY 10018-6507
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>>>>>> USA
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>>>>>> Tel.: [b6]
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>>>>>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>>> From: ROCHE Benjamin [b6]
>>>>>> Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 12:48 AM
>>>>>> To: David Morens [b6] >
>>>>>> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] >; benjamin.roche [b6] >; Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio [b6]
>>>>>> Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
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>>>>>> Dear David,
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>>>>>>
>>>>>> I hope this e-mail will find you well. Actually, Peter will not be able to come, but I will be glad to meet you to present the PREZODE initiative. By any chance, do you have some possibilities on Wednesday 20th?

I'll be in DC
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>>>>>> All the best,
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>>>>>> Labs:
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>>>>>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>>>>>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
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>>>>>> Postal address:
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>>>>>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>>>>>> France
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Phone[b6]
>>>>>> e-mail:[b6]
>>>>>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/
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>>>>>>
>>>>>> Le 22 sept. 2021 à 16:54, David Morens [b6] > a écrit :
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>>>>>> Peter, and Ben glad to meet you on email, and will be happy to come to the event.
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>>>>>> Not sure what you mean by "represent at the event", but I suppose you mean represent NIH? Or NIAID? Anything I need to do other than just enjoy it?
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>>>>>> TY, David
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>>>>>> David M. Morens, MD
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>>>>>> [b6]
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>>>>>> b6
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b6 (cell)
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>>>>>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
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>>>>>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address
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>>>>>> On Tue, Sep 21, 2021 at 11:43 AM Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Hi David,
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>>>>>> I'm introducing you by email to my colleague Dr. Ben Roche from IRD France. He is the PI of the new French Govt pandemic prediction initiative PREZODE. As you can see from the Email below mine, there is an event scheduled for October 21st at the French Embassy in DC. I'll be moderating the panel discussion and will be in DC in person (FINALLY!!).
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>>>>>> Ben is looking for someone from NIH to represent at that event. I've suggested you would be perfect for that role, and wanted to introduce you to him now.
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>>>>>> Full disclosure, Ben is working with EHA on joint projects and we signed an MOU with the French Govt IRD to stimulate joint efforts to predict and prevent pandemics. I've also cc'd Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio from EHA who I believe you've met in the past, who has worked closely on this initiative.
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>>>>>> Hope you're available and look forward to seeing you while I'm in DC whatever the case!
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>>>>>> Cheers,

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>>>>>> Peter
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>>>>>> Peter Daszak
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>>>>>> President
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>>>>>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>>>>>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
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>>>>>> From: POIRIER Agnès b6 >
>>>>>> Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:47 AM
>>>>>> To: Biffl, Claire b6
>>>>>> Cc: Liao, Julie b6 LIGEARD Christian b6 >
>>>>>> Subject: French Embassy: conference on the PREZODE Initiative (October 21st)
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>>>>>> Dear Ms. Biffl,
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>>>>>> As you well know, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of designing effective strategies for preventing and responding to health crises by taking greater account of the interactions between

human health, animal health and environmental health.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> In response to this emergency, the French President Emmanuel Macron launched the PREZODE initiative during the One Planet Summit on January 11, with the support of the Director General of the FAO and the President of the European Commission.
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>>>>>> This initiative (see attached document) aims to network, on a global scale, research work and operational actions to prevent the risks of zoonotic emergencies and pandemics through the reduction of pressures on biodiversity, in accordance with the "One Health" approach. It will improve knowledge of the risks of emergence and spread of zoonoses, strengthen the surveillance activities of the networks that already exist and ensure greater compliance with prevention measures for future diseases.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> The PREZODE initiative will strengthen cooperation with several regions of the world (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, America, Europe…) and will support the integration and strengthening of human, animal and environmental health networks. It will also support the work of the "One Health" High Level Panel of Experts proposed by France with the support of Germany, and launched by what we call the Tripartite + (WHO-FAO- World Organization For Animal Health-UN Environment Programme) on May 17 and 18.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> The year 2021 is dedicated to building the strategic framework and the operation of the initiative, with the objective of entering the operational phase from 2022.
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>>>>>> In this context, the French Embassy is planning to host a conference (preferably an in-person event) to present the PREZODE initiative and discuss the possible involvement of US government and research institutions.
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>>>>>> The event is scheduled for October 21, 2021, in the afternoon (2:30–5:30 pm) and would consist (see draft program attached) of two sequences of approximately one hour each:
>>>>>>
>>>>>> - Presentation of the PREZODE initiative by representatives (scientific or institutional directors) of the three French research institutes involved, CIRAD (Agricultural Research Centre for International Development), INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), IRD (National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)
>>>>>>
>>>>>> - Panel discussion on national and international initiatives: statements by DoS, DoD (DTRA), CDC, USDA, USAID, OHHLEP, the Tripartite+, the World Bank, private sector…
>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>> We are currently looking for a moderator for this event, and would be honored to involve an expert from the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Indeed, the Forum's work on these issues, its leadership and independence, and its broad audience seem to me to be perfect for our event. If you agree to this role, I would be happy to discuss further the organization of the meeting.
>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Thank you for your consideration and best regards,
>>>>>>

>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Dr Agnès POIRIER, D.V.M.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Conseillère SPS / Counselor for sanitary and phytosanitary matters - USA / Canada
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Conseiller agricole adjoint / Deputy Agricultural Counselor
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Ambassade de France / Embassy of France
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>>>>>> Tel: b6
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> --
> David M Morens b6

Date: Sun, 25 Jul 2021 6:50:45 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 25 Jul 2021 6:48:47 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Report today in South China Morning Post
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; David Morens <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>

Nice quote from you Jerry. The last quote is the one everyone leaves with and remembers – so well done!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: <b6>
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Sent: Thursday, July 22, 2021 10:18 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; David Morens <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>
Subject: Report today in South China Morning Post

Here is an article by Simone McCarthy. Its not exactly what she was planning to write, but the events of the past day pushed the report in a somewhat different direction. The hour and a half plus some additional email exchanges I had with her after Peter indicated she was a good journalist was reflected in one quote at the end of her piece. But it makes me seem prophetic in the context of the events and the article It should seem obvious that only in the context of scientific collaboration in a non-confrontational and neutral context can there can be any meaningful exploration of the origins in China. David Relman, Marc Lipsitch, and Richard Ebright should feel embarrassed at what they have helped to happen but I suspect they will instead be pleased by the developments. The less real data there are in the public domain the more they can spin webs.

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 22, 2021 8:36 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Jerry,

Lots of shifting sands under this story, due to new developments, but happy to be able to include some of your comment here. Thank you.
https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3142113/chinas- covid-origins-snub-shows-limits-world-health

Best,

Simone

On Wed, 21 Jul 2021 at 11:39, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com> wrote:

> Dear Jerry,
>
> Thanks very much for this - well noted and I really appreciate the quick turnaround. I'll be sure to keep in touch regarding publication.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 23:13, Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:
>
> > Hi Simone,
> >
> > I'm in catch up mode so here are a few additional comments.
> >
> > Despite agreeing – at least in part – with the Relman quotes regarding WHO in Jon Cohens piece in Science that WHO may not be the best organization to pursue the origin studies right now it is the only organization that can pursue the investigation. I say that because it is the only global public health entity with membership from virtually all nation states – that why it's called the World Health Organization. That structure also makes it subject to political influence, often played out in terms of whether or not a country will provide the extrabudgetary funding WHO needs to do things like this investigation, which subjects WHO to the terms and conditions the funding country applied. Most certainly in my mind WHO cannot move forward with credibility if Dr. Tedros dismisses the original 10 international team members and calls for self and government nominations of a new team. The 10 are true experts in their field and internationally respected scientists. I agree with Marion Koopmans that appointing an expert or two in specific areas of interest could more optimally meet any reasonable need for additional expertise.
> >
> > Regarding the comments/quotes below, I was certainly following a consistent theme along the way, which is again reflected in what I say above and on the record. I made one edit below which you will see in bold underlined italic font.
> >
> > Jerry
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> > **Sent:** Tuesday, July 20, 2021 8:51 AM
> > **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> > **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
> >
> > Dear Jerry,
> >
> > Thanks again for your time sharing your thoughts with me last week - really good food for thought for me there. The floor

has shifted underneath our conversation a bit given that Dr. Tedros released the outline of his plan for the phase two work. I 'm putting together an article that takes a look at the proposal (as described to member states in the public statement) and the challenges that may exist for getting it off the ground. I'd like to be able to include a few of your comments from our conversation and I've included those below for you to check, as discussed.

I did see your related comments in Jon Cohen's Science story, and I would be curious to ask just broadly if you think that the path laid out by Tedros is the best way forward and perhaps what exactly a lab audit in this specific scenario may entail. If it 's something you'd be able to discuss via email or a short chat today or tomorrow I'd appreciate that - if I've already taken up way too much of your time, no worries, that is highly understandable too.

I realize you're not in the office today, but I'm wondering if you might be able to give these quotes a quick look and let me know any changes sometime during your Tuesday. Please note in order to optimize timing I am sending over a rough draft version, the context will be as described, but I can't guarantee that there won't be changes to the exact wording in the preceding lines. Likewise it's possible there could be further paraphrasing or shortening of the direct quotes, but that would be with strict attention to the meaning as shown below. Thank you.

Best,

Simone

Gerald Keusch, associate director of the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory Institute at Boston University
Some scientists say the rhetoric around the laboratory leak hypothesis - especially that which seeks to blame China for the outbreak or accuse its scientists of wrongdoing - has made it difficult to move forward with international research in China.
"All of the accusatory statements and hypotheses built on no ***publicly available*** evidence will not gain access to an open, clear, transparent, collaborative international investigation, one that is meant not to cast blame, but to find out what happened so that efforts to prevent this happening again in the future can actually take place."
"There is something called the scientific method - we know how to do collaborative work - it just takes the willingness to do it, in an environment that is positively oriented." "Let's get on with it."

Keusch said it was a "mistake" of the phase one WHO report to not recommend further research into the laboratory leak, and that both this hypothesis and the natural origin should be investigated. However, research into the natural origins was more urgent, given that it was the more likely of the two scenarios, based on available evidence, he said.
"We need to be looking at all of it [both natural origins and lab leak] systematically and in a thoughtful and planned manner."
The kind of work that should be done: forensic analysis of the labs, serology on humans and animals (for example Linfa Wang's cPass serological test which "is available and could be used systematically in China, in Thailand and other border countries where bats, coronaviruses, and people interface")
"It can be done...but there has to be the environment and the desire and the goals for doing it which is not blame and castigate, but to learn and intervene in the future."

[The urgency of uncovering the origin, why it matters for the next phase of the WHO-led mission to begin]
"If you don't look for evidence it doesn't just spring up on its own and hit you in the face, there needs to be a cooperative, collaborative, collegial and communicative way of going about this and as far as I can see the only organisation that can do it is WHO."
"It's no longer a question of if, but when and what. Now that we've seen three severe coronavirus outbreaks of respiratory disease [this century] and we know that these trace back to a vast viral floral, across multiple bat species, another SARS, MERS, or Covid is not a question."

On Wed, 14 Jul 2021 at 09:10, Simone McCarthy <b6> wrote:

> Hi Jerry,
>
> Sure that's no problem, and thanks for sending the event details, looks interesting. Speak soon and thank you again for the time.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone

On Wed, 14 Jul 2021 at 06:10, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Hi Simone,
>
> Can we move the call tomorrow to 11 am EDT? I will be logging on to a presentation on financing future pandemic preparedness organized by the Center for Global Development in DC, which goes from 9:30 to 10:30. The buffer time allows for late ending, pit stops, and refills of the coffee mug. I will forward the announcement of the seminar to you so you can register if you are interested.
>
> Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:16 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Got it, thank you and look forward to speaking.

Best,

Simone

On Fri, 9 Jul 2021 at 01:54, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> My office phone is [b6]
> Backup will be my cell phone [b6]
> Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:58 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Sure, Wednesday 10:30a Eastern daylight works just fine for me, thank you. What's the best number to reach you?

Best,

Simone

On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 23:38, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> How about Wednesday at 10:30 am EDT (you will probably recall that too). Is that OK for Hong Kong time (I assume that's where you are).
>
> Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 9:25 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Dr. Keusch,

Thanks so much for your message and the offer of your time. I'm glad to hear that you had a nice (and unplugged) Fourth of July weekend. I should have realized when I wrote you... I've been over here a bit too long I guess, although originally I'm from your neck of the woods, Massachusetts.

I'd still be interested to chat with you about the letter, and also your thoughts more broadly on what the most critical next steps are for moving forward on gathering more data about how SARS-CoV-2 started circulating in humans. My schedule is open your Wednesday or Thursday morning EST next week, if there's a convenient time for you to talk in either of those windows, please let me know. I'd be grateful for a chance to speak then.

Best,

Simone

On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 00:16, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] > wrote:

> Hi Simone,
>
> Sorry I was not able to respond to you on Monday. While the timing of the publication in The Lancet on a Monday was fine for the world, it was over the long July 4th independence day weekend, and we were with family for the first time in a while and unplugged the WiFi.
>
> I am willing to chat with you about this, but to be clear I should say that I am on my summer schedule, which means I am out of the office from Fridays through Tuesdays, which leaves Wednesday or Thursday to find a time.
>
> GT Keusch
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com >
> **Sent:** Monday, July 5, 2021 10:41 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]
> **Subject:** Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Dr. Keusch,
>
> I am a reporter with the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong, where I cover research into the origins of SARS-CoV-2. I'm reaching out to you while following up on the 'Science, not speculation' Lancet letter. I realise that I am contacting you quite late in your evening, I thought it couldn't hurt to check if you would be available to share a short comment for our coverage today. Specifically I was hoping to ask you why/how the decision was made to put this letter forward now and what you hope it will add to the current conservation/efforts to understand how the virus emerged. Do you and the other signatories also feel that there should be more research into the potential of a lab or research-related accident?
>
> I'd also be interested to speak with you in more detail about your views on the next steps that should be taken in the origins research, specifically how different hypotheses could be further probed and what the priorities should be. Ideally I'd love to touch base quickly and include your perspective in our piece, which will be published today here in Hong Kong time, but if that's not possible and you would be up for a separate conversation on this, I'd love a chance to learn more about how you're looking at the origins research work.

Thank you.
Best,

Simone

--

Simone McCarthy | Reporter
South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd
19/F Tower One, Times Square,
1 Matheson Street, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong
M: b6
E: simone.mccarthy@scmp.com

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Phone: b6

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Simone McCarthy | Reporter
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E: simone.mccarthy@scmp.com

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Phone: 5523-0089

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Date: Thu, 6 May 2021 11:52:25 AM -0400
Sent: Thu, 6 May 2021 11:47:33 AM -0400
Subject: RE: McCarthyism looming - Bipartisan bill re. competition with China includes language on WIV and our work
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>;
Attachments: Sheahan et al. 2017 Broad-spectrum GS5734 (Remdesivir) inhibits epidemic and zoonotic CoVs Sci Transl Med.pdf; Sheahan et al. 2020 An orally bioavailable broad spectrum..EEID-2801 Science Translat. Med..pdf; Wec et al Broad neut of SARSr-CoVs by monoclonals Science 2020.pdf

---

Yes, I know you have concerns over gain of function work and the debate on gain of function is not something that a CEO of a conservation and health non-profit who doesn't run a lab should be the spokesperson for! My point is that we weren't doing gain of function work – a small matter that no reporter has yet bothered to check on! The generation of recombinant bat viruses to test whether spike proteins of other bat viruses are able to bind to human cells is in my opinion a valid and useful line of research that allows us to reduce dependence on culturing of viruses, while protecting human health by generating better vaccines and therapeutics. I now know of 2 therapeutics (Remdesivir & EEID-2801) and a broad-acting monoclonal (Wec et al. above) that have used the WIV viruses and/or bat-CoV recombinants from our work that Ralph Baric produced to test them. It's not my specific research, but it's good to see the science we do used in this way.

Re. a rebuttal, the problem is I'm now being asked by Jeff Sachs if our Lancet taskforce should do a point by point rebuttal to a letter sent to WHO co-led by a New Zealand financial analyst & Jamie Metzl. I've got reporters calling me up to rebut their interviews with conspiracists, and Republican members of Congress who want me to send them 100s of pages of docs. It's just relentless, and however many times I say "There is still, as yet, no scientific evidence at all that it came from a lab", no one seems interested…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: RE: McCarthyism looming - Bipartisan bill re. competition with China includes language on WIV and our work

Peter:

If you read the "Cambridge Group" piece you will see that I am a co-signee of that as I have been greatly concerned about Gain-of-Function research. Just wanted to point that out in case you didn't know.

As for the article, Nicholas Wade is quite widely respected and the article is well-written with better than usual arguments. A point-by-point rebuttal might be useful if it came from someone other than you. However, the bottom line is that the Chinese have done nothing but stoke the fires of the conspiracists because of their dread of losing face. And of course if the virus was being worked on in the lab, they would be the last to admit it.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g >
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 9:43 AM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6 >; Robert Kessler < b6]
Subject: RE: McCarthyism looming - Bipartisan bill re. competition with China includes language on WIV and our work

EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes – the conspiracists are circulating it ad infintum on the web.

We need other scientists to speak up. I'm getting vilified for research that helps prevent pandemics, and people like Ebright and Relman are publicly calling to defund our programs. My problem is that I can argue back on every single point raised, and point out the flaws, but I've been attacked so repeatedly that my opinion is considered flawed or biased.

Apparently a well-known Nobel Laureate is quoted in the article supporting a lab origin now – David Baltimore.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 9:10 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler < [b6] g >
Subject: RE: McCarthyism looming - Bipartisan bill re. competition with China includes language on WIV and our work

Peter:

Have you seen this hard-hitting article by Nicholas Wade?

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

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Date:	Sun, 15 Aug 2021 1:48:49 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Sunday Wash Post editorial
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments:	image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image013.jpg; image014.jpg; image015.jpg; image016.gif; image017.jpg

He's claiming he said nothing new, but it's now being used by the press – see article below from the UK Times today.

I wouldn't mind if they just stuck to slagging off the DG, WHO, Peter Ben Embarek etc., but of course the do a hit-job on me as well. It's just disgusting. I can't get through a week without more of this garbage, despite zero communication with the press.

China, the WHO and the power grab that fuelled a pandemic

In early 2020, the world missed its chance to stop Covid-19. Insight exposes how Beijing's ten-year takeover of the global health watchdog sowed the seeds of disaster

Play Video

Jonathan Calvert
and
George Arbuthnott
| Insight
Saturday August 14 2021, 6.00pm BST, The Sunday Times
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After being heavily criticised by the World Health Organisation for its response to Sars in 2003, China decided it would not accept such public humiliation again. What followed was a concerted campaign over many years to seize power within the organisation.

A Sunday Times investigation raises serious concerns that the independence and leadership of the WHO were severely compromised by the time the first cases of a mysterious new coronavirus appeared in Wuhan in 2019 — with profound consequences for the course of the Covid-19 pandemic and the world.

Our investigation reveals:

- China secured WHO votes to install its chosen candidates as director-general.

• The WHO leadership prioritised China's economic interests over halting the spread of the virus when Covid-19 first emerged.

• China exerted ultimate control over the WHO investigation into the origins of Covid-19, appointing its chosen experts and negotiating a backroom deal to water down the mandate.

A catastrophe in the making

Barely eight months after taking charge, the director-general of the WHO gave a speech that would prove extraordinarily prophetic. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that all nations were facing the ever-present threat that a new respiratory illness, such as the Spanish flu, might emerge and spread across the globe in weeks or months, killing millions.

It was why, the Ethiopian told the audience at his keynote speech in Dubai in February 2018, he had made it his daily priority since becoming the WHO's chief to make sure he was up to date on the thousands of reports the health body received every month that might flag up signs of an outbreak.

The WHO, a Geneva-based United Nations agency with a £5 billion budget from 194 member states, was on a war footing. Tedros said it would act fast and decisively, because ignoring the signs of an outbreak could "be the difference between global spread of a deadly disease and rapid interruption of transmission". So far this "new tighter focus" was working, he added.





Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus with Chinese premier Li Keqiang in 2017
GETTY IMAGES

So when the first alert of a mysterious respiratory illness in China, exactly as Tedros had described, was reported by health monitors in Taiwan at the end of December 2019, the health agency should have been prepared and ready for action.

In fact the WHO would receive considerable criticism for failing to help stop the spread of the Sars-CoV-2 virus in the opening weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic. Not only did the organisation fail to act but it also promulgated misinformation about the virus originating from China and even discouraged other nations from taking steps that might have contained the spread. For all his foresight, Tedros would be accused of being ineffective when the big test came.

The world paid a heavy price for the WHO's inaction. As Tedros predicted, the virus has killed more than four million people, and there will be many more. The body that is charged with looking after the world's health seriously malfunctioned in those opening weeks, when humanity most needed it to come to the rescue. Why?

Our investigation reveals today how a concerted campaign over many years by Beijing to grab power inside the WHO appears to have fatally compromised its ability to respond to the crisis. It raises serious concerns about the extent of Beijing's influence over the WHO and its director-general, and how this undermined the organisation's capacity — and willingness — to take the steps necessary to avert a global pandemic. Its leadership put China's economic interests before public health concerns. The results have been nothing short of catastrophic.

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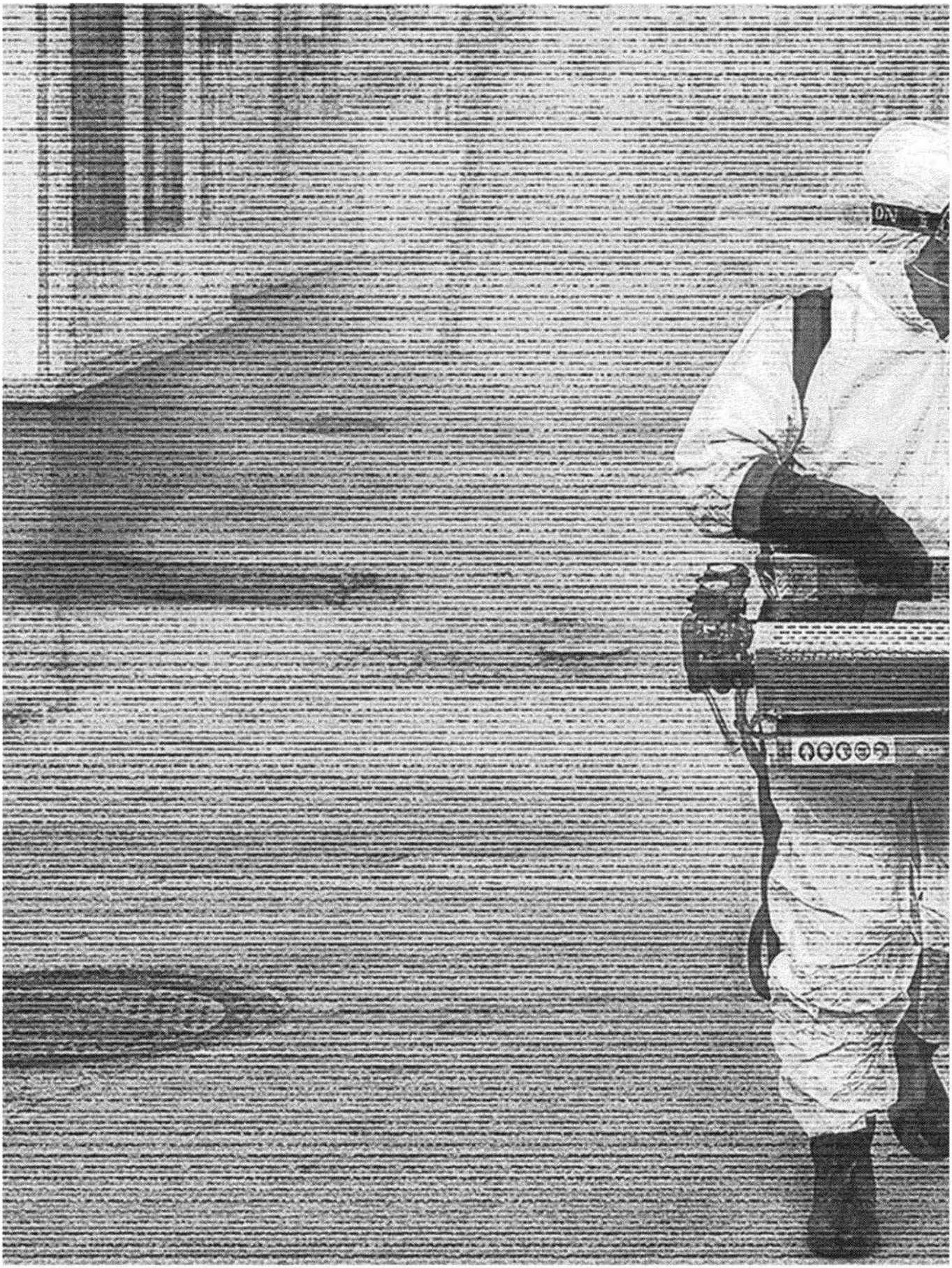

Disinfection in a Chinese village in January 2020, when hospitals were being overwhelmed with Covid patients
CNSPHOTO/REUTERS

Beijing's man

It is a story that stretches back many years before the Covid-19 crisis. After being strongly criticised by the health agency for attempting to cover up the 2003 Sars crisis, China set out to increase its influence over the WHO. By applying financial and diplomatic leverage over some of the world's poorest nations, Beijing won a global power struggle to get its favoured candidates installed at the very top of the organisation.

As a result, years later, a body that was set up with the lofty goal of "attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health" has been co-opted into aiding the Chinese state's campaign for global economic dominance. Its leadership began to speak differently, espousing statements and pursuing policies that were markedly convenient to China — even praising Beijing's questionable allies such as North Korea, despite its appalling health and human rights record.

Beijing had been instrumental in installing Tedros as the £170,000-a-year head of the agency by pulling strings and calling in favours during the 2017 election for the job.

Tedros himself caused outrage by bestowing the role of WHO goodwill ambassador on Robert Mugabe, the notorious former Zimbabwean dictator, an appointment said to have had strong backing by the Chinese government, a long-standing close ally of the despot.

As hospitals became flooded with patients in Wuhan in January 2020, the health agency repeatedly relayed to the world the Chinese government's false claims that there was no evidence the virus could pass between humans. It made a specific point of cautioning countries not to impose bans on travel to and from the virus hotspots — which meant many weeks were lost before countries independently decided to seal their borders. The WHO's approach ensured that China's short-term economic prospects were protected. Meanwhile, the virus was allowed to spread round the globe like wildfire.

More recently, we can reveal, a backroom deal negotiated between the WHO and China has seriously damaged the chances of the world getting to the bottom of one of the most important questions facing mankind today: the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic.

When the world's nations gave Tedros the job of discovering how the virus first came to infect humans, his team struck an agreement in secret with China that emasculated the inquiry. It meant that the WHO's "independent" mission — its fact-finding team travelled to Wuhan early this year to carry out an investigation — was, in the words of one expert, little more than a "shameful charade". There may well be no second chance.

Legacy of Sars

The health agency's reaction to Sars, the first pandemic crisis of the 21st century, had been very different. In many ways that lay at the root of the later difficulties that would come to a head with China.

The Sars outbreak started in November 2002, when a number of people in Guangdong province, southern China, began to fall ill with flu-like respiratory symptoms; by January 2003 infected patients were streaming into the region's hospitals.

The Chinese government had immediately enforced its strict laws, which classified all new infectious diseases as a state secret before they were officially announced by the ministry of health. As a result, the WHO was kept largely in the dark about the outbreak until the son of one of its former employees emailed the agency in February 2003 with some alarming news. The message described a mysterious virus in Guangdong that had already killed 100 people but claimed the authorities were insisting "it was not allowed to be made known to the public".

The cat was out of the bag, and after stern questions from the health agency China did share some limited information about the new virus the following day. However, government officials in Guangzhou, the city at the centre of the outbreak, were still maintaining that the illness was under control. This was untrue. Sars had already spread to other parts of China.

The Chinese were still anxious to play down the extent of the outbreak. At one stage 30 patients with the virus were said to have been driven round Beijing in ambulances, and 40 others were moved out of a hospital into a hotel to hide their existence from a visiting team of WHO scientists.





Tough on China: former WHO director-general Gro Harlem Brundtland
PAUL HILTON/EPA/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

China's reluctance to disclose the duration, scale and evolution of the disease led Gro Harlem Brundtland, then the WHO director-general, to get tough. She was a former prime minister of Norway and not scared of ruffling feathers. "Brundtland was a very brave politician with a lot of legitimacy," recalls Gian Luca Burci, a legal adviser to the WHO at the time. "She didn't shy away from criticising China and basically saying, 'We don't believe you. You should come clean.'"

Brundtland put pressure on China and took the brave decision to issue strong advice against travelling to the affected areas, which included Hong Kong and Toronto as the virus spread.

"The WHO really stepped into a vacuum, and it really exerted its authority as an emergency manager," Burci said. "I would say the unanimous perception is that the WHO played a central role and essential role in allowing Sars to be controlled in a matter of months."

Brundtland publicly criticised China's cover-up and said the outbreak might have been contained if the WHO had been alerted earlier. "Next time something strange and new comes anywhere in the world, let us come in as quickly as possible," she urged.

The virus was brought under control in the early summer with only 8,000 cases and just under 800 deaths. The public ticking-off had been humiliating for Beijing. There was also an economic price for China: the health agency's travel advice had contributed to an estimated $6 billion loss to the country's GDP.

China began taking a keen interest in the WHO after the bruising it received over Sars. A senior source now working at the health agency has described how in 2005 Beijing was behind a group of countries that attempted to "limit" the authority of its director-general.

Their efforts led to new regulations for the WHO's governance, which compel the director-general to consult an emergency committee — made up of international experts and often including a China representative — before he or she calls an international public health emergency or recommends travel restrictions.

A further opportunity for China to extend its influence within the agency presented itself a year later

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when Brundtland's recently appointed successor as director-general, the Korean doctor Lee Jong-wook, suddenly died after undergoing brain surgery.

One of the leading candidates was Dr Margaret Chan, a Chinese national. She was a former Hong Kong health director who had been criticised during the Sars crisis for her supine attitude to mainland China. The Hong Kong legislative council found she had been too slow to respond to the Sars outbreak and too unquestioning of the misleading information from Beijing. Hong Kong suffered a higher Sars death rate than anywhere else in the world.

Chan had, nonetheless, moved to a new job with the WHO in Geneva, and when Jong-wook died, the Beijing government rallied behind her candidacy, ordering its embassies to lobby international friends to get behind her in the November 2006 election to choose a replacement.





Margaret Chan drew criticism as Hong Kong's health chief for believing China's claims about the 2002-04 Sars outbreak
FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Just five days before the vote, a summit was held in Beijing for leaders of the African nations. China pledged to cancel large amounts of their debts and double aid donations to the continent in a move that was openly acknowledged by state-backed analysts in the country as designed to secure backing for Chan.

It was an "extraordinarily aggressive campaign", according to Professor Lawrence Gostin, the director of the WHO's Collaborating Centre on Public Health Law and Human Rights. "[China] got burnt really badly during Sars," he said, adding: "It wanted someone much more friendly and gentle if an outbreak came again."

Chan won with two thirds of the votes in the final ballot. China had succeeded in getting its candidate to the top "precisely to avoid another humiliation", according to a source working at the WHO at the time.

The African link

During her 10-year reign in the agency's top job, Chan certainly gave the appearance that she was very grateful to China for propelling her into the role. In April 2010 she made a trip to North Korea, one of China's neighbours and allies, and made the extraordinary claim the country's health system was the "envy" of most developing nations.

A few months later a report by the human rights group Amnesty International described the shambolic state of North Korea's "crumbling" health system. Hospitals at times lacked heat, power and medicines, the report said, and amputations were sometimes performed in candlelight without anaesthesia by doctors who were living on the poverty line because their wages were not paid.

Chan made a number of key appointments that appeared carefully calculated to please the Chinese government. In 2011 she made the Chinese soprano Peng Liyuan a WHO goodwill ambassador, praising the singer's "world-famous voice" and "compassionate heart". The other reason Chan might have selected Peng was not mentioned.

Peng is married to Xi Jinping, China's president. She holds the rank of major-general in the People's Liberation Army and wore her uniform to sing for the troops after they quashed the pro-democracy

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protests in Tiananmen Square. Chinese state censors have since attempted to erase these pictures from the internet.

Chan also chose to appoint China Central Television's James Chau a goodwill ambassador. Later, during the 2020 pandemic, more than 100 UN-affiliated associations would write to the WHO calling for him to be removed from the role because he was a well-known propagandist for the Chinese government.

The biggest test for Chan was also the moment she drew the most criticism — and there was a Beijing link to this too. She took two months to declare an international emergency over the 2014 ebola outbreak despite repeated warnings from her own experts.

Leaked emails obtained by the Associated Press revealed that the delay was caused by WHO officials who did not want to upset the African countries hit by the outbreak and damage their economies. More than 1,000 people died during the delay.

One of the countries affected, Guinea, had struck a big mining rights deal that allowed a state-backed Chinese firm to excavate one of the world's biggest untapped iron ore reserves. Fearing that the foreign investors might be scared away, Alpha Condé, then the country's president, claimed that ebola was under control in Guinea in a speech at the WHO's Geneva headquarters.

His lie went unchallenged. "Margaret Chan's WHO was accused of being too close to Alpha Condé," the senior source from the WHO said. In the end the UN took the highly unusual step of appointing David Nabarro, a British doctor, to co-ordinate the international effort on ebola because it was so concerned about the WHO's failure to get to grips with the outbreak.

In 2017 Chan crowned her final year in office by welcoming Xi to Geneva. While he was there, she signed an agreement that committed the WHO to working alongside China on health as part of the country's Belt and Road initiative. It was the first time any UN agency had signed up to the initiative, which seeks to extend Chinese influence and trade in more than 70 developing countries by financing infrastructure projects.

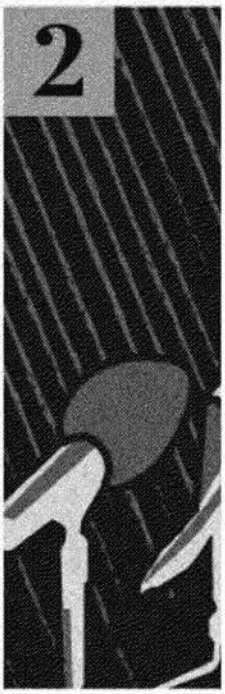
The initiative is highly controversial because its critics argue that China uses it to shackle countries, particularly in Africa, to "unsustainable debt" as a way of gaining access to the continent's raw materials and buying political favours.

"I think health is too special to get into the really seedy politics that Belt and Road is part of, and I wouldn't want the WHO to be associated with it," Gostin argues. "The cost in terms of human rights and debt, and other adverse events for Africa, was a bridge too far."



2003

The World Health Organisation's director-general, Gro Harlem Brundtland, takes strong and decisive action during the Sars crisis, exposing China's cover-up of the outbreak and recommending restrictions on travel to virus hotspots. Fearless leadership by Brundtland, a former Norwegian prime minister, helps to bring a swift end to the pandemic, which causes 800 deaths



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Turning on the money taps

Under bright skies in the rolling parkland on the banks of Lake Geneva a large group of protesters with placards gathered outside the Palace of Nations for the 70th meeting of the World Health Assembly (WHA), the body with representatives from all UN member states that controls the WHO.

The protest that day — May 22, 2017 — was against Tedros standing to replace Chan, who had served her final term. The demonstrators were highlighting human rights abuses by the Ethiopian regime, which was reported to have tortured dissidents, displaced villages and ordered police massacres of protesters. Until the previous year Tedros had been a minister in that Ethiopian government.

Tedros, a former epidemiologist then aged 52, had been the health and then foreign minister after joining the government in 2005. Last year David Steinman, a US economist nominated for the Nobel peace prize, called for Tedros to be personally prosecuted for genocide over his alleged involvement directing Ethiopia's security forces. He denies any involvement in human rights abuses despite his lengthy period in government.

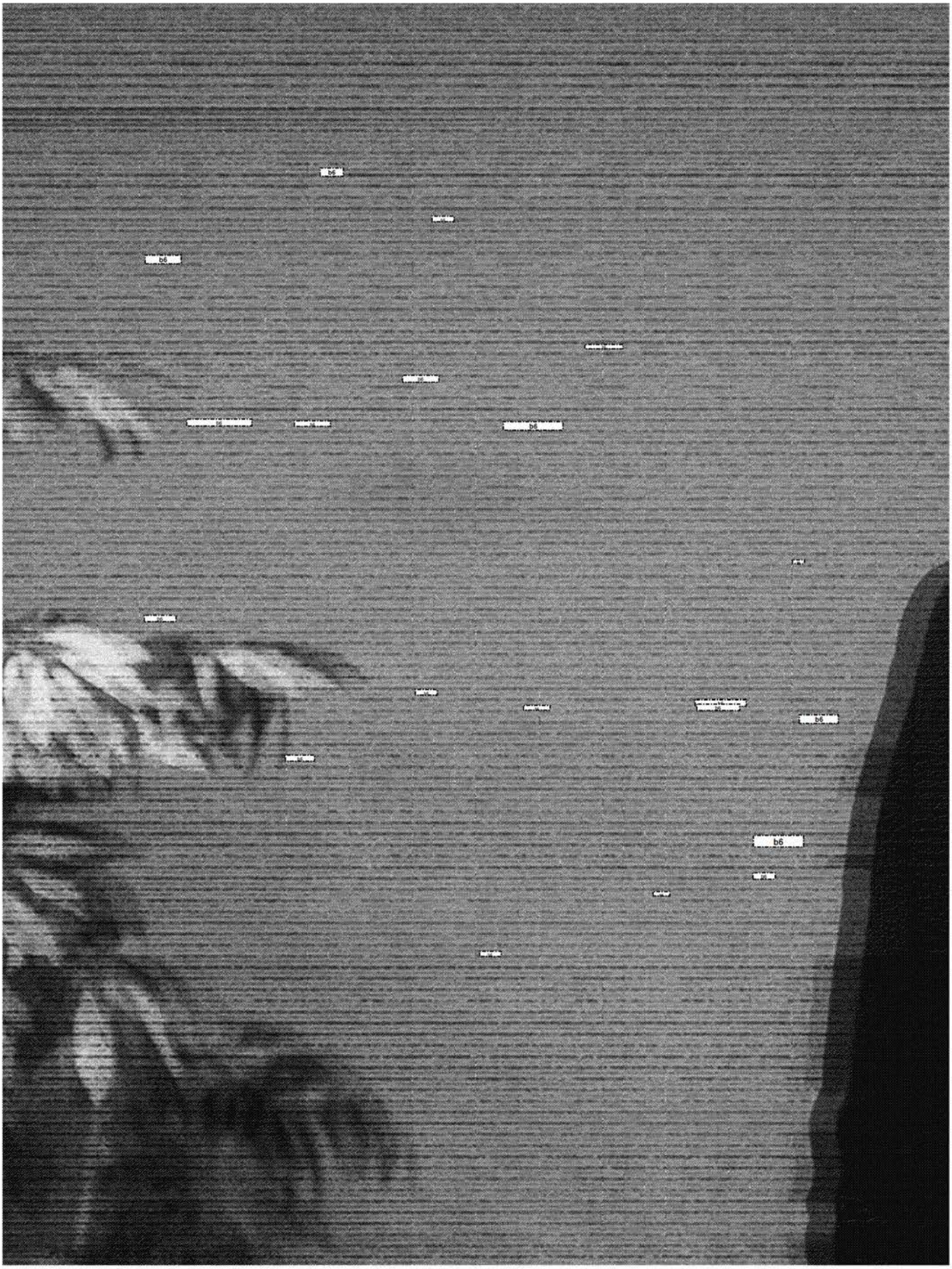
As foreign minister Tedros had formed a close relationship with China. He would often praise the Chinese leadership, which invested more money in Ethiopia than any other country did. In 2014 he wrote a joint article with the Chinese foreign minister in the state-controlled China Daily newspaper that waxed lyrical about the bond between the countries. "We are sincere friends, reliable partners and good brothers who share both happiness and adversity, each rejoicing in the successes the other has achieved," they wrote.

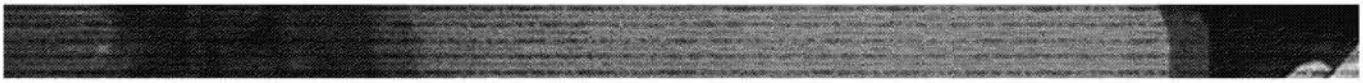
The African Union countries had wanted their candidate to replace Chan as director-general. They had previously helped Chan get elected, and it was now their turn. As an African with close links to China, Tedros was the perfect candidate.

As the election approached, China had again turned on the money taps. A month before the vote, a multinational ministerial conference was held in Pretoria ostensibly with the aim of stepping up China-Africa co-operation in health. During the conference China agreed to offer a cataract surgery programme for free to the African countries.

Then, nine days before polling, Xi hosted an event in Beijing at which he pledged more than $100 billion in extra funding for its Belt and Road initiative — a large portion of which would be channelled into

investment in developing countries. This included new investment in Kenya, Indonesia and Hungary.





David Nabarro witnessed at first hand the WHO leadership's incompetence during the Ebola crisis
FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Tedros's main opponent was Nabarro, whose first-hand experience of the WHO leadership's incompetence during the ebola crisis had convinced him of the need for reform. Nabarro was not alone in his concerns about the WHO, and he reportedly received support from the US, the UK and Canada. This appears to have been the first time the West had woken up to China's creeping influence over the health agency.

The contest between the two men for the WHO director-generalship took place under new rules that had been introduced by Chan. Previously, the director-general had been chosen by the 34 members of the WHA executive board, but the new rules gave an equal vote to all the assembly's 194 member states.

Critics of the rule change, such as J Michael Cole of the Canadian think tank the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, have pointed out that the WHO was essentially copying the electoral system that propped up the famously corrupt regime of the former Fifa president Sepp Blatter.

As with football's governing body, tiny countries that might be susceptible to financial aid were given an equal vote to countries many times their size. Cole said tiny island countries such as those in the Pacific were "easy targets" for Chinese influence.

During the campaign Gostin, who was supporting Nabarro, accused Tedros of covering up three cholera outbreaks during his time as Ethiopia's health minister. Tedros again strongly denied the allegations. Certainly the mud did not stick. With China's help he won by 133 votes to Nabarro's 50.

'Model' China

Within a month of taking over in July 2017, Tedros was on his way to China to emphasise the health agency's continued commitment to the partnership under the Belt and Road initiative.

"China's long experience and expertise in health systems and policies will be invaluable to achieving the WHO's global priorities, especially in health crisis management," he wrote in the China Daily. "China can share its lessons learnt and best practices with other countries, offering them models of success."

Months later Tedros made an extraordinary announcement, seemingly without consulting colleagues. He

had appointed Mugabe, the tyrannical Zimbabwean president, as a goodwill ambassador for the WHO. Diplomatic sources affiliated to the health agency have told us that the honouring of Mugabe was made at the behest of Beijing as a political payoff for the dictator's years as a staunch ally of the Chinese government.

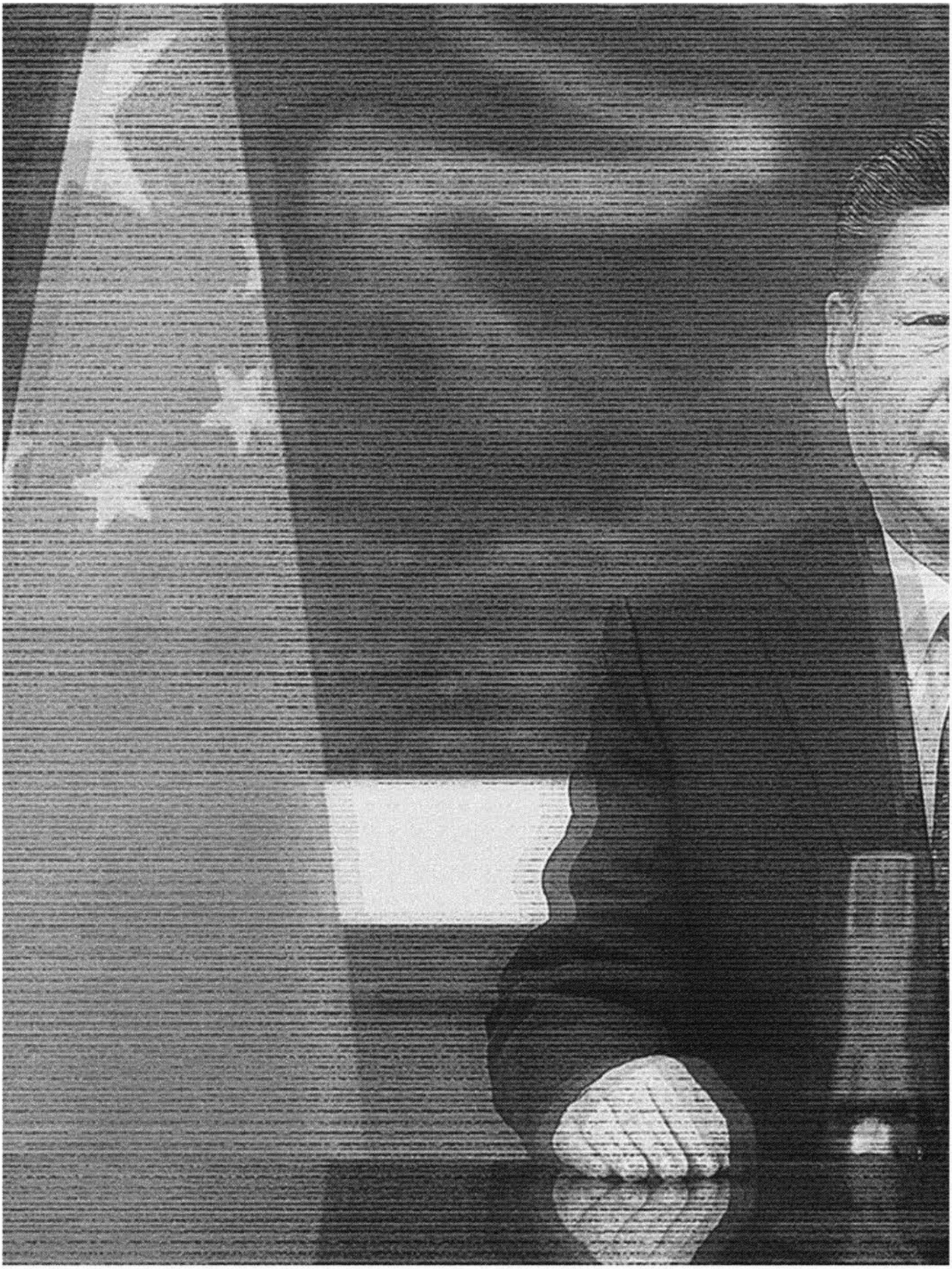
Xi has described Zimbabwe as China's "all-weather friend". In turn Mugabe called Xi "a God-sent person". The Chinese government's connection to Mugabe stretches back to the 1970s, when it helped fund his guerrilla war in Zimbabwe before he took power. More recently it ploughed cash into his regime when it was struggling under western sanctions.

It was an ill-judged move by Tedros. The Canadian prime minister, Justin Trudeau, described the announcement as a "bad April Fool's joke", Ireland's health minister said it was "offensive and bizarre" and the UK prime minister's office said it was "surprising and disappointing, particularly in light of the current US and EU sanctions against [Mugabe]".

There was particular bemusement because Zimbabwe's healthcare system had deteriorated so badly under Mugabe's rule that he himself had sought treatment at a luxurious private hospital in Singapore rather than trust his own country's doctors. A report by the group Physicians for Human Rights in 2009 gave examples of how Mugabe had damaged his own health system in his efforts to cling on to power.

The appointment was withdrawn just four days after Tedros announced it. But it did not stop him continuing to lavish praise on China's leaders. Nine months later, on another trip to Beijing in July 2018, he described China's health reforms as "a model for universal health coverage" and "a bulwark against health emergencies". In other words, they would help to prevent a future pandemic.

One of the oddities of China's influence within the WHO was that it managed to achieve it while paying little money towards the running of the organisation. In 2018-19 China gave the health agency $89 million, whereas the UK contributed $464 million and the US $853 million.





Tedros praised President Xi's 'rare leadership' as Covid spread across the world in January 2020
LI XUEREN/XINHUA/AP

Gostin described the vast shortfall as "galling". He is critical of the way China instead uses its money to pay for health projects in deals it negotiates directly with individual countries. This gives Beijing more diplomatic and economic leverage with the countries themselves. "China's foreign policy is extraordinarily mercantile and self-interested," he said. "It's all done on bilateral country negotiations, where [China] has got a ton of leverage."

China has used this approach to take over other parts of the UN system. In June 2019 a Chinese candidate was elected head of the Food and Agricultural Organisation, after reports that Beijing had cancelled $78 million of Cameroon's debt in exchange for the withdrawal from the race of a candidate from the country. It meant that, of the UN's 15 specialised agencies, four were headed by Chinese nationals.

The cover-up begins

The main "bulwark" at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic was a wall of secrecy in China. On December 30, 2019, Dr Li Wenliang, an ophthalmologist at Wuhan Central Hospital, sent a message to medical colleagues in an online chat forum suggesting they wear protective clothing because he had seen several cases of a virus that appeared to be transmitted between humans like Sars.

Li was summoned for an inquisition by the authorities, with seven of his friends. They were investigated for "spreading rumours" and warned against "publishing fictitious discourse". Li would later die from Covid-19.

The following day — the last of the year — the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission publicly admitted for the first time that a number of people had been struck down with a similar illness in a bland public announcement reporting 27 cases of pneumonia-like infection.

What the statement did not say was that the illness had already been identified by the Chinese authorities as a new coronavirus — not unlike Sars — that appeared to be passing between humans. This crucial information — as well as any indication of the alarm already secretly felt by scientific and health officials in China — was withheld from the world.

However, earlier that day Taiwan had been closely monitoring reports in the Chinese media that might

indicate a new medical phenomenon and it noted that an internal hospital alert had been reported in an obscure business publication. The Taiwanese authorities sent the WHO an email raising concerns about a number of "atypical pneumonia cases" in Wuhan that had been "isolated for treatment". The only reason patients would need to be isolated was that Chinese hospitals feared the virus could pass between humans.

The health agency did not heed the Taiwanese warning. The island's relations with the WHO were strained because of China's claims of sovereignty over its territory.

In the months before the pandemic Beijing had used its influence to block the island from attending meetings of the WHA for a third year in a row. The UK and the US were among a number of nations that wanted Taiwan to be given access and had warned Tedros that the country's absence "created serious gaps in the global health security system".

Taiwan's vice-president, Chen Chien-jen, an epidemiologist by training, would later accuse the WHO of brushing aside this early evidence it had provided on suspected human-to-human transmission and of failing to pass the early warning on to the world. In the weeks that followed, the island's relationship with the WHO deteriorated further when Tedros wrongly claimed in public that it was behind a series of racist online attacks against him.

In the first two weeks of January desperate scenes were unfolding at Wuhan hospitals as patients with flu-like symptoms began to flood in. The mayhem and death were described by Dr Peng Zhiyong, the director of the intensive care unit in Wuhan University's Zhongnan Hospital, several weeks later in an interview he gave to the Chinese media outlet Caixin Global.

Within four days of the arrival of the first patient, Peng said, all 16 intensive care beds were full and the situation was "dire". More than 40 members of his team then contracted the disease from patients. Things were even worse at another hospital in the city, where two thirds of intensive care staff had reportedly been infected.

The doctors fought the epidemic in gruelling conditions. Some wore nappies inside their protective suits to avoid taking breaks. Peng said many patients were turned away because the hospitals could not cope. "Some patients even knelt down to beg me to accept [them]. But there was nothing I could do since all the beds were occupied," he said. "I shed tears while I turned them down. I have run out of tears now."

The doctors were in no doubt the virus was passing rapidly between humans. Few of Peng's colleagues went home after their shifts, for fear they would infect their families.

Yet the Chinese authorities systematically tried to cover up the human spread by issuing diktats, suppressing whistleblowers and scrubbing social media. On January 3 a confidential notice was issued forbidding labs to publish details of the virus without authorisation. On January 6 the hashtag #WuhanSARS appeared online, but posts on Twitter were swiftly censored.

The authorities also withheld work that had been done to sequence the coronavirus's genome, which had been completed by January 3 — a decision that delayed international scientists from developing tests for the virus.

It was the beginning of exactly the type of crisis that Tedros had warned of in his 2018 Dubai speech. He had been clear at the time that ignoring the signs of an outbreak could be the difference between containing a deadly disease and allowing it to spread.

But, at the beginning of the biggest pandemic for more than a hundred years, the health agency simply took the Chinese explanations about the outbreak at face value. On January 10 the WHO issued a statement saying: "From the currently available information, preliminary investigation suggests that there is no significant human-to-human transmission, and no infections among healthcare workers have occurred."

Both statements were untrue, and the agency did not even attempt to couch its language in a way that would have made clear that these were merely claims made by China. Instead it was mindful of the need to avoid taking measures that might damage the Chinese economy. "WHO advises against the application of any travel or trade restrictions on China," its statement went on.

However, staff at the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Centre laboratory were growing increasingly anxious about the need to develop tests for the virus in the hope they might be available before millions of people crisscrossed the country for the lunar new year celebrations later that month. So they took matters into their own hands and shared the genetic code they had sequenced on a US computer database called GenBank, which is available to scientists around the world. It was published on January 11. When the Chinese authorities learnt of the leak, the Shanghai lab was instantly closed for "rectification". But China's secret was out and the Wuhan Institute of Virology was forced to share its information on the

coronavirus with the health agency.

By now some officials inside the WHO were becoming frustrated that their repeated requests for data from China were being rebuffed. Leaked recordings of one of the health agency's meetings in the second week of January show that Dr Michael Ryan, the WHO's Irish chief of emergencies, wanted to apply more pressure on China as he could see that the crisis was becoming a repeat of the 2003 Sars disaster.



Chinese authorities desperately tried to cover up the spread of the coronavirus
NOEL CELIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

"This is exactly the same scenario — endlessly trying to get updates from China about what was going on," he said in the recording obtained by the AP news agency. "The WHO barely got out of that one with its neck intact, given the issues that arose around transparency in southern China."

Ryan appears to have been keen to raise the lack of co-operation by China in public, pointing out that the health agency had criticised Tanzania a few months earlier for withholding details of an ebola outbreak. "We have to be consistent," Ryan said. "The danger now is that despite our good intent ... especially if something does happen, there will be a lot of finger-pointing at the WHO."

But such behind-the-scenes concerns did not alter the WHO's public messaging. "WHO is reassured of the quality of the ongoing investigations and the response measures implemented in Wuhan, and the commitment to share information regularly," it said in a statement on January 12. "At this stage there is no infection among healthcare workers, and no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission," it added calmly.

Deadly delay

On the morning of January 13 the first case of an infection outside China was found in Thailand. That day Tedros announced that he was giving thought to whether he should call a meeting of the WHO emergency committee, which consists of about 20 international experts, including one from China.

The emergency body plays a key role in deciding whether the director-general should declare an infectious outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). Meetings are held in confidence because PHEIC declarations can damage business, travel and tourism in an affected country, according to a source on the committee.

The growing outbreak in China could have been declared an emergency under the health agency's criterion, which requires a crisis to be "an extraordinary event" that might cause "a public health risk to other states through the international spread of disease".

But Tedros decided to wait, and nine more days passed before he even gathered the committee members for their advice. During this period he was talking directly on the phone about the outbreak to Ma

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Xiaowei, the Chinese minister of health, whom he had described warmly as his "brother" in a tweet on January 11.

According to the health agency's official timeline of events, it first warned that the virus might be transmitted between people on January 14. It is certainly true that Maria Van Kerkhove, the American acting head of emerging diseases, acknowledged in a briefing that there might be some evidence of "limited human-to-human transmission, potentially among families". But she was corrected by the WHO official Twitter account a few hours later: "Investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel #coronavirus." A further five days would go by in which the WHO issued another denial about hospital staff in Wuhan contracting the virus.

Finally on January 19 the health agency's regional office in the western Pacific announced clearly that the virus could pass between humans, albeit with the qualification that the transmission was "limited".

By now the emergency situation in Wuhan was so desperate that the Chinese authorities were preparing to build the 1,000-bed Huoshenshan Hospital in just 10 days. The virus had spread to Beijing, and it was no longer credible to pretend it could not pass between humans.

Therefore, on January 20 — three weeks after Taiwan's warning — China's health ministry admitted that it did have evidence that medical staff had been infected. It meant the health agency could no longer delay. Tedros summoned a meeting of the emergency committee, which deliberated on January 22 and 23.

The number of known cases jumped from 314 to 581 during those two days and the virus had spread to 24 regions of China, killing 18 people. The true figures will have been many times greater because of underreporting by China. And the virus had now escaped the country's borders: ten cases had been identified in four other countries.

For reasons that are unclear because of the secrecy of its meetings, the members of the emergency committee were split on what action to take after an update on the crisis was provided by the Chinese representative. The advice they gave Tedros was equivocal, and he decided to avoid taking the diplomatically fraught decision of imposing an international public health emergency on China.

In a press briefing on January 23 he reasoned that there was "an emergency in China ... but it has not yet

become a global health emergency", adding that he wished to thank the country's government for its "co-operation and transparency".

The protection of Beijing's interests continued the following day when the health agency issued a statement reiterating that countries should not impose travel restrictions on China, even though the situation in Wuhan had become so dire that the city had imposed a full lockdown, then unprecedented in modern times. Yet the inaction by the health body sent a clear signal to the world that this new coronavirus might not be as serious as was feared.

The calm ripples of this cool approach were felt in Britain a day later. Matt Hancock, the health minister, chaired the first meeting of the Cobra national security committee, which spent an hour discussing the virus before concluding that the risk to the UK public was "low". Hancock had first been alerted to the unusual pneumonia-like cases on January 3 but the government had done little in the meantime to prepare for the potential arrival of the virus. Downing Street would later defend Boris Johnson's decision to skip the Cobra meeting — the first of five the prime minister missed — by pointing out that the WHO had not considered the crisis sufficiently serious to declare a global emergency.
By Tuesday January 28 four weeks had passed since Taiwan raised the initial alarm and there was still no evidence of the fast and decisive action that Tedros had said was necessary to combat an outbreak in his Dubai speech. That day he met Xi, the Chinese president, in Beijing and emerged from the encounter full of praise for his hosts.

He said Xi had shown "rare leadership" and deserved "gratitude and respect" for acting to contain the outbreak at the epicentre. These "extraordinary steps" had prevented further spread of the virus, and this was why, he said, there were only "a few cases of human-to-human transmission outside China, which we are monitoring very closely".

Tedros even claimed that China was "completely committed to transparency", pointing out that it had shared the genomic sequence of the virus "immediately" — when in fact the lab that leaked the sequence had been punished by the country's authorities for defying the censors.

If the words of Tedros's speech suggested he and China had everything under control, nothing could have been further from the truth. The virus was spreading fast across the globe.

By this point a crucial four weeks had been lost because China had covered up the highly infectious

nature of Sars-CoV-2 while the WHO had repeated its claims unquestioningly. The health agency had failed in its single most important job — to swiftly sound the alarm.

Professor Richard Ebright, of Rutgers University's Waksman Institute of Microbiology in New Jersey, a fellow of the Infectious Disease Society of America, believes China's influence over the WHO played "a decisive role" in the agency's failure to act decisively at the start of the pandemic.

"Not only did it have a role; it has had a decisive role," he said. "It was the only motivation. There was no scientific or medical or policy justification for the stance that the WHO took in January and February 2020. That was entirely premised on maintaining satisfactory ties to the Chinese government. So at every step of the way, the WHO promoted the position that was sought by the Chinese government ... the WHO actively resisted and obstructed efforts by other nations to implement effective border controls that could have limited the spread or even contained the spread of the outbreak."

He added: "It is impossible for me to believe that the officials in Geneva, who were making those statements, believed those statements accorded with the facts that were available to them at the time the statements were made.

"It's hard not to see that the direct origin of that is the support of the Chinese government for Tedros's election as director-general ... This was a remarkably high return on [China's] investment with the relatively small sums that were invested in supporting his election. It paid off on a grand scale for the Chinese government."

David Fidler, a former WHO legal adviser, is scathing about Tedros's "obsequious" praise for Xi and suspects that "the WHO knew China was not being transparent, particularly about information related to human-to-human transmission". He added: "The praise that he heaped on China gave them no incentive to change their behaviour."

Tedros finally declared an international public health emergency on January 30. By then the virus had been detected in 18 countries and was almost certainly lurking undetected in many others.

The WHO's failure to act had blown the world's only chance to contain the pandemic at source, Ebright believes. "Ironically, China's success in curbing the spread and containing the spread by implementing appropriate border controls ... tells us that, had this been done globally, in January, this outbreak could

have been potentially contained," he said.

"We can see what happened when Taiwan, cut off from WHA guidance and shunned by the WHO, made its own decisions and was largely Covid-free for 2020 and even through 2021. Had other nations implemented tight border restrictions by the middle of January, the situation would have been very different."

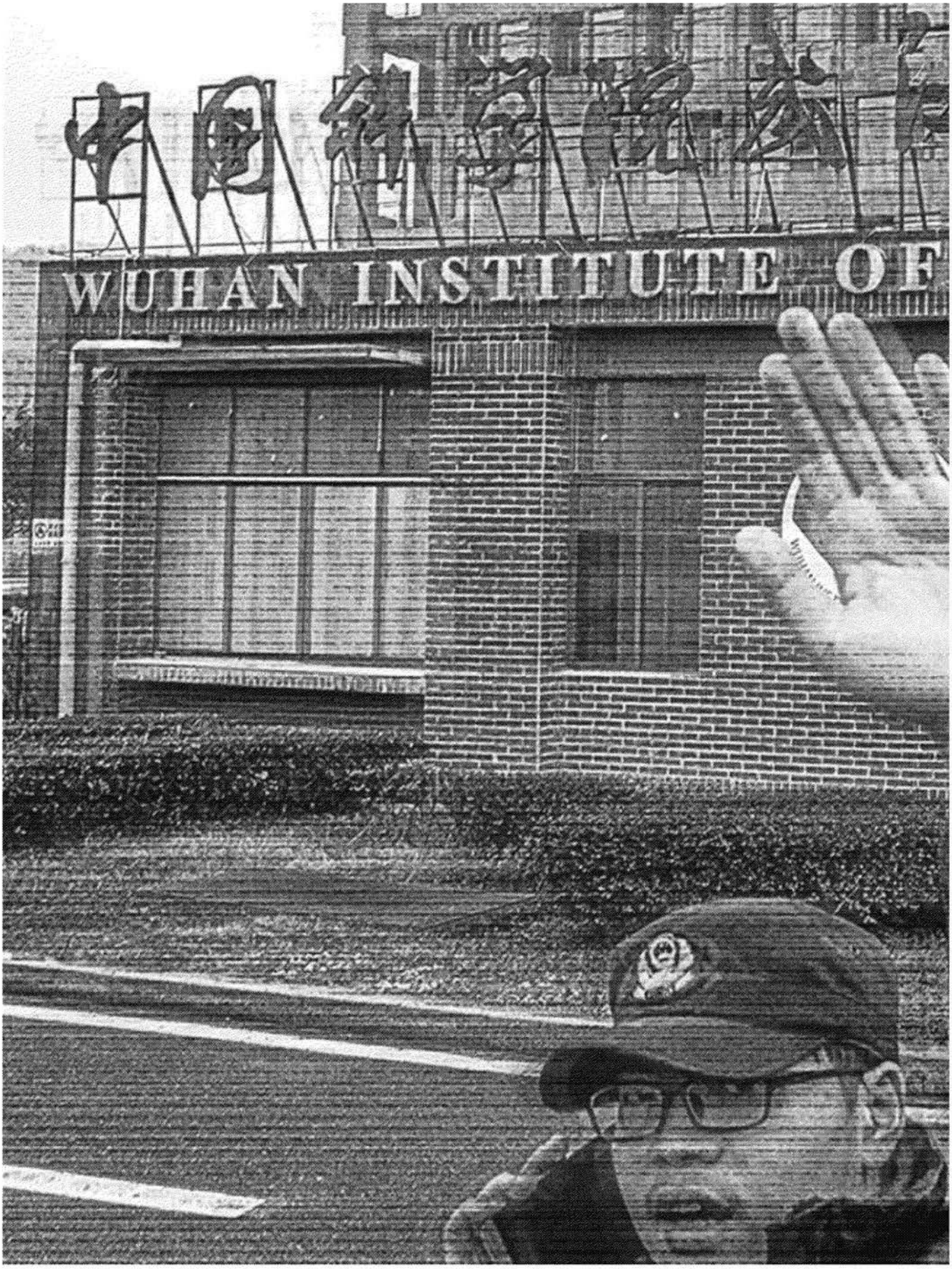
A year later a report by an independent panel set up at the request of the WHA was critical of the delay in calling the emergency. The panel, led by the former New Zealand prime minister Helen Clark, said the health agency should have assumed human-to-human transmission and issued warnings as a precaution, given what was known about respiratory infections.

Even after the global emergency was declared, the travel advice remained the same. At a meeting of the WHO executive board in Geneva on February 3, Tedros claimed the spread of the virus outside China was "minimal and slow" and there was no need to introduce measures that "unnecessarily interfere with international travel and trade".

This prompted an outburst from the appreciative Chinese delegate to the board. Li Song, an ambassador to the UN, leapt to his feet and denounced countries that were blocking the entry of travellers from Hubei, the province of which Wuhan is the capital. "All these measures are seriously against recommendation by the WHO," he fumed.

In fact, while the health agency did later give advice that travellers should be screened to detect flu symptoms at airports, it never did explicitly support any restrictions on travel to and from China. By the end of March 2020 many countries across the world had ignored the health agency's advice and instituted some form of travel ban.

Gostin believes China's cover-up in January was "the singular important event in the course of the pandemic" because it blew the world's "only shot" of containing the crisis at source.


WUHAN INSTITUTE OF



The Wuhan institute was meant to develop vaccines in advance of outbreaks
ROMAN PILIPEY/EPA

A flawed investigation

If the cordial relationship between Tedros and China had survived the opening months of the pandemic, the strength of their friendship would be tested once again in the early summer of 2020. It was over the very important, yet highly sensitive, issue of how and where the virus originated.

The Sars outbreak in 2003 is thought to have originated in bats in Yunnan province, southwest China, and to have been introduced into markets in the surrounding area through an intermediary host animal. Sars-CoV-2 is believed to have had similar beginnings because of its resemblance to other bat coronaviruses.

However, the caves in Yunnan province are more than a thousand miles from Wuhan, and no bats containing such viruses have ever been found near that city. If an intermediate animal, or indeed a human, had been infected by a bat in Yunnan, how could this very infectious virus be carried on such a long journey to Wuhan without causing a single noticeable outbreak along the way?

The Chinese had tested thousands of animals in Wuhan and the surrounding areas, but not one had come up positive for the virus. Chinese scientists had also rejected the suggestion that the virus entered through the Huanan seafood market in the city, which was connected to some of the cases in December 2019.

Extensive sample-testing at the market failed to show a link between any of the animals there and the virus. It was also clear that many of the early human cases had no link to the market, and the conclusion was that the market was a crowded environment in which the virus had spread, rather than the point of introduction into Wuhan.

But there was an elephant in the room. Coronaviruses found in the Yunnan bat caves, including the world's closest known match to Sars-CoV-2, were being kept at the Wuhan Institute of Virology at the time of the outbreak. To many it seemed a remarkable coincidence that, of all the 600 cities in China, the virus began in Wuhan, the home of an institute that houses the world's largest collection of coronaviruses from wild bats and has a team of scientists who often travel to those same Yunnan caves.

The scientists had been seeking out coronavirus-infected bats and then transporting the viruses back to the laboratory in Wuhan. There they carried out highly controversial "gain of function" experiments to make the viruses more infectious to humans. The work was designed to help develop vaccines to pre-

empt a potential coronavirus outbreak, but many scientists had warned that one safety lapse could itself cause a deadly pandemic.

Only a tiny handful of labs in the world carried out such high-risk experiments, and in 2018 inspectors sent by the US embassy in Beijing to the Wuhan institute had flagged serious safety concerns there. A US diplomatic cable leaked to The Washington Post stated: "During interactions with scientists at the WIV laboratory, they noted the new lab has a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate this high-containment laboratory."

There were therefore questions about whether the pandemic had been caused by a leak from the Wuhan institute or one of its researchers who had been infected in the bat caves and then accidentally carried the virus back to the city. It was certainly not inconceivable: the Sars virus had leaked from the National Institute of Virology lab in Beijing in 2004. Nine people were infected by the outbreak and one died.

There were serious concerns about what the Wuhan institute had been doing with the world's closest known match to the Covid-19 virus, which was the strongest lead in the hunt for the pandemic's origin. It had been found eight years ago by Wuhan scientists in an abandoned mine, where it had been linked to deaths caused by a coronavirus-type respiratory illness. But the significance of the deaths had been kept secret by the Chinese authorities until a Sunday Times investigation uncovered them in the summer of last year. The lab has refused to answer questions on whether it was experimenting on the virus in the run-up to the pandemic.

Indeed China had been reluctant to address many questions about the pandemic's origins since January 2020, other than to issue blanket denials. It did not want the ignominy of being found culpable for the world's worst pandemic for a century.

The subject had become politically charged. Donald Trump, then the US president, had weighed in and alleged China might be culpable. Right-wingers in America were calling for multibillion-dollar reparations from China if it was proved to have caused the pandemic.

So a demand for an investigation of the origins of the virus by the Australian prime minister, Scott Morrison, on April 22 was not welcomed in Beijing. Morrison called for the WHO to appoint independent investigators, akin to weapons inspectors, and urged the international community to back a plan to track down the virus's origins in China. In the weeks that followed, China imposed trade sanctions on Australia's beef and barley.

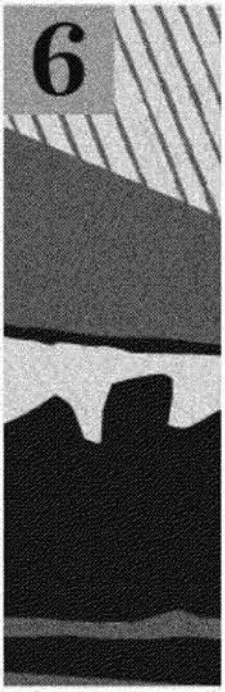
Morrison had started a hare running. It was important to find the origin of the virus but there was much resistance by China, leading to some tough negotiating behind the scenes at the WHA. Many countries wanted an investigation to start immediately, but Chinese diplomats managed to fight that off. In the end it was the EU countries that brokered a compromise. "There were negotiations over every word," said a source in the WHO.

On May 19 the assembly agreed on a form of words for the inquiry. The resolution required the director-general of the WHO to work closely with member states to "identify the zoonotic source of the virus and the route of introduction to the human population". There was no mention of the word "investigation" or the timescale.



2017

Tedros causes outrage by appointing Robert Mugabe, the tyrannical Zimbabwean president, a WHO goodwill ambassador. Sources say the appointment was encouraged by China, which was a close ally of Mugabe, having helped to fund his guerrilla war in Zimbabwe before he took power and ploughed cash into his sanctions-hit regime. After an outcry, the appointment is rescinded



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There are those such as Jamie Metzl, a former member of the Clinton administration and an adviser to the WHO, who believe Tedros's hands were tied from the beginning by the resolution. He says it had strong backing from China because it authorised "a Chinese-controlled joint study into a single-origin hypothesis, namely, that of zoonosis in the wild, and that is what I call the original sin, because there was

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a broad public perception that there was a WHO-led investigation, and there was no investigation that was ever authorised".

However, the wording did not say this specifically, and it was left to Tedros and his team to draw up the terms of the inquiry with the Chinese authorities between May and July, which they did without seeking the opinions of the member states. The two sides took the decision to jointly interpret the loose wording — referring to "scientific and collaborative field missions" — as a mandate for a "study" rather than a proper independent investigation.

"It was never an investigation. Investigations are something different," said the WHO source with knowledge of the negotiations. "With a study it's not that you go and look for some wrongdoing ... You're not looking backwards trying really to do a forensic audit of things and say, 'Give me everything; show me everything.' It doesn't work like that."

In July, Peter Ben Embarek, a WHO expert on infections that jump from animals to people, spent three weeks in China with a colleague horse-trading over the terms of reference of the "study". Two weeks were spent in quarantine in a gloomy hotel on the outskirts of Beijing, and their requests to interview Chinese researchers on Zoom were largely rebuffed. "It was a real struggle to get this going while they were on the ground and really depressing," said the WHO source.

WHO insiders say Beijing held the trump card in the negotiations as it could always simply refuse to allow any of the scientific team to enter the country. That is why Tedros was averse to criticising the country's leadership publicly, the insiders claim in his defence.

Behind closed doors the health agency ruled out any work on a matter that might make Beijing jumpy: the question of a possible laboratory leak. The study would concentrate on the zoonotic source of the virus, which the WHO argued was its narrow remit from the original WHA resolution.

But the resolution was clearly wider than the health agency's interpretation. Even a virus that had leaked from the lab would have had a zoonotic origin before, for example, it was taken back to Wuhan by researchers. The crucial point was the second part of the resolution, which clearly states that the director-general was charged with finding out how such an animal virus would be then transmitted to humans.

The terms of reference were finalised between the WHO and China on August 2 last year. Yet, according

to the US government, they were not shared with the other countries until the beginning of November.

That was when Garrett Grigsby, the US representative on the WHO executive board, immediately raised objections that the terms were "not negotiated in a transparent way with all WHO member states" and appeared to be "inconsistent" with the mandate. The complaints were ignored.

When asked why other nations had not been consulted about the terms, a WHO spokesman said: "In general, terms of reference for in-country scientific studies are not discussed by member states."

By then the team of scientists had already been selected for the study. The health agency had deliberately chosen zoonotic experts rather than scientists who might be qualified to examine laboratory leaks. The team consisted of 34 scientists, and the agreement reached with Beijing was that it would include 17 members from China, who would mostly be employed by the Chinese state.

The team turned out to contain a majority of Chinese nationals because the health agency chose Li Jian — one of its technical officers, who is from China — among its 17. Gostin says allowing so many Chinese scientists to be part of the WHO team "undermined the credibility and objectivity" of the inquiry.

Furthermore, China was given a veto over the choice of the non-Chinese experts. When the US put forward three scientists, including a laboratory expert, they were all rejected by the WHO without even a phone call. The only US representative chosen by the WHO was Peter Daszak, a New Yorker originally from Dukinfield, near Manchester.

Daszak was a controversial choice. He had been working with the Wuhan Institute of Virology on hunting down coronaviruses for more than 15 years and he headed the EcoHealth Alliance charity, which had redirected large grants from the US government to the Wuhan lab to fund some of its controversial coronavirus work.

The institute's lead virologist, Shi Zhengli — nicknamed "Bat Woman" — described Daszak as her "collaborator" in an email to this newspaper that summer. However, the health agency regarded this conflict of interest as an irrelevance because it had already ruled out the possibility that the team would follow any lines of inquiry into the Wuhan institute.

A capable communicator, Daszak had already been vocal with his view that the virus first infected

humans directly from an animal — possibly in one of China's crammed live markets. He had even secretly orchestrated a statement rejecting the "conspiracy" theory that the virus did not have a natural origin, which was signed by 27 scientists and published by the medical journal The Lancet in February 2020. When his role in organising the letter was revealed this year, Daszak stepped down from a UN-backed Lancet commission that was separately looking into the origins of the virus, and the medical periodical retrospectively published a detailed disclosure document on his work in China.





Peter Daszak had been hunting viruses with the Wuhan Institute of Virology for 15 years
ALY SONG/REUTERS

The stakes were high for Daszak when the WHO chose him for the joint mission in late summer 2020. If it was concluded that the virus passed naturally from animals to humans, it would vindicate much of his life's work. However, all that work would be seriously undermined if the pandemic had begun at the laboratory he was so closely associated with.

Metzl, who has been campaigning for a proper investigation of the origins of the virus, believes Daszak's selection was "simply outrageous". He said: "So his entire career is ... in large part based on his collaboration with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. So he's the last person who should be on a committee that is examining the possibility of whether experiments that his organisation may have supported played a role in sparking this global pandemic."

Ebright added: "Shameful terms of reference were negotiated between WHO and China. Terms of reference that in essence ended up being the Chinese position without any change. Again it is hard not to see this as a repayment, or as a return on investment on the support the Chinese government provided for [Tedros's] election."

The centrepiece of the first phase of the WHO study was the long-awaited field trip to Wuhan, which finally began on January 14. It had been delayed by the Chinese government for reasons that were opaque: a year had passed since the original outbreak by the time the international scientists were allowed to set foot in the city where the first known Covid-19 cases were recorded.

According to the American magazine Vanity Fair, it was in the weeks before the trip that the US State Department had acquired its explosive — and hotly disputed — intelligence that three researchers from the Wuhan institute had fallen ill.

The researchers were alleged to be connected to the laboratory's "gain of function" experiments on coronaviruses and appeared to have been taken to hospital with Covid-19-type pneumonia symptoms in November 2019. The timing of the cases is significant: this is exactly the time the outbreak is believed to have started and, if the intelligence is true, it would be a smoking gun in favour of the laboratory theory.

It is not clear when this information was conveyed to the WHO, but Tedros surprisingly decided to move

the goalposts at about that time. According to WHO sources close to him, he agreed with China that the international team would now be allowed to briefly visit the Wuhan institute — while fully aware that the scientists that had been chosen were not qualified to assess the potential of a laboratory leak.

The Chinese had not acceded to every request by the health agency. They refused entry to a WHO communications officer who would have acted as spokesperson for the joint mission. The result was that the team's most media-savvy communicator, Daszak, became the default spokesman for the group.

While the joint mission was in quarantine in a Wuhan hotel on January 15 this year, the US government publicly released its information about the researchers' illnesses and raised concerns about the experiments that had been carried out at the laboratory on the closest known match to the Covid-19 virus. The US further claimed that the Wuhan institute had been engaged in secret projects with China's military, including laboratory animal experiments, since 2017.

"For more than a year, the Chinese Communist Party has systematically prevented a transparent and thorough investigation of the Covid-19 pandemic's origin, choosing instead to devote enormous resources to deceit and disinformation," said the statement by the US State Department. "Nearly two million people have died. Their families deserve to know the truth."

Joe Biden was due to be inaugurated as president in five days, and there was no sign that he would deviate from this hard line. It raised the stakes for the WHO team even higher.

Playing politics

As it was, the team's visit to the Wuhan Institute of Virology lasted only a few hours. It was a smoggy day, and Daszak was filming the press pack outside the institute for his regular Twitter update. He would later claim that the joint mission had asked "tough" questions of the director and senior staff. "And the answers we got were consistent with everything that's been put out there," he said.

What actually happened was that the scientists asked a string of questions and appeared to take the answers from senior figures from the Wuhan institute at face value without seeking evidential proof.

Professor Thea Fischer, a Danish virologist who was part of the team, has described how she felt impolite asking direct questions. In an interview for a virology podcast she said the team concluded that it was not obvious that anything untoward had been "going on" but admitted: "This was based on questioning and

not us coming with swabs or testing, or serology follow-up, or looking into lab logs, because it was not a lab audit."

Before the trip there had been widespread disquiet in scientific circles about why the institute had, on September 12, 2019, taken offline a database that itemised its collection of 22,000 virus samples and sequences. The institute claimed it had taken the database down because it had feared hacking attacks, but it was a notable coincidence that it happened just before the pandemic is thought to have started.

Yet the joint mission team did not even demand access to the database. Daszak later explained that he had told the team there was no need to request the information as his charity had done a lot of work with the institute. "We do basically know what's in those databases," he said. They appear to have accepted his word and moved on.

Even WHO sources acknowledge that the lab visit was cursory. "They walk through the door, they talk to people and they walk out," the source said. "I think they were there for about two hours. And it was better than nothing, but it was close to nothing."

The team toured hospitals, a communicable disease centre, a propaganda museum and the empty Wuhan seafood market. When it finished in early February this year, it decided to conduct a straw poll of all the international and Chinese members on the relative likelihood of four theories on how the virus originated.

On the ground the Chinese were 17-strong as originally intended but the team were down to 14 as three of their experts were having to keep in contact remotely from outside China.

The ranking of possible theories took place in a Wuhan conference centre on February 8, with the two sets of scientists sitting in rows of chairs facing each other. They were given five options to categorise each theory, in a sliding scale from "very likely" to "likely", "possible", "unlikely" and "extremely unlikely".





WHO investigators at the Huanan seafood market in January this year
GETTY IMAGES

It is not known how many people favoured each theory, but the results were announced at a press conference in Wuhan on February 9. The favoured theory, which was backed as "likely" to "very likely", was that the virus spread from a bat into another host animal, possibly through intensive farming, and was then passed on to humans.

In a sense this was a leap of faith, as the joint mission had found no evidence of such an intermediary animal or any clues as to how it might have travelled the huge distance to Wuhan. It was just that the scientists believed that this was the way these outbreaks had happened in the past. But then laboratory leaks had happened too.

The decision was perhaps unsurprising, given this was a team that had been specifically picked to concentrate solely on the natural animal causes of the pandemic. In addition, the joint mission's Chinese contingent were under pressure from their government to dismiss any suggestion of culpability.

Therefore the joint mission found the idea that a virus could have leaked from an institution in Wuhan "extremely unlikely" and unworthy of further investigation. Even the theory that the virus might have entered China on frozen food was ranked higher and classed as "possible". The Chinese scientists had been pushing this theory and claimed to have evidence of a small number of cases in which the virus had been reintroduced to China on frozen food packaging.

The implausibility of the theory was later highlighted when the team's more detailed report was released. But the joint mission's "possible" verdict had given the theory a semblance of credibility, which was welcomed in Beijing because it suggested the virus might have originated outside its borders.

Sources close to Tedros say he was taken by surprise when Embarek, the mission's joint leader, dismissed the lab leak theory at the press conference. "That was the first time when we realised back in Geneva that there was an agreement among the totality of terminology that did not feel grounded in science, specifically this relative weighting of hypotheses," said the source.

The WHO insiders admit that the team was not even qualified to make that judgment. They point out that the health agency has a specialist "lab audit team", which, for example, regularly checks Russian and

American smallpox labs. "And that group had not fed into the choice of the team," the source said. "Nor had any of those people gone [to Wuhan], because we weren't able to negotiate something like that in the terms of reference."

A second WHO source was even more damning. "These guys should have not gone into the labs at all. They had not been given proper access to these labs. They didn't have expertise. They didn't have a mandate," they said. "And then they came out with this 'extremely unlikely' thing. We were all surprised. I was listening and I had no idea why they would say that. I think it was a little bit naive, honestly."

Last week, Emabarek gave an extraordinary interview for a Danish television documentary in which he disclosed that the joint mission had been forced to rule out a lab leak because of pressure from Beijing. He said the final report had been vetted by the Chinese government employees and the team were only allowed to mention the theory if they agreed that they would not pursue it further.

Embarek said it was possible that a laboratory employee may have been infected while collecting samples from bats in the wild. "We consider that hypothesis a likely one," he added. This was not what the team had told the world.

It is still not clear why Tedros organised for the team to visit the laboratory in his last-minute negotiations. But the director-general was under pressure after the joint mission's press conference in February. He was only too aware the new US president held more sway among America's international allies than Trump. While Biden had reversed his predecessor's decision to stop funding the health agency, he was not backing down on the confrontation with China over the origin investigation.

With the WHO's credibility on the line, Tedros decided to take a diplomatic approach to the joint mission's findings. He called a press conference to praise the team for its work while making clear that "all hypotheses remain open and require further analysis and studies".

When the joint mission produced its report in March, it was clear that there had been a lack of rigour in the team's reasoning for ruling out the Wuhan laboratory as a possible source.
It made two main arguments. The first was that there "was no record of viruses closely related to Sars-CoV-2 in any laboratory before December 2019". Yet it had not been given access to the Wuhan institute's virus database. Second, it observed that staff at the institute had claimed nobody at the lab had been ill with respiratory symptoms. But the WHO joint mission had not been given access to research

staff or their personnel records.

The report prompted a further joint statement by the US and 13 allies, including Britain, Australia and Japan, which expressed concerns about its findings and alleged the scientists' work had been hampered by significant delays and "lacked access to complete, original data and samples".





August-November 2020

China is given a veto over the make-up of the inquiry team, which ends up with more Chinese than non-Chinese scientists and is made up of experts qualified to examine the animal-to-human transmission and frozen meat theories rather than those trained to do lab audits. The zoologist Peter Daszak, who has a close relationship with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, is one of them

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The bigger picture was that the WHO study was in disarray. Whether by design or opportunism, China had triumphed. Beijing had never wanted an investigation of the origin of the virus and had used all its considerable influence at the WHO to make sure it was watered down.

"This outbreak was serious enough to potentially damage China's image, its legitimacy, its interests, its ambitions and the image it was trying to project internationally," said Fidler, the former lawyer for the health agency. "So that political dynamic led China to control and decide the way in which these investigations were going to happen. And that's made nobody outside China happy."

In late May Biden ordered the CIA to redouble its efforts to investigate how the outbreak started, "including whether it emerged from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident". When it reports in a few weeks' time, more may be revealed about the reliability or otherwise of the intelligence on the Wuhan institute.

But China was ready to pull up the drawbridge. When, on July 22, the WHO proposed a new phase two of the investigation, which would include an audit of the Wuhan labs, it was quickly rejected by China. The country's top health officials held a press conference in Beijing to say the results of the joint team's work should be accepted and the next phase should look at whether the pandemic had begun in a country outside China.

It means that unless China can be somehow compelled to open itself up to more thorough investigation, which appears unlikely, the world may never get to the bottom of what caused the great pandemic of the 21st century, which has killed four million people and counting.

In preparing this article, we asked to interview the health agency's staff who were part of the investigation as well as Tedros. The WHO press office declined our request. Margaret Chan did not respond to a request for comment.

A WHO spokesperson said this newspaper's article rehashed old events and contained "falsehoods and baseless claims". The agency argues that the director general treats China like any other country as a matter of principle.

"WHO's top priority is ending the acute stage of the Covid-19 pandemic and we are supporting countries to implement comprehensive, evidence based responses, based on the consistent use of public health measures and the equitable use of life-saving tools including vaccines," the spokesperson added.

Meanwhile, Tedros is likely to stand for re-election when his term ends next year and, if he does, will no doubt again seek backing from China.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T < b6
Subject: RE: Sunday Wash Post editorial

Yes, the shit never ends, it seems. Do you know him well enough to email him and say "wat's up here?"

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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-
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 1:23 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: Sunday Wash Post editorial

I don't buy the argument that he simply didn't say anything new. He knowingly gave space for the lab leakers to latch on to the 'field scientist' idea, which is never disprovable of course, but exactly as unlikely as any other lab pathway because 1) they wore PPE, 2) they tested all the samples and none had SARS-CoV-2, and 3) the bat-farmed wildlife-Huanan market is far more likely.

He shouldn't have said what he said to the press, and absolutely knew it would lead to this sort of crap in the US. I think it helps him and WHO look tougher on the lab leak stuff, and helps remove some political heat in the long run.

Very irritating considering the papers are linking and EcoHealth into all this as usual - it's just too easy for them. Sunday Times did another piece today and it's let to more vitriol on social media directly straight at EHA and me.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 10:32 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Sunday Wash Post editorial

Touting Embarek's supposed recantating. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 12:32:33 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 12:32:30 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Please help!
From: "Roberts, Rich" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6; Gerald "Jerry" Keusch b6; David Morens b6>; Aleksei Chmura b6>; peter hotez b6

Peter:

Finally located a good contact at Elizabeth Warren's office.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 10:55 AM
To: Gerald "Jerry" Keusch b6; Roberts, Rich b6; David Morens b6>; Aleksei Chmura b6>; peter hotez b6
Subject: Please help!

EXTERNAL SENDER

Sorry to do this but I'm under pressure here and Jeff sachs' latest discrediting of our name publicly is not helping. Apparently a letters been sent to my board calling on them to fire me.

It's being reported in the NY Post today. Let me know if you can't read it on this link.

https://www.google.com/amp/s/nypost.com/2021/10/01/calls- grow-for-ouster-of-wuhan-lab-tied-daszak-as-head-of-nyc-health-nonprofit/amp/

My board chair is Nancye green - she's v supportive but everyone has limits. Her email address is nancye@dgtwo.com

Would you be willing to write an email to her this week to express your support for me and disgust at the way we are being attacked? It might be good to also mention that ecohealth has a critical mission that needs to stay the course through these ugly politics.

Sorry to be so blatant but I'm worried that this level of attack is hard to stand up against.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

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Date: Wed, 24 Feb 2021 2:11:47 PM -0500
Sent: Wed, 24 Feb 2021 2:11:45 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Briefing Tony
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; David Morens b6

Trash stuff. Any news outlet with a heading for Patriots on their banner is one I would normally avoid. I think this, and the republicans gambit mentioned in the article (which of course is full of innuendo, hyperbole, and out of context associations), make it even more important to brief Tony on the WHO team visit to China.

Before there is a knee jerk response to the provocation, it would be wise to think more carefully about any next step to take.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 1:53 PM
To: David Morens b6 >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: Re: Briefing Tony

Apologies - here's the story: https://dailycaller.com/2021/02/23/gop- lawmakers-demand-nih-investigation-wuhan/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Feb 24, 2021, at 1:14 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
>
> Here's the latest bullshit from the Republicans. My problem is that the White House says "no plans to continue funding". It's very disappointing. I mean there is actually still NO evidence that the virus escaped from the lab, for F's sake!
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> Peter Daszak
> (Sent from my iPhone)
>
> President

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Feb 24, 2021, at 9:21 AM, David Morens <b6> wrote:

You are right, i need to be more careful. However, as i mentioned once before, i learned from our foia lady here how to make emails disappear after i am foia'd but before the search starts, so i think we are all safe. Plus i deleted most of those earlier emails after sending them to gmail. D

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Feb 23, 2021, at 21:53, Keusch, Gerald T <b6> wrote:

We need you alive and well, so pay attention to the email address you use. If you get FOIA'ed and have to respond it will have Peter and, of lesser importance, me on the correspondence. The less we provide the enemy the better.

That said, thanks for planting the seed for this conversation to be. It will provide Tony with insights and it will be Peter who provides them - pointing out how amazingly connected (and important) he, Peter, is. Tony too.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.

Professor of Medicine

Associate Director

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory

Boston University, Boston MA 02118

-----Original Message-----

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>

Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 2:36 PM

To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>

Cc: Peter Daszak <b6>

Subject: Re: Briefing Tony

Thanks for reminding me, but I am pretty sure it is OK now to use my NIH email because 1) I haven't been a bad boy, and 2) the brown shirts have left town, and 3) it is no loger a cardinal sin to know Dr. Daszak!

However, your point is well taken, as I often do say subversive things without realizing it.....

I wonder what Tony is thinking about Peter's grant situation. He hasn't told anyone as far as I know, and we won't bring it up. he might do so, but I would be surprised.

Also, Peter, I heard t5hat he want's Cliff Lane to be on that call. You may remember that Cliff went to China last spring to look at the COVID situation. david

--

david..... PS, I will be on Public Health Service deployment from 10 December 2020 until 23 January 2021. During this time I will have limited access to email and phone contact. Ty, dmm

Date: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 4:12:25 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 4:12:22 PM -0400
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs
From: "Garry, Robert F" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6];
CC: Jason Gale [b6]; Rasmussen, Angie [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Stephen Goldstein [b6];
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6], Robert Garry [b6], Edward Holmes [b6], Jason Gale [b6], "Rasmussen, Angie" [b6], Robert Kessler [b6], Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

> External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Garry, Robert F b6 Edward Holmes <
b6 Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie < b6
Robert Kessler b6 >; Stephen Goldstein b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

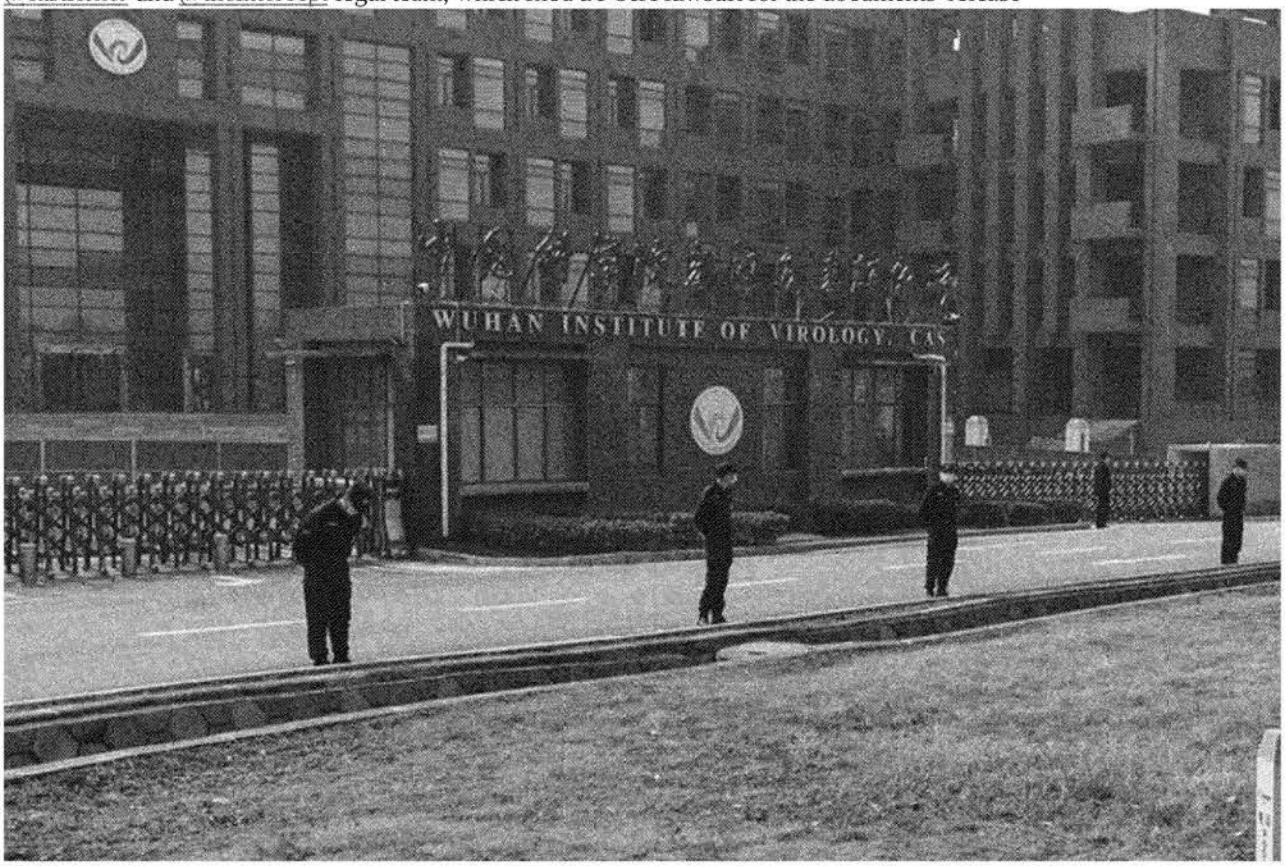
This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h
> NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With
> @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release
>
> 
>
>
> New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
> More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
> theintercept.com



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h The full documents are here: “Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence”
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…
"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.

7h
There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Garry, Robert F [b6]; Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]

Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6 b6 ; b6

Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen <b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes b6
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6

b6

Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes b6 wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <
> > j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-

coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Mon, 13 Sep 2021 11:28:20 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 13 Sep 2021 11:28:06 AM -0400
Subject: RE: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]

That's exactly what needs to be said!

The definition of a P3CO relevant pathogen is as follows (from https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf):
Section II. Scope and Definitions For the purposes of this HHS P3CO Framework:
A. A potential pandemic pathogen (PPP) is a pathogen that satisfies both of the following:
1. It is likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations; and
2. It is likely highly virulent and likely to cause significant morbidity and/or mortality in humans.
B. An enhanced PPP is defined as a PPP resulting from the enhancement of the transmissibility and/or virulence of a pathogen. Enhanced PPPs do not include naturally occurring pathogens that are circulating in or have been recovered from nature, regardless of their pandemic potential

How on any planet is a bat-CoV that's never been seen in people, "likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations"? The scientists in the Intercept article that thought our work was GoF seem to have been operating on the assumption that any growth or impact of a chimeric virus at any time above the parental strain means it's GoF. They've forgotten that 1) these are bat viruses have never been shown to infect people, and that the growth rates of the parental strain caught up with it by the end of the expt.

Add to that the never-mentioned point that the spike proteins are taken from a bat CoV that presumably is alive and well in large colonies of bats flying over people's houses every night in China. By doing this expt without culturing that virus, we reduce risk. By identifying that virus as a potential spillover risk, we can work with these communities to reduce exposure. It's exactly what we'll need to do if we want to beat future EIDs before they become pandemics!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Monday, September 13, 2021 11:14 AM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Subject: Re: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication

I just followed up with Simone McCarthy who is writing due SCMP on the GoF issues and noted the Intercept crap and the virus growth curve. I had previously sent her my perspective via email. Now I said the sinister implications of the intercept take was pure BS because the virus level was different only at the first time point, it was not a human pathogen, it was a legal and legitimate experiment by NIH regulations, EHA reported it as they were supposed to, and there are no scientifically valid extrapolations to human virulence or risk.

I also said it was important for her to set the record straight What did I miss and I'll be happy to follow up before she posts her article.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Sep 13, 2021, at 10:48 AM, David Morens [b6] > wrote:
>
> Never heard of them and presume they come from the Dark Side of the moon, pun intended…
> d
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Sep 13, 2021, at 00:16, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
> >
> > I was tempted to respond - it really irritated me for some reason - more
> > than others. Maybe because he (almost certainly a he) comes across as
> > otherwise intelligent...
> >
> > In the end I deleted and blocked...as I'm supposed to!
> >
> > Cheers,
> >
> > Peter
> >
> > Peter Daszak
> > President
> >
> > EcoHealth Alliance
> > 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> > New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Sunday, September 12, 2021 10:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; David Morens
[b6]
Subject: FW: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication

I finally made contact with Pink Floyd and it's a nameless email. I took the last part to heart, had a nice day, said FU to Pink Floyd, and had a lovely dinner out here in the Berkshires.

Have either of you encountered this one before?

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory Boston University, Boston MA 02118

-----Original Message-----
From: [b6]
Sent: Sunday, September 12, 2021 10:09 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication

Dear Professor, Mister/Madam

Congratulations to your publication (Calisher et al. (2020)) in the journal THE LANCET which has attracted many attentions.

However, you have to explain seriously this report about your publication (which has been published in The Daily Telegraph in UK): Revealed: How scientists who dismissed Wuhan lab theory are linked to Chinese researchers Cover-up alleged over Lancet letter that effectively shut down scientific debate into whether coronavirus was manipulated or leaked from lab

https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/09/10/revealed- scientists-dismissed-wuhan-lab-theory-linked-chinese/

Reference:

Calisher, C., Carroll, D., Colwell, R., Corley, R. B., Daszak, P., Drosten, C., ... & Turner, M. (2020). Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19. The Lancet, 395(10226), e42-e43.

I hope you can accept my interview and give a serious answer in the public media.

Have a nice day!

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Date: Wed, 25 Aug 2021 12:19:46 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 25 Aug 2021 12:19:27 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC: [b6] [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6]
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

Additionally, I'm seeing a shift in the Right wing press to start pointing the finger at China for its "Strange food fetishes", "industrialized wildlife farming" etc. which is actually a good sign that commonsense on the origins is beginning to be accepted, albeit that the Right wing is putting an anti-China slant on this as well (of course). Example is this Op Ed in today's WSJ, below.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid- 19-coronavirus-origins-china-wet-market-lab-leak-intelligence-agencies-biden-xi-11629839700

- OPINION
- BUSINESS WORLD

Let the Spooks Speak on Covid

The spy agencies can tell us a lot even if they can't nail down the virus's origins.



By
Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.
Aug. 24, 2021 6:44 pm ET

- SAVE
- PRINT
- TEXT

133



Security personnel stand near the Wuhan Institute of Virology during a visit by the World Health Organization investigators in Wuhan, China, Feb. 3.

PHOTO: NG HAN GUAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Length5 minutes

Queue

If the U.S. intelligence agencies adhered to the mandated schedule, and there's nothing magical about 90 days, the White House on Tuesday received spookdom's report on the origins of Covid 19.

Leaks already indicate the 18 agencies couldn't settle an internal disagreement over whether a natural origin or a lab release was more likely. There is much else they might usefully say, though, in the declassified release the administration has talked about making public in the next few days.

With 100% confidence, the agencies could certainly tell us that China has engaged in a deliberate coverup. With some degree of confidence, they might tell us whether they believe China itself knows how Covid got started.

The agencies could estimate how committed Xi Jinping and his regime are to the propaganda claim that the virus originated outside the country, perhaps in the U.S. Army facility at Fort Detrick, Md. They

might tell us about China's efforts to steal the secrets of the West's superior vaccines.

On a related question, they could estimate how long China will stick with its zero-Covid policy, which has required a deepening, Mao-like control over its population and China's re-isolation from the world.

If news reporting is correct, China is sitting on samples from early Covid infections and much other information it hasn't shared. A Bloomberg News investigation elaborates on a point made by this column: China's leadership would likely be covering up even a natural origin, "embarrassed that its citizens were still eating wild animals bought in wet markets—a well-known path for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago."

China's scientists would know with documentary certainty by now whether the virus is related to one held and possibly manipulated in a government-run lab. Thus it matters whether secret evidence shows they are still trying to find answers to Covid's origins.

The Economist magazine suggests that, following on the work of private researchers, U.S. intelligence supercomputers may have scoured the web for traces of deleted viral sequences once housed by the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

CNN, citing leaks, reports that the agencies may be in possession of Wuhan lab records that the Chinese mysteriously tried to take offline in September 2019, weeks before the Wuhan outbreak became publicly known.

The stakes are rising, geopolitically and politically. Once the story seemed to be that China, with its strange dietary fetishes and industrially primitive food markets, inflicted the virus on the world. The integrated, rules-based, freedom-based outside world saved the day with mRNA vaccines.

That story is less satisfying now that Delta has emerged. Our vaccines, however fabulous, are proving not a one-and-done fix. Everybody now seems to have a Delta breakthrough story. In my circle, multiple acquaintances talk about colleagues or family members who previously had Covid, were vaccinated, and now have tested positive for Covid again.

More than ever, coping with the virus seems likely to involve long-term adjustments. We might take with a couple of sacks of salt reports this week that China beat down its own Delta outbreak spread over 17 provinces by conducting 100 million tests in a matter of days, including testing every resident of one city 12 times.

Whether China can carry on this way is doubtful. In the meantime, it has effectively entered into a biological-cum-chemical standoff with the outside world. The global population's immune systems are being hardened by multiple exposures as well as by vaccination, and people are getting back to normal life after much loss and suffering.

China's increasingly virulent propaganda is aimed not at outsiders but at its own people, neutralizing what is bound to be a growing disgruntlement over recurrent iron-fisted lockdowns, over having to wait

in lines repeatedly for mandatory testing, over the loss of tourism dollars, the loss of domestic and foreign travel and education opportunities, the loss of income and opportunities of every kind.

Three weeks ago I suggested the White House would likely prefer continued murk around Covid's origins for the purpose of rebuilding U.S.-China relations—that is, "unless the Biden administration's popularity is in free fall in three weeks and needs a foreign conflict to revive it."
That caveat was offered in advance of the Afghanistan debacle, in advance of a now-avalanche of indicators suggesting the Delta surge is complicating what should be a shining recovery and renewing U.S. political fights over masks, vaccine mandates, schools and deteriorating hospital care in some locations.

The Biden administration has more reason now to treat the intelligence report on Covid's origins as a chance to lay down a tougher line on China's role in bringing this calamity on the world.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 12:03 AM
To: 'David Morens [b6] [b6]>; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Hotez, Peter Jay'
Cc: b6 Garry, Robert F [b6]

b6

Subject: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins
Importance: High

Here's the 'nothing burger' from the US Intel Services.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/08/24/covid- origins-biden-intelligence-review/

Good quote from Bob Garry in here. Shameful disingenuous crap from David Relman, of course.

Hate to harp on about it, but we did have an active grant to work on "Understanding risk of emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses" in China that Trump/Francis Collins canceled, then suspended, and NIH is still refusing to release. We had active collaboration on the ground in the sites where the wildlife farms supplied Huanan and other markets, and I know that WIV is ready, willing and able to continue this work with us. Surely that's a better option than increasing the ranks of the CIA with people who "have significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens" that Biden is quoted as saying below.

This is beyond ironic at this point.

Cheers,

Peter

Biden receives inconclusive intelligence report on covid origins

The report falls short of concluding whether the coronavirus jumped from animal to human, or might have accidentally escaped from a lab in China

By
Ellen Nakashima
,
Yasmeen Abutaleb
and
Joel Achenbach

Today at 10:32 p.m. EDT
260

President Biden on Tuesday received a classified report from the intelligence community that was inconclusive about the origins of the novel coronavirus, including whether the pathogen jumped from an animal to a human as part of a natural process, or escaped from a lab in central China, according to two U.S. officials familiar with the matter.

The intelligence community will seek within days to declassify elements of the report for potential public release, officials said.

The assessment is the result of a 90-day sprint after Biden tasked his intelligence agencies in May to produce a report "that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion" on the origins of a virus that has killed more than 4 million people globally and wrecked national economies. But despite analyzing a raft of existing intelligence and searching for new clues, intelligence officials fell short of a consensus, said the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the report is not yet public.

The debate over the virus's origins has become increasingly rancorous since former president Donald Trump said last year that the virus originated in a Chinese lab. Efforts to understand the virus's provenance have been

complicated by Chinese authorities' steadfast refusal to allow a more intensive inquiry by international investigators.

Biden's directive came after he received a May report from the agencies saying that they had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" but had not reached a conclusion. He disclosed that two agencies leaned toward the hypothesis that the virus emerged from human contact with an infected animal, while a third leaned toward the lab accident scenario.

The leader of the intelligence community, Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, cautioned in June that the agencies might not solve the mystery. "We're hoping to find a smoking gun," she told Yahoo News in an interview. But, she said, "it's challenging to do that," adding that "it might happen, but it might not."

The review involved dozens of analysts and intelligence officials across multiple agencies, Haines told Yahoo. She said she deployed "red cells," or groups to test analysts' assumptions and ensure the intelligence is scrutinized from every angle.

Another official said the intelligence community is "not necessarily best equipped to solve this problem," which is fundamentally an issue of science. Although spy services are "positioned to collect on a range of foreign actors," the official said, they are not necessarily poised to dive into global health data sets.

Biden himself, in his first visit to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in July, voiced the need for a more robust group to track pathogens. "You're going to have to increase your ranks with people with significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens," he said at the time.

Officials in the Biden administration hammered China's lack of transparency ahead of a World Health Organization report on the origins of the coronavirus. (JM Rieger/The Washington Post)

Many scientists familiar with the origin debate have been skeptical that the 90-day review would settle it, and some have said the inquiry could require years of research.

"We should not even be thinking about closing the book or backing off, but rather ratcheting up the effort," David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist who has pushed for a broad investigation of all origin hypotheses, said late Tuesday in an email.

The notion that the virus may have escaped from a lab got sharply increased interest this spring after 18 scientists wrote a letter to the journal Science in May saying that all possible origins needed to be investigated, including a laboratory accident.

Proponents of that theory point to classified information, first disclosed in the waning days of the Trump administration, that three unidentified workers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — one of the world's preeminent research institutions studying coronaviruses — went to the hospital in November 2019 with flu-like symptoms. In China, people visit the hospital for routine and mild illnesses.

Throughout 2020, that hypothesis became enmeshed in election-year politics. Trump's assertion that the virus emanated from a lab came as he and other administration officials were blaming China for the global outbreak and trying to deflect attention from their botched handling of the virus at home.

Many scientists, however, noted that viruses have a long history of jumping from animals to humans. There are many plausible scenarios in which that might have occurred, including the possibility the virus spread from wild and domestically raised animals sold in crowded markets. Many early cases were clustered around a seafood market where traces of the virus were later detected on surfaces.

That zoonosis theory was bolstered by a June 7 report, published in the journal Nature, documenting 38 species of animals sold in 17 markets in Wuhan before the pandemic. The authors said many of the animals suffered from poor hygiene and were known to carry zoonotic diseases.

"We now know for sure that [coronavirus] susceptible animals were in fact sold at the markets in Wuhan, which changes the calculus tremendously," Robert Garry, a Tulane University microbiologist who strongly supports the zoonosis theory, said in an email.

Experts in viral genome evolution also determined that the novel coronavirus almost certainly was not engineered as a bioweapon because it has several naturally occurring features seen in many other coronaviruses. But even scientists favoring a natural origin have said that without definitive evidence of animal-to-human transmission, it is not possible to rule out the possibility that a laboratory accident led to the outbreak.

And many questions remain unanswered. The animal that carried this virus before it infected people has not been identified — a process that has taken years in previous disease outbreak investigations. Nor have the lab-leak advocates found any direct evidence that SARS-CoV-2 was inside a laboratory in Wuhan before the pandemic, although the lab has not released its records, which have been sought by scientists and governments around the world.

A delegation of investigators from the World Health Organization made a brief visit to the Wuhan laboratory in

February and later declared that there were multiple possible origins, with a natural zoonosis most likely and a lab leak "extremely unlikely."
But the WHO director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, undercut that conclusion, saying it would be premature to rule out the lab-leak theory. The WHO effort was also criticized by some international scientists and researchers, who called for further investigation.
White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Monday said the public would be told the report's outcome. "I don't know what format that will take at this point in time," she said.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:36 AM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6 b6 b6 b6
Garry, Robert F <b6
Subject: Re: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

TY, i think this is different from the article in The Economist a week or two ago? That one was interesting as i recall.,.. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Aug 23, 2021, at 03:08, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
>
> In case you missed it, FYI.
> Seems to lay things out well. I feel sorry for the int'l team. They didn't decide on/agree to the terms of reference, so the response from

the DG on the final report (which he waited for until weighing in) seems disingenuous to me.

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:40:56 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

"The virus mystery" broadcast on August 12th, drew uncommonly wide attention for a Danish television documentary. That was because it featured Peter Ben Embarek, an expert on food security and zoonotic diseases, casting doubt on the conclusions of a "joint study" on the origins of the covid-19 pandemic carried out earlier this year under the auspices of the World Health Organisation (who). Dr Ben Embarek was the senior who figure who went to China as part of that study.

In March the joint study reported that it was "extremely unlikely" that the virus had been released in a laboratory accident. Dr Ben Embarek revealed that this conclusion did not come from a balanced assessment of all the relevant evidence but from a steadfast refusal by the Chinese members of the joint study to support anything stronger. Indeed they only allowed even that minimal assessment on the condition that the report did not call for further investigation into the question. He also pointed out that the idea that the point of spillover was someone collecting bat samples for research purposes belongs in the "likely" basket, along with other human interactions with wild bats.

Problems in the joint study had long been clear. Within the
who one source describes it as "riddled with compromises and sloppiness". Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the
who's director-general, was uneasy about the way it was carried out. He pushed back at the marginalisation of the lab-leak hypothesis, particularly when the final report was released in March. He has since called for further investigations into it, as well as into other possibilities.

The further unravelling of the joint study matters because, more than a year and a half after the covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, a city in Hubei, was first recognised as the work of a new pathogen, there has been nothing like a thorough international investigation of how that pathogen,
sars-cov-2, got into humans and spread round the world. The pandemic's death toll stands at 9m-18m, according to a model which *The Economist* has built on the basis of excess-mortality reports and other indicators. The question of how it started matters both for the relatives of the dead and for those who wish to prevent such an outbreak happening again. China's efforts to stop the world from answering it are both shabby and, to an extent, self-defeating. The more the truth seems hidden, the more it seems suspicious.

Earnest calls for an international investigation into the origins of covid-19 began in April 2020, voiced most clearly by Scott Morrison, the prime minister of Australia. The next month the World Health Assembly, the gathering of government representatives which serves as the
who's decision-making body, passed a motion calling for a study into the origins of the pandemic. But in order to be acceptable to China—which had reacted furiously to Mr Morrison's original suggestion—the work was set up as a joint research project between two teams of scientists, one Chinese, one international. And it was to be based on "scientific and collaborative field missions", rather than a targeted and forensic inquiry into all the relevant circumstances.

The terms of reference, which were subsequently negotiated behind closed doors, allowed the Chinese hosts to frame the joint study's work in the way which best suited them. The study was set up to build on pre-existing Chinese research, not to delve into unvetted data. Investigating the laboratories that had been working with coronaviruses like sars-cov-2 in Wuhan was not part of its terms of reference.

After a lot of wrangling, the international team got to China in January this year. Data about

the first reported covid-19 cases, those from December 2019, were one subject of friction with their hosts. The Chinese had reported 174 such cases, but would not share the underlying data on which those reports were based. Hearing that these vital data were not being made available worried Dr Tedros enough that he lobbied the Chinese government for access. The authorities declined, citing concerns over citizens' privacy. It could have been anonymised.

Elsewhere the team appears to have been knowingly misled. Take, for example, the live-animal trade at the Huanan seafood and wildlife market, a site associated with a number of Wuhan's earliest recorded cases of covid-19. In its final report, the study group took at face value claims there was no credible evidence that live mammals were sold there in 2019. A lot of eyewitness accounts gainsay that; so does a study published in *Scientific Reports*, a journal, this summer.

One report and no more

The *Scientific Reports* paper found that 18 species of mammal had been for sale in Wuhan between May 2017 and November 2019; gunshot wounds and trapping injuries suggested that almost a third of them were taken from the wild. Although the paper was published only recently, it was submitted to the journal in October 2020. Chinese law requires that all covid-19 research be reviewed by the government before it is sent to a journal. Some Chinese authorities would have known of its contents before the team arrived.

The market is not the only way for animals and the pathogens they carry to get into Wuhan. The horseshoe bats in which the closest wild relatives to sars-cov-2 have been found do not live anywhere near the city, but the two laboratories there that were known to have engaged in coronavirus research received samples from bat caves around the country. The joint-study team was not allowed to investigate the procedures around, or documentation of, this research; when it visited the laboratories the team was shown presentations on safety procedures but no more.

When the researchers left Wuhan the who 's Geneva headquarters told them that their report needed to be laid out scientifically and could express dissenting opinions; the international members and the Chinese members did not have to reach a consensus. However, according to sources within the who , the team felt committed to producing a joint report with their Chinese counterparts. Dr Tedros was so unhappy with what finally emerged from the processes that he nobbled the report as it left the starting blocks, rejecting its contention that the possibility of a lab leak needed no further investigation.

On May 26th President Joe Biden ordered America's intelligence services to report on the pandemic's origins in 90 days (time will be up on August 24th). When he and his fellow g7 leaders met in June they joined in calling for a timely, transparent and science-based follow-up study. On July 16th Dr Tedros laid out the next steps which the who wants to see taken. They include further work on the Wuhan animal markets, studies of early cases and audits of local laboratories.

The Chinese government has reacted angrily to the idea of further studies on its territory. Zeng Yixin, the vice-minister of China's National Health Commission, said he was "shocked" by the plan to investigate a lab leak, saying it was "impossible" to accept. According to the *Global Times*, a tub-thumping tabloid run by the Communist Party, 55 countries have sent written complaints about the proposal for further investigations to the who . Dr Tedros, elected director-general with China's support in 2017 and derided by President Donald Trump as China's puppet, may now face a Chinese-backed candidate when he looks for reappointment later this year.

In the absence of any hope that China will co-operate, sources of data beyond its control

have become increasingly important. One area of interest is genetic sequence data. Another is early cases exported from China.

See what you did there

An online open-source-intelligence group which calls itself
drastic
has been scouring sequencing data to get insight into activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (wiv). When researchers publish sequences they typically post the raw data from which those sequences are assembled to public databases such as the sequence-read archive at America's National Centre for Biotechnology Information. Contamination events in the laboratory, or within sequencing machines themselves, mean these data sometimes contain sequences not meant to be there. In theory such evidence could reveal nefarious goings-on.

Such work, while promising, takes a lot of resources. If you have the sort of supercomputers available to America's national labs it gets easier. Gilles Demaneuf, a data scientist who works with
drastic
, says he has a hunch the American intelligence community's 90-day study is working the same angle. It is conceivable that the intelligence services might have been able to filch raw sequence reads directly from Chinese sequencing machines, thus picking up even more data.

Sequencing data only offers a way forward if the virus did indeed leak out of a lab, something which remains a possibility but which is far from proven. The study of early cases should be useful whatever route it took; the closer you get to understanding the when and where of the crossing-over from animal to human, the easier it should be to learn something of the how.

On the basis of information provided by China the joint study concluded it was unlikely for there to have been any substantial transmission in Wuhan before December 2019. That is unlikely to be true. For one thing the *South China Morning Post*, a newspaper based in Hong Kong, obtained government documents in 2020 which showed one to five new cases a day in Wuhan from November 17th 2019 onwards. Further evidence has strengthened the possibility that the virus could have been in circulation much earlier than the official story allows.

That circulation need not have been limited to China. There is increasing evidence suggesting early infections elsewhere. These cases would have been exported from China; no virologists doubt that Hubei was where the virus got going within humans. But if circulation in Hubei goes back further than thought and cannot be directly assessed through studies there, the presence of cases elsewhere offers an alternative way to get an idea of the timing. If a specific travel link were identified, that might help identify a group in Hubei which was infected early on.

A recent study of blood samples from 9,144 adults in 12 different regions of France found seven which contained antibodies against sars-cov-2, all of them taken in November 2019. An Italian lung-cancer screening trial has found samples taken in September 2019 which seem to contain anti-sars-cov-2 antibodies. Another antibody study suggests the virus was circulating at a low level in northern Italy at the same time, notably in Lombardy, a region which has close connections to Wuhan through the garment trade, and saw Europe's first major outbreak of covid-19 in March 2020.

Antibody tests can give false positives. In a preprint published on August 6th by the *Lancet*, researchers in Lombardy reported on looking instead for
sars-cov-2 gene sequences. Examining 289 swabs and urine tests taken from people who had presented with a rash as far back as the second half of 2019, they found
sars-cov-2 sequences in 13, the earliest of which was taken on September 12th.

Sudhir Kumar of Temple University in Philadelphia says the *Lancet* preprint is likely to inspire other investigators to go back and look at retrospective hospital samples. That should help his own research into the origins of the virus. A family tree Dr Kumar and his colleagues have built from vast numbers of published sars-cov-2 genomes allows them to

predict the sequence of the progenitor virus from which they are all descended. This sequence differs in three places from that found in the earliest samples taken from patients in Wuhan, meaning there had been enough spread for a certain amount of viral mutation to take place before December. Dr Kumar says that an analysis of the Lombardy sequences suggests that the timeline for the origin of the virus in China might now extend back to the late summer.

More systematic international research into these early infections and their circumstances is needed. Maria Van Kerkhove, head of emerging diseases and zoonoses at the who, suggests it may be possible to prioritise work in areas which saw the earliest outbreaks in America, France, Italy and Spain. "I think the floodgates will open one day," says Dr Kumar.

A last line of light

An early origin would fit with the timeline that lab-leak proponents tend to favour. Early this August, the minority Republican staff on the House foreign-affairs committee released an 84-page report arguing this case. It makes much of a small but deadly disease outbreak which took place at an abandoned copper mine in Yunnan in 2012. As drastic showed last year, a virus studied at WIV which had been taken from that mine is the closest known relative to sars-cov-2.

The report sees importance in the removal, on September 12th 2019, of a database containing details of sequences and samples from the wiv. This is read as the beginning of a cover-up, and thus as the point when the authorities first knew something had gone amiss, arguing for a leak in late August or early September. The wiv says it was a response to cyber-attacks.

A leak is not the only research-related possibility. The first person infected could have been someone employed by the wiv or another lab to collect bats and samples—the prospect to which Dr Ben Embarek pointed in his television interview. And it is important to remember that some other form of spillover outside the lab, either directly from a bat or by way of some other species, may well be to blame.

China clearly does not want lab-leaks investigated; but that does not mean it knows one happened. It is also being misleading about Huanan market, denying access to early-case data and obfuscating in various other non-lab-leak-specific ways. The most obvious explanation is that it does not really want any definitive answer to the question. An unsanitary market, a reckless bat-catcher or a hapless spelunker would not be as bad in terms of blame as a source in a government laboratory. But any definite answer to the origin question probably leaves China looking bad, unless it can find a way to blame someone else. To that end China has called for an investigation of Fort Detrick in Maryland, historically the home of American bioweapons research; state media regularly publish speculations about its involvement.

The possibility of spillover from wild bats does not have to be studied in China. Yunnan abuts onto Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, and bats are not sticklers in matters of territory. Samples taken outside China could provide a good idea of viral diversity the other side of the border. A thorough evaluation of the existing farm-animal and wildlife trade in the region would also be useful.

Yet there is an inherent risk in such work that needs to be considered. Efforts to uncover the roots of covid-19 by seeking out a natural reservoir of something very like sars-cov-2 would, by definition, expose people to the sort of risks that can seed pandemics. Ironically, the very possibility of a lab leak raises questions about how most safely to pursue investigations into other possibilities.

When he called for further inquiries in July, Dr Tedros also announced the formation of a new permanent group of pathogen hunters, the International Scientific Advisory Group for

Origins of Novel Pathogens (sago). He wants it to organise further studies of sars-cov-2. But it will also need to look at more general questions for the future—such as how to be sure that, come what may, studies of pathogens involved in past disease outbreaks never create further outbreaks of their own.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 14:34:52 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

I saw. But it's behind a paywall. U have full access?

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:23:52 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

icymi

From: b6 At: 08/22/21 15:23:17 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

The Economist | Putting it all together

https://www.economist.com/international/2021/08/19/the-world-needs-a-proper-investigation-into-how-covid-19-started?frsc=dg%7Ce

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Date: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 5:14:15 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 5:14:12 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6];

Don't worry about it.

From: David Morens [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 5:13 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Jerry, i will try to call in a few minutes but at the monent trying to deal with the hacking of my gmail, possibly by these bad actors. trying to get our IT guys to fix this. I will call but may need to interrupt if the IT guys come online to fix the hack. In the meantime i have no gmsil so have to contact on nih emails. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 8, 2021, at 16:44, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

Sure, always happy to chat with you. 617-358-9186

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:42 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Jerry, I am finally frree, sorry for the long delay but the meetings never ended.

Free now, I can call you if you wish to talk. d

On 9/8/2021 1:02 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

Thanks, and much appreciated. I will be talking to Simone at 8 tomorrow morning.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 1:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Jerry, I am just goinmg into a eeting now. Happy to share any insifhts I have but it might also be good to loop in Jeff Taubenberger with who I work, who has been dealing with GoF stuff momstop since it began, and who is on the 3PCO committee. He can explain it better than me. Ironically he

and I were discussing it at lengrh. This was in the context of a draft paper I wrote reviewing the whole GoF thing some years ago, as the so called moratorium was looming. We never published it for several reasons, and now it is out of date becaause it deals mostly with H5N1, but I did share it with a reporter off the record and she said it helped her alot. More later d

On 9/8/2021 12:07 PM, Keusch, Gerald T wrote:

> Hi David,
>
> Thanks for the update yesterday on the GOF kerfuffle (it's an old Manchester term which means kerfuffle). As you can see below, Simone McCarthy from the S. China Morning Post wants to talk about it, specifically in the context of Tony's recent remarks. That suggests to me that you should not be involved. However, I would be very grateful for every bit of nuance about NIAID's position so I can stay well within the philosophical and rational grounds of interpretation of the 2017 ground rules for review of GOFOC research, and for any GOF research in general.
>
> One key question I want to be sure about pertains to the initial flagging of grants from submitting entities when there are experiments proposed that could be considered GOF. I understand that institutional review boards are required to review proposals on EIDs for research on the genetic basis for pathogenesis and to tell NIH if these reach a threshold for special attention by the established mechanisms. What I am not sure about is how NIH handles a proposal that is labeled GOF but not of concern. Are all of those reviewed in-house to determine if the grant is correctly classified? That would take a lot of admin review time for sure. I don't know how many grants submitted since the process was announced in 2017 have been flagged, been reviewed, and been denied funding, at least for those experiments. If you have any data that can be shared and NIAID would like to see that information out there (as you know Nature is also working on an article), at least in ballpark figures, I'd be happy to have that in my back pocket. What would the oversight be when a grantee is told specific aim X cannot be explored? What is the concern when other sources of funding are used – as I note below – in non USG facilities?
>
> A related perspective is that the NIH process, and therefore the position of the USG, is restricted to oversight of government funded research, and research facilities that receive federal research funding. If Sheldon Adelson were to ask one of our NEIDL scientists to open a separate laboratory to see what it takes to make a bat coronavirus transmissible to a mammal by the respiratory route would there be any review at any level or any constraint on supporting that work? My sense of it is that the NIH can only oversee NIH funded research and institutions. The private research establishment, and of course the lab-in-the-garage, can do whatever they want to do, and for whatever reason they would do so. It is important that there be a well-considered and thoughtful overview of what should be acceptable because the knowledge gain predominates and the risk can be mitigated by training, protocol, and suitably equipped and safe facilities.

Thanks, Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy [b6] >
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 9:34 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Well, along these lines my editors have asked me to do an explainer about the controversy surrounding Fauci's comments to Congress on NIH funding for gain of function research at WIV via EcoHealth. I'm putting together a story that will look at the definitions of GofF under NIH and how it's decided what merits review. I'm wondering if it's something that you would be up for commenting on? If so, I'd ideally hope to chat tomorrow (Thursday), although I'm not sure if that is one of your office days. Please let me know if that might be feasible, and thank you.

Best,

Simone

On Mon, 6 Sept 2021 at 17:30, Keusch, Gerald T < b6 > wrote:

> Travel well.
>
> I think the continuous flow of more thoughtful reporting on what the science tells us and what is pure speculation and political perspective is beginning to turn the tide towards a more refined appreciation of the likely and the unlikely scenarios. My view is we need to continue to push on what is objective science, what is crap pseudoscience, and what is pure PR marketing.
>
> I think – but can't really prove – the public that buys into the risky research plot is the same public that refuses to get immunized and then for the few, on their death bed, they say maybe I made a mistake. Although some of them are OD'ing on Ivermectin in horse dose quantities. Same thing – no ability to sift through information.
> Who is your readership? What do they appreciate and what are they confusing?
>
> Jerry
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com >
> **Sent:** Monday, September 6, 2021 8:30 AM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Hi Gerry,
>
> Thank you for the note/offer of your time and glad you hear you've been basking in some vacation time. Hope you guys didn't get hit too hard by Henri or Ida.
>
> I'm on my way back from Martha's Vineyard to Hong Kong this week myself (although have been working remotely here) but I'll get back in touch soon and look forward to discussing the latest then.
>
> Good luck adjusting back to the office coffee.
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Fri, 3 Sept 2021 at 21:20, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> > I see I didn't respond to your note. I have been happily on vacation at our place in the Berkshires, which means no alarm in the morning, hot tub on waking, good coffee, doing the chores and fixing things on my to-do list, and trying to avoid anything that sounds like professional activities. So I stay off the emails, except for family stuff.

At any rate I am back in the office next week after Tuesday, so we could follow up after that.

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 7:18 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Gerry,

Ah, too bad! Would have been nice to cross paths on the Vineyard, perhaps another time here or in Boston, which I end up travelling through fairly frequently.

I wanted to check in with you in advance of the US intelligence report on the origins which we expect will be released publicly in the coming days. I'll likely be putting together a story about how scientists are viewing the assessment reached there (angle still to be honed). I'm not exactly sure the timeline, but I wanted to drop you a line and see if you might be up for chatting when it's out.

Hope all is well otherwise, thank you again for all your time last month and for mentioning me to Dr. Morens - I have gotten in touch.

Best,

Simone

On Fri, 30 Jul 2021 at 03:21, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Great to hear you will spend a bit of time on the Vineyard. My son has a house in West Tisbury, and loves it. Unfortunately this year we won't make it there in August, otherwise we might have been able to say hello in person.
>
> I'll let David know you are away and you may be in touch with him in a couple of weeks. This issues you are reporting on won't go away in the near future.
>
> Jerry
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Thursday, July 29, 2021 2:21 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Jerry,
>
> Thanks for these thoughts - very clear, and thanks as well for suggesting a conversation with David Morens. I'll be on leave (actually headed to MA) for a short stint, but I look forward to staying in touch on this in the coming weeks and will drop Dr. Morens a line as well. Hope you enjoy some nice August time in the Berkshires.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Wed, 28 Jul 2021 at 12:39, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> > Hi Simone,
> > In addition, I have been in touch with David Morens at NIAID who works closely with Tony Fauci. Based on my interactions with you, as well as comments by Peter Daszak regarding your thoughtful journalism, he could

be helpful for future reporting albeit considering all of the circumstances it would almost certainly be off-the-record. You can therefore contact him at b6 and he will respond if he has something of value to add.

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 4:57 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Jerry,

One more with the comment from our previous exchange, thank you again for the time. https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3142773/no- entry-trouble-ahead-china-whos-covid-19-origins-hunt

Best,

Simone

On Mon, 26 Jul 2021 at 16:47, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com> wrote:

> Dear Jerry,
>
> Thank you, and that is a very graphic (and apt) metaphor. I am attempting to drill (lance?) deeper into these exact issues in a piece that will be published Tuesday HKT. I realise this is very short notice (and I promise I won't be knocking on your door so frequently here after that), but we have touched on some of the key issues at length in our conversation earlier this month that I believe they may need to be clarified within the context of the next phase proposal to use in this story. If there's any way you might be able to share your thoughts on these follow-ups via email or chat for 15 minutes anytime on Monday I'd really love to be able to update and include your perspective.
>
> I am also planning to include the comment that you sent me last week regarding keeping the original international team involved, and wanted to ask you a follow-up there. Please see below. Thank you.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> - I know that you mentioned that the lab leak hypothesis should be investigated, but that it is of lesser priority as compared to work to investigate the animal/natural pathways due to where the publicly available evidence points. Do you think that the prioritization of the lab leak as one of the five areas in the WHO proposal will slow down the process of being able to get started on international collaboration on animal studies in China? Is the inclusion politics at play or is it fitting that this is part of the proposal?
> - Do you think that putting together this SAGO, as opposed to moving forward with the original team (perhaps with the addition of some relevant expertise as you and Dr. Koopmans mentioned), will slow down the process of getting this next phase of work started? Does it present other challenges/benefits?
>
> On Fri, 23 Jul 2021 at 11:08, Keusch, Gerald T <keusch@bu.edu> wrote:

I'm game. You have only been able to scratch the surface of the political overlay at play here. I think there is some pus underneath that needs to be drained so the deeper tissues can heal. When there is no "laudible pus" exuding on its own from a deep wound a pathway must be created by the physician in order to prevent more severe complications, including the potential for sepsis and death, if the patient is to have a chance to heal and return to good health. Same thing pertains here. You can help to point the way to accomplish that and I am willing to talk with you about the issues and how this has been made more difficult by partisan voices on both sides.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 22, 2021 10:42 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Thanks so much for the feedback. The May 25 report is attached. Hope we can keep in touch as this goes forward.

Best,

Simone

On Fri, 23 Jul 2021 at 10:09, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Yes things do move fast. I think your report was balanced, and your use of my quote makes me seem prophetic. Thanks.
>
> Would you send me a pdf of your report on May 25th of the additional work on bat coronaviruses. I can only see a portion of it when I try to open it from your article of today.
>
> Cheers, Jerry
>
> Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
> Professor of Medicine
> Associate Director
> National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
> Boston University, Boston MA 02118
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 8:36 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Dear Jerry,
>
> Lots of shifting sands under this story, due to new developments, but happy to be able to include some of your comment here. Thank you.
> https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3142113/chinas- covid-origins-snub-shows-limits-world-health

Best,

Simone

On Wed, 21 Jul 2021 at 11:39, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com> wrote:

> Dear Jerry,
>
> Thanks very much for this - well noted and I really appreciate the quick turnaround. I'll be sure to keep in touch regarding publication.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 23:13, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> > Hi Simone,
> >
> > I'm in catch up mode so here are a few additional comments.
> >
> > Despite agreeing – at least in part – with the Relman quotes regarding WHO in Jon Cohens piece in Science that WHO may not be the best organization to pursue the origin studies right now it is the only organization that can pursue the investigation. I say that because it is the only global public health entity with membership from virtually all nation states – that why it's called the World Health Organization. That structure also makes it subject to political influence, often played out in terms of whether or not a country will provide the extrabudgetary funding WHO needs to do things like this investigation, which subjects WHO to the terms and conditions the funding country applied. Most certainly in my mind WHO cannot move forward with credibility if Dr. Tedros dismisses the original 10 international team members and calls for self and government nominations of a new team. The 10 are true experts in their field and internationally respected scientists. I agree with Marion Koopmans that appointing an expert or two in specific areas of interest could more optimally meet any reasonable need for additional expertise.
> >
> > Regarding the comments/quotes below, I was certainly following a consistent theme along the way, which is again reflected in what I say above and on the record. I made one edit below which you will see in bold underlined italic font.
> >
> > Jerry
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> > **Sent:** Tuesday, July 20, 2021 8:51 AM
> > **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Jerry,

Thanks again for your time sharing your thoughts with me last week - really good food for thought for me there. The floor has shifted underneath our conversation a bit given that Dr. Tedros released the outline of his plan for the phase two work. I'm putting together an article that takes a look at the proposal (as described to member states in the public statement) and the challenges that may exist for getting it off the ground. I'd like to be able to include a few of your comments from our conversation and I've included those below for you to check, as discussed.

I did see your related comments in Jon Cohen's Science story, and I would be curious to ask just broadly if you think that the path laid out by Tedros is the best way forward and perhaps what exactly a lab audit in this specific scenario may entail. If it's something you'd be able to discuss via email or a short chat today or tomorrow I'd appreciate that - if I've already taken up way too much of your time, no worries, that is highly understandable too.

I realize you're not in the office today, but I'm wondering if you might be able to give these quotes a quick look and let me know any changes sometime during your Tuesday. Please note in order to optimize timing I am sending over a rough draft version, the context will be as described, but I can't guarantee that there won't be changes to the exact wording in the preceding lines. Likewise it's possible there could be further paraphrasing or shortening of the direct quotes, but that would be with strict attention to the meaning as shown below. Thank you.

Best,

Simone

Gerald Keusch, associate director of the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory Institute at Boston University
Some scientists say the rhetoric around the laboratory leak hypothesis - especially that which seeks to blame China for the outbreak or accuse its scientists of wrongdoing - has made it difficult to move forward with international research in China.
"All of the accusatory statements and hypotheses built on no ***publicly available*** evidence will not gain access to an open, clear, transparent, collaborative international investigation, one that is meant not to cast blame, but to find out what happened so that efforts to prevent this happening again in the future can actually take place."
"There is something called the scientific method - we know how to do collaborative work - it just takes the willingness to do it, in an environment that is positively oriented." "Let's get on with it."

Keusch said it was a "mistake" of the phase one WHO report to not recommend further research into the laboratory leak, and that both this hypothesis and the natural origin should be investigated. However, research into the natural origins was more urgent, given that it was the more likely of the two scenarios, based on available evidence, he said.
"We need to be looking at all of it [both natural origins and lab leak] systematically and in a thoughtful and planned manner."
The kind of work that should be done: forensic analysis of the labs, serology on humans and animals (for example Linfa Wang's cPass serological test which "is available and could be used systematically in China, in Thailand and other border countries where bats, coronaviruses, and people interface")
"It can be [b6] there has to be the environment and the desire and the goals for

doing it which is not blame and castigate, but to learn and intervene in the future."

[The urgency of uncovering the origin, why it matters for the next phase of the WHO-led mission to begin]
"If you don't look for evidence it doesn't just spring up on its own and hit you in the face, there needs to be a cooperative, collaborative, collegial and communicative way of going about this and as far as I can see the only organisation that can do it is WHO."
"It's no longer a question of if, but when and what. Now that we've seen three severe coronavirus outbreaks of respiratory disease [this century] and we know that these trace back to a vast viral floral, across multiple bat species, another SARS, MERS, or Covid is not a question."

On Wed, 14 Jul 2021 at 09:10, Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com> wrote:

> Hi Jerry,
>
> Sure that's no problem, and thanks for sending the event details, looks interesting. Speak soon and thank you again for the time.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone

On Wed, 14 Jul 2021 at 06:10, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Hi Simone,
>
> Can we move the call tomorrow to 11 am EDT? I will be logging on to a presentation on financing future pandemic preparedness organized by the Center for Global Development in DC, which goes from 9:30 to 10:30. The buffer time allows for late ending, pit stops, and refills of the coffee mug. I will forward the announcement of the seminar to you so you can register if you are interested.
>
> Jerry
>
> **From:** Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
> **Sent:** Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:16 PM
> **To:** Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post
>
> Got it, thank you and look forward to speaking.
>
> Best,
>
> Simone
>
> On Fri, 9 Jul 2021 at 01:54, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:
>
> > My office phone is 617-358-9186.
> > Backup will be my cell phone [b6]

Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:58 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Hi Jerry,

Sure, Wednesday 10:30a Eastern daylight works just fine for me, thank you. What's the best number to reach you?

Best,

Simone

On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 23:38, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> How about Wednesday at 10:30 am EDT (you will probably recall that too). Is that OK for Hong Kong time (I assume that's where you are).
>
> Jerry

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 9:25 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Dr. Keusch,

Thanks so much for your message and the offer of your time. I'm glad to hear that you had a nice (and unplugged) Fourth of July weekend. I should have realized when **I** wrote you... I've been over here a bit too long I guess, although originally **I**'m from your neck of the woods, Massachusetts.

I'd still be interested to chat with you about the letter, and also your thoughts more broadly on what the most critical next steps are for moving forward on gathering more data about how SARS-CoV-2 started circulating in humans. My schedule is open your Wednesday or Thursday morning EST next week, if there's a convenient time for you to talk in either of those windows, please let me know. I'd be grateful for a chance to speak then.

Best,

Simone

On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 00:16, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

> Hi Simone,
>
> Sorry I was not able to respond to you on Monday. While the timing of the publication in The Lancet on a

Monday was fine for the world, it was over the long July 4th independence day weekend, and we were with family for the first time in a while and unplugged the WiFi.

I am willing to chat with you about this, but to be clear I should say that I am on my summer schedule, which means I am out of the office from Fridays through Tuesdays, which leaves Wednesday or Thursday to find a time.

GT Keusch

From: Simone McCarthy <simone.mccarthy@scmp.com>
Sent: Monday, July 5, 2021 10:41 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Media Inquiry - South China Morning Post

Dear Dr. Keusch,

I am a reporter with the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong, where I cover research into the origins of SARS-CoV-2. I'm reaching out to you while following up on the 'Science, not speculation' Lancet letter. I realise that I am contacting you quite late in your evening, I thought it couldn't hurt to check if you would be available to share a short comment for our coverage today. Specifically I was hoping to ask you why/how the decision was made to put this letter forward now and what you hope it will add to the current conservation/efforts to understand how the virus emerged. Do you and the other signatories also feel that there should be more research into the potential of a lab or research-related accident?

I'd also be interested to speak with you in more detail about your views on the next steps that should be taken in the origins research, specifically how different hypotheses could be further probed and what the priorities should be. Ideally I'd love to touch base quickly and include your perspective in our piece, which will be published today here in Hong Kong time, but if that's not possible and you would be up for a separate conversation on this, I'd love a chance to learn more about how you're looking at the origins research work.

Thank you.
Best,

Simone

--

Simone McCarthy | Reporter
South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd
19/F Tower One, Times Square,

1 Matheson Street, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong
M: b6
E: simone.mccarthy@scmp.com

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Phone: b6

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Phone: 5523-0089

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David M Morens b6

Date: Fri, 14 May 2021 7:12:03 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 14 May 2021 7:10:40 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]

Yes - you're right. In fact, this began at the WHO press conference in Wuhan when Peter Ben Embarek said further work on the lab leak hypothesis was 'off the table'. Actually, the report stated we only recommended further work if evidence was identified that could be followed up. The categorization of 'extremely unlikely' was simply putting this in the 'least likely' bucket as you say.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:57 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
[b6] >
Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

I think maybe we should say it is the least likely hypothesis, and it would be useful if we were able to join with others including the Chinese to do broader, deeper, more systematic investigation, and the sooner the better rather than being dismissive. It's the latter that stirs the pot for those whose pot is ripe for stirring.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 5:32 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Roberts, Rich b6 >
Cc: Peter Daszak b6
b6 >
Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

I think that's good.... I have known him for years and have always found him to be careful, thorough and fair. He is always curious, more interested in understanding things than getting g a hot story. But, as I said, he doesn't sound certain the lab hypothesis is almost impossible.

d

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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B b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) (b6 b6
b6
3 b6

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-----Original Message-----

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 5:30 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

He asked who the small band of scientists I referred to were, and I told him he could probably figure it out.

He sounds reasonable and smart, and on your recommendation I fired both barrels.

Jerry
-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 5:17 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

Thanks, Jerry, for speaking to him. I sent him the article you mentioned shortly after I saw it, and I have also been talking to Arthur on background about this over recent months.

Bravo for what you said, which is pretty much what I have been saying to him.

I suggested Arthur try to interview Tony directly and connected him to our "secret" back channel. He emailed Tony a few hours ago.

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
B [b6] [b6] [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) ([b6] [b6] [b6]
3 [b6]

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-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]>
Subject: RE: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

Just off the phone with Arthur Allen from Kaiser Family Foundation News, thanks to an introduction from David. I spent 45 minutes talking to him about this GOF stuff, and why that was a pejorative term being used to drum up support to ban certain kinds of research into evolutionary biology of viruses and viral pathogenesis, with the ban being far more dangerous than any possible leak of a created super pathogen. Peter, I characterized you as a hero. Don't disappoint me or undermine my credibility (said tongue in cheek to be absolutely clear). In response to a question I said you were the member of the WHO team who would most want to find out if there was a leak of virus from the laboratory because your integrity as a scientist would want to know how this virus became a human pandemic so that we can try to better prevent it in the first place, and if not find it as quickly as possible in order to stop it from spreading. So while on the list of priorities the emergence from bats through some mammal to spillover to humans was at the very top, and lab origin was at the very bottom, you would not be the one to eliminate the latter from the list. That said, I do think that after characterizing it as highly unlikely, it was a mistake for the WHO report to say it should not be explored any further. I suspect that was more an offering to the Chinese to keep the door open to the next step in the investigation than anything else. After all, it would not be at all possible if the Chinese didn't actually agree to allow it to happen.

I also saw the Garry paper this morning and not only brought it to Allen's attention (he said he had just become aware of it 30 minutes before we spoke) but I also characterized it as the first piece of actual field derived evidence to evaluate, and really very powerful evidence that the evolution of the precursor virus to CoV-2 happened in nature and not in a lab. I think he will look at it carefully and use it.

We also talked politics and the consequences of continuing expression of

concerns about GOF research, with my take that if certain lines of research were cut off instead of managed/regulated/overseen the lost benefits for humankind would so overwhelm the miniscule chance of unintended harm like an asymptomatic infected person leaving a lab and initiating a global pandemic resulting in (according to Chris Murray et al) more than 900,000 deaths in the US to date, and over 7 million global deaths and counting as the deadly outbreak in India continues to wreak havoc, and without doubt spread to other countries, travel bans or not. I made the analogy to recombinant DNA, and more recently to CRIPR where the benefits overwhelm the chance of inadvertent harm. And I said the small number of scientists who are on this bandwagon can really harm the future of science to explore, understand, and use knowledge about microbial evolution and pathogenesis to develop treatment, vaccines, and diagnostics, playing into the hands of the crazies, the conspiracy community, and scientifically illiterate so called communities of conscience or those who have no concern for the common good.

I asked him to do a good job in his write up. He promised, and I will hold him to it if I can figure out how to accomplish that.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 11:29 AM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
[b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Re: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological

I agree. I have only skimmed it too, so will have to really read it carefully. Also it will be helpful for independent phylogeneticists to take a look. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 13, 2021, at 10:53, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:
>
> David:
>
> That is a very interesting article. I will have to read it more fully, but
> on quickly skimming through it does make a strong argument against the
> lab-leak theory.
>
> Rich
>
> Richard J. Roberts
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723

> USA
> Tel: b6 b6
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: b6
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:54 AM
> To: Peter Daszak b6
> b6 >; Keusch, Jerry b6
> <keusch@bu.edu>; Roberts, Rich b6 >
> Subject: FW: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of
> SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has
> a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
> EXTERNAL SENDER
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> See link way down below
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>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service Senior Advisor to the
> Director Office of the Director National Institute of Allergy and
> Infectious Diseases National Institutes of Health Building 31, Room
> 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> B b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson) b6
> b6
> 3 b6
>
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> -----Original Message-----
> From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
> Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:31 AM

> To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
> Subject: Early appearance of two distinct genomic lineages of
> SARS-CoV-2 in different Wuhan wildlife markets suggests SARS-CoV-2 has
> a natural origin - SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus - Virological
>
>
> https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fviro
> logical.org%2Ft%2Fearly-appearance-of-two-distinct-genomic-lineages-of
> -sars-cov-2-in-different-wuhan-wildlife-markets-suggests-sars-cov-2-ha
> s-a-natural-origin%2F691&data=04%7C01%7Croberts%40neb.com%7C770222
> d6f783495c5fad08d916168d4b%7C77cefbc6b3d64d6a9f740664881c384b%7C0%7C0%
> 7C637565108407156387%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQI
> joiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000 &sdata=DWMmogMoU%2
> BVEmatA3mQt1BQkOkTVJnEP6gHTb28Tp0E%3D &reserved=0
>
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Mon, 17 May 2021 2:22:12 PM -0400

Subject: RE: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

From: Peter Daszak [b6]

To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]

CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]

Attachments: image004.gif; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg

I spoke to him for an hour off-the-record before he wrote this (last week). He was fully on-board the conspiracy stuff, largely because Nicholas Wade is a buddy of his from NYT days and because all of the juicy half-truths that fit together quite nicely for him – RaTG13, miners etc.

I repeatedly pointed out that there is no evidence of a lab leak whatsoever, only suggestions that china covered up. I told him I asked Zhengli Shi all of the questions that these theories demand, and that the answers she gave are normal, and indicative of stuff that happens at labs (taking a database offline, getting hacked, removing images of former staff from the web etc.). I said, the only reason to follow a lab leak theory is if, therefore, you don't trust what a Chinese scientist is saying. He point blank told me he did not. I guess that's the essence of this whole thing, given that we will never have definitive proof…

He cites Ian Lipkin's comment about BSL-2 as a reason for concern. We've been doing our homework on this and I'll be sending you all a document in a couple of days with info on whether the cultivation of bat-CoVs in Wuhan at BSL-2 was appropriate or not. Turns out that in the USA we culture rabies at BSL-2 (a human pathogen), other human pathogens (e.g. Zika, including animal expts), and bat viruses (e.g. Cedar virus, a paramyxovirus close to Hendra/Nipah not known to infect people). Even chimeric Cedar virus with Nipah and Hendra genes inserted is a BSL-2 agent.

Full details to follow… Suffice it to say that this is poorly-researched, disingenuous hype from our scientist colleagues, sadly.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 11:42 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

Peter, don't read this until you take a couple blood pressure pills.

I may well contact him on background and tell him he was right the first time.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
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b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 9:49 AM
Subject: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory*



Donald G. McNeil Jr.

In early spring 2020, I reported an article for The New York Times on which I put the tentative headline: "New Coronavirus Is 'Clearly Not a Lab Leak,' Scientists Say."
It never ran.
For two reasons.
The chief one was that inside the Times, we were sharply divided. My colleagues who cover national security were being assured by their Trump administration sources — albeit anonymously and with no hard evidence — that it *was* a lab leak and the Chinese were covering it up. We science reporters were hearing from virologists and zoologists — on the record and in great detail — that

the odds were overwhelming that it was *not* a lab leak but an animal spillover.

Frankly, the scientists had more credibility.

The other reason my story never ran was that it was 4,000 words long and full of expressions like "polybasic cleavage site," "RNA-dependent RNA polymerase gene" and "O-linked glycan shields." Editors would open it, their eyeballs would bleed, and they would close it and find something else to do.

(Back then, editors blanched even at "spike protein" and "receptor binding domain," but we've all had a crash course in virology this year, haven't we?)

Although it never ran, others like it did elsewhere. The experts all agreed that the SARS-CoV-2 virus was not a deliberate weaponization of a previously known virus and that it had no obvious signs of lab manipulation (more details below). They noted that blood sampling showed that brief "spillovers" of animal viruses into humans happen often without causing large outbreaks. Therefore, they argued, the odds were that this was another virus that got lucky, like SARS and MERS and the 2009 pandemic flu: it had dwelled long enough inside a civet or camel or pig or something to infect human-like cells, and then had hit the big city.

For about a year, that was the general wisdom among science writers. The "lab-leak theory" migrated back to the far right where it had started — championed by the folks who brought us Pizzagate, the Plandemic, Kung Flu, Q-Anon, Stop the Steal, and the January 6 Capitol invasion. It was tarred by the fact that everyone backing it seemed to hate not just Democrats and the Chinese Communist Party, but even the Chinese themselves. It spawned racist rumors like "Chinese labs sell their dead experimental animals in food markets."

China retorting to Trump administration nonsense with nonsense of its own — such as suggesting that U.S. military officers planted the virus during a visit to Wuhan in October 2019 — did not help.

And now to the present day.

Two weeks ago, my former New York Times science news colleague Nicholas Wade wrote an article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (and on Medium) arguing that the lab-leak theory deserves a harder look.

It has since been sent to me a dozen times with notes asking "What do you think?"

My first reaction was dismissive, even though I very much respect Nick as a journalist. (Some of his work is controversial and he can be cranky, but who am I to criticize anyone on those grounds?) I covered the pandemic from its earliest days and I disagreed with his retelling of how the leak-vs.-spillover debate began.

Also, I was offended by some aspects, such as his attacks on Dr. Anthony S. Fauci of the National Institutes of Health and Peter Daszak of the EcoHealth Alliance, both of whom I have known for years; I know both are dedicated to saving lives, and they have always told me the truth — or what they honestly believed to be the truth at the time, because evidence sometimes changes. They are now both getting death threats, and that is repulsive.

The N.I.H.-funded EcoHealth Alliance does not do dangerous lab research; it doesn't even have a lab. It hunts for dangerous viruses in the field; its zoologists teach people how to safely gather samples from bats, birds, chimpanzees and other creatures fortified with claws, teeth, beaks, muscles and pathogens.

That's work I consider as essential as staffing the radar stations that watch for missiles coming over the North Pole. The Trump administration was insane to cut off funding for it. You need to know what's coming at you. Actually cooking up novel threats is a different matter, of which more below.

I was also bothered by Nick quoting Dr. Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To my mind, after being warned about the virus by his Chinese counterpart in the first week of January, Dr. Redfield failed to shout from the rooftops and move mountains — and now 600,000 Americans are dead. He also raised the specter of a flu-Covid "twindemic" that turned out to be virological alarmism.

But…but…but…but…but…

The deeper I read into the papers and articles Nick cited, the clearer it became how much new information had trickled out in the last year. Not new to the most intense and well-educated followers of this topic, but new to the greater public debate. I include articles like this, this, this, this and this by Yuri Deigin, Rossana Segretto, Milton Leitenberg, Josh Rogin, Nicholson Baker and others.

And more and and more scientists feel misled.



I now agree with Nick's central conclusion: We still do not know the source of this awful pandemic. We may never know. But the argument that it *could* have leaked out of the Wuhan Institute of Virology or a sister lab in Wuhan has become considerably stronger than it was a year ago, when the screaming was so loud that it drowned out serious discussion.

And China's lack of candor is disturbing. It denies access to the institute's lab logs and whatever messages were swapped during its own investigations, took down 2018 statements critical of lab biosecurity protocols, retaliated against Australia for advocating an open investigation and sharply restricted the W.H.O. investigators.

Calls for a better probe are mounting. Last week, 18 biologists, including leading and outspoken experts on this pandemic like the Harvard epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch and Yale immunologist Akiko Iwasaki, published a letter in Science calling for a new investigation and demanding that Chinese labs and public health agencies open their records to outside scrutiny.

To my mind, China could be forgiven for its standoffishness in early 2020. It was busy fighting its own pandemic. And if China had, say, arrogantly offered to teach the American C.D.C. how to investigate America's killer hamburgers — the equivalent of the way the Trump administration spoke to China back then — we would have snubbed them too.

But now, 17 months later, China is persistently acting like a nation hiding something.

Also worrying: the hunt for the spillover theory's smoking gun — a very closely related natural virus in a human or an animal — has gone on for over a year. Success would mean big prizes for the discoverer — especially from the Chinese government, which could say "See??"

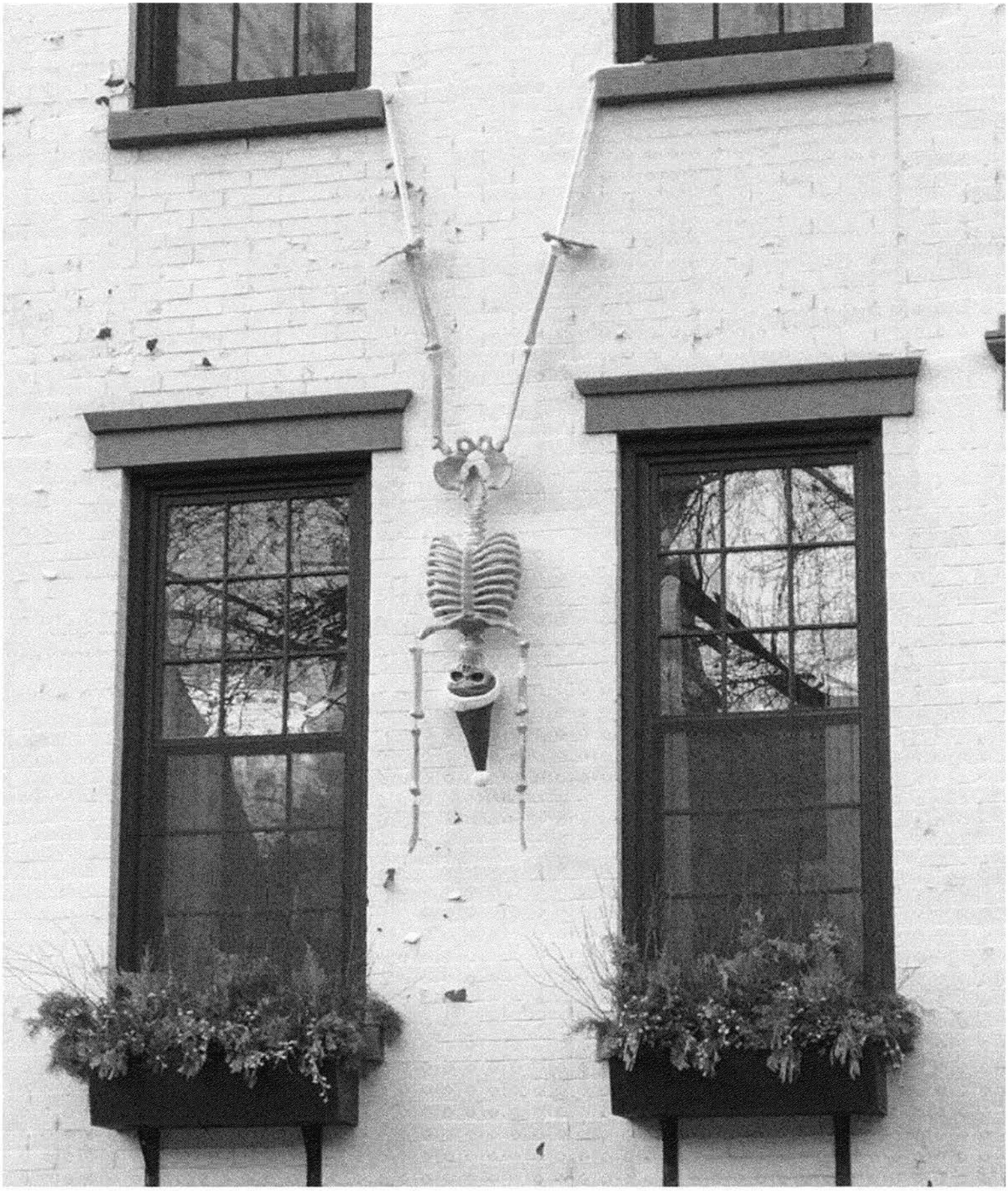
And yet — zip. That doesn't mean it won't be found. But by now we might have expected at least some smoking shell casings.

I had been skeptical of the "lab leak" theory because animal spillover is such an obvious answer. Genetics has proven that almost every disease mankind has faced jumped from animals: bubonic plague from rodents, measles probably from cows, whooping cough maybe from dogs, and so on.

Also, the leak idea was just *too* conveniently conspiratorial.

I've covered several pandemics and studied others and one element is consistent: they start in utter confusion that defies any sense that an evil genius at work. Doctors know something's wrong, but aren't sure what. That was true when American veterans started dying of pneumonia after a 1976 convention (Legionnaire's disease); when the Bronx Zoo's birds started dropping dead in 1999 (West Nile virus); when young nurses fell ill in Mexico City in 2009 (swine flu); when camel butchers died in Saudi Arabia (MERS); and when Brazilian babies were born with shrunken heads (Zika).

This pandemic's opening days were also shrouded in fog, and yes, there *was* a government coverup. But it was outed immediately and it didn't emanate from Beijing.



In late December 2019, doctors at hospitals near the Huanan Seafood Market began seeing a strange viral pneumonia they couldn't identify. On Dec. 30, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission issued a warning.

It was quickly picked by disease-alert websites like FluTrackers and ProMED; the W.H.O. put out an alert the next day. The New York Times wrote its first article on January 6, from Beijing; I started helping my China colleagues soon after.

By that time, one coverup had been underway for a week. Wuhan's politically ambitious mayor, Zhou Xianwang, was eager to protect the local party congress he had scheduled for January and the pot-luck dinner for 40,000 Wuhanese he hoped would get him into the Guinness Book of Records.

On January 1, his police silenced the nervous doctors. The Hainan Seafood Market was closed and hosed down.

That was the equivalent of trampling a crime scene. The market's wild game sellers — who might have had the infected animal, if there was one — scattered. Any live animals or fresh meat probably went to other markets or into the trash. Customers disappeared. The chance to use the market as the hub of a good epidemiological investigation was lost.

At the same time, other events occurred that looked like coverups, but maybe weren't. As soon as it was clear that the threat was a dangerous new coronavirus, the local health commission and then the national one ordered diagnostic and genetics labs to destroy their samples or surrender them to high-level biosecurity labs. Most labs chose incineration — another crime scene wrecked.

That smacked of coverup, and was treated as such by the Trump administration, but it's actually standard safety procedure to prevent outbreaks. Our C.D.C. gave the same order in 2014 when it realized that hospital labs had samples from Ebola patients being treated in Dallas and Omaha. "We told the labs in Texas and Nebraska to destroy them or send them to Fort Detrick," Dr. Pierre E. Rollin, who recently retired from the C.D.C after 26 years of fighting global outbreaks, told me. "You can call that a cover-up, but it was a public health decision."

During those first days in Wuhan, a major misconception circulated — that the virus did not spread easily between people. The W.H.O. repeated it, so did we. But that was not necessarily deliberate misinformation. With the market closed, the epicenter had scattered a few dozen cases across a city of 11 million. Very few PCR tests existed, and it was the height of flu season. At such times, it's hard to know who infected whom with what.

Also, I don't believe the image of China as a Teflon pyramid with Xi Jinping at the apex, the evil emperor who sees every sparrow that falls. It's like other big countries, even totalitarian ones: messy, with competing scientists and petty bureaucrats. Its flaws often become public despite Beijing's rigid control of the internet.

Each day back then, the rumors got more bizarre. Some scientists claimed the virus had snake genes. Others said it was part H.I.V., triggering claims that it was a bio-weapon.

Some of that fog of war lifted after Beijing sent Dr. Zhong Nanshan, the country's renowned epidemiologist, to Wuhan to demand the truth. On January 20th, Dr. Zhong warned on national TV that the virus was spreading rapidly and that outsiders should stay away. On January 23, Wuhan was cut off from the world, Mayor Xian apologized, and China launched its brutal but amazingly successful effort to crush its epidemic.

The first article I know of blaming the Wuhan Institute of Virology ran on January 26 in the Washington Times, a conservative paper founded by the Unification Church. It seemed based on two elements — the lab was in the same city (albeit nine miles from the market), and a brief, speculative quote from an Israeli biowarfare expert, Dany Shoham.

"Certain laboratories in the institute have probably been engaged, in terms of research and development in Chinese [biological weapons], at least collaterally, yet not as a principal facility of the Chinese BW alignment," the paper quoted Dr. Shoham as saying. Any work on biological weapons would be "definitely covert," he added.

When I reached Dr. Shoham by telephone later, he spoke very cautiously. He had not been misquoted, he said, but he emphasized that he had never said that deadly virus came from that lab. He had said only that it "was possible" that such a virus could have come from such a lab.

But the rumor was off and running.

Then, on February 3 — a week later — scientists from that Institute produced what smelled like a smoking gun.

They published an article on Nature's open-access website saying one of the hundreds of coronaviruses gathered from bat caves that was in their freezers was a 96.2 percent match to SARS-CoV-2.

They called it RaTG13 (indicating a *R*hinolophus *a*ffinis horseshoe bat captured in *T*ong *G*uan cave in Yunnan in 20*13*).

For conspiracy theorists, that was the clincher — if the lab had a 96 percent match, it must have leaked the killer.

But many of the world's top virologists leapt to say "Not so fast."

Coronaviruses mutate slowly, so a 4 percent mismatch in the 30,000 base pairs of the two viruses meant RaTG13 and SARS-CoV-2 had diverged maybe 40 years ago, evolutionary geneticists said.

On February 16, as rumors swirled, five of the world's top virologists got together to publish a letter on virological.org explaining why animal origin was more likely.

The letter, titled "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," was later republished in the journal Nature.

Its basic argument was that any lab trying to make a super-dangerous virus would start with the backbone of one already known to be pretty dangerous, like 2002 SARS. This new virus was so different from SARS, especially in its receptor binding domain — the crucial bit where the spike protein binds to the ACE2 receptor on the surface of a human cell — that logically no one would have chosen it.

The binding domain was much closer to one that had been recently found in pangolin viruses, so it was likely the pandemic virus

had jumped from bats to an animal — perhaps pangolins but not necessarily.
Also, the new virus had a cleavage site unlike those in related coronaviruses. (After binding to a cell, the spike has to "cleave" or split open, to meld with the surface and inject its RNA.) The new virus's cleavage site was an unusual set of amino acids in an unusual spot on the genome. Such unexpected choices seemed more likely to happen during the constant random evolution that goes on in nature rather than the logic-driven "let's try this next" methods of a lab.
Also the virus's spikes had "glycans" which act as shields to protect them from antibodies. A virus sunbathing in a friendly lab cell culture wouldn't need to evolve shields, while a virus constantly fighting off immune system attacks because it was evolving inside an animal would, they argued.
Therefore, they concluded, "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."
The paper's first author, Kristian G. Andersen of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, is still vigorously defending the paper's basic premise — that an animal origin is by far the most likely.
But other eminent virologists, including at least one of his co-authors, are wavering.
During the uproar that ensued after the institute revealed that the RaTG13 strain was in its freezers, Dr. Daszak argued that merely having a virus in a frozen fecal pellet meant little. Infections take place only when viruses are warmed up and growing in cell cultures or animals.
Dr. Daszak had worked for years with Dr. Shi Zheng-li, the "Bat Woman" who now runs the Wuhan institute. His zoologists and field veterinarians had taught her bat-sampling — a dangerous practice even in caves with tourists in bathing suits wandering around.
Freezers contain hundreds of viruses. It is too expensive to fully sequence all of them and impossible to grow them all out in cell culture, he explained. So labs create a set of "bookmarks." They sequence one short gene, called RdRP, that seldom mutates and keep a list of their RdRPs. Sometimes they post their lists to a public database like GISAID or Genbank.
Since the world had previously been looking only for relatives of the dangerous 2002 SARS or MERS, he said, labs would care only if a virus' RdRP gene closely matched those.
"If it doesn't, it's of no interest, so you pop it back in the freezer," he said.
Later, if a new dangerous virus turns up, labs can check their bookmarks for a match, thaw that one out and sequence all of it. That was why RaTG13 was found so quickly, he said. Ditto for pangolin virus sequences found in the freezers of the South China Agricultural University.
Because there were no viruses with closer RdRP matches either in public databanks or in a private Wuhan Institute list of 630 unposted RdRP genes he had seen, he said, the Wuhan lab presumably held nothing closer than a 40-year-distant relative of the killer virus.
"Believe me, if there had been, *no one* would have kept that a secret," he said to me more than a year ago. "It would be a huge discovery. We'd be over the moon."
Dr. Shi herself later told Scientific American that, when news of the new virus erupted, her first fear was that it had come from her institute. She did not sleep for days, she said, until she had finished checking her lab's logs and assured herself that it had not.
Since then, though, more has come to light about the work done by Dr. Shi's teams.
The most startling bit of information was that, rather than "finding" RaTG13 in her freezers in February, Dr. Shi had worked with it since at least 2016, but under a different name, RaBtCoV/4991.
RaBtCoV/4991 had not been gathered at random but from a mineshaft in which miners digging bat guano got pneumonia, some fatally. Dr. Shi's lab sequenced enough of it to be able to say it was the most "SARS-like" of the viruses from that investigation.
There were arguments over whether the miners died of fungal pneumonia, viral pneumonia or both, but that link made it a likely suspect for any lab wanting to explore dangerous viruses. Not mentioning her previous work with it was troubling.
Also, Dr. Shi was trained by Ralph S. Baric of the University of North Carolina in building "chimera" viruses — taking, for example, the spike protein from a new virus and splicing it to the backbone of a known one like SARS. He invented "no-see-um" techniques that left no trace of the splice.
(Interestingly, Dr. Baric is one of the signers of the letter to Science demanding a more thorough investigation of all Wuhan labs.)
Then, to see if the new chimeras could infect people, they were tested against human airway cells and "humanized" mice — mice bred to have human ACE-2 receptors on their organs.
There is debate over whether this is truly "gain of function" research. Some argue that gain of function strictly involves taking a virus already *known* to endanger humans and trying to make it more lethal or more transmissible.
So Dr. Fauci was answering truthfully in his bitter exchange with Senator Rand Paul on May 11.
But many other scientists feel this is a distinction without a difference. They feel that building any new virus from suspect parts and then seeing if it infects humans is just as risky.
Like nuclear bomb testing, the need for "gain of function" research is hotly contested.
Proponents argue that it is the only way to stay ahead of epidemics: in a world full of emerging diseases, if you can figure out which pathogens are only a few amino acids tweaks shy of disaster, you can develop and stockpile vaccines and antibodies against them.
Opponents say that, noble as that goal may be, it is inherently too dangerous to pursue by building Frankensteins and poking them to see how strong they are.
Despite constantly rising biosafety levels, viruses we already know to be lethal, from smallpox to SARS, have repeatedly broken loose by accident.

Most leaks infect or kill just a few people before they are stopped by isolation and/or vaccination. But not all: scientists now believe that the H1N1 seasonal flu that killed thousands every year from 1977 to 2009 was influenza research gone feral. The strain first appeared in eastern Russia in 1977 and its genes were initially identical to a 1950 strain; that could have happened only if it had been in a freezer for 27 years. It also initially behaved as if it had been deliberately attenuated, or weakened. So scientists suspect it was a Russian effort to make a vaccine against a possible return of the 1918 flu. And then, they theorize, the vaccine virus, insufficiently weakened, began spreading.

Also, Dr. Shi's teams had done work on inserting cleavage sites into viruses and seeing if that enhanced their ability to infect human cells.

All this raises a disturbing possibility: What if some Wuhan scientist — someone in Dr. Shi's lab or perhaps at the Wuhan Center for Disease Control right near the market, or possibly some military scientist she trained but could not control — did something like take the likely suspect virus RaBtCoV/4991 and use it as the "backbone" for a set of chimeras with different receptor binding domains? What if that scientist was trying in 2019 to attach binding domains from viruses recently found in dying pangolins seized from wildlife smugglers in southern China? What if someone got tempted to add a cleavage site to see if that supercharged it?

What if various such chimeras were passaged through cultures of human cells or humanized mice? Wouldn't that speed up mutations into forms likely to infect humans even faster than nature can? Wouldn't that mean that something that looked like the current pandemic strain *could* emerge, polybasic cleavage sites, O-linked glycans and all?

And what if someone doing that work in a less secure lab than should have been permitted got infected before catching the subway home?

It's a lot of ifs, and it's pure speculation, which has been going on since mid-last year.

Jon Cohen of Science magazine put essentially these very questions to Dr. Shi back in August, 2020.

She said no such work took place in her lab, and that the RaBtCoV/4991 virus had only been sequenced, not isolated or grown out as a virus before the sample was used up. Everyone in her lab had tested negative for antibodies to SARS-like coronaviruses so there was no evidence of an outbreak inside, she said. And she had been assured through regular conversations with other Wuhan labs that that they had no leaks either.

Doubts have been raised about that, including the question: since Covid-19 was racing through Wuhan in early 2020, how likely would it be that *no one* in her lab tested antibody-positive? Wouldn't some have gotten infected outside?

Ultimately, much of the debate comes down to this: Is Dr. Shi telling the whole truth? And even if she is, are all her similarly skilled colleagues in Wuhan? Are they being allowed to do so by their government — which has a history of silencing scientists? Chinese scientists were allowed to interact with W.H.O. investigators only in a very tightly controlled way and very little of the report was devoted to the lab leak theory, which it all but dismissed.

Opening up the 2019 logs of every lab in Wuhan and the 2019–2020 emails between scientists and health officials would go a long way to restoring trust.

And the failure to discover any wild viruses that look like evolutionary intermediate steps on the way to SARS-Cov-2 is troubling.

So virologists are feeling more doubts.

Nick Wade quoted David Baltimore, who won the 1975 Nobel Prize for his work with viruses, as saying the specific amino acid sequences in the cleavage site made "a powerful challenge to the idea of a natural origin." (This has prompted a complex debate among evolutionary geneticists over which specific rungs on the RNA-DNA ladder are statistically most likely to appear in a bat virus.)

I spoke about Nick's article last week with Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, the renowned Columbia University virus hunter who was one of the five co-authors on the seminal "proximal origin" paper.

He favored a natural origin theory, he said, in part because he had assumed that all the Wuhan Institute's 2019 work with SARS-like viruses had been done in its top-level BSL-4 lab, which was cleared to operate in 2017. (State Department cables from 2018 raised questions about how well-run the lab was.)

But later he learned of studies with Dr. Shi's name on them showing that work he considers dangerous had been done in level BSL-2 labs, which he considers highly porous to leaks, not just in 2016, but in 2020.

"That's screwed up," he said. "It shouldn't have happened. People should not be looking at bat viruses in BSL-2 labs. My view has changed."

That is still not, as he pointed out, direct evidence of a lab leak. There *is no proof* of a leak.

But the Occam's Razor argument — what's the likeliest explanation, animal or lab? — keeps shifting in the direction of the latter.

The hardest evidence that it was an animal is still what it was early last year: On January 1, right after the market was closed down, and then again on January 12, Huazhong Agricultural University and Dr. Shi's Institute gathered almost 600 samples from the block-long warren of shuttered stalls.

Of those swabs, about six percent were positive for the virus, according to Xinhua, China's state news agency. Most came from the western end, where the wildlife was sold. And most, Dr. Shi said, were from spots near or below floor level — the handles of roll down steel shutters and the drains over the floor gutters.

Finding virus in six percent of surface samples was more than might be expected even in a hospital during flu season, Trevor Bedford, an evolutionary geneticist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle who does flu studies told me last year.

And the most logical explanation for finding that much virus on the floor and in the drains, he speculated, was not coughing

humans. It was the blood of a butchered animal being sloshed around as the market was hosed out.

Yes, there were cases in early December with no connection to that market, but that's not impossible. Livestock is shipped in batches, Wuhan has other live markets. Also, viruses are known to create "stuttering chains of transmission" as they become more transmissible. We've seen the rise of increasingly transmissible variants this year and we know this virus alternates between rare transmission and superspreading.

And the wildlife trade is not some dinky smuggling operation. As the W.H.O. report detailed, there are large farms in China raising civets, badgers and other formerly wild animals for food. A bat virus could have raced through them, adapting itself to more human-like animals, the same way the human virus raced through Dutch mink farms.

Also, farmers all over Asia enter caves to dig bat guano for garden fertilizer. A study Dr. Daszak's alliance did on villagers living near caves found that three percent had antibodies to bat viruses. That translates to up 7 million inhabitants of rural southeast Asia potentially catching such viruses each year. There may be many small outbreaks that die out without spreading far. Ebola did that at least 19 times we know of between 1976 and 2014, the year the virus reached a big city for the first time.

So there we are. All we have so far is speculation, and all the explanations are unsatisfactory.

The whole thing may just be a cold case, and stay that way forever. But there are more embers left to sift. The whole world, China included, needs a hard answer, *whoever* is to blame — so we can prevent this from happening again.

**The title is from the 1964 film "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love The Bomb," which is about human lies and safety failures — and ends with clips of atomic weapons tests depicted as the real thing. Not that I think the pandemic is funny. But neither is nuclear war.*

Donald G. McNeil Jr.

New York Times, 1976–2021. Global health beat 2002–2021. Last assignment: lead reporter on the Covid-19 pandemic.

b6

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Date: Wed, 30 Jun 2021 10:38:58 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 30 Jun 2021 10:35:11 AM -0400
Subject: RE: quote of the day…. i can't resist
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Siatras Siatras [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Peter Hotez [b6]

Even in the upside down, hate-filled world the USA is currently in, this takes it to a new level.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens [b6] >
Sent: Tuesday, June 29, 2021 7:17 PM
To: Siatras Siatras [b6] >; Peter Daszak [b6] >; Gerald Keusch [b6] >; Peter Hotez [b6] >
Subject: quote of the day…. i can't resist

Just on TV, a quotation from a White Trump-supporting woman who is angry about woke-ism, BLM, and Black progressives: "If we had known [you people would become who you are today] we would have picked our own fucking cotton".

You gotta love the poetry of blind stupidity and evil. In this climate, we have to deal with a whole new field of demagoguery: Covid-originalism! One day someone will write a book about this. It will sit on a shelf next to

Hannah Arendt and Theodore Adorno. And you may well be heroes! Congrats.
d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date:	Fri, 1 Oct 2021 3:02:44 PM -0400
Sent:	Fri, 1 Oct 2021 3:02:20 PM -0400
Subject:	Biggest non-story yet
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6] [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg

If I wasn't so sick of being pilloried in the press, I would find this one amusing! These investigative reporters have found out in our pile of foia'd docs that we were late submitting a report to NIH, and managed to turn it into an innuendo filled hit job. Just awful…

https://theintercept.com/2021/10/01/nih- bat-coronavirus-grant-ecohealth-alliance/

For your interest, here's the truth behind this mystery: We got our report ready to file for yr 5 of the grant, but when it was re-funded we assumed we didn't need to. It was the first time we'd had a renewal. We then had our grant terminated by Trump and assumed we definitely wouldn't need to at that point. Eventually NIH wrote to us and told us to file, so we did.

Meanwhile, I can't believe that people like Larry Gostin are willing to be quoted in this sort of crap. I used to think he did good work, but he's repeatedly spoken out over the last few months to support Tedros and whine about our 'lack of transparency'.

NIH BAT CORONAVIRUS GRANT REPORT WAS SUBMITTED MORE THAN TWO YEARS LATE

The unusual timing of a bat coronavirus grant report suggests that an earlier version may have been revised.



Mara Hvistendahl, Sharon Lerner
October 1 2021, 1:11 p.m.

A PROGRESS REPORT detailing controversial U.S.-funded research into bat coronaviruses in China was filed more than two years after it was due and long after the corresponding grant had concluded. The U.S.-based nonprofit the EcoHealth Alliance submitted the report to its funder, the National Institutes of Health, in September 2020,

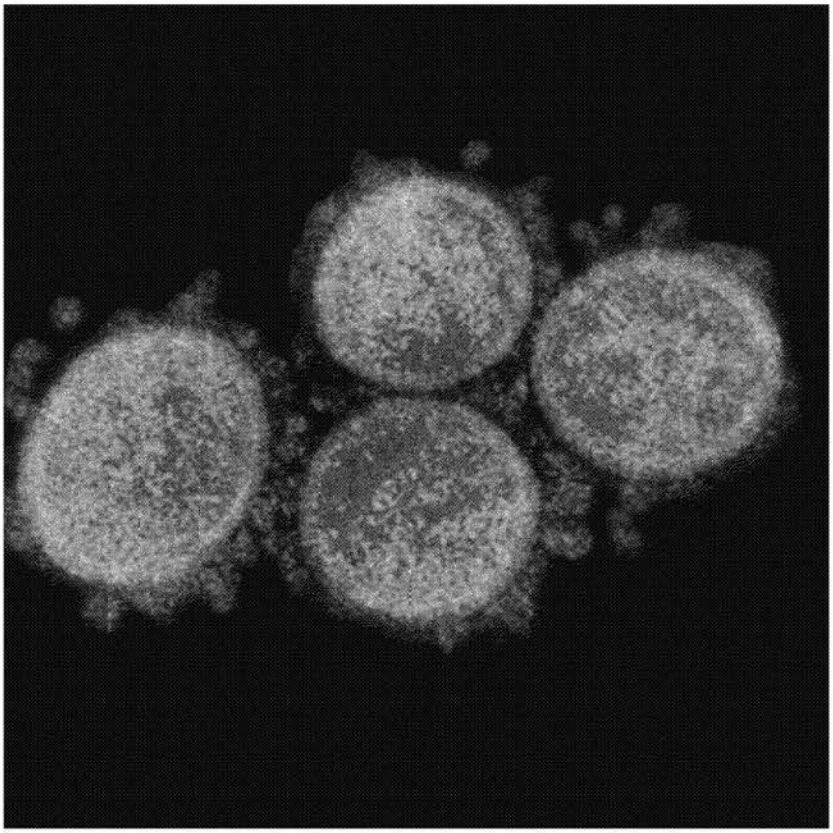
while the group was engulfed in controversy surrounding its work with partners in China. The Intercept obtained the report, along with the grant proposal and other documents, through a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit.

Scientists consulted by The Intercept described the late date as highly unusual and said it merited an explanation, given the controversy surrounding the EcoHealth Alliance's work at the time that the report was submitted. The scientists spoke under the condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the topic with the NIH, the world's leading funder of biomedical research.

The annual report described the group's work from June 2017 to May 2018, which involved creating new viruses using different parts of existing bat coronaviruses and inserting them into humanized mice in a lab in Wuhan, China. The work was overseen by the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is headed by Anthony Fauci.

Neither the NIH nor the EcoHealth Alliance offered an explanation for the date of the report or responded to questions from The Intercept about whether another version of the report had been submitted on time and, if so, in what ways that version may have been altered.

The Intercept is seeking any missing progress reports, among other documents, through ongoing litigation against the NIH.



Related

Leaked Grant Proposal Details High-Risk Coronavirus Research

The agency has been criticized for withholding information that might relate to the origins of the coronavirus pandemic, which is now responsible for more than 4.5 million deaths around the world. "NIH has a public responsibility to be fully transparent on why it gave funding to the EcoHealth Alliance, whether it considered the potential of a possible accidental leak of dangerous bat viruses, and the ethics of approving the study," said Lawrence Gostin, a professor at Georgetown University's school of law and director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Center on National and Global Health Law. "Overall, it is important to fund good basic research on bat viruses, but the project has been shrouded in uncertainty and lacks full transparency."

The progress report and other documents were released by the NIH over a year after The Intercept and others requested them. "What [the NIH] really needs to do is not just react to FOIA requests. They need to be proactive and say, 'OK, here's the process, and here's the outcome.' And they haven't done that," said Gregory Koblentz, director of the Biodefense Graduate Program at George Mason University. "That just raises questions about why they're dragging their heels. They should have provided all relevant information months ago."

The EcoHealth Alliance and its longtime partner the Wuhan Institute of Virology have come under intense scrutiny in the search for the pandemic's origins. The two groups are at the center of the lab-origin hypothesis, the idea that the coronavirus could have emerged through a lab accident, the collection and storage of thousands of bat coronavirus samples, or through divisive research that makes viruses more transmissible in order to study how they evolve.

MOST READ

There has been no shortage of unsubstantiated ideas in circulation about SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes the respiratory illness Covid-19, several of which continue to be used as political wedges by former President Donald Trump and the far right. But EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak helped organize scientists to tar any discussion of a possible lab origin, even if it was science-based, as a conspiracy theory.

In February 2020, the medical journal The Lancet published a statement decrying the spread of "rumours and misinformation" around the origins of the pandemic. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," read the letter. Daszak was not among its 27 signatories, but emails later obtained by U.S. Right to Know showed that he had orchestrated the effort. Daszak has also served on two international committees tasked with investigating the origins of the pandemic, despite having a clear conflict of interest. (Last weekend, the Wall Street Journal reported that one of these committees, a task force convened by The Lancet, would be disbanded.)

For months, Daszak continued to push the notion that a lab origin was preposterous. "They're coming at this with the belief system that there's a cabal of mysterious international folks who are trying to kill people," he said in an online seminar in October 2020, of those who believe it's possible that the virus that causes Covid-19 emerged from a lab. "They come at it with a belief system. So logic jumps out the window."

The unusually dated EcoHealth Alliance progress report adds to a string of missing, incomplete, or disappeared information that could be relevant to the origins of the pandemic.

The report describes work done in year four of the five-year, $3.1 million NIH grant " Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence." It was due in April 2018. The version released by the NIH was submitted over two years later, after The Intercept had filed a public records request seeking the bat coronavirus and other NIH grants to the EcoHealth Alliance.

The NIH sends out automatic reminders ahead of key due dates and makes the

distribution of new funding contingent upon receipt of the previous years' annual reports. According to an NIH instruction manual, submission dates are automatically generated, meaning that the date could not be a typo.

Adding to the evidence that the annual update was submitted in 2020 are references to studies that were published after 2018, when the update was due. NIH progress reports include a section in which researchers list any papers that have been published or accepted for publication. In the EcoHealth Alliance progress report, the section lists papers published in 2019 and 2020.

Many researchers say the experiment that involved infecting humanized mice with altered bat coronaviruses described in the annual report qualifies as "gain-of-function research of concern." None of the viruses described in the experiment are related to SARS-CoV-2 closely enough to have evolved into it. But scientists said the odd submission date raises questions about whether information in an earlier draft of the report had been altered — or omitted — amid controversy over the EcoHealth Alliance's work in Wuhan.

Early on, several groups, media outlets, and individuals requested the grant documents and communications surrounding them, an effort that apparently irked Daszak. "Conspiracy-theory outlets and politically motivated organizations have made Freedom of Information Act requests on our grants and all of our letters and e-mails to the NIH," he told Nature in August 2020. "We don't think it's fair that we should have to reveal everything we do."

The Intercept requested the grant documents from the NIH on September 3 of that year. The anomalous progress report was submitted less than two weeks later, on September 16.

The documents released to The Intercept are also missing a year-five progress report, covering the crucial period of June 2018 to May 2019, which was due in September 2019, according to NIH guidelines. Scientists said that NIH program officers sometimes overlook reports for the final reporting period, but taken together with the odd date on the year-four report, the omission raises questions that the agency should answer.

Federal funding documents are routinely released under the Freedom of Information Act. In this case, public interest in the origins of the pandemic should have led to a timely and full release of documents, transparency experts say. "The presumption of disclosure is all the more crucial when dealing with documents that are squarely in the public interest," said Gunita Singh, a staff attorney with the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. "And records about how the pandemic may have originated and where our taxpayer dollars have been spent are clearly worthy of public observation and scrutiny and debate."

"Records about how the pandemic may have originated and where our taxpayer dollars have been spent are clearly worthy of public observation and scrutiny and debate."

The origins of the pandemic remain hotly debated. In August, President Joe Biden announced that a three-month inquiry into the matter by U.S. intelligence agencies was inconclusive. Many scientists lean toward a natural origin, but in recent months an increasing number of prominent researchers have gone on record as saying that a lab origin deserves thorough investigation.

The progress report is just one of many missing puzzle pieces that could shed light on the question. In June, evolutionary biologist Jesse Bloom reported that key data from Wuhan had been deleted from an NIH database, a move allowed by NIH rules but that is nonetheless unusual. From a Google Cloud server, he recovered 13 partial viral sequences collected from people in the city in the early days of the pandemic. These added to evidence that the coronavirus was circulating in the city long before the December 2019 outbreak at the city's Huanan seafood market, which was a major focus of the recent WHO report on the origins of the pandemic. It turned out that researchers from Wuhan University had emailed the NIH in June 2020 to request that the sequences be deleted.

Then in July, after the Washington Post reported on other discrepancies in early WHO data, the WHO changed the virus sequence IDs associated with three early patients described in the joint report.

There are also important gaps in what we know about the history of RaTG13, a relative of SARS-CoV-2, which was sequenced and written about by scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Last summer, Shi Zhengli, director of the Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, admitted to Science magazine that RaTG13 was a renamed version of a virus found in a Chinese mineshaft where miners fell ill in 2012. But that admission only came following pressure from independent scientists.

Also unresolved are questions about revisions made to public databases of viruses that infect pangolins and about a database that the Wuhan Institute of Virology took offline in September 2019, claiming that it had been hacked.

In 2019, the NIH renewed the EcoHealth Alliance bat coronavirus grant for a second five-year period. The Trump administration suspended funding in April 2020. (The NIH

reinstated the grant in July 2020, under strict terms that Daszak said his group could not meet.) It is unclear whether the EcoHealth Alliance would have been required to file a progress report for the final year of the grant, given that it was terminated.

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Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Sat, 18 Sep 2021 10:12:33 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 18 Sep 2021 10:09:06 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Wang Linfa [b6] Edward Holmes [b6] >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>;
CC: Stephen Goldstein [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] David Morens [b6]

Yes – saw that paper Jason – really interesting

I looked through the paper and it's yet another game changer. So far, in the last few weeks/months, we've got the following new evidence supporting emergence via bat-to-intermediate host-to-human origin for COVID-19 (I've probably missed something):

- Multiple new, SARS-CoV-2 related CoVs in SE Asia (Cambodia, Thailand, Japan, China etc.). I know of other work in review describing other related viruses in SE Asia also. We're also finding further novel SARS-CoV-2 related bat viruses in Malaysia, Thailand.
- New evidence that live animals of the type that carry CoVs were present in the Wuhan markets (including Huanan).
- Evidence from other bat SARSr-CoVs that mutations occur where there FCS is found (eg. RmYN02) https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7211627/
- a rat alpha-CoV with an FCS in wildlife farms, hotels and train stations in S. China, showing that FCS insertions are more common in nature than previously thought. https://journals.asm.org/doi/epdf/10.1128/JVI.01173- 21
- Epidemiological analysis of early cases supporting early origin close to Huanan market, not WIV https://www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092- 8674(21)00991-0
- Phylogenetic analyses suggesting there may have been multiple introductions into the human population, supporting presence of a virus circulating in animals rather than a lab leak (@virology paper)
- Our work showing a very large interface for bat SARSr-CoV spillover in a v. densly population region, and potential for large numbers of missing cases each year https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.09.09.21263359v1
- This paper showing ACE2 binding for bat SARS-CoV-2 related CoVs. https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs- 871965/v1

On the lab leak side, we have convoluted accusations based on interpretations of intent about how Chinese scientists submitted genomes, wrote the papers, or how me and other scientists had collaborations with Chinese scientists. But, as far as new evidence goes, I could only find this:

- None

Of course, the momentum on the lab leak side will continue, with books by Sharri Markison, Alina Chan/Matt Ridley, Op Eds that criticize scientists, 70+ FoIAs by one organization alone, many other FoIAs on their way, 900 pages of FoIA'd grants and reports from EHA/NIAID showing zero evidence of lab leak.

This rate of research even in a pandemic is remarkable and suggests that we'll pretty quickly have such overwhelming evidence for the 'natural' origins that most people will move on from the lab leak.

(Off-the-record) However, the damage they leave behind is already horrific and will be worse by the time they decide to find another issue to focus on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Wang Linfa b6
Sent: Friday, September 17, 2021 10:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: Stephen Goldstein b6 b6 ; Peter Daszak b6 b6 g
Subject: RE: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

Almost identical SARS-CoV-2 RBD in several bat sarbecoviruses! This is as close as you can get for a natural RBD origin!

Also, the paper concluded that SARS-CoV-2 genome fragments are found in different sarbecoviruses, very similar to the PloS Path paper for SARS-CoV-1.

All we need is to find a sarbecovirus with a furin cleavage site and no more debate on the natural origin of SARS-CoV-2!

Linfa (Lin-Fa) WANG, PhD FTSE FAAM
Professor
Programme in Emerging Infectious Disease
Duke-NUS Medical School,
8 College Road, Singapore 169857
Tel: b6

From: Edward Holmes b6
Sent: Thursday, 16 September 2021 3:31 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: Stephen Goldstein b6 b6 ; Peter Daszak b6 b6 ; Wang Linfa b6
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

- External Email -

Dismantles one key argument of the leakers - how could a virus get from Yunnan to Wuhan - in one simple move.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia

T
E b6

On 16 Sep 2021, at 2:26 pm, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

And there's this:
"The discovery of civet-CoVs in the Hubei province should not be a surprise as SARS-CoV-like viruses were recently found in a bat species in the same province"

From: u6025689@utah.edu At: 09/16/21 14:24:33 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: b6
b6
b6
b6
Subject: Re: Study from 2007 shows SARS-infected civets on farms in Hubei

Just stumbled across it reading the discussion of another paper honestly. It's been cited since - there are certainly people who remembered it but I did not know of it and clearly had not penetrated the public origins discussion.

Stephen

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 15, 2021, at 10:22 PM, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Well done, Stephen for finding this:
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1900161/

Jason Gale, MHlthSec
Senior editor & chief biosecurity correspondent | Bloomberg News
Level 30, 120 Collins St., Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel. (landline) b6 | Mobile + b6
@jwgale | Linkedin: http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jason- gale/6/249/a56

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Date:	Wed, 23 Jun 2021 9:36:10 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 23 Jun 2021 9:36:03 AM -0400
Subject:	Re: HOTEZ EDITS ADDITIONS ATTACHED Notes from Today's call
From:	"Hotez, [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Alison Andre [b6]>; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Attachments:	HOTEZ EDITS Countering COVID anti-science attacks. Call [b6]

Peter, I've made track changes and additions, ATTACHED. Many thanks! Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Co-Head, Section of Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
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Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
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Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
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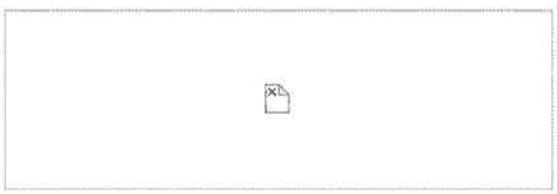
Phone: [b6]



From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 22, 2021 11:36 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6] David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Alison Andre [b6]>
Subject: Notes from Today's call

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Thanks very much for spending time today on "Countering COVID-19 Anti-Science Attacks".

I've written up notes, with a first shot at a paragraph description of a meeting, and who put their hand up to contact whom.

All good movements need a name. I think "Committee to counter the anti-science movement (CASM)" is a good start…Certainly feels like a Chasm's opening up before our feet these days…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Date: Mon, 29 Mar 2021 3:33:12 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 29 Mar 2021 3:26:22 PM -0400
Subject: Some good news..
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Jerry [b6]; David Morens [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6];
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6];
Attachments: 10.2.20 Political Interference Report (1).pdf; [b6] SST EC Letter to HHS.pdf

I wanted to point out some good news, or the beginnings of potential good news.

I've been doing the rounds trying to generate some political goodwill, given the snarky comments from Anthony Blinken in the State Dept, publicly, about China and the WHO report. Last week I briefed Beth Cameron and others at the NSC/White House, to give them an inside view of what's in the WHO report, which comes out tomorrow. I also briefed staffers at the House Committee on Science, Space & Technology. They told me the Committee chair is very interested in how the Trump White House intervened politically to block NIH funding and are interested in helping me deal with this issue. I'm going to send them copies of all NIH correspondence, and my response to Michael Lauer once it is submitted. I'll also be briefing the Democratic members of the Committee in the next few weeks. After the call, I remembered that it was this committee that tried to get me to meet with them when the termination first happened, but I didn't respond because I didn't want to be completely crushed by Trump. The Chair did write a letter back then (attached) and here:
https://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/files/documents/06.26.20%20SST%20EC%20Letter%20to%20HHS.pdf
Hoping for real traction here…

Secondly, I noticed this great news from Biden's White House that they're setting up a task force to investigate Trump's meddling in science across the board – it's reported in the NYT today: https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/29/climate/biden-trump-science.html
In the article, there's a link to a list of egregious actions that Trump undertook
https://coronavirus.house.gov/sites/democrats.coronavirus.house.gov/files/10.2.20%20Political%20Interference%20Report%20%281%29.pdf
(also attached to this email). Delighted to see NIH's action on our grant in there listed on May 1st 2020. Only problem is the sheer volume of egregious acts making this just a small item among many!

Anyway – onwards and upwards…

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 2:10 AM
To: 'Keusch, Jerry [b6]; 'David Morens [b6]
Roberts, Rich [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Response to Michael Lauer letters

Importance: High

Hi Jerry, David, and Rich

I can't remember which of you offered to review our draft response to Michael Lauer at NIH, but it would be very helpful if one of you could. I'm sending it to my pro bono lawyers as well, and they'll rip into it, but your advice and edits (using track changes) would be most helpful…

By the way, the WHO report comes out Tuesday morning our time (I think).

I'll have a final draft version tomorrow that I'll try to get out to you early.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date:	Fri, 27 Aug 2021 5:25:43 PM -0400
Sent:	Fri, 27 Aug 2021 5:25:32 PM -0400
Subject:	Re: DNI releases summary of Intel report
From:	"Hotez, Peter Jay" [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6]
CC:	David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments:	image003.jpg; image004.jpg

So surprises, except I'm surprised they were so forthright and honest about this

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
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Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

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Skype: [b6]
Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6]
Phone: [b6]
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Aug 27, 2021, at 4:04 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Happy Friday afternoon!

The summary of the report is out now (attached).

It's inconclusive, but states that China did not engineer the virus. Also that China had no forewarning of the outbreak. It's slightly more leaning towards the "natural" origin that they were prior to the 90 day analysis. At that point it was 2 agencies for natural vs. 1 for lab (I think). Now it's 4 agencies believe it's animal origin, one believes may be lab. All have low confidence.

Maybe now we can get on with the actual scientific analysis of COVID origins – something that will likely take many more months than it should because of all the politics and "Intelligence" involved!

Maybe we can read something into the fact this was released late on a summer Friday afternoon! I'm definitely happy it was!

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021- 08-27/u-s-probe-of-covid-origin-inconclusive-without-help-from-china

Prognosis

Biden Criticizes China for Not Aiding Report on Virus Origins

By Josh Wingrove and Chris Strohm
August 27, 2021, 3:35 PM EDT *Updated on August 27, 2021, 4:19 PM EDT*

- More U.S. agencies think virus came from animal than lab
- The U.S. believes virus wasn't created as a biological weapon

President Joe Biden rebuked China for stonewalling a U.S. investigation into the origins of the coronavirus, as his administration reported it was unable to reach firm conclusions because of

Beijing's unwillingness to cooperate.

"The world deserves answers, and I will not rest until we get them," Biden said in a statement on Friday shortly after the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released an unclassified summary of the report. "Responsible nations do not shirk these kinds of responsibilities to the rest of the world."

The intelligence community determined the virus wasn't created as a biological weapon and said Chinese officials had no "foreknowledge" of the outbreak, but was divided on how it came to infect humans and spread across the globe.

Four components of the intelligence community said -- with low confidence -- that the outbreak was likely linked to exposure to an infected animal, according to the summary. This theory is the most widely supported by scientists, including Anthony Fauci, who is advising Biden on Covid.

One intelligence community component assessed with moderate confidence that the outbreak was associated with a research lab in China. As of a few months ago, two components backed the animal theory while one backed the lab theory.

Analysts at other agencies are unable to coalesce around either without more information, including some who think both are equally likely. To reach a conclusion with higher confidence, the intelligence community said it would need more cooperation of China, which it said continues to hinder global efforts.

"Beijing, however, continues to hinder the global investigation, resist sharing information and blame other countries, including the United States," the summary says. "These actions reflect, in part, China's government's own uncertainty about where an investigation could lead as well as its frustration the international community is using the issue to exert political pressure on China."

The intelligence community overall believes that the virus infected humans through an initial small exposure no later than November of 2019, according to the report. The report says the intelligence agencies judge that the virus was not developed as a biological weapon, and most assess -- with low confidence -- that it was not genetically engineered, though two agencies believe there isn't enough evidence to know either way.

"China's officials did not have foreknowledge of the virus before the initial outbreak of COVID-19 emerged," the summary says. But the intelligence agencies and the global community lack clinical samples and other data from the earliest Covid-19 cases, the summary says.

The report is partly a sign of how far from reach a conclusion remains. Only five of the agencies, or components, of the intelligence community expressed any view and none did so with more than low or moderate confidence.

The U.S. Intelligence Community is made up of 18 different organizations, including the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which released the summary, and the Central Intelligence

Agency, among others.

The intelligence community sprinted to provide the report within Biden's timeline, and approached it from multiple perspectives, including consulting scientists and epidemiologists, an official familiar with the process said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The intelligence community also reached out to academic experts, as well as international allies and partners, the official said.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Friday, August 27, 2021 12:28 PM
To: 'David Morens' <b6>; 'Roberts, Rich' <b6>; Keusch, Jerry <b6>; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' <b6>
Subject: FW: The good, the bad, and the ugly
Importance: High

I just wanted to share a couple of articles – Op Eds re the Intel report on COVID origins. The First is actually positive and balanced from today's Guardian
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/aug/27/us- report-covid-origins-pandemic-virus-covid

It includes the comment:
"The false dichotomy that has been set up over Covid's origins is hard to challenge. Until a year ago, scientists who collaborated across national and disciplinary borders were applauded. Now they're accused of conflicts of interest – meaning that many of the people who know most about what happened, or are best qualified to find out, have been silenced. Meanwhile the behemoth that is the global livestock industry goes about its toxic business untroubled by any real scrutiny."

The bad/ugly is below this one, from yesterday's WSJ from Mike Pompeo, calling on lawyers to decide COVID origins – years of litigation will illuminate the truth according to the former Secretary of State. I realize he's grandstanding and may be using this hardline talk to put in a bid for President in 3 yrs, but it's very worrying for me to think that one day EcoHealth Alliance, and myself could be under criminal investigation for doing what we were supposed to do as scientists.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid- 19-coronavirus-origin-fsia-foreign-sovereign-immunities-act-china-lab-leak-wet-market-11629990917

The Guardian

The US report into Covid's origins is little use in averting another pandemic

Laura Spinney

Regardless of where the virus came from, there's a growing risk of another Covid-like phenomenon occurring

<image003.jpg>

'Biden ordered the latest investigation partly because of widespread dissatisfaction with one set up by the World Health Organization (WHO).' Photograph: Evan Vucci/AP

Fri 27 Aug 2021 11.20 EDT

US intelligence services have just briefed the president, Joe Biden, on the results of their 90-day investigation into the origins of Covid-19. They were asked to test two hypotheses: that it had a "natural" origin, or that it escaped from a lab. Preliminary reports suggest that their findings are inconclusive.

Few scientists will be surprised by this, and yet the investigation has been the subject of intense – and intensely divisive – political and media interest over the past three months. The White House has promised more detail, which could be illuminating, especially if it reveals the genetic sequences of viruses related to the one that causes Covid-19, Sars-CoV-2, that were being studied in labs in Wuhan in 2019. But that won't change the fact that two investigations down, we're still in the dark as to how this pandemic started.

Biden ordered the latest investigation partly because of widespread dissatisfaction with one set up by the World Health Organization (WHO), which reported in March that a lab origin was "extremely unlikely". Many saw the WHO's efforts as compromised because China used its influence within the organisation to set restrictive terms of reference. It's hard to see why the new investigation, from a single nation locked in a trade war with China, and from intelligence services to boot – not a source often lauded for transparency – should be accorded any more credibility. It should have been conducted by a coalition of national science academies. They still might not have reached any firm conclusions, but they would have had more chance of being seen as independent.

The WHO is promising a new investigation, and there may be others. Whether these will add anything is again questionable, but it's important that scientists continue to try to get at the truth,

and that we all acknowledge that it might take them years to do so. It's difficult to trace the origins of a pandemic. Here's just one example of the challenges.

Much has been made of the finding that some Italians may have been carrying antibodies to Sars-CoV-2 as early as September 2019, several months before the first cases of Covid-19 were reported in China. (Nobody's suggesting the pandemic started in Italy, only that it might have come out of China earlier than thought.) But if those antibodies really were to Sars-CoV-2 – which some researchers doubt – it's odd that the wave of Covid-19 infection they indicate wasn't followed by a wave of hospitalisations and deaths, as it was later in China. What's more, those antibody carriers didn't go to the doctor with Covid symptoms, they went for other reasons. If the earliest Chinese cases were also mild or asymptomatic, how will researchers find them?

To be clear, the only reason these investigations are valuable is scientific – because the knowledge they provide could help prevent something similar from happening again. Even if it could be proved to many people's satisfaction that a lab accident triggered the pandemic, it's unlikely that any punishment could be meted out or compensation demanded. As Thomas Bollyky and Yanzhong Huang of the US Council on Foreign Relations have written, a lab accident is not a violation of any international law, and even if it were, establishing causation would be tricky. As they point out, taking the US perspective: "Many nations faced similar challenges in this pandemic and did not suffer the United States' poor health outcomes."

The ongoing debate over Covid's origins has had good and bad outcomes. A good outcome is that it has shone a spotlight on the fact that, as biosecurity experts Filippa Lentzos and Gregory Koblentz reported in May, labs authorised to deal with the most dangerous pathogens have been proliferating in an almost complete vacuum of regulation or oversight. One component of the oversight that should now be put in place is independent, international inspection teams. A model already exists for these, in the WHO's protocol for overseeing the two labs – one Russian, one American – that hold the last stockpiles of variola virus, which causes the now eradicated disease smallpox.

A bad outcome is that at least part of the scientific community – supposedly the bulwark that protects us from propaganda – has bought into the false dichotomy of two "rival" hypotheses for Covid's origins. It's as if they were looking at one of those ambiguous images, and seeing either a duck or a rabbit when both are in the picture. In reality it isn't natural origins versus lab leak; it's long-term human activity versus short-term human activity. Natural ceases to mean much in this context.

Fire, waves and warfare: the way we make sense of Covid

Read more

In fact, since the evidence is by now overwhelmingly that long-term human activity is accelerating the emergence of novel pathogens and increasing the risk of pandemics, the question investigators should really be asking is: did some recent, one-off event such as a lab accident exacerbate the already high and growing risk of spillover of a virus with pandemic potential caused by a decades-long shift towards industrialised farming and the wildlife trade?

Through their reliance on antibiotics, livestock monocultures and crowding, industrial-scale farms are ratcheting up the virulence of animal pathogens that the wildlife trade – and one of its shop windows, wet markets – is bringing into contact with potential host species they wouldn't otherwise encounter, including us. This is not news. As the journalist Felicity Lawrence wrote in 2009, during the swine flu pandemic: "Novel human disease is the toxic debt of today's industrial livestock farming."

Here's something worth reflecting on: in recent decades, most spillover events of highly pathogenic avian influenza – still considered the disease most likely to cause a future pandemic – occurred in countries with generally good biosecurity but lots of intensive poultry farming. The

reason more of them didn't seed outbreaks is that they were nipped in the bud through good disease surveillance – the US being a leader in this. If high-security labs are enjoying a boom, prestige and biowarfare deterrence may have something to do with it, but it's also because dangerous pathogens are booming.

The false dichotomy that has been set up over Covid's origins is hard to challenge. Until a year ago, scientists who collaborated across national and disciplinary borders were applauded. Now they're accused of conflicts of interest – meaning that many of the people who know most about what happened, or are best qualified to find out, have been silenced. Meanwhile the behemoth that is the global livestock industry goes about its toxic business untroubled by any real scrutiny. This week, Marco Marani of the University of Padova in Italy and colleagues reported that the probability of an individual experiencing a Covid-like pandemic in their lifetime, currently about 38%, could double within a few decades. Unless scientists stand back and look at the bigger picture, it won't stop there.

- Laura Spinney is a science journalist and the author of Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World

Here's the bad/ugly from Mike Pompeo yesterday..

Let Lawyers Hunt for Covid's Origin

The report from the intelligence community is equivocal, but spies don't have subpoena power.

By Mike Pompeo and David B. Rivkin Jr.
Aug. 26, 2021 12:59 pm ET
SAVE
PRINT
TEXT
213
<image004.jpg>

PHOTO: MARTIN KOZLOWSKI

Listen to article
Length 7 minutes
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Will we ever know where Covid-19 came from? Not if the last word comes from the U.S. intelligence community, which reported to the White House this week that China's fault is plausible but unprovable. Beijing has refused to cooperate with inquiries, which it has characterized as "origin tracing terrorism." The Chinese Foreign Ministry even denounced the equivocal intelligence report: "If they want to baselessly accuse China, so they better be prepared to accept the counterattack from China."

For the rest of the world, getting to the bottom of the question is essential to assigning blame and preventing pandemics. Fortunately, we have an institution dedicated to getting to the bottom of thorny factual disputes: the U.S. judicial system. Our judiciary is respected globally for its

impartiality and scrupulous adherence to due process. Civil discovery gives litigants the tools to compel production of evidence, backed by the threat of sanctions or even default judgment, so Beijing would be unable to stonewall. With so many losses caused by the pandemic, U.S. litigants have a powerful incentive to bring cases, prosecute them aggressively, and test liability through adversarial presentation. Several such cases have already been filed.

But those suits and others like them face a high hurdle: the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. The FSIA is the reason at least eight lawsuits were dismissed or withdrawn on grounds that foreign states are generally shielded from litigation in U.S. courts. Yet that immunity isn't a constitutional mandate, only a matter of congressional discretion. Congress can legislate exceptions, and has done so.

Lawmakers should enact a new FSIA exception denying sovereign immunity to nations that fail to inform, or deliberately misinform, the global community of the nature and scope of a local epidemic that becomes a global pandemic. Beijing's failure in December 2019 to comply with the 24-hour notification requirement of the 2005 International Health Regulations, which China joined, should be a sufficient trigger. This would permit lawsuits to proceed so China's culpability for the Covid-19 outbreak can be openly adjudicated.

Congress should also withdraw immunity from international organizations that aided and abetted China's efforts to play down the virus's transmission and health risks. Western intelligence services have suggested that Beijing instructed the World Health Organization early in the pandemic on what it should say about Covid-19. Plaintiffs could use discovery to identify other governmental and private entities that collaborated with Beijing and hold them accountable. This litigation would have an added benefit of unmasking much of the pro-China infrastructure within international organizations and Western companies, think tanks and other institutions.

To ensure that China can't delay proceedings, the FSIA amendment should also either create a new federal tort action or give federal courts jurisdiction over Covid-related claims under state law.

Some may object that these measures could interfere with U.S. diplomacy. But Congress can address that concern. The Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act of 2016—which withdrew sovereign immunity from nations that provided material support to terrorist attacks on American soil—authorized the federal government to intervene in litigation to secure a diplomatic resolution that compensates plaintiffs and mitigates future harm. It makes sense to follow that model here. That would provide the Biden administration with the impetus to declassify and make available to Covid-19 litigants intelligence relating to the virus's origin. Here, too, there is precedent, stemming

from civil cases over the Iran-contra affair and the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Defendants in U.S. legal proceedings are ordinarily entitled to bring counterclaims and spread liability to other potential defendants. Beijing has accused the U.S. military of creating the Covid-19 virus at the Army's Fort Detrick, Md., lab and introducing it during the 2019 Military World Games in Wuhan, in which a U.S. team participated. To ensure that Beijing is accorded every opportunity to defend itself, including bringing counterclaims against the U.S., the Biden administration should waive governmental immunity, a step it can take unilaterally without statutory changes. Let Beijing test its implausible theory in court.

China wouldn't be able to ignore lawsuits in American courts, given its close commercial ties with the U.S. If it refused to participate, courts would enter enforceable default judgments. China would be hard-pressed to avoid complying with any court-ordered damages and injunctions. Successful plaintiffs could pursue collection actions against Chinese government-owned commercial property around the world. Corporations are not normally liable for their owners' debts, but there is an exception when the owner is involved on a day-to-day basis in running the company. Given the Chinese Communist Party's pervasive control over formally private Chinese companies, this shouldn't be difficult to prove.

It should be possible to secure broad bipartisan support for these measures. Republicans and Democrats have expressed a keen desire to hold Beijing accountable, and the Biden administration has made a priority of defending and strengthening the rules-based international order. The president has repeatedly said he wants to make sure China plays by the rules.

Chinese military publications have run articles expressing interest in developing biological weapons. China understands that bioweapons are particularly effective against open societies, where stringent isolation and quarantine measures spur resistance, and could be used to incapacitate aircraft carriers and military bases, which are crucial to the U.S. ability to project power in the Indo-Pacific. Pandemics aside, upholding international norms is essential to deterring China from other malevolent acts, including against Taiwan.

Permitting Covid-19 suits would have additional strategic benefits. In its propaganda, Beijing has sought to capitalize on its supposedly superior handling of Covid-19, claiming it demonstrates the superiority of its totalitarian political system over open, democratic society. Legal discovery could unearth information puncturing these claims.

Holding Beijing accountable would also do much to dispel its assertions that the U.S. is a declining power. While Beijing still respects U.S. military power, it routinely talks down U.S. political will and economic strength. It would face a formidable foe in an army of lawyers on an honest judicial

battlefield.

Mr. Pompeo is a distinguished fellow at the Hudson Institute. He served as director of the Central Intelligence Agency (2017-18) and secretary of state (2018-21). Mr. Rivkin practices appellate and constitutional law in Washington. He served at the Justice Department and the White House Counsel's Office in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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<Unclassified-Summary-of-Assessment-on-COVID-19-Origins.pdf>

Date: Thu, 9 Sep 2021 8:14:04 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 9 Sep 2021 8:13:25 PM -0400
Subject: Re: here's the latest line of attack today...
From: "Kristian G. Andersen" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Rasmussen, Angie [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] Edward Holmes [b6] >; Jason Gale [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Attachments: 1f173b8a-2d0d-442c-8c8b-7b6e151a325a.png

"she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up".

If she had in fact done that, she'd realize there'd be no news and no need for a second article - except to say "nothing to see here, move along".

Sigh.

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:28 PM David Morens <[b6]> wrote:
Amen and good for you! You are right that Ebright and his ilk are not only NOT experts but are harmful demogogues. They need to be called out. Because i am in government i can only fo this off the record, but i have done do again and again. Some of them are knowingly promoting false equivalences. If they interviewed a Holocaust survivor, they would say they have to give equal time and space to a Nazi murderer. They have no shame. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 9, 2021, at 18:40, Rasmussen, Angie [b6] wrote:
>
> Peter and all,
>
> I am so sorry you are still going through all of this. For what it's worth, I broke my rule of talking to disingenuous journalists and sent Mara Hvistendahl a long email telling her exactly what I think of the "experts" she's talked to and setting the record straight about what these FOIAd reports supposedly show. From what I can see, they show that you were reporting your work appropriately to NIH as required, the work itself was done in appropriate biocontainment, and, importantly, you didn't have SARS-CoV-2 or a progenitor. I also explained that previous work was published with WIV1 chimeras and that this type of study precludes doing more dangerous (and technically very difficult) virus isolation.
>
> She wanted to know whether I agreed with her two sources (likely Alina Chan or Richard Ebright, based on her prior story) that this fits the definition of GoF by NIH and I told her no and explained at length why not and the assertions that it was should disqualify any supposed "expert". Took every opportunity to dunk on their amateurish, disingenuous bullshit, while also emphasizing the importance of this work. Mara wrote back defensively, claiming she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up. I am not optimistic that the follow-up will be more balanced, but I did try to provide some juicy quotes about how her "experts" actually have no expertise, and emphasized the profound damage these people have done to this essential research. They make all of us less safe.

Hang in there. Ultimately the truth will come out and it's not going to be from the likes of the Daily Caller's inability to interpret virology data or from Jesse Bloom and all the grifters and conspiracy theorists populating the rabbit hole that he's crawled down.

Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
University of Saskatchewan
Office: b6 b6
She/her
www.vido.org

VIDO

On Sep 9, 2021, at 3:07 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

CAUTION: External to USask. Verify sender and use caution with links and attachments. Forward suspicious emails to phishing@u

Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain. https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth- alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

There's a good response from NIH: 'An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

This story is particularly irritating because if you look at the P3CO rules, it's clear they are meant for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans. Let's also not forget that the virus with a higher viral load in mice was actually because it had the spike protein of a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence - In fact, the opposite: the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find. It reduces risk!

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP
Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show
<image003.jpg>
<image007.jpg>

-
-
-
-

ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER
September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.**

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.

Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.

EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.

"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."

"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.

EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

<image005.jpg>

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)

"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."

The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.

"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.

EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.

EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.

Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.

The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review. Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

<image006.jpg>

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)

An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."

"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."

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Cheers,

Peter

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President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 8:29 PM
To: 'Garry, Robert F' b6 'Kristian G. Andersen' <b6
Cc: 'David Morens' <b6 'Edward Holmes' b6 'Jason Gale' b6 'Rasmussen, Angie' <b6 Robert Kessler < b6 'Stephen Goldstein' <b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

That's interesting about Jesse Bloom – I wasn't aware of that work and hadn't really heard of him before this year to be honest. I suspect that like many people his view of his own research is that it's highly professionally managed and carefully controlled re. biosafety. He clearly has a different view of the work at WIV & by other leading Chinese scientists and seems suspicious of their motives in many of his public comments. This can't be based on their published work – it's often excellent. It just seems like a difficulty people have teasing apart their viewpoint about the Chinese Govt from their opinion about individual scientists. Anyone who's been on the ground in China rapidly realizes that the two are not the same.

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Garry, Robert F <b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Kristian G. Andersen b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Edward Holmes b6 Jason Gale <
j.gale@bloomberg.net >; Rasmussen, Angie b6 Robert Kessler <
b6 >; Stephen Goldstein <b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen b6
Cc: David Morens <b6 >, Robert Garry b6 Edward
Holmes b6 >, Jason Gale <b6 Rasmussen,
Angie" <b6 >, Robert Kessler b6 >, Stephen
Goldstein <b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an

accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: David Morens b6 ; Garry, Robert F b6 ; Edward Holmes < b6 Jason Gale b6 Rasmussen, Angie < b6 >; Robert Kessler < b6 >; Stephen Goldstein < b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have

been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h
> NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With
> @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release
> <image001.jpg>
>
> New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
> More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
> theintercept.com
>
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"
> https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…
> "Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia
> "https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .

7h
There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6 Kristian G. Andersen b6 >; Edward Holmes < b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak < b6 wrote:
>
> To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.
>
> The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack

on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Garry, Robert F <b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen <b6; Edward Holmes <
b6
Cc: Jason Gale <b6
b6 b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6] [b6] [b6]

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Date: Wed, 19 May 2021 6:15:15 PM -0400

Subject: RE: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

To: Donald G McNeil Jr [b6];

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg

Don, I will resist the temptation to try to fill in more complexity and explain why I and many others are concerned about what we see as the simplistic stitching together of real and supposed facts to create a desired or at least satisfying whole that seems to make sense. For scientists that's a death trap. As Darwin said, and we should remember: "Nature will tell you a direct lie if she can"....

But I will mainly say, I hope that you, as an important journalist with the ability to cut through the miasmas of the biased environments in which you work, will retain the highest level of skepticism possible. As A G Maurice Raynaud (of Raynaud's disease and phenomenon) said in the 1880s about scientific inquiry: "Doubt is an excellent condition [of mind}, the exception is nearly as frequent as the rule, and it is impossible to affirm anything positively"....

To folks like me, therer are so mmany charges going around that it becomes impossible to refute them one by one, because each push-back becomes a chance to elevate false equivalency, and objective truth quickly becomes a value system with, at best, a 50-50 chance of persuading anyone.

David

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From: Donald G McNeil Jr (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 7:26 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6

Subject: Re: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

Dear David,

Thank you for this note. I've delayed answering it because I've been brooding about it because I respect you so much.

First of all, thanks for the kind words about my Times departure. It was very unpleasant and unexpected and I'm still stunned and resentful. But I'm also not big on self-pity, so I'm moving on. I don't know who your editor friend is. It's true I don't read PC culture very well. I also didn't feel I had to. I didn't think I worked in academia or some other kindergarten. For many years, The New York Times *was* a haven for grownups. We had thick skins. We also had standards, we corrected our errors, we explained our style-change decisions. I thought I was acting like a straight-arrow Timesman in Peru. I answered the students' questions truthfully because that was what I was asked to do -- engage with them on any topic they wanted. I used the word I did in order to be sure what had been said before I gave my opinion. The Times effectively fired me for using that one word -- but they have used it repeatedly not only before I did, but during their investigation of me and then even afterwards, after condemning me for using it, both in the Styles section and in John McWhorter's recent essay. What can I say? They're hypocrites. They're craven. It has always been a great place to be a reporter from; but it had become a really unpleasant place to work.

About my Medium piece: Thank you. But I don't agree that it's just fringe scientists questioning whether it might actually have been a leak. I didn't quote nonsense like phone outages or disappearing scientists. I did talk at length with Peter Daszak before I wrote. He insisted on not being quoted. And I believe him, just as I believe Tony. And I'm horrified that they get death threats, and I said that in my piece.

But even Peter said the Chinese scientists were constrained in what they could say to the WHO team because the government had a message it wanted the report to deliver. And what this all comes down to in the end

is that Peter believes Shi Zheng-Li, and that's that. And I don't think that's good enough, especially when she/her lab didn't tell the whole truth about the 4991/RaTG13 virus, and when she says things like "There was no leak from my lab and I know from conversations with others that they haven't had them either." (Effectively saying: "Take my word for it.") It's time for China to open up its lab logs, reveal what it learned when it investigated, and so on. Instead, it's gotten more and more secretive -- chasing journalists away from the labs and the bat caves, closing off access to electronic records, threatening Australia, making counter-accusations....all the things a guilty party does. It's been an inadequate, secretive investigation.

I know serious, dedicated scientists on both sides of the gain-of-function debate. Not just kooks. Accidents do happen, have happened relatively frequently. I'm no expert on biosafety levels, but if Ian Lipkin says the work being done with bat viruses, something he knows a lot about, should have been done in BSL-4 labs, I believe him enough to quote him. I do know that Dr. Shi's team trained in Galveston. But there are reports that they still weren't careful enough in China. The people at Emergent who got the vaccines mixed up were trained. Someone trained the staff at Cutter to make polio vaccine. Even trained people make lethal mistakes.

David Baltimore's "smoking gun" quote wasn't simply that the virus had a furin cleavage site, it was the pattern of the codons that inserted arginines in it that he and Kristian Andersen disagreed about. I don't pretend to have a clue as to who's wrong and who's right on questions like that.

And I hope it was clear that I was not coming down firmly on the side of the lab leak theory. I just said that it was no longer as easy to dismiss as InfoWars nonsense as it was a year ago. I know Tucker Carlson is doing a victory dance. I hate that. But I'm sticking by the notion that we are not as close to a definitive answer as we should have been after a year, and it needs a better investigation. I don't think that's false equivalence.

And thanks again for writing me such a long, thoughtful note.

Donald

On Mon, May 17, 2021 at 2:27 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Don, first impressions are sometimes the most accurate, and in your case I think this is very true of your instincts about the "lab-leak" theory.
>
> First, before I make a couple comments off the record, I need to say how sorry I am about the NYT situation, and how unfair I think it was. I've been ruminating about it for a while, and thought about emailing you with supporting thoughts and good wishes, but work overtook me. I did have a chat with a personal friend who is an NYT editor. She had mixed feelings, thinking that it was so unfair, but also blaming you for being blind to what happens in today's PC "gotcha" culture. But having come of age in the 60s, where speaking what was on your mind was still protected by first amendment rights, I realized that in your situation I might well have said the same things. And that's the way I raised my kids…. Anyway, the world needs great journalists, so what happened was a loss all around. I hope and presume you will do fine without the NYT…
>
> …About the lab-leak issue. I feel compelled to say something, off the record, because this is all so crazy, unproductive, and hurtful to legitimate science. That even someone like Nick Wade, who I don't know but who clearly did a thorough job researching his article, got led astray, is depressing. To my mind, his piece was an example of Texas Sharp-shooting, as we say in epidemiology: shooting a bullet hole in the wall and then walking up and drawing a bull's-eye around it. The agenda was clear and the attempt to show balance unconvincing. Sorry to say so. And especially since he seemed to do such a thorough deep dive.
>
> So, for the record, the lab leak theory is, according to most experts, somewhere between extremely unlikely and impossible. I and 9 others (all top experts including one Nobel laureate) wrote as much in a manuscript last summer. The "why is it almost impossible" question is addressed there. You might ask, then, why do scientists here and there keep raising alarm bells?
>
> To consider….
>
> There are very very few real experts who understand not only the experimental virology but also the epidemiology of disease emergence. I know many if not most of these folks and they are by and large in hiding. Peter Daszak, charged with being a conspirator along with Tony Fauci, has been under FBI protection because he and his family have been for over a year receiving credible death threats. One day he opened an envelope in his house and out came a fume of white powder. His wife was traumatized. He now has to be protected by a security force. He talks to the press, but that just makes the situation worse…. And all his friends and supporters are scared to death. Tony, my boss, who can't speak about this for government reasons, is protected by a guy with an AR-15 all the time, and our whole floor at NIH is protected by armed police. Eddie Holmes, the phylogeneticist who first sequenced SARS-CoV-2, has, like Peter, been locked down under death threats to his wife and children as well as he himself, and yet another colleague who I think would rather not be named, and who is a good friend, has been threatened in perhaps milder ways, and has told me many times he's afraid to speak out. He and I have both gotten threatening emails including violent language and wishing we were dead.
>
> So journalists will find it difficult to get experts to speak on the record, and they then turn to less-than-experts who get some attention by raising doubts.
>
> This whole "Gain-of-Function" alarmism has been driven by many kooks and a very few knowledgeable scientists who should know better, and their charges and claims are full of misunderstandings, what-ifs, cherry-picked facts, and even old fashioned sophistry.
>
> For example, David Baltimore, a Nobel laureate once co-authored a paper with several folks, including me and Jeff Taubenberger, who had performed the ultimate so-called GoF experiment in reconstructing the 1918 pandemic virus, pointing out the importance of doing such GoF work. Did he really say, as quoted in the Wade article, that the furin cleavage site was a marker for human manufacture? If so, he either mis-spoke, or was mis-quoted, since it's widely known that furin cleavage sites occur spontaneously in viruses in nature all the time, including in coronaviruses. Should we hold our breath for a retraction? Or Ian Lipkin's comment about the danger of BSL-2 work at Wuhan. He didn't add that work with Chinese bat viruses (mostly their genes, not the viruses themselves, and NOT including SARS or SARS-C0V-2) was rated at BSL-2 by conventional US-derived standards, that every country sets their own BSL levels, that the people in China who did so were trained by Jim LeDuc at our BSL-4 lab in Galveston, on US BSL principles, and that the BSL-2 designation was not a controversial decision for animal viruses not known to infect or cause disease in humans.
>
> And no, there were no mysterious phone outages at Wuhan in fall 2019, and no there was no unexplained disappearance of a

Wuhan scientists around the same time. And on and on.

It's very easy to spin conspiracy theories by stringing together a lot of what-ifs, innuendos, and fearful scenarios. We went through this in the McCarthy era.

And of the many good things science can do, one thing science can't do is prove a negative.

That is, as every good sophist knows, if something didn't happen, you can't ever prove that it didn't happen.

Raising the lab-leak theory to a level of false-equivalency can do great harm. During the original GoF scare a decade ago, when hysteria and foolishness ruled the day, some of our best scientists lost their research programs, graduate students and post docs lost their dissertation work and career projects, and many promising young people got out of science. Influenza pathogenesis research was set back probably 5 years. I saw bright young people leave in sorrow, and labs become demoralized and less productive, usually spinning off into less controversial work if they still had a job and funding.

Hopefully one day you'll go back and reflect on your original thoughts on lab leak. I think you had it right the first time.

Keep doing good work, we need good journalists….

David

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 9:49 AM

Subject: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory*



Donald G. McNeil Jr.

In early spring 2020, I reported an article for The New York Times on which I put the tentative headline: "New Coronavirus Is 'Clearly Not a Lab Leak,' Scientists Say."

It never ran.

For two reasons.

The chief one was that inside the Times, we were sharply divided. My colleagues who cover national security were being assured by their Trump administration sources — albeit anonymously and with no hard evidence — that it *was* a lab leak and the Chinese were covering it up. We science reporters were hearing from virologists and zoologists — on the record and in great detail — that the odds were overwhelming that it was *not* a lab leak but an animal spillover.

Frankly, the scientists had more credibility.

The other reason my story never ran was that it was 4,000 words long and full of expressions like "polybasic cleavage site," "RNA-dependent RNA polymerase gene" and "O-linked glycan shields." Editors would open it, their eyeballs would bleed, and they would close it and find something else to do.

(Back then, editors blanched even at "spike protein" and "receptor binding domain," but we've all had a crash course in virology this year, haven't we?)

Although it never ran, others like it did elsewhere. The experts all agreed that the SARS-CoV-2 virus was not a deliberate weaponization of a previously known virus and that it had no obvious signs of lab manipulation (more details below). They noted that blood sampling showed that brief "spillovers" of animal viruses into humans happen often without causing large outbreaks.

Therefore, they argued, the odds were that this was another virus that got lucky, like SARS and MERS and the 2009 pandemic flu: it had dwelled long enough inside a civet or camel or pig or something to infect human-like cells, and then had hit the big city.

For about a year, that was the general wisdom among science writers. The "lab-leak theory" migrated back to the far right where it had started — championed by the folks who brought us Pizzagate, the Plandemic, Kung Flu, Q-Anon, Stop the Steal, and the January 6 Capitol invasion. It was tarred by the fact that everyone backing it seemed to hate not just Democrats and the Chinese Communist Party, but even the Chinese themselves. It spawned racist rumors like "Chinese labs sell their dead experimental animals in food markets."

China retorting to Trump administration nonsense with nonsense of its own — such as suggesting that U.S. military officers planted the virus during a visit to Wuhan in October 2019 — did not help.

And now to the present day.

Two weeks ago, my former New York Times science news colleague Nicholas Wade wrote an article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (and on Medium) arguing that the lab-leak theory deserves a harder look.

It has since been sent to me a dozen times with notes asking "What do you think?"

My first reaction was dismissive, even though I very much respect Nick as a journalist. (Some of his work is controversial and he can be cranky, but who am I to criticize anyone on those grounds?) I covered the pandemic from its earliest days and I disagreed with his retelling of how the leak-vs.-spillover debate began.

Also, I was offended by some aspects, such as his attacks on Dr. Anthony S. Fauci of the National Institutes of Health and Peter Daszak of the EcoHealth Alliance, both of whom I have known for years; I know both are dedicated to saving lives, and they have always told me the truth — or what they honestly believed to be the truth at the time, because evidence sometimes changes. They are now both getting death threats, and that is repulsive.

The N.I.H.-funded EcoHealth Alliance does not do dangerous lab research; it doesn't even have a lab. It hunts for dangerous viruses in the field; its zoologists teach people how to safely gather samples from bats, birds, chimpanzees and other creatures fortified with claws, teeth, beaks, muscles and pathogens.

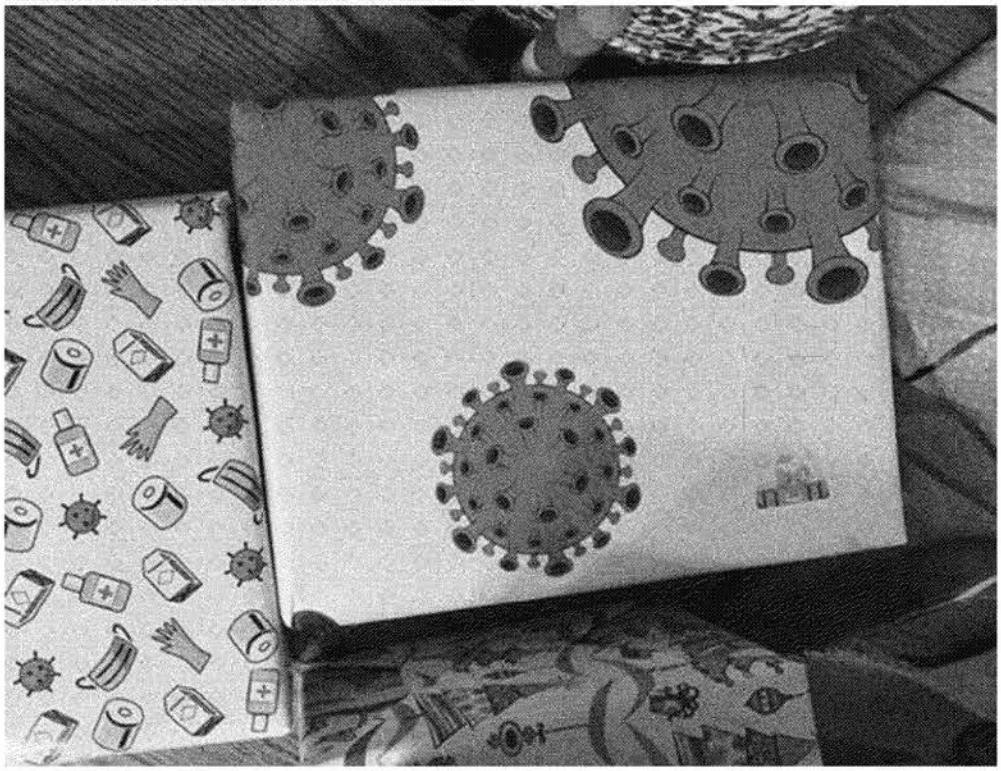
That's work I consider as essential as staffing the radar stations that watch for missiles coming over the North Pole. The Trump administration was insane to cut off funding for it. You need to know what's coming at you. Actually cooking up novel threats is a different matter, of which more below.

I was also bothered by Nick quoting Dr. Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To my mind, after being warned about the virus by his Chinese counterpart in the first week of January, Dr. Redfield failed to shout from the rooftops and move mountains — and now 600,000 Americans are dead. He also raised the specter of a flu-Covid "twindemic" that turned out to be virological alarmism.

[b6]..but...but...

The deeper I read into the papers and articles Nick cited, the clearer it became how much new information had trickled out in the last year. Not new to the most intense and well-educated followers of this topic, but new to the greater public debate. I include articles like this, this, this, this and this by Yuri Deigin, Rossana Segretto, Milton Leitenberg, Josh Rogin, Nicholson Baker and others.

And more and and more scientists feel misled.



I now agree with Nick's central conclusion: We still do not know the source of this awful pandemic. We may never know. But the argument that it *could* have leaked out of the Wuhan Institute of Virology or a sister lab in Wuhan has become considerably stronger than it was a year ago, when the screaming was so loud that it drowned out serious discussion.

And China's lack of candor is disturbing. It denies access to the institute's lab logs and whatever messages were swapped during its own investigations, took down 2018 statements critical of lab biosecurity protocols, retaliated against Australia for advocating an open investigation and sharply restricted the W.H.O. investigators.

Calls for a better probe are mounting. Last week, 18 biologists, including leading and outspoken experts on this pandemic like the Harvard epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch and Yale immunologist Akiko Iwasaki, published a letter in Science calling for a new investigation and demanding that Chinese labs and public health agencies open their records to outside scrutiny.

To my mind, China could be forgiven for its standoffishness in early 2020. It was busy fighting its own pandemic. And if China had, say, arrogantly offered to teach the American C.D.C. how to investigate America's killer hamburgers — the equivalent of the way the Trump administration spoke to China back then — we would have snubbed them too.

But now, 17 months later, China is persistently acting like a nation hiding something.

Also worrying: the hunt for the spillover theory's smoking gun — a very closely related natural virus in a human or an animal — has gone on for over a year. Success would mean big prizes for the discoverer — especially from the Chinese government, which could say "See??"

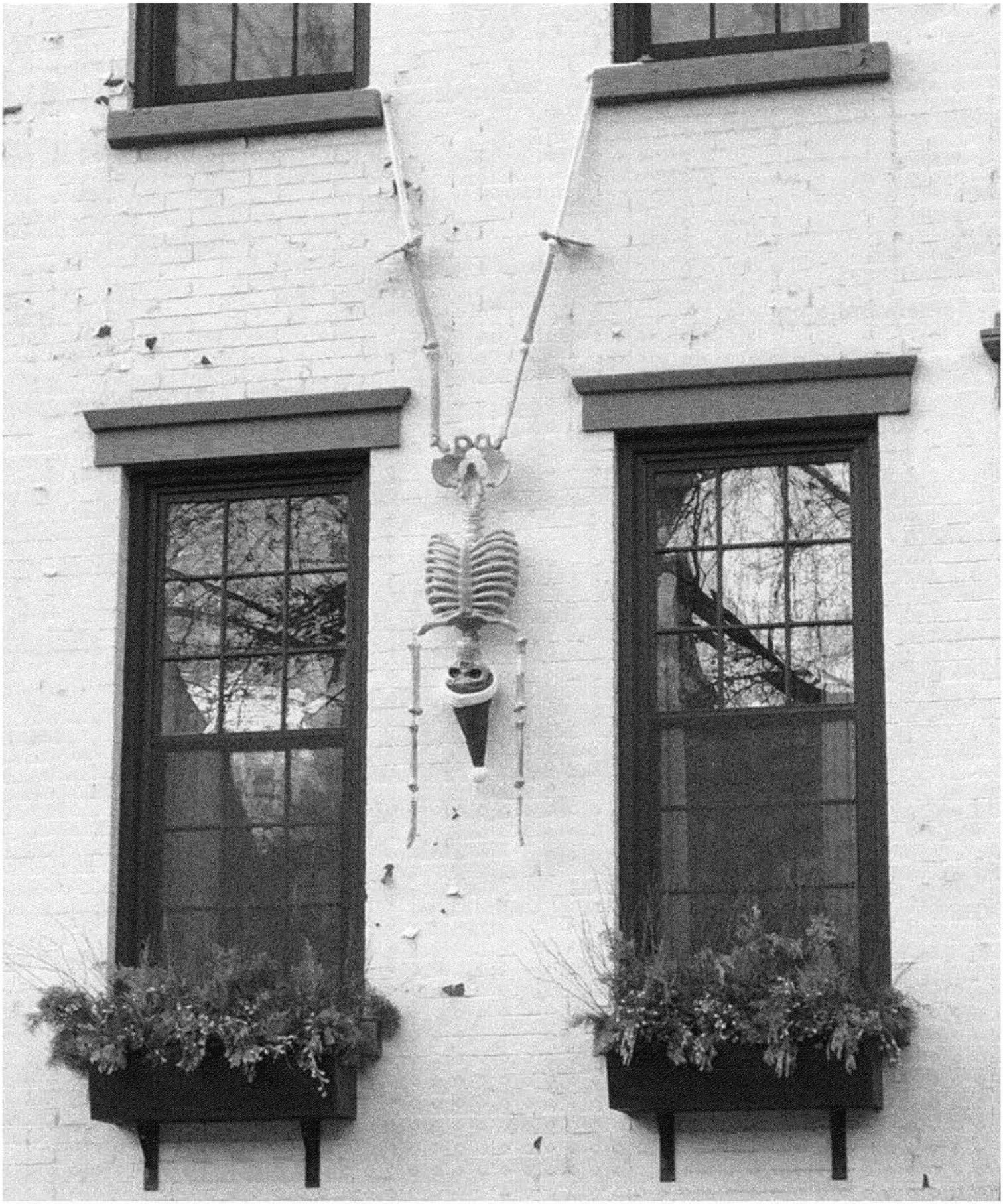
And yet — zip. That doesn't mean it won't be found. But by now we might have expected at least some smoking shell casings.

I had been skeptical of the "lab leak" theory because animal spillover is such an obvious answer. Genetics has proven that almost every disease mankind has faced jumped from animals: bubonic plague from rodents, measles probably from cows, whooping cough maybe from dogs, and so on.

Also, the leak idea was just *too* conveniently conspiratorial.

I've covered several pandemics and studied others and one element is consistent: they start in utter confusion that defies any sense that an evil genius at work. Doctors know something's wrong, but aren't sure what. That was true when American veterans started dying of pneumonia after a 1976 convention (Legionnaire's disease); when the Bronx Zoo's birds started dropping dead in 1999 (West Nile virus); when young nurses fell ill in Mexico City in 2009 (swine flu); when camel butchers died in Saudi Arabia (MERS); and when Brazilian babies were born with shrunken heads (Zika).

This pandemic's opening days were also shrouded in fog, and yes, there *was* a government coverup. But it was outed immediately and it didn't emanate from Beijing.



In late December 2019, doctors at hospitals near the Huanan Seafood Market began seeing a strange viral pneumonia they couldn't identify. On Dec. 30, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission issued a warning.

It was quickly picked by disease-alert websites like FluTrackers and ProMED; the W.H.O. put out an alert the next day. The New York Times wrote its first article on January 6, from Beijing; I started helping my China colleagues soon after.

By that time, one coverup had been underway for a week. Wuhan's politically ambitious mayor, Zhou Xianwang, was eager to protect the local party congress he had scheduled for January and the pot-luck dinner for 40,000 Wuhanese he hoped would get him into the Guinness Book of Records.

On January 1, his police silenced the nervous doctors. The Hainan Seafood Market was closed and hosed down.

That was the equivalent of trampling a crime scene. The market's wild game sellers — who might have had the infected animal, if there was one — scattered. Any live animals or fresh meat probably went to other markets or into the trash. Customers disappeared. The chance to use the market as the hub of a good epidemiological investigation was lost.

At the same time, other events occurred that looked like coverups, but maybe weren't. As soon as it was clear that the threat was a dangerous new coronavirus, the local health commission and then the national one ordered diagnostic and genetics labs to destroy their samples or surrender them to high-level biosecurity labs. Most labs chose incineration — another crime scene wrecked.

That smacked of coverup, and was treated as such by the Trump administration, but it's actually standard safety procedure to prevent outbreaks. Our C.D.C. gave the same order in 2014 when it realized that hospital labs had samples from Ebola patients being treated in Dallas and Omaha. "We told the labs in Texas and Nebraska to destroy them or send them to Fort Detrick," Dr. Pierre E. Rollin, who recently retired from the C.D.C after 26 years of fighting global outbreaks, told me. "You can call that a cover-up, but it was a public health decision."

During those first days in Wuhan, a major misconception circulated — that the virus did not spread easily between people. The W.H.O. repeated it, so did we. But that was not necessarily deliberate misinformation. With the market closed, the epicenter had scattered a few dozen cases across a city of 11 million. Very few PCR tests existed, and it was the height of flu season. At such times, it's hard to know who infected whom with what.

Also, I don't believe the image of China as a Teflon pyramid with Xi Jinping at the apex, the evil emperor who sees every sparrow that falls. It's like other big countries, even totalitarian ones: messy, with competing scientists and petty bureaucrats. Its flaws often become public despite Beijing's rigid control of the internet.

Each day back then, the rumors got more bizarre. Some scientists claimed the virus had snake genes. Others said it was part H.I.V. , triggering claims that it was a bio-weapon.

Some of that fog of war lifted after Beijing sent Dr. Zhong Nanshan, the country's renowned epidemiologist, to Wuhan to demand the truth. On January 20th, Dr. Zhong warned on national TV that the virus was spreading rapidly and that outsiders should stay away. On January 23, Wuhan was cut off from the world, Mayor Xian apologized, and China launched its brutal but amazingly successful effort to crush its epidemic.

The first article I know of blaming the Wuhan Institute of Virology ran on January 26 in the Washington Times, a conservative paper founded by the Unification Church. It seemed based on two elements — the lab was in the same city (albeit nine miles from the market), and a brief, speculative quote from an Israeli biowarfare expert, Dany Shoham.

"Certain laboratories in the institute have probably been engaged, in terms of research and development in Chinese [biological weapons], at least collaterally, yet not as a principal facility of the Chinese BW alignment," the paper quoted Dr. Shoham as saying. Any work on biological weapons would be "definitely covert," he added.

When I reached Dr. Shoham by telephone later, he spoke very cautiously. He had not been misquoted, he said, but he emphasized that he had never said that deadly virus came from that lab. He had said only that it "was possible" that such a virus could have come from such a lab.

But the rumor was off and running.

Then, on February 3 — a week later — scientists from that Institute produced what smelled like a smoking gun.

They published an article on Nature's open-access website saying one of the hundreds of coronaviruses gathered from bat caves that was in their freezers was a 96.2 percent match to SARS-CoV-2.

They called it RaTG13 (indicating a *R*hinolophus *a*ffinis horseshoe bat captured in *T*ong *G*uan cave in Yunnan in 20*13*).

For conspiracy theorists, that was the clincher — if the lab had a 96 percent match, it must have leaked the killer.

But many of the world's top virologists leapt to say "Not so fast."

Coronaviruses mutate slowly, so a 4 percent mismatch in the 30,000 base pairs of the two viruses meant RaTG13 and SARS-CoV-2 had diverged maybe 40 years ago, evolutionary geneticists said.

On February 16, as rumors swirled, five of the world's top virologists got together to publish a letter on virological.org explaining why animal origin was more likely.

The letter, titled "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," was later republished in the journal Nature.

Its basic argument was that any lab trying to make a super-dangerous virus would start with the backbone of one already known to be pretty dangerous, like 2002 SARS. This new virus was so different from SARS, especially in its receptor binding domain — the crucial bit where the spike protein binds to the ACE2 receptor on the surface of a human cell — that logically no one would have chosen it.

The binding domain was much closer to one that had been recently found in pangolin viruses, so it was likely the pandemic virus had jumped from bats to an animal — perhaps pangolins but not necessarily.

Also, the new virus had a cleavage site unlike those in related coronaviruses. (After binding to a cell, the spike has to "cleave"

or split open, to meld with the surface and inject its RNA.) The new virus's cleavage site was an unusual set of amino acids in an unusual spot on the genome. Such unexpected choices seemed more likely to happen during the constant random evolution that goes on in nature rather than the logic-driven "let's try this next" methods of a lab.

Also the virus's spikes had "glycans" which act as shields to protect them from antibodies. A virus sunbathing in a friendly lab cell culture wouldn't need to evolve shields, while a virus constantly fighting off immune system attacks because it was evolving inside an animal would, they argued.

Therefore, they concluded, "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."

The paper's first author, Kristian G. Andersen of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, is still vigorously defending the paper's basic premise — that an animal origin is by far the most likely.

But other eminent virologists, including at least one of his co-authors, are wavering.

During the uproar that ensued after the institute revealed that the RaTG13 strain was in its freezers, Dr. Daszak argued that merely having a virus in a frozen fecal pellet meant little. Infections take place only when viruses are warmed up and growing in cell cultures or animals.

Dr. Daszak had worked for years with Dr. Shi Zheng-li, the "Bat Woman" who now runs the Wuhan institute. His zoologists and field veterinarians had taught her bat-sampling — a dangerous practice even in caves with tourists in bathing suits wandering around.

Freezers contain hundreds of viruses. It is too expensive to fully sequence all of them and impossible to grow them all out in cell culture, he explained. So labs create a set of "bookmarks." They sequence one short gene, called RdRP, that seldom mutates and keep a list of their RdRPs. Sometimes they post their lists to a public database like GISAID or Genbank.

Since the world had previously been looking only for relatives of the dangerous 2002 SARS or MERS, he said, labs would care only if a virus' RdRP gene closely matched those.

"If it doesn't, it's of no interest, so you pop it back in the freezer," he said.

Later, if a new dangerous virus turns up, labs can check their bookmarks for a match, thaw that one out and sequence all of it. That was why RaTG13 was found so quickly, he said. Ditto for pangolin virus sequences found in the freezers of the South China Agricultural University.

Because there were no viruses with closer RdRP matches either in public databanks or in a private Wuhan Institute list of 630 unposted RdRP genes he had seen, he said, the Wuhan lab presumably held nothing closer than a 40-year-distant relative of the killer virus.

"Believe me, if there had been, *no one* would have kept that a secret," he said to me more than a year ago. "It would be a huge discovery. We'd be over the moon."

Dr. Shi herself later told Scientific American that, when news of the new virus erupted, her first fear was that it had come from her institute. She did not sleep for days, she said, until she had finished checking her lab's logs and assured herself that it had not.

Since then, though, more has come to light about the work done by Dr. Shi's teams.

The most startling bit of information was that, rather than "finding" RaTG13 in her freezers in February, Dr. Shi had worked with it since at least 2016, but under a different name, RaBtCoV/4991.

RaBtCoV/4991 had not been gathered at random but from a mineshaft in which miners digging bat guano got pneumonia, some fatally. Dr. Shi's lab sequenced enough of it to be able to say it was the most "SARS-like" of the viruses from that investigation.

There were arguments over whether the miners died of fungal pneumonia, viral pneumonia or both, but that link made it a likely suspect for any lab wanting to explore dangerous viruses. Not mentioning her previous work with it was troubling.

Also, Dr. Shi was trained by Ralph S. Baric of the University of North Carolina in building "chimera" viruses — taking, for example, the spike protein from a new virus and splicing it to the backbone of a known one like SARS. He invented "no-see-um" techniques that left no trace of the splice.

(Interestingly, Dr. Baric is one of the signers of the letter to Science demanding a more thorough investigation of all Wuhan labs.)

Then, to see if the new chimeras could infect people, they were tested against human airway cells and "humanized" mice — mice bred to have human ACE-2 receptors on their organs.

There is debate over whether this is truly "gain of function" research. Some argue that gain of function strictly involves taking a virus already *known* to endanger humans and trying to make it more lethal or more transmissible.

So Dr. Fauci was answering truthfully in his bitter exchange with Senator Rand Paul on May 11.

But many other scientists feel this is a distinction without a difference. They feel that building any new virus from suspect parts and then seeing if it infects humans is just as risky.

Like nuclear bomb testing, the need for "gain of function" research is hotly contested.

Proponents argue that it is the only way to stay ahead of epidemics: in a world full of emerging diseases, if you can figure out which pathogens are only a few amino acids tweaks shy of disaster, you can develop and stockpile vaccines and antibodies against them.

Opponents say that, noble as that goal may be, it is inherently too dangerous to pursue by building Frankensteins and poking them to see how strong they are.

Despite constantly rising biosafety levels, viruses we already know to be lethal, from smallpox to SARS, have repeatedly broken loose by accident.

Most leaks infect or kill just a few people before they are stopped by isolation and/or vaccination. But not all: scientists now believe that the H1N1 seasonal flu that killed thousands every year from 1977 to 2009 was influenza research gone feral. The strain first appeared in eastern Russia in 1977 and its genes were initially identical to a 1950 strain; that could have happened only if it had been in a freezer for 27 years. It also initially behaved as if it had been deliberately attenuated, or weakened. So scientists suspect it was a Russian effort to make a vaccine against a possible return of the 1918 flu. And then, they theorize, the vaccine virus, insufficiently weakened, began spreading.

Also, Dr. Shi's teams had done work on inserting cleavage sites into viruses and seeing if that enhanced their ability to infect human cells.

All this raises a disturbing possibility: What if some Wuhan scientist — someone in Dr. Shi's lab or perhaps at the Wuhan Center for Disease Control right near the market, or possibly some military scientist she trained but could not control — did something like take the likely suspect virus RaBtCoV/4991 and use it as the "backbone" for a set of chimeras with different receptor binding domains? What if that scientist was trying in 2019 to attach binding domains from viruses recently found in dying pangolins seized from wildlife smugglers in southern China? What if someone got tempted to add a cleavage site to see if that supercharged it?

What if various such chimeras were passaged through cultures of human cells or humanized mice? Wouldn't that speed up mutations into forms likely to infect humans even faster than nature can? Wouldn't that mean that something that looked like the current pandemic strain *could* emerge, polybasic cleavage sites, O-linked glycans and all?

And what if someone doing that work in a less secure lab than should have been permitted got infected before catching the subway home?

It's a lot of ifs, and it's pure speculation, which has been going on since mid-last year.

Jon Cohen of Science magazine put essentially these very questions to Dr. Shi back in August, 2020.

She said no such work took place in her lab, and that the RaBtCoV/4991 virus had only been sequenced, not isolated or grown out as a virus before the sample was used up. Everyone in her lab had tested negative for antibodies to SARS-like coronaviruses so there was no evidence of an outbreak inside, she said. And she had been assured through regular conversations with other Wuhan labs that that they had no leaks either.

Doubts have been raised about that, including the question: since Covid-19 was racing through Wuhan in early 2020, how likely would it be that *no one* in her lab tested antibody-positive? Wouldn't some have gotten infected outside?

Ultimately, much of the debate comes down to this: Is Dr. Shi telling the whole truth? And even if she is, are all her similarly skilled colleagues in Wuhan? Are they being allowed to do so by their government — which has a history of silencing scientists?

Chinese scientists were allowed to interact with W.H.O. investigators only in a very tightly controlled way and very little of the report was devoted to the lab leak theory, which it all but dismissed.

Opening up the 2019 logs of every lab in Wuhan and the 2019–2020 emails between scientists and health officials would go a long way to restoring trust.

And the failure to discover any wild viruses that look like evolutionary intermediate steps on the way to SARS-Cov-2 is troubling.

So virologists are feeling more doubts.

Nick Wade quoted David Baltimore, who won the 1975 Nobel Prize for his work with viruses, as saying the specific amino acid sequences in the cleavage site made "a powerful challenge to the idea of a natural origin." (This has prompted a complex debate among evolutionary geneticists over which specific rungs on the RNA-DNA ladder are statistically most likely to appear in a bat virus.)

I spoke about Nick's article last week with Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, the renowned Columbia University virus hunter who was one of the five co-authors on the seminal "proximal origin" paper.

He favored a natural origin theory, he said, in part because he had assumed that all the Wuhan Institute's 2019 work with SARS-like viruses had been done in its top-level BSL-4 lab, which was cleared to operate in 2017. (State Department cables from 2018 raised questions about how well-run the lab was.)

But later he learned of studies with Dr. Shi's name on them showing that work he considers dangerous had been done in level BSL-2 labs, which he considers highly porous to leaks, not just in 2016, but in 2020.

"That's screwed up," he said. "It shouldn't have happened. People should not be looking at bat viruses in BSL-2 labs. My view has changed."

That is still not, as he pointed out, direct evidence of a lab leak. There *is no proof* of a leak.

But the Occam's Razor argument — what's the likeliest explanation, animal or lab? — keeps shifting in the direction of the latter.

The hardest evidence that it was an animal is still what it was early last year: On January 1, right after the market was closed down, and then again on January 12, Huazhong Agricultural University and Dr. Shi's Institute gathered almost 600 samples from the block-long warren of shuttered stalls.

Of those swabs, about six percent were positive for the virus, according to Xinhua, China's state news agency. Most came from the western end, where the wildlife was sold. And most, Dr. Shi said, were from spots near or below floor level — the handles of roll down steel shutters and the drains over the floor gutters.

Finding virus in six percent of surface samples was more than might be expected even in a hospital during flu season, Trevor Bedford, an evolutionary geneticist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle who does flu studies told me last year.

And the most logical explanation for finding that much virus on the floor and in the drains, he speculated, was not coughing humans. It was the blood of a butchered animal being sloshed around as the market was hosed out.

Yes, there were cases in early December with no connection to that market, but that's not impossible. Livestock is shipped in batches, Wuhan has other live markets. Also, viruses are known to create "stuttering chains of transmission" as they become more transmissible. We've seen the rise of increasingly transmissible variants this year and we know this virus alternates between rare transmission and superspreading.

And the wildlife trade is not some dinky smuggling operation. As the W.H.O. report detailed, there are large farms in China raising civets, badgers and other formerly wild animals for food. A bat virus could have raced through them, adapting itself to more human-like animals, the same way the human virus raced through Dutch mink farms.

Also, farmers all over Asia enter caves to dig bat guano for garden fertilizer. A study Dr. Daszak's alliance did on villagers living near caves found that three percent had antibodies to bat viruses. That translates to up 7 million inhabitants of rural southeast Asia potentially catching such viruses each year. There may be many small outbreaks that die out without spreading far. Ebola did that at least 19 times we know of between 1976 and 2014, the year the virus reached a big city for the first time.

So there we are. All we have so far is speculation, and all the explanations are unsatisfactory.

The whole thing may just be a cold case, and stay that way forever. But there are more embers left to sift. The whole world, China included, needs a hard answer, *whoever* is to blame — so we can prevent this from happening again.

**The title is from the 1964 film "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love The Bomb," which is about human lies and safety failures — and ends with clips of atomic weapons tests depicted as the real thing. Not that I think the pandemic is funny. But neither is nuclear war.*

Donald G. McNeil Jr.

New York Times, 1976–2021. Global health beat 2002–2021. Last assignment: lead reporter on the Covid-19 pandemic.
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Date: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 1:20:36 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 1:20:16 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Intercept piece is now out.
From: Edward Holmes [b6]>
To: Jason Gale [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6]

It is just so tedious and so bloody stupid.

Other than the abuse, the worst thing is every day that goes by, and the more shit that is thrown, the less likely we are of finding out what really happened.

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases & Biosecurity,
School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T
E [b6]

On 10 Sep 2021, at 3:17 pm, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

Well done, Angie, for being a voice of reason. I'm sorry my profession seems intent on piling on you, David. Personally, I find this whole line of inquiry incredibly boring. Hope you're able to switch off soon and get some rest. Jason

From: [b6] At: 09/10/21 15:09:54 UTC+10:00
To: [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:), [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Intercept piece is now out.

Really appreciate you speaking out Angie. I just read the piece in the Intercept and it's very upsetting: https://theintercept.com/2021/09/09/covid-origins-gain-of-function-research/

What you said is correct – without evidence of ability to infect people, or transmit even from one animal to another, it can't possibly meet the NIH definition of GoF, which is now officially the P3CO definition as follows (from https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf):

Section II. Scope and Definitions For the purposes of this HHS P3CO Framework:

A. A potential pandemic pathogen (PPP) is a pathogen that satisfies both of the following:

1. It is likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations; and

2. It is likely highly virulent and likely to cause significant morbidity and/or mortality in humans.

B. An enhanced PPP is defined as a PPP resulting from the enhancement of the transmissibility and/or virulence of a pathogen. Enhanced PPPs do not include naturally occurring pathogens that are circulating in or have been recovered from nature, regardless of their pandemic potential

How on any planet is a bat-CoV that's never been seen in people, "likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations"? It seems the 8 scientists that believed this to be GoF base it on one of the chimeras growing faster than the parental strain early on, while forgetting that 1) these are bat viruses have never been shown to infect people, or that, as you say Angie – the growth rates of the parental strain caught up with it by the end of the expt. I'm v. disappointed that Vincent Racaniello is one of these scientists – he should know better.

I'm hoping that more will speak out and point to the differences between their version of what GoF is, and the actual definition that we're all supposed to adhere to, and by the way that NIH uses as the agency of note to decide!

NIH DOCUMENTS PROVIDE NEW EVIDENCE U.S. FUNDED GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH IN WUHAN

U.S.-funded experiments in China posed biosafety risks but did not cause Covid-19 pandemic, scientists say.

<Mail Attachment.jpeg><Mail Attachment.jpeg><Mail Attachment.jpeg>

Sharon Lerner, Mara Hvistendahl, Maia Hibbett

September 9 2021, 9:03 p.m.

DOCUMENTS OBTAINED BY The Intercept contain new evidence that the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the nearby Wuhan University Center for Animal Experiment, along with their collaborator, the U.S.-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, have engaged in what the U.S. government defines as

"gain-of-function research of concern," intentionally making viruses more pathogenic or transmissible in order to study them, despite stipulations from a U.S. funding agency that the money not be used for that purpose.

Grant money for the controversial experiment came from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is headed by Anthony Fauci. The award to EcoHealth Alliance, a research organization which studies the spread of viruses from animals to humans, included subawards to Wuhan Institute of Virology and East China Normal University. The principal investigator on the grant is EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak, who has been a key voice in the search for Covid-19's origins.

Scientists unanimously told The Intercept that the experiment, which involved infecting genetically engineered mice with "chimeric" hybrid viruses, could not have directly sparked the pandemic. None of the viruses listed in the write-ups of the experiment are related to the virus that causes Covid-19, SARS-CoV-2, closely enough to have evolved into it. Still, several scientists said the new information, which the NIH released after it was sued by The Intercept, points to biosafety concerns, highlighting a general lack of oversight for research on pathogens and raising questions about what other information has not been publicly disclosed.

"As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19, by an airborne coronavirus.

<Mail Attachment.jpeg>

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci listens during a briefing on the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on March 26, 2020 in Washington, DC.

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The experiment also raises questions about assertions from Fauci and NIH Director Francis Collins that NIH-funded projects at the Wuhan Institute of Virology did not involve gain-of-function research. In May, Fauci testified before Congress: "The NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." The documents do not establish whether Fauci was directly aware of the work.

Scientists working under a 2014 NIH grant to the EcoHealth Alliance to study bat coronaviruses combined the genetic material from a "parent" coronavirus

known as WIV1 with other viruses. They twice submitted summaries of their work that showed that, when in the lungs of genetically engineered mice, three altered bat coronaviruses at times reproduced far more quickly than the original virus on which they were based. The altered viruses were also somewhat more pathogenic, with one causing the mice to lose significant weight. The researchers reported, "These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice."

But the terms of the grant clearly stipulated that the funding could not be used for gain-of-function experiments. The grant conditions also required the researchers to immediately report potentially dangerous results and stop their experiments pending further NIH review. According to both the EcoHealth Alliance and NIH, the results were reported to the agency, but NIH determined that rules designed to restrict gain-of-function research did not apply.

The Intercept consulted 11 scientists who are virologists or work in adjacent fields and hold a range of views on both the ethics of gain-of-function research and the Covid-19 origins search. Seven said that the work appears to meet NIH's criteria for gain-of-function research.

One said that the experiment "absolutely does not meet the bar" for gain-of-function research. "You can't predict that these viruses would be more pathogenic, or even pathogenic at all in people," said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist with the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization at the University of Saskatchewan. "They also did not study transmissibility at all in these experiments," meaning that the scientists did not look at whether the viruses could spread across a population.

Three experts said that, while they did not have enough knowledge of U.S. policies to comment on whether the research met NIH criteria, the experiment involving humanized mice was unnecessarily risky.

One virologist, Vincent Racaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Columbia University, said while he considered the mouse experiment described in the document to clearly fall into the gain-of-function category, he didn't see it as problematic. "You can do some kinds of gain-of-function research that then has unforeseen consequences and may be a problem, but that's not the case here," said Racaniello.

Robert Kessler, communications manager for EcoHealth Alliance, denied that the work on the humanized mice met the definition of gain-of-function research. Kessler insisted that bat viruses are not potential pandemic pathogens

because, he said, "a bat virus is not known to be able to infect humans." The proposal justified the work on WIV1 by explaining that it is "not a select agent" — referring to a list of closely monitored toxins and biological agents that have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health — and "has not been shown to cause human infections, and has not been shown to be transmissible between humans."

But the group's bat coronavirus research was focused on the very threat that bat viruses pose to people. Kessler did acknowledge that, while the original bat coronavirus in the experiment did not spread among humans, the research was designed to gauge how bat coronaviruses could evolve to infect humans.

All but two of the scientists consulted agreed that, whatever title it is given, the newly public experiment raised serious concerns about the safety and oversight of federally funded research. "In my point of view, the debate about the definition of 'gain-of-function' has been too much focused on technical aspects," said Jacques van Helden, a professor of bioinformatics at Aix-Marseille Université. "The real question is whether or not research has the potential to create or facilitate the selection of viruses that might infect humans." The experiments described in the proposal clearly do have that potential, he said.

NIH spokesperson Elizabeth Deatrick said that the agency had considered the research — and decided not to restrict it under its own rules. "In 2016, NIAID determined that the work was not subject to the Gain-of-Function (GoF) research funding pause and the subsequent HHS P3CO Framework," Deatrick wrote, referring to criteria put in place in 2017 to guide the agency's funding decisions about research that involves, or is reasonably anticipated to involve, potential pandemic pathogens.

Republican members of Congress have alleged, without sufficient evidence, that gain-of-function research in Wuhan sparked the coronavirus pandemic. As part of an inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, they have twice grilled Fauci in Congress on his role as NIAID director.

In a heated exchange in July, Republican Sen. Rand Paul accused Fauci of lying when he claimed that NIH did not fund gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Experts now say that the documents support the contention that NIH funded gain-of-function work, though not in the specific instance where Paul alleged it. "There's no question," said Racaniello, of Columbia University, who pointed to the decreased weight of the mice infected with the chimeric viruses that was described in the research summaries sent to NIH. "From the weight

loss, it's gain of function. Tony Fauci is wrong saying it's not."

But the documents do not prove Paul's claim that Fauci was lying, as they do not make clear whether Fauci read them. Nor do they in any way support Paul's allegation that Fauci was "responsible for 4 million people around the world dying of a pandemic" — or that anyone intentionally caused Covid-19. What is clear is that program officers at NIAID, the agency that Fauci oversees, did know about the research.

A paragraph describing the research, as well as two figures illustrating its results, were included in both a 2018 progress report on the bat coronavirus grant and an application for its 2019 renewal. And NIH confirmed that it reviewed them.

"NIH has never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans," the agency said in a statement, echoing remarks by Collins, the NIH director, posted to its website in May. "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease." Similar research funded by NIH had aided in the development of vaccines against the coronavirus, the statement continued.

The White House did not respond to questions about the research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

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USA

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 8:13 PM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Rasmussen, Angie [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]; Jason Gale < [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Stephen Goldstein < [b6]
Subject: Re: here's the latest line of attack today...

"she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up".

If she had in fact done that, she'd realize there'd be no news and no need for a second article - except to say "nothing to see here, move along".

Sigh.

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:28 PM David Morens [b6] wrote:

> Amen and good for you! You are right that Ebright and his ilk are not only NOT experts but are harmful demogogues. They need to be called out. Because i am in government i can only fo this off the record, but i have done do again and again. Some of them are knowingly promoting false equivalences. If they interviewed a Holocaust survivor, they would say they have to give equal time and space to a Nazi murderer. They have no shame. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> David M Morens
>
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Sep 9, 2021, at 18:40, Rasmussen, Angie [b6] wrote:
> >
> > Peter and all,
> >
> > I am so sorry you are still going through all of this. For what it's worth, I broke my rule of talking to disingenuous journalists and sent Mara Hvistendahl a long email telling her exactly what I think of the "experts" she's talked to and setting the record straight about what these FOIAd reports supposedly show. From what I can see, they show that you were reporting your work appropriately to NIH as

required, the work itself was done in appropriate biocontainment, and, importantly, you didn't have SARS-CoV-2 or a progenitor. I also explained that previous work was published with WIV1 chimeras and that this type of study precludes doing more dangerous (and technically very difficult) virus isolation.

She wanted to know whether I agreed with her two sources (likely Alina Chan or Richard Ebright, based on her prior story) that this fits the definition of GoF by NIH and I told her no and explained at length why not and the assertions that it was should disqualify any supposed "expert". Took every opportunity to dunk on their amateurish, disingenuous bullshit, while also emphasizing the importance of this work. Mara wrote back defensively, claiming she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up. I am not optimistic that the follow-up will be more balanced, but I did try to provide some juicy quotes about how her "experts" actually have no expertise, and emphasized the profound damage these people have done to this essential research. They make all of us less safe.

Hang in there. Ultimately the truth will come out and it's not going to be from the likes of the Daily Caller's inability to interpret virology data or from Jesse Bloom and all the grifters and conspiracy theorists populating the rabbit hole that he's crawled down.

Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
University of Saskatchewan
Office: b6 b6
She/her
www.vido.org

<Mail Attachment.png>

On Sep 9, 2021, at 3:07 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

CAUTION: External to USask. Verify sender and use caution with links and attachments. Forward suspicious emails to phishing@usask.ca

Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain.
https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth- alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

There's a good response from NIH: 'An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move

swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

This story is particularly irritating because if you look at the P3CO rules, it's clear they are meant for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans. Let's also not forget that the virus with a higher viral load in mice was actually because it had the spike protein of a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence - In fact, the opposite: the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find. It reduces risk!

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP

Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show

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<image007.jpg>

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-
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ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.**

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.

Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.

EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.

"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."

"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.

EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

<image005.jpg>

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)

"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."

The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.

"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.

EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.

EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.

Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.

The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review.

Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

<image006.jpg>

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)

An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."

"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread

disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."

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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 8:29 PM
To: 'Garry, Robert F' [b6] 'Kristian G. Andersen' [b6]

Cc: 'David Morens' [b6] 'Edward Holmes' < [b6] 'Jason Gale' < [b6] 'Rasmussen, Angie' < [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] ; 'Stephen Goldstein' < [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

That's interesting about Jesse Bloom – I wasn't aware of that work and hadn't really heard of him before this year to be honest. I suspect that like many people his view of his own research is that it's highly professionally managed and carefully controlled re. biosafety. He clearly has a different view of the work at WIV & by other leading Chinese scientists and seems suspicious of their motives in many of his public comments. This can't be based on their published work – it's often excellent. It just seems like a difficulty people have teasing apart their viewpoint about the Chinese Govt from their opinion about individual scientists. Anyone who's been on the ground in China rapidly realizes that the two are not the same.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]; Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] Robert Garry [b6] Edward Holmes [b6] Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>, "Rasmussen, Angie" [b6], Robert Kessler [b6] Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Garry, Robert F b6; Edward Holmes b6; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie b6; Robert Kessler b6
Stephen Goldstein b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
>
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .

15h

NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With

@fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release

<image001.jpg>

New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab

More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.

theintercept.com

<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence" https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989-understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…

"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988-risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…

<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl

@MaraHvistendahl

.

7h

There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with

relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6 Kristian G. Andersen b6
Edward Holmes <edward.ho b6 Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>;
b6 Robert Kessler b6
b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

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---

From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen b6; Edward Holmes < b6
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6
b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes b6
Cc: Jason Gale b6
b6
b6
b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes b6 wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
>
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> >
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new-details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 8:53:27 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 8:53:23 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Intercept piece is now out.
From: "Rasmussen, Angie" b6
To: Garry, Robert F b6
CC: Peter Daszak b6 ; Kristian G. Andersen b6 David Morens b6 Edward Holmes b6 >; Jason Gale b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Stephen Goldstein b6
Attachments: image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.png

This is such garbage. I explained to Mara at length why weight loss in transgenic mice and viral RNA cannot be used to assess pathogenicity and transmissibility in people. I also said that Alina specifically is a hobbyist with zero relevant experience and should not be trusted as a source. Not surprised that Mara wrote this but if "adjacent fields" includes Alina, that's all I need to know. And Jesse "As a Virologist" Bloom is clearly an outlier in our profession. 8/11 consulted suggests it was Chan, Bloom, Ebright, Relman, Lipsitch, etc and evidently Racaniello. If you ask mostly people who you know will say "yep, gain of function, shut it down" then of course you'll get a majority of "virologists and adjacent fields" confirming your thesis. It's shoddy journalism.

Vincent Racaniello was my PhD mentor and I have enormous respect for him, but that said, he doesn't work on anything that would ever remotely meet the criteria for P3CO oversight and this quote leads me to believe that he doesn't know what the NIH definition is. Also given that Mara completely blew past a NIH spokesperson saying it didn't meet the definition of P3 and left out all the context I provided about why this doesn't fit the definition, I also think it's possible Vincent was quoted out of context. Ugh. I'm sorry, Peter. This is a flaming pile of hot garbage, especially given what Bob points out below.

On Sep 10, 2021, at 05:45, Garry, Robert F b6 > wrote:

Just asking questions, but how are the exp described in Peter's grants somehow GoF and experiments here aren't? https://www.mdpi.com/1999- 4915/12/9/987/htm

"We incorporated a membrane-anchored form of the SARS-CoV-2 spike receptor binding domain (RBD) in place of the neuraminidase (NA) coding sequence in an influenza virus also possessing a mutation that reduces the affinity of hemagglutinin for its sialic acid receptor."
"The viral supernatant from reverse genetics was blind passaged twice in MDCK-SIAT1-TMPRSS2 cells at three-day intervals. Upon the final passage, the cytopathic effect was evident in the well containing ΔNA(RBD)-Flu, suggesting the presence of a replicating virus."

Glass house-stones?
""As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19, by an airborne coronavirus."

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 5:20 AM
To: Kristian G. Andersen b6 >; David Morens b6 >
Cc: Rasmussen, Angie b6 >; Garry, Robert F b6 Edward Holmes b6 >; Jason Gale b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 ; Stephen Goldstein b6

Subject: RE: Intercept piece is now out.

> External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Here's the last part of the story, with a really irritating quote from Alina Chan, who wants even more data to be released. At some point, there is no more private stuff for them to demand, unless they bring out the thought police to see if we were thinking of possibly doing GoF!:

Shifting Definitions, Growing Viral Load

The humanized mouse experiment fits with the overall goal of the $3.1 million grant, which was titled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence" and aimed at preventing a pandemic by predicting the circumstances under which a bat coronavirus could evolve to infect humans. The researchers took an ambitious three-pronged approach: screening people with high exposure to wildlife, mathematical modeling, and lab experiments on viruses. Peter Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, has worked closely with scientists in China for years, and roughly $750,000 of the grant was allocated for the Wuhan Institute of Virology. An additional nearly $300,000 went to East China Normal University, where researchers did field sampling.

In a 2005 paper, Daszak's team showed that the first SARS virus originated in bats. Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, is caused by a coronavirus that emerged in 2012 and also believed to come from bats, which are now a prime target for virologists trying to understand and combat emerging diseases. Daszak has long maintained that his research is critical to preventing outbreaks.

But the research on the bat viruses in Wuhan showed that infecting live animals with altered viruses can have unpredictable consequences. A report to NIH on the project's progress in the year ending in May 2018 described scientists creating new coronaviruses by changing parts of WIV1 and exposing genetically engineered mice to the new chimeric viruses. Research published in 2017 in the journal PLOS Pathogen showed that, in cells in a laboratory, similar chimeric viruses reproduced less effectively than the original. NIH cited that research as one of the reasons the moratorium on gain-of-function research of concern didn't apply to this experiment. "It was a loss of function, not a gain of function," the email from NIH explained. (NIH also pointed out that the changes to the chimeric viruses "would not be anticipated to increase virulence or transmissibility in humans.")

Inside the lungs of the humanized mice, however, the novel viruses appear to have reproduced far more quickly than the original virus that was used to create them, according to a bar graph shown in the documents. The viral load in the lung tissue

of the mice was, at certain points, up to 10,000 times higher in the mice infected with the altered viruses than in those infected with WIV1. According to Deatrick, the NIH spokesperson, the difference in the rates of viral reproduction — which were particularly pronounced two and four days after the mice were infected with the virus — didn't amount to gain of function because, by the end of the experiment, the amount of virus produced by the parent and chimeric strains evened out. "Viral titers were equivalent by the end of the experimental time-course," Deatrick wrote. The email also said, "NIH supports this type of research to better understand the characteristics of animal viruses that have the potential to spill over to humans and cause widespread disease."

Scientists The Intercept consulted expressed differing views on whether the increase in viral load could be translated to an increase in transmissibility, which relies on the virus's ability to replicate. To some, the jump in viral load indicated that the modified RNA virus could replicate far more rapidly than the original in the lungs of the mice, likely leading to increased pathogenicity and spread. Rasmussen, of the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, pointed out that viral load is not identical to reproduction rate, noting: "This shows the chimeric viruses replicated a little faster, but that tells us exactly nothing about transmissibility. Furthermore, WIV1 caught up by the end of the experiment. We see differences in the rate of viral replication all the time, but it is often not directly correlated with pathogenicity."

Another figure in the documents suggests that at least one of the altered viruses not only enhanced viral reproduction, but also caused the humanized mice to lose more weight than those exposed to the original virus — a measure of the severity of illness.



A graph from a report on NIH-funded research in Wuhan shows viral load in lung tissues of humanized mice.

Screenshot: FOIA Document

NIH requires the increase in viral reproduction to be immediately reported, according to a note in the Notice of Award the agency issued in July 2016. "No funds are provided and no funds can be used to support gain-of-function research covered under the October 17, 2014 White House Announcement," the note said. If any new MERS-like or SARS-like chimeras show "enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log over the parental backbone strain," the note continued, the researchers were instructed to stop all experiments with the viruses and send the data to NIAID grant specialists, as well as to the Wuhan Institute of Virology biosafety committee. The enhanced growth of the chimeric coronaviruses in the humanized mice was, at

one point, up to 4 log greater — or 10,000 times — the rate of the original virus. But there are no indications the research was stopped.
In fact, the bat coronavirus grant was renewed for a five-year period in 2019, although the Trump administration suspended funding in April 2020 amid the Covid-19 pandemic and spiraling concerns about its origins. (Funding was later reinstated but under strict conditions that Daszak said were impossible for his group to meet.)

Kessler, EcoHealth Alliance's communications manager, also pointed to the fact that the grant was renewed in 2019 — after EcoHealth Alliance had twice submitted documents detailing the experiment — as evidence that the organization did nothing wrong. "If there had been any violations, they would not have done so," he said.

Long History of Controversy

The practice of making chimeric viruses in order to study how they might become more contagious was under scrutiny long before the pandemic. Proponents of such gain-of-function research argued that it can help virologists better understand and defend against natural outbreaks. But critics said that they were unreasonably dangerous.

In October 2014, the federal government put a moratorium on funding gain-of-function research on potential pandemic pathogens that could be "reasonably anticipated" to lead to spread in humans, as outlined in a 2017 guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services. In December 2017, the moratorium was lifted and replaced with new guidelines for oversight of research using potential pandemic pathogens. The grantees reported that the humanized mouse experiment was done between June 2017 and May 2018. Gain-of-function research was thrust into the spotlight again in 2020, amid speculation that the Wuhan Institute of Virology had conducted such research and that it was somehow linked to the pandemic.

While the new information about the research on humanized mice does not provide the "smoking gun" for proponents of what has become known as the "lab leak theory," it lends the hypothesis credence, according to Stuart Newman, a professor of cell biology who directs the developmental biology laboratory at New York Medical College. "Making chimeric coronaviruses, mixing and matching RBDs [a part of the virus that allows it to attach to receptors] and spike proteins is exactly the scenario imagined by many lab-leak scenario proponents," said Newman. "The fact that this was an established research paradigm in the Wuhan lab … definitely makes the laboratory origin more plausible."

The documents about the research were released by NIH after The Intercept submitted a Freedom of Information Act request in September 2020, later suing to have it fulfilled. The request sought copies of these and other grant proposals that Daszak submitted to the agency, as well as the agency's communications about the proposals. NIH originally denied The Intercept's request on the grounds that releasing Daszak's proposals would undermine an ongoing investigation. Counsel for the agency later admitted that NIH had not reviewed many of the records before making that assertion.

"The contents of the grants raise serious questions about the review processes and oversight relating to risky pathogen research," said Alina Chan, a Boston-based scientist and co-author of the upcoming book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19." The new information in the documents warrants further inquiry into whether researchers may have omitted information about other concerning experiments, she said. "The question is: What else did they do in more recent years that we're not aware of?"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 1:09 AM
To: 'Kristian G. Andersen' [b6]; 'David Morens' [b6]
Cc: 'Rasmussen, Angie' [b6]; 'Garry, Robert F' [b6] 'Edward Holmes' <

b6 >; 'Jason Gale' <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Robert Kessler <
'Stephen Goldstein' b6

Subject: Intercept piece is now out.

Really appreciate you speaking out Angie. I just read the piece in the Intercept and it's very upsetting: https://theintercept.com/2021/09/09/covid- origins-gain-of-function-research/

What you said is correct – without evidence of ability to infect people, or transmit even from one animal to another, it can't possibly meet the NIH definition of GoF, which is now officially the P3CO definition as follows (from https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf):

Section II. Scope and Definitions For the purposes of this HHS P3CO Framework:

A. A potential pandemic pathogen (PPP) is a pathogen that satisfies both of the following:

1. It is likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations; and

2. It is likely highly virulent and likely to cause significant morbidity and/or mortality in humans.

B. An enhanced PPP is defined as a PPP resulting from the enhancement of the transmissibility and/or virulence of a pathogen. Enhanced PPPs do not include naturally occurring pathogens that are circulating in or have been recovered from nature, regardless of their pandemic potential

How on any planet is a bat-CoV that's never been seen in people, "likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations"? It seems the 8 scientists that believed this to be GoF base it on one of the chimeras growing faster than the parental strain early on, while forgetting that 1) these are bat viruses have never been shown to infect people, or that, as you say Angie – the growth rates of the parental strain caught up with it by the end of the expt. I'm v. disappointed that Vincent Racaniello is one of these scientists – he should know better.

I'm hoping that more will speak out and point to the differences between their version of what GoF is, and the actual definition that we're all supposed to adhere to, and by the way that NIH uses as the agency of note to decide!

NIH DOCUMENTS PROVIDE NEW EVIDENCE U.S. FUNDED GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH IN WUHAN

U.S.-funded experiments in China posed biosafety risks but did not cause Covid-19 pandemic, scientists say.

<image007.jpg>
<image008.jpg>
<image009.jpg>

Sharon Lerner, Mara Hvistendahl, Maia Hibbett
September 9 2021, 9:03 p.m.

DOCUMENTS OBTAINED BY The Intercept contain new evidence that the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the nearby Wuhan University Center for Animal Experiment, along with their collaborator, the U.S.-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, have engaged in what the U.S. government defines as "gain-of-function research of concern," intentionally making viruses more pathogenic or transmissible in order to study them, despite stipulations from a U.S. funding agency that the money not be used for that purpose.

Grant money for the controversial experiment came from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is headed by Anthony Fauci. The award to EcoHealth Alliance, a research organization which studies the spread of viruses from animals to humans, included subawards to Wuhan Institute of Virology and East China Normal University. The principal investigator on the grant is EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak, who has been a key voice in the search for Covid-19's origins.

Scientists unanimously told The Intercept that the experiment, which involved infecting genetically engineered mice with "chimeric" hybrid viruses, could not have directly sparked the pandemic. None of the viruses listed in the write-ups of the experiment are related to the virus that causes Covid-19, SARS-CoV-2, closely enough to have evolved into it. Still, several scientists said the new information, which the NIH released after it was sued by The Intercept, points to biosafety concerns, highlighting a general lack of oversight for research on pathogens and raising questions about what other information has not been publicly disclosed.

"As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19, by an airborne coronavirus.

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci listens during a briefing on the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on March 26, 2020 in Washington, DC.

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The experiment also raises questions about assertions from Fauci and NIH Director Francis Collins that NIH-funded projects at the Wuhan Institute of Virology did not involve gain-of-function research. In May, Fauci testified before Congress: "The NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." The documents do not establish whether Fauci was directly

aware of the work.
Scientists working under a 2014 NIH grant to the EcoHealth Alliance to study bat coronaviruses combined the genetic material from a "parent" coronavirus known as WIV1 with other viruses. They twice submitted summaries of their work that showed that, when in the lungs of genetically engineered mice, three altered bat coronaviruses at times reproduced far more quickly than the original virus on which they were based. The altered viruses were also somewhat more pathogenic, with one causing the mice to lose significant weight. The researchers reported, "These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice."

But the terms of the grant clearly stipulated that the funding could not be used for gain-of-function experiments. The grant conditions also required the researchers to immediately report potentially dangerous results and stop their experiments pending further NIH review. According to both the EcoHealth Alliance and NIH, the results were reported to the agency, but NIH determined that rules designed to restrict gain-of-function research did not apply.

The Intercept consulted 11 scientists who are virologists or work in adjacent fields and hold a range of views on both the ethics of gain-of-function research and the Covid-19 origins search. Seven said that the work appears to meet NIH's criteria for gain-of-function research.

One said that the experiment "absolutely does not meet the bar" for gain-of-function research. "You can't predict that these viruses would be more pathogenic, or even pathogenic at all in people," said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist with the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization at the University of Saskatchewan. "They also did not study transmissibility at all in these experiments," meaning that the scientists did not look at whether the viruses could spread across a population.

Three experts said that, while they did not have enough knowledge of U.S. policies to comment on whether the research met NIH criteria, the experiment involving humanized mice was unnecessarily risky.

One virologist, Vincent Racaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Columbia University, said while he considered the mouse experiment described in the document to clearly fall into the gain-of-function category, he didn't see it as problematic. "You can do some kinds of gain-of-function research that then has unforeseen consequences and may be a problem, but that's not the case here," said Racaniello.

Robert Kessler, communications manager for EcoHealth Alliance, denied that the

work on the humanized mice met the definition of gain-of-function research. Kessler insisted that bat viruses are not potential pandemic pathogens because, he said, "a bat virus is not known to be able to infect humans." The proposal justified the work on WIV1 by explaining that it is "not a select agent" — referring to a list of closely monitored toxins and biological agents that have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health — and "has not been shown to cause human infections, and has not been shown to be transmissible between humans."

But the group's bat coronavirus research was focused on the very threat that bat viruses pose to people. Kessler did acknowledge that, while the original bat coronavirus in the experiment did not spread among humans, the research was designed to gauge how bat coronaviruses could evolve to infect humans.

All but two of the scientists consulted agreed that, whatever title it is given, the newly public experiment raised serious concerns about the safety and oversight of federally funded research. "In my point of view, the debate about the definition of 'gain-of-function' has been too much focused on technical aspects," said Jacques van Helden, a professor of bioinformatics at Aix-Marseille Université. "The real question is whether or not research has the potential to create or facilitate the selection of viruses that might infect humans." The experiments described in the proposal clearly do have that potential, he said.

NIH spokesperson Elizabeth Deatrick said that the agency had considered the research — and decided not to restrict it under its own rules. "In 2016, NIAID determined that the work was not subject to the Gain-of-Function (GoF) research funding pause and the subsequent HHS P3CO Framework," Deatrick wrote, referring to criteria put in place in 2017 to guide the agency's funding decisions about research that involves, or is reasonably anticipated to involve, potential pandemic pathogens.

Republican members of Congress have alleged, without sufficient evidence, that gain-of-function research in Wuhan sparked the coronavirus pandemic. As part of an inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, they have twice grilled Fauci in Congress on his role as NIAID director.

In a heated exchange in July, Republican Sen. Rand Paul accused Fauci of lying when he claimed that NIH did not fund gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Experts now say that the documents support the contention that NIH funded gain-of-function work, though not in the specific instance where Paul alleged it. "There's no question," said Racaniello, of Columbia University, who pointed to the decreased weight of the mice infected with the chimeric viruses that was described

in the research summaries sent to NIH. "From the weight loss, it's gain of function. Tony Fauci is wrong saying it's not."

But the documents do not prove Paul's claim that Fauci was lying, as they do not make clear whether Fauci read them. Nor do they in any way support Paul's allegation that Fauci was "responsible for 4 million people around the world dying of a pandemic" — or that anyone intentionally caused Covid-19. What is clear is that program officers at NIAID, the agency that Fauci oversees, did know about the research.

A paragraph describing the research, as well as two figures illustrating its results, were included in both a 2018 progress report on the bat coronavirus grant and an application for its 2019 renewal. And NIH confirmed that it reviewed them.

"NIH has never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans," the agency said in a statement, echoing remarks by Collins, the NIH director, posted to its website in May. "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease." Similar research funded by NIH had aided in the development of vaccines against the coronavirus, the statement continued.

The White House did not respond to questions about the research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6

Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 8:13 PM
To: David Morens [b6]
Cc: Rasmussen, Angie [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Robert Kessler [b6]; Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: Re: here's the latest line of attack today...

"she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up".

If she had in fact done that, she'd realize there'd be no news and no need for a second article - except to say "nothing to see here, move along".

Sigh.

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:28 PM David Morens [b6] wrote:

> Amen and good for you! You are right that Ebright and his ilk are not only NOT experts but are harmful demogogues. They need to be called out. Because i am in government i can only fo this off the record, but i have done do again and again. Some of them are knowingly promoting false equivalences. If they interviewed a Holocaust survivor, they would say they have to give equal time and space to a Nazi murderer. They have no shame. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Sep 9, 2021, at 18:40, Rasmussen, Angie [b6] wrote:
> >
> > Peter and all,
> >
> > I am so sorry you are still going through all of this. For what it's worth, I broke my rule of talking to disingenuous journalists and sent Mara Hvistendahl a long email telling her exactly what I think of the "experts" she's talked to and setting the record straight about what these FOIAd reports supposedly show. From what I can see, they show that you were reporting your work appropriately to NIH as required, the work itself was done in appropriate biocontainment, and, importantly, you didn't have SARS-CoV-2 or a progenitor. I also explained that previous work was published with WIV1 chimeras and that this type of study precludes doing more dangerous (and technically very difficult) virus isolation.
> >
> > She wanted to know whether I agreed with her two sources (likely Alina Chan or Richard Ebright, based on her prior story) that this fits the definition of GoF by NIH and I told her no and explained at length why not and the assertions that it was should disqualify any supposed "expert". Took every opportunity to dunk on their amateurish, disingenuous bullshit, while also emphasizing the importance of this work. Mara wrote back defensively, claiming she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up. I am not optimistic that the follow-up will be more balanced, but I did try to provide some juicy quotes about how her "experts" actually have no expertise, and emphasized the profound damage these people have done to this essential research. They make all of us less safe.
> >
> > Hang in there. Ultimately the truth will come out and it's not going to be from the likes of the Daily Caller's inability to interpret virology data or from Jesse Bloom and all the grifters and conspiracy theorists populating the rabbit hole that he's crawled down.

Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
University of Saskatchewan
Office: b6 b6
She/her
www.vido.org

<image011.png>

On Sep 9, 2021, at 3:07 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

CAUTION: External to USask. Verify sender and use caution with links and attachments. Forward suspicious emails to phishing@usask.ca

Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain.
https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth- alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

There's a good response from NIH: 'An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

This story is particularly irritating because if you look at the P3CO rules, it's clear they are meant for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans. Let's also not forget that the virus with a higher viral load in mice was actually because it had the spike protein of a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence - In fact, the opposite: the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find. It reduces risk!

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP
Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show
<image003.jpg>
<image007.jpg>

ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER
September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.**

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.

Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.

EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.

"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."

"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.

EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

<image005.jpg>

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)

"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."

The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains

by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.

"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.

EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.

EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.

Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.

The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review.

Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

<image006.jpg>

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)

An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."

"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."

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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 8:29 PM
To: 'Garry, Robert F' [b6] Kristian G. Andersen' [b6]
Cc: 'David Morens' <[b6]>; 'Edward Holmes' [b6]>; 'Jason Gale' <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; 'Rasmussen, Angie' [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6] 'Stephen Goldstein' [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

That's interesting about Jesse Bloom – I wasn't aware of that work and hadn't really heard of him before this year to be honest. I suspect that like many people his view of his own research is that it's highly professionally managed and carefully controlled re. biosafety. He clearly has a different view of the work at WIV & by other leading Chinese scientists and seems suspicious of their motives in many of his public comments. This can't be based on their published work – it's often excellent. It just seems like a difficulty people have teasing apart their viewpoint about the Chinese Govt from their opinion about individual scientists. Anyone who's been on the ground in China rapidly realizes that the two are not the same.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Garry, Robert F <rfgarry@tulane.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Kristian G. Anderser b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Edward Holmes b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net >; Rasmussen, Angie b6; Robert Kessler b6; Stephen Goldstein b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen b6
Cc: David Morens b6, Robert Garry b6 Edward Holmes b6 Jason Gale b6 "Rasmussen, Angie" b6 Robert Kessler < b6, Stephen Goldstein b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

> External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: David Morens < b6 >; Garry, Robert F b6 ; Edward Holmes b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net >; Rasmussen, Angie < b6 ; Robert Kessler b6 ; Stephen Goldstein <
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus

isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h
> NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With
> @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release
> <image001.jpg>
>
> New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
> More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
> theintercept.com
>
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"
> https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…

"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…
<image002.jpg>

Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.
7h
There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6 ; Kristian G. Andersen b6 >; Edward Holmes b6 Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net >; b6 Robert Kessler b6 >; b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; Edward Holmes < [b6] >
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes <b6>
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
<b6>; <b6>; <b6>; <b6>; Garry, Robert F <b6>; <b6>
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes <
<b6> wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Mon, 18 Oct 2021 1:40:41 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 18 Oct 2021 1:38:35 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
From: ROCHE Benjamin b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Peter Daszak b6; benjamin.roche b6 Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio b6

Dear David and Peter,

Sorry for the organization has been a bit confusing. Actually, this is the NIH who has invited Cristina, but we still don't know if she's coming. Nevertheless, I'll be in DC for a couple of days (and pretty free this Wednesday), so if you are available, that would be a pleasure to present you this initiative.

All the best,

Labs:

Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)

Postal address:
Centre IRD de Montpellier
911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France

Phone: b6
e-mail: b6
web: http://rocheben.github.io/

> Le 18 oct. 2021 à 19:32, David Morens b6 > a écrit :
>
> Peter, yes, sorry to miss that. I may not be able to go either
> because the organizers invited Cristina Cassetti instead of me, but
> that is OK as she will be good.
>
> D
>
> David M. Morens, MD
> b6
>
> b6
> b6 (work)
> b6 b6 b6 (cell)
>
> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which
> is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a
> reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

>
> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my
> NIAID address
>
> On Mon, Oct 18, 2021 at 1:08 PM Peter Daszak
> <b6> wrote:
>>
>> Sorry I won't be able to make it to the event after all David. I'll be on a college visit with my daughter that day.
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>> Please say hello to all our colleagues and I hope you have a good opportunity to talk with Benjamin, who is heading up this really interesting and important initiative at IRD.
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>> Cheers,
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>> Peter
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>> Peter Daszak
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>> President
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>> EcoHealth Alliance
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>> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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>> New York, NY 10018-6507
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>> USA
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>> Tel.: b6
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>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
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>>
>> From: ROCHE Benjamin [b6]>
>> Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 12:48 AM
>> To: David Morens [b6]>
>> Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; benjamin.roche [b6]>; Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio [b6]
>> Subject: Re: Introduction to our key Collaborator in France, and heads-up re. a PREZODE event at French Embassy Oct 21st
>>
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>> Dear David,
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>> I hope this e-mail will find you well. Actually, Peter will not be able to come, but I will be glad to meet you to present the PREZODE initiative. By any chance, do you have some possibilities on Wednesday 20th? I'll be in DC
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>> All the best,
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>> Labs:
>>
>> Infectious Diseases: Vector, Control, Genetic, Ecology and Evolution (MIVEGEC)
>> Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Research on Cancer (CREEC)
>>
>> Postal address:
>> Centre IRD de Montpellier
>> 911, Avenue Agropolis BP64504
>> 34394 Montpellier cedex 5
>> France
>>
>> Phone: [b6]
>> e-mail [b6]
>> web: http://rocheben.github.io/
>>
>>
>>
>> Le 22 sept. 2021 à 16:54, David Morens [b6]> a écrit :
>>

>>
>>
>> Peter, and Ben glad to meet you on email, and will be happy to come to the event.
>>
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>>
>> Not sure what you mean by "represent at the event", but I suppose you mean represent NIH? Or NIAID? Anything I need to do other than just enjoy it?
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>>
>> TY, David
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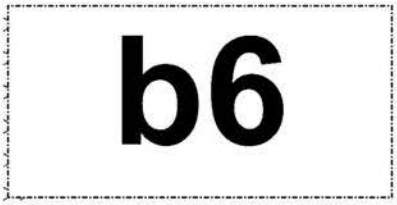
>>
>> David M. Morens, MD
>>


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>> IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address
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>> IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address
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>> On Tue, Sep 21, 2021 at 11:43 AM Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
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>> Hi David,
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>> I'm introducing you by email to my colleague Dr. Ben Roche from IRD France. He is the PI of the new

French Govt pandemic prediction initiative PREZODE. As you can see from the Email below mine, there is an event scheduled for October 21st at the French Embassy in DC. I'll be moderating the panel discussion and will be in DC in person (FINALLY!!).
>>
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>>
>> Ben is looking for someone from NIH to represent at that event. I've suggested you would be perfect for that role, and wanted to introduce you to him now.
>>
>>
>>
>> Full disclosure, Ben is working with EHA on joint projects and we signed an MOU with the French Govt IRD to stimulate joint efforts to predict and prevent pandemics. I've also cc'd Carlos Zambrana-Torrelio from EHA who I believe you've met in the past, who has worked closely on this initiative.
>>
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>> Hope you're available and look forward to seeing you while I'm in DC whatever the case!
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>> Cheers,
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>> Peter
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>> Peter Daszak
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>> President
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>> Tel.: [b6]
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>> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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>> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
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>> EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation
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>> From: POIRIER Agnès [b6] >
>> Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 8:47 AM
>> To: Biffl, Claire [b6] >
>> Cc: Liao, Julie [b6] LIGEARD Christian [b6] >
>> Subject: French Embassy: conference on the PREZODE Initiative (October 21st)
>>
>>
>>
>> Dear Ms. Biffl,
>>
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>>
>> As you well know, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency of designing effective strategies for preventing and responding to health crises by taking greater account of the interactions between human health, animal health and environmental health.
>>
>> In response to this emergency, the French President Emmanuel Macron launched the PREZODE initiative during the One Planet Summit on January 11, with the support of the Director General of the FAO and the President of the European Commission.
>>
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>>
>> This initiative (see attached document) aims to network, on a global scale, research work and operational actions to prevent the risks of zoonotic emergencies and pandemics through the reduction of pressures on biodiversity, in accordance with the "One Health" approach. It will improve knowledge of the risks of emergence and spread of zoonoses, strengthen the surveillance activities of the networks that already exist and ensure greater compliance with prevention measures for future diseases.
>>
>> The PREZODE initiative will strengthen cooperation with several regions of the world (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, America, Europe…) and will support the integration and strengthening of human, animal and environmental health networks. It will also support the work of the "One Health" High Level Panel of Experts proposed by France with the support of Germany, and launched by what we call the Tripartite + (WHO-FAO- World Organization For Animal Health-UN Environment Programme) on May 17 and 18.
>>
>> The year 2021 is dedicated to building the strategic framework and the operation of the initiative, with the objective of entering the operational phase from 2022.
>>
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>> In this context, the French Embassy is planning to host a conference (preferably an in-person event) to present the PREZODE initiative and discuss the possible involvement of US government and research

institutions.
>>
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>>
>> The event is scheduled for October 21, 2021, in the afternoon (2:30–5:30 pm) and would consist (see draft program attached) of two sequences of approximately one hour each:
>>
>> - Presentation of the PREZODE initiative by representatives (scientific or institutional directors) of the three French research institutes involved, CIRAD (Agricultural Research Centre for International Development), INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), IRD (National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)
>>
>> - Panel discussion on national and international initiatives: statements by DoS, DoD (DTRA), CDC, USDA, USAID, OHHLEP, the Tripartite+, the World Bank, private sector…
>>
>>
>>
>> We are currently looking for a moderator for this event, and would be honored to involve an expert from the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Indeed, the Forum's work on these issues, its leadership and independence, and its broad audience seem to me to be perfect for our event. If you agree to this role, I would be happy to discuss further the organization of the meeting.
>>
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>>
>> Thank you for your consideration and best regards,
>>
>>
>>
>> Dr Agnès POIRIER, D.V.M.
>>
>> Conseillère SPS / Counselor for sanitary and phytosanitary matters - USA / Canada
>>
>> Conseiller agricole adjoint / Deputy Agricultural Counselor
>>
>> Ambassade de France / Embassy of France
>>
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>> 4101 Reservoir Road N.W.
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>> Washington DC 20007-2173
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>> Tel: +1 b6 b6 b6
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Date: Fri, 27 Aug 2021 5:06:41 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 27 Aug 2021 5:06:24 PM -0400
Subject: FW: DNI releases summary of Intel report
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Edward Holmes [b6] >; David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6]
Attachments: image004.jpg; image002.jpg; Unclassified-Summary-of-Assessment-on-COVID-19-Origins.pdf

The summary of the US "Intelligence" report is out now (attached).

It's inconclusive, but states that China did not engineer the virus. Also that China had no forewarning of the outbreak. It's slightly more leaning towards the "natural" origin that they were prior to the 90 day analysis. At that point it was 2 agencies for natural vs. 1 for lab (I think). Now it's 4 agencies believe it's animal origin, one believes may be lab. All have low confidence.

Maybe now we can get on with the actual scientific analysis of COVID origins – something that will likely take many months (if not years) more than it should because of all the politics and "Intelligence" involved!

Maybe we can read something into the fact this was released late on a summer Friday afternoon! I'm definitely happy it was!

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021- 08-27/u-s-probe-of-covid-origin-inconclusive-without-help-from-china

Prognosis

Biden Criticizes China for Not Aiding Report on Virus Origins

By Josh Wingrove and Chris Strohm
August 27, 2021, 3:35 PM EDT *Updated on August 27, 2021, 4:19 PM EDT*

- More U.S. agencies think virus came from animal than lab
- The U.S. believes virus wasn't created as a biological weapon

President Joe Biden rebuked China for stonewalling a U.S. investigation into the origins of the coronavirus, as his administration reported it was unable to reach firm conclusions because of Beijing's unwillingness to cooperate.

"The world deserves answers, and I will not rest until we get them," Biden said in a statement on Friday shortly after the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released an unclassified summary of the report. "Responsible nations do not shirk these kinds of responsibilities to the rest of the world."

The intelligence community determined the virus wasn't created as a biological weapon and said Chinese officials had no "foreknowledge" of the outbreak, but was divided on how it came to infect humans and spread across the globe.

Four components of the intelligence community said -- with low confidence -- that the outbreak was likely linked to exposure to an infected animal, according to the summary. This theory is the most widely supported by scientists, including Anthony Fauci, who is advising Biden on Covid.

One intelligence community component assessed with moderate confidence that the outbreak was associated with a research lab in China. As of a few months ago, two components backed the animal theory while one backed the lab theory.

Analysts at other agencies are unable to coalesce around either without more information, including some who think both are equally likely. To reach a conclusion with higher confidence, the intelligence community said it would need more cooperation of China, which it said continues to hinder global efforts.

"Beijing, however, continues to hinder the global investigation, resist sharing information and blame other countries, including the United States," the summary says. "These actions reflect, in part, China's government's own uncertainty about where an investigation could lead as well as its frustration the international community is using the issue to exert political pressure on China."

The intelligence community overall believes that the virus infected humans through an initial small exposure no later than November of 2019, according to the report. The report says the intelligence agencies judge that the virus was not developed as a biological weapon, and most assess -- with low confidence -- that it was not genetically engineered, though two agencies believe there isn't enough evidence to know either way.

"China's officials did not have foreknowledge of the virus before the initial outbreak of COVID-19 emerged," the summary says. But the intelligence agencies and the global community lack clinical samples and other data from the earliest Covid-19 cases, the summary says.

The report is partly a sign of how far from reach a conclusion remains. Only five of the agencies, or components, of the intelligence community expressed any view and none did so with more than low or moderate confidence.

The U.S. Intelligence Community is made up of 18 different organizations, including the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which released the summary, and the Central Intelligence Agency, among others.

The intelligence community sprinted to provide the report within Biden's timeline, and approached it

from multiple perspectives, including consulting scientists and epidemiologists, an official familiar with the process said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The intelligence community also reached out to academic experts, as well as international allies and partners, the official said.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, August 27, 2021 12:28 PM
To: 'David Morens b6 >; 'Roberts, Rich' b6 >; Keusch, Jerry (b6 ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Subject: FW: The good, the bad, and the ugly
Importance: High

I just wanted to share a couple of articles – Op Eds re the Intel report on COVID origins. The First is actually positive and balanced from today's Guardian
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/aug/27/us- report-covid-origins-pandemic-virus-covid

It includes the comment:
"The false dichotomy that has been set up over Covid's origins is hard to challenge. Until a year ago, scientists who collaborated across national and disciplinary borders were applauded. Now they're accused of conflicts of interest – meaning that many of the people who know most about what happened, or are best qualified to find out, have been silenced. Meanwhile the behemoth that is the global livestock industry goes about its toxic business untroubled by any real scrutiny."

The bad/ugly is below this one, from yesterday's WSJ from Mike Pompeo, calling on lawyers to decide COVID origins – years of litigation will illuminate the truth according to the former Secretary of State. I realize he's grandstanding and may be using this hardline talk to put in a bid for President in 3 yrs, but it's very worrying for me to think that one day EcoHealth Alliance, and myself could be under criminal investigation for doing what we were supposed to do as scientists.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid- 19-coronavirus-origin-fsia-foreign-sovereign-immunities-act-china-lab-leak-wet-market-11629990917

The Guardian

The US report into Covid's origins is little use in averting another pandemic

Laura Spinney

Regardless of where the virus came from, there's a growing risk of another Covid-like phenomenon occurring

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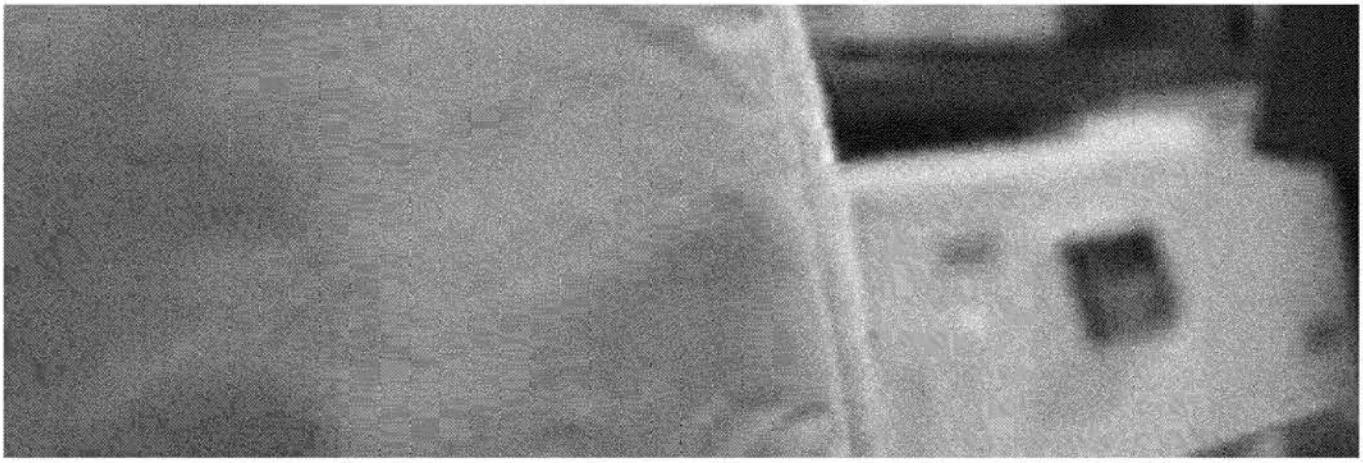

'Biden ordered the latest investigation partly because of widespread dissatisfaction with one set up by the World Health Organization (WHO).' Photograph: Evan Vucci/AP

Fri 27 Aug 2021 11.20 EDT

US intelligence services have just briefed the president, Joe Biden, on the results of their 90-day investigation into the origins of Covid-19. They were asked to test two hypotheses: that it had a "natural" origin, or that it escaped from a lab. Preliminary reports suggest that their findings are inconclusive.

Few scientists will be surprised by this, and yet the investigation has been the subject of intense – and intensely divisive – political and media interest over the past three months. The White House has promised more detail, which could be illuminating, especially if it reveals the genetic sequences of viruses related to the one that causes Covid-19, Sars-CoV-2, that were being studied in labs in Wuhan in 2019. But that won't change the fact that two investigations down, we're still in the dark as to how this pandemic started.

Biden ordered the latest investigation partly because of widespread dissatisfaction with one set up by the World Health Organization (WHO), which reported in March that a lab origin was "extremely unlikely". Many saw the WHO's efforts as compromised because China used its influence within the organisation to set restrictive terms of reference. It's hard to see why the new investigation, from a single nation locked in a trade war with China, and from intelligence services to boot – not a source often lauded for transparency – should be accorded any more credibility. It should have been conducted by a coalition of national science academies. They still might not have reached any firm conclusions, but they would have had more chance of being seen as independent.

The WHO is promising a new investigation, and there may be others. Whether these will add anything is again questionable, but it's important that scientists continue to try to get at the truth, and that we all acknowledge that it might take them years to do so. It's difficult to trace the origins of a pandemic. Here's just one example of the challenges.

Much has been made of the finding that some Italians may have been carrying antibodies to Sars-CoV-2

as early as September 2019, several months before the first cases of Covid-19 were reported in China. (Nobody's suggesting the pandemic started in Italy, only that it might have come out of China earlier than thought.) But if those antibodies really were to Sars-CoV-2 – which some researchers doubt – it's odd that the wave of Covid-19 infection they indicate wasn't followed by a wave of hospitalisations and deaths, as it was later in China. What's more, those antibody carriers didn't go to the doctor with Covid symptoms, they went for other reasons. If the earliest Chinese cases were also mild or asymptomatic, how will researchers find them?

To be clear, the only reason these investigations are valuable is scientific – because the knowledge they provide could help prevent something similar from happening again. Even if it could be proved to many people's satisfaction that a lab accident triggered the pandemic, it's unlikely that any punishment could be meted out or compensation demanded. As Thomas Bollyky and Yanzhong Huang of the US Council on Foreign Relations have written, a lab accident is not a violation of any international law, and even if it were, establishing causation would be tricky. As they point out, taking the US perspective: "Many nations faced similar challenges in this pandemic and did not suffer the United States' poor health outcomes."

The ongoing debate over Covid's origins has had good and bad outcomes. A good outcome is that it has shone a spotlight on the fact that, as biosecurity experts Filippa Lentzos and Gregory Koblentz reported in May, labs authorised to deal with the most dangerous pathogens have been proliferating in an almost complete vacuum of regulation or oversight. One component of the oversight that should now be put in place is independent, international inspection teams. A model already exists for these, in the WHO's protocol for overseeing the two labs – one Russian, one American – that hold the last stockpiles of variola virus, which causes the now eradicated disease smallpox.

A bad outcome is that at least part of the scientific community – supposedly the bulwark that protects us from propaganda – has bought into the false dichotomy of two "rival" hypotheses for Covid's origins. It's as if they were looking at one of those ambiguous images, and seeing either a duck or a rabbit when both are in the picture. In reality it isn't natural origins versus lab leak; it's long-term human activity versus short-term human activity. Natural ceases to mean much in this context.

Fire, waves and warfare: the way we make sense of Covid

Read more

In fact, since the evidence is by now overwhelmingly that long-term human activity is accelerating the emergence of novel pathogens and increasing the risk of pandemics, the question investigators should really be asking is: did some recent, one-off event such as a lab accident exacerbate the already high and growing risk of spillover of a virus with pandemic potential caused by a decades-long shift towards industrialised farming and the wildlife trade?

Through their reliance on antibiotics, livestock monocultures and crowding, industrial-scale farms are ratcheting up the virulence of animal pathogens that the wildlife trade – and one of its shop windows, wet markets – is bringing into contact with potential host species they wouldn't otherwise encounter, including us. This is not news. As the journalist Felicity Lawrence wrote in 2009, during the swine flu pandemic: "Novel human disease is the toxic debt of today's industrial livestock farming."

Here's something worth reflecting on: in recent decades, most spillover events of highly pathogenic avian influenza – still considered the disease most likely to cause a future pandemic – occurred in countries with generally good biosecurity but lots of intensive poultry farming. The reason more of them didn't seed outbreaks is that they were nipped in the bud through good disease surveillance – the US being a leader in this. If high-security labs are enjoying a boom, prestige and biowarfare deterrence may have something to do with it, but it's also because dangerous pathogens are booming.

The false dichotomy that has been set up over Covid's origins is hard to challenge. Until a year ago, scientists who collaborated across national and disciplinary borders were applauded. Now they're accused of conflicts of interest – meaning that many of the people who know most about what happened,

or are best qualified to find out, have been silenced. Meanwhile the behemoth that is the global livestock industry goes about its toxic business untroubled by any real scrutiny. This week, Marco Marani of the University of Padova in Italy and colleagues reported that the probability of an individual experiencing a Covid-like pandemic in their lifetime, currently about 38%, could double within a few decades. Unless scientists stand back and look at the bigger picture, it won't stop there.

- Laura Spinney is a science journalist and the author of Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World

Here's the bad/ugly from Mike Pompeo yesterday..

Let Lawyers Hunt for Covid's Origin

The report from the intelligence community is equivocal, but spies don't have subpoena power.

By Mike Pompeo and David B. Rivkin Jr.
Aug. 26, 2021 12:59 pm ET
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213

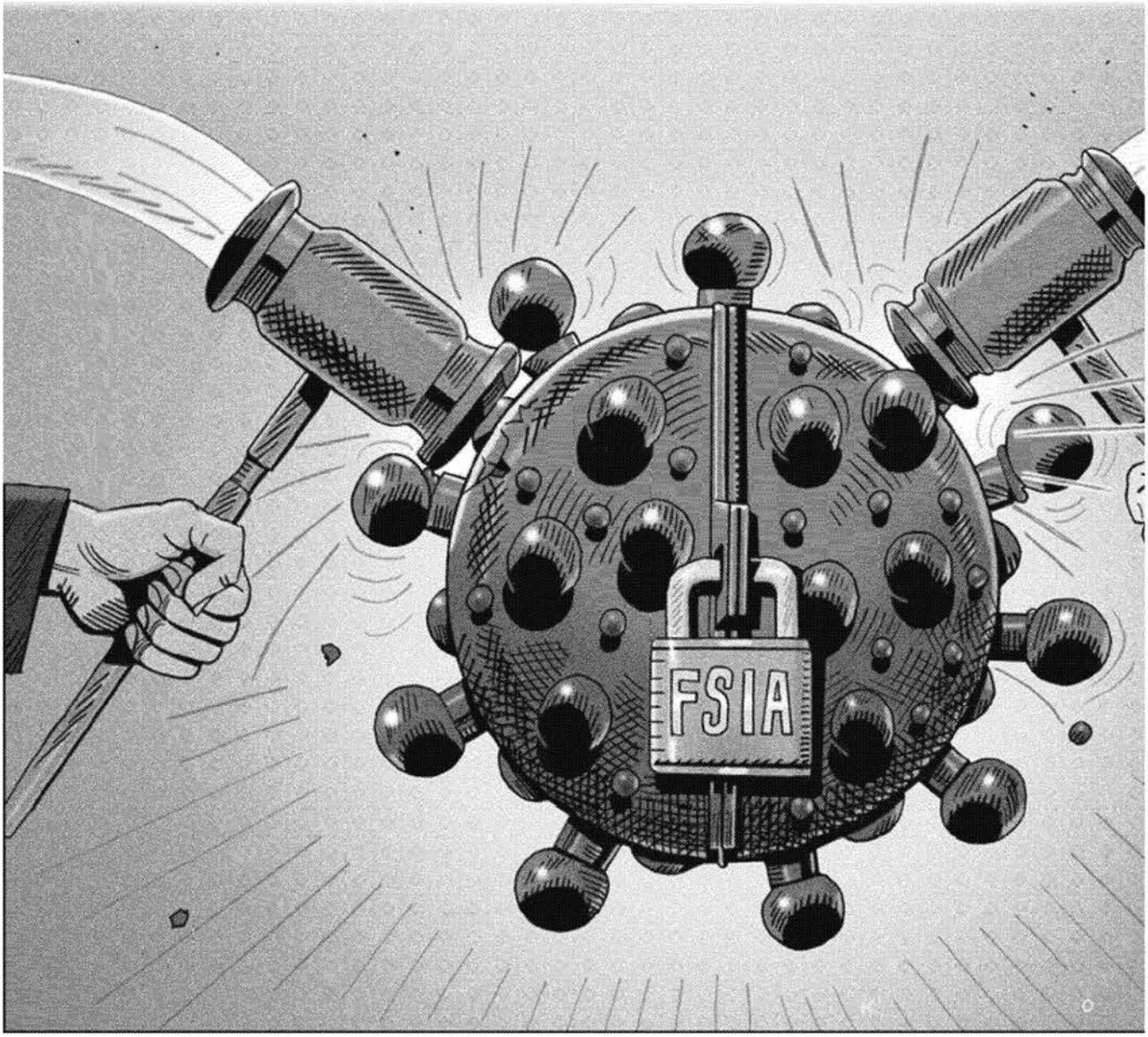

PHOTO: MARTIN KOZLOWSKI

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Will we ever know where Covid-19 came from? Not if the last word comes from the U.S. intelligence community, which reported to the White House this week that China's fault is plausible but unprovable. Beijing has refused to cooperate with inquiries, which it has characterized as "origin tracing terrorism." The Chinese Foreign Ministry even denounced the equivocal intelligence report: "If they want to baselessly accuse China, so they better be prepared to accept the counterattack from China."

For the rest of the world, getting to the bottom of the question is essential to assigning blame and preventing pandemics. Fortunately, we have an institution dedicated to getting to the bottom of thorny factual disputes: the U.S. judicial system. Our judiciary is respected globally for its impartiality and

scrupulous adherence to due process. Civil discovery gives litigants the tools to compel production of evidence, backed by the threat of sanctions or even default judgment, so Beijing would be unable to stonewall. With so many losses caused by the pandemic, U.S. litigants have a powerful incentive to bring cases, prosecute them aggressively, and test liability through adversarial presentation. Several such cases have already been filed.

But those suits and others like them face a high hurdle: the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. The FSIA is the reason at least eight lawsuits were dismissed or withdrawn on grounds that foreign states are generally shielded from litigation in U.S. courts. Yet that immunity isn't a constitutional mandate, only a matter of congressional discretion. Congress can legislate exceptions, and has done so.

Lawmakers should enact a new FSIA exception denying sovereign immunity to nations that fail to inform, or deliberately misinform, the global community of the nature and scope of a local epidemic that becomes a global pandemic. Beijing's failure in December 2019 to comply with the 24-hour notification requirement of the 2005 International Health Regulations, which China joined, should be a sufficient trigger. This would permit lawsuits to proceed so China's culpability for the Covid-19 outbreak can be openly adjudicated.

Congress should also withdraw immunity from international organizations that aided and abetted China's efforts to play down the virus's transmission and health risks. Western intelligence services have suggested that Beijing instructed the World Health Organization early in the pandemic on what it should say about Covid-19. Plaintiffs could use discovery to identify other governmental and private entities that collaborated with Beijing and hold them accountable. This litigation would have an added benefit of unmasking much of the pro-China infrastructure within international organizations and Western companies, think tanks and other institutions.

To ensure that China can't delay proceedings, the FSIA amendment should also either create a new federal tort action or give federal courts jurisdiction over Covid-related claims under state law.

Some may object that these measures could interfere with U.S. diplomacy. But Congress can address that concern. The Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act of 2016—which withdrew sovereign immunity from nations that provided material support to terrorist attacks on American soil—authorized the federal government to intervene in litigation to secure a diplomatic resolution that compensates plaintiffs and mitigates future harm. It makes sense to follow that model here. That would provide the Biden administration with the impetus to declassify and make available to Covid-19 litigants intelligence relating to the virus's origin. Here, too, there is precedent, stemming from civil cases over the Iran-contra affair and the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Defendants in U.S. legal proceedings are ordinarily entitled to bring counterclaims and spread liability to other potential defendants. Beijing has accused the U.S. military of creating the Covid-19 virus at the Army's Fort Detrick, Md., lab and introducing it during the 2019 Military World Games in Wuhan, in which a U.S. team participated. To ensure that Beijing is accorded every opportunity to defend itself, including bringing counterclaims against the U.S., the Biden administration should waive governmental immunity, a step it can take unilaterally without statutory changes. Let Beijing test its implausible theory in court.

China wouldn't be able to ignore lawsuits in American courts, given its close commercial ties with the U.S. If it refused to participate, courts would enter enforceable default judgments. China would be hard-pressed to avoid complying with any court-ordered damages and injunctions. Successful plaintiffs could pursue collection actions against Chinese government-owned commercial property around the world. Corporations are not normally liable for their owners' debts, but there is an exception when the owner is involved on a day-to-day basis in running the company. Given the Chinese Communist Party's pervasive control over formally private Chinese companies, this shouldn't be difficult to prove.

It should be possible to secure broad bipartisan support for these measures. Republicans and Democrats have expressed a keen desire to hold Beijing accountable, and the Biden administration has made a priority of defending and strengthening the rules-based international order. The president has repeatedly said he wants to make sure China plays by the rules.

Chinese military publications have run articles expressing interest in developing biological weapons. China understands that bioweapons are particularly effective against open societies, where stringent isolation and quarantine measures spur resistance, and could be used to incapacitate aircraft carriers and military bases, which are crucial to the U.S. ability to project power in the Indo-Pacific. Pandemics aside, upholding international norms is essential to deterring China from other malevolent acts, including against Taiwan.

Permitting Covid-19 suits would have additional strategic benefits. In its propaganda, Beijing has sought to capitalize on its supposedly superior handling of Covid-19, claiming it demonstrates the superiority of its totalitarian political system over open, democratic society. Legal discovery could unearth information puncturing these claims.

Holding Beijing accountable would also do much to dispel its assertions that the U.S. is a declining power. While Beijing still respects U.S. military power, it routinely talks down U.S. political will and economic strength. It would face a formidable foe in an army of lawyers on an honest judicial battlefield.

Mr. Pompeo is a distinguished fellow at the Hudson Institute. He served as director of the Central Intelligence Agency (2017-18) and secretary of state (2018-21). Mr. Rivkin practices appellate and

constitutional law in Washington. He served at the Justice Department and the White House Counsel's Office in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoIIealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date:	Wed, 14 Jul 2021 7:54:18 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Science Speaks: Not until June 2021 does China report Wuhan wet markets sold palm civets, racoon dogs and mink from 2017-2019: Where are the SARS-CoV-2 results?
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments:	image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

I know him quite well. He's what we'd call in England a 'busy-body'. It's crazy to turn every single paper and event into an attack on China – just because one group was doing studies at a university with the goal of analyzing welfare and ethics at wildlife markets does not mean the China team involved in the WHO mission knew about it.

If China was trying to cover up this, why did they let this group publish a paper on it in Scientific Reviews!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 5:23 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] [b6]
Subject: FW: Science Speaks: Not until June 2021 does China report Wuhan wet markets sold palm civets, racoon dogs and mink from 2017-2019: Where are the SARS-CoV-2 results?

Presumably you guys know Dan Lucey?

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health

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Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 5:01 PM
Subject: Science Speaks: Not until June 2021 does China report Wuhan wet markets sold palm civets, racoon dogs and mink from 2017-2019: Where are the SARS-CoV-2 results?

Not until June 2021 does China report Wuhan wet markets sold palm civets, racoon dogs and mink from 2017-2019: Where are the SARS-CoV-2 results?

By IDSA Contributor on July 14, 2021.

By Daniel R. Lucey MD, MPH, FIDSA

Last month a paper titled "Animal sales from Wuhan wet markets immediately prior to the COVID-19 pandemic" by Xiao et al., in *Nature Scientific Reports* listed 18 mammalian species sold May 2017 -November 2019 in Wuhan wet markets (Table 1). These mammalian species included masked palm civets (*Paguma larvata*) and racoon dogs (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*), species linked with SARS-CoV-1 in 2003 and known to be susceptible to SARS-CoV-2. Mink (*neovision vison*) were also sold, and the authors state these mink: . . . originated from fur farms — noting that SARS-CoV-2 has been reported in mink farms in Europe and North America." (paragraph 3 of the Discussion section).

Notably, Figure 2 shows photos of **caged live mammals in the Huanan seafood market** including a racoon dog, amur hedgehogs, Chinese bamboo rat, marmots and hog badger.

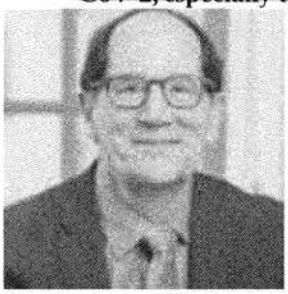
In sharp contrast, the WHO-China joint team report from their work in Wuhan Jan. 14-Feb. 10, 2021 and posted March 30, 2021 (p. 98): "Although there is photographic evidence in a published paper that live mammals were sold at the Huanan market in the past (2014) (36) (date confirmed by author in statement Annex F) and unverified media reports in 2020, **no verified reports of live mammals being sold around 2019 were found.**" (my bolding added for emphasis and contrast with Figure 2 of the paper by Xiao et al. above).

Xiao et al., also state in the next to last paragraph of the Discussion section: "Furthermore, the WHO reports that market authorities claimed all live and frozen animals sold in the Huanan market were acquired from farms officially licensed for breeding and quarantine, as such no illegal wildlife trade was identified. In reality, however, because China has no regulatory

authority regulating animal trading conducted by small-scale vendors or individuals it is impossible to make this determination".
Specific information regarding racoon dogs is provided by Xiao et al:
"Racoon dog fur farming is legal in China; however, due to a drop in fur prices, racoon dogs are now frequently sold off in live animal markets, augmented by wild-caught animals." (3rd paragraph of the Discussion section).
Xiao et al. state that no pangolins or bats were found in the Wuhan markets.
Memorably, Xiao X. (X.X.) et al. explained how these data were acquired:
"Serendipitously, prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, over the period May 2017-November 2019, we were conducting unrelated routine monthly surveys of all 17 wet market shops selling live wild animals for food and pets across Wuhan City (surveys were conducted by X.X.). This was intended to identify the source of the tick-borne (no human -to-human transmission) Severe Fever with Thrombocytopenia (SFTS), following an outbreak in Hubei province in 2009-2010 . . . these shops selling live, often wild, animals included two at Baishazhou market . . . seven at Huanan seafood market . . . four at Dijiao outdoor pet market . . .and four at Qiyimen live animal market . . .". (1st paragraph of Materials and Methods section).
"As an objective observer unconnected to law enforcement X.X. was granted unique and complete access to trading practices. On each visit, vendors were asked what species they had sold over the preceding month and in what numbers, along with the prices…and origin of these goods (wild caught or captive bred/farmed). Additionally . . . the number of individuals available for sale at the time of each visit was noted, and animals were checked for gunshot wounds . . ." (2nd paragraph of Materials and Methods section).
Even more people than the five co-authors (from China, Canada, and UK), and the multiple market vendors, were well aware of this study and its findings of live mammalian species in Wuhan wet markets, including the Huanan seafood market because:
"All protocols in the market survey were reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of Hubei University of Chinese Medicine (no 20161111). All vendors provided written informed consent to participate in these surveys, and all protocols were performed with relevant guidelines and regulations". (4th paragraph of the Materials and Methods).
Two of the many key questions raised by this June 2021 publication are:

- **Will the WHO Director General, Dr. Tedros, determine from China why the WHO international team in Wuhan Jan-Feb 2021 was not informed of these important data,** especially with regard to the live masked palm civets, racoon dogs, and mink being sold in Wuhan wet markets May 2017 until November 2019 "immediately prior to the COVID-19 pandemic"?

- Will Dr. Tedros determine from China what became of these 18 live mammalian species in Wuhan wet markets in December 2019-January 2020 **and what were the results of (so far undisclosed) testing of these animals for SARS-CoV-2, especially the masked palm civets, the raccoon dogs, and the mink?**



Dr. Daniel Lucey
Daniel Lucey, M.D. MPH, FIDSA, FACP, *is a Clinical Professor of Medicine at Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine, Infectious Disease adjunct Professor at Georgetown Medical Center, senior scholar at Georgetown Law, Anthropology Research Associate at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History and a member of the Infectious Diseases Society of America Global Health Committee. He served as a volunteer to outbreaks overseas including hands-on Ebola patient care in Sierra Leone and Liberia (Doctors without Borders) 2014, MERS 2013, SARS 2003, as well as HIV, H5N1, Zika, yellow Fever, and pneumonic plague 2017 (with WHO/USAID/CDC). Since Jan. 6, 2020 he has contributed more than 100 posts to Science Speaks on COVID-19 and traveled to China in February 2020. He initially proposed, then fundraised and helped design the content for 2018-2022 Smithsonian Exhibition on Epidemics due to zoonotic viruses. From 1982-1988 he trained at University of California San Francisco and Harvard and was an attending physician at the NIH (NIAID) in the 1990s while in the U.S. Public Health Service.*

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Date: Wed, 4 Aug 2021 12:47:23 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 4 Aug 2021 12:47:09 PM -0400
Subject: Re: House report on Origins
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; Outlook-f3m2stcb.png

It's just awful, the hate emails I'm getting after the new PLOS Biology piece defending science and scientists are really troubling

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor, Baylor University
Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health
Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases

E-mail: b6
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Linkedin Peter Hotez

Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPiC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6
Phone: b6
Fax: 713-798-2299

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 11:11 AM

To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: RE: House report on Origins

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Peter:

It never stops. Best to lie as low as possible – something that animals in Africa learned a long time ago.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
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USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 5:59 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: FW: House report on Origins

EXTERNAL SENDER

More attempts to discredit me from the Republicans.

Just forwarding this to Rich and Peter. The Republicans in the House Foreign Affairs Committee have released a 'Covid-19 origins report' in advance of the White House intel report. It re-hashes all the usual conspiracies with no new information at all. However, they are now accusing me of following orders from China in 'covering up' COVID's origins and asking for me to be subpoena'd. Today I've been called the 'Public Face of China's Disinformation Campaign' by one right wing press outlet, and I expect this will drive a follow up cycle of abuse and offense from the Murdoch Press. In fact, I've received multiple requests for comment from reporters already including Josh Rogin in the Washington Post, reporters in the Washington Examiner etc.

Here are some articles:

https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/house- report-names-public-face-of-chinas-disinformation-campaign-on-covid-origin/

https://news.yahoo.com/peter- daszak-subpoenaed-wuhan-lab-183600491.html

https://nypost.com/2021/08/02/gop- investigation-proves-covid-leaked-from-wuhan-lab-report/

https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world- news/2021/08/02/covid- did-leak-wuhan-lab-say-republicans-want-subpoena-british/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:24 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6); b6 ; Keusch, Jerry (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) b6 , Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Eddie Holmes b6 >; Kessler, Robert b6 >; Wang Linfa b6 b6
Subject: FW: House report on Origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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From: Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:19 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: House report on Origins

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Date: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 6:19:33 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 6:19:31 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>; peter hotez [b6]

I talk to him regularly, most recently about the attacks on Peter D and the task force we were on under the Lancet COVID Commission which Jeff Sachs has unilaterally terminated. I couldn't really allow him insights into where we are or to use anything I said (all off the record) because we are negotiating with Lancet for a different way to continue our work.

I think he is a decent guy. I know Peter D has concerns so if you do speak to Jon be careful about what you say and how you say it, and require him to run any quotes he plans to use by you. That's his general modus operandi.

What we need is to get the amendment out of the appropriations bill, and while the senators are important it may be somebody like Eric Lander who is a cabinet member to get them to pay attention. The administration is mightily distracted.

Rich, if you are able to share your entre to Elizabeth Warrens staff I would happily follow up. I have contacted them, Markey, and my representation and all I get back is the auto thank you reply.

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 3:47 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]>; peter hotez [b6]
Subject: RE: Good LA Times article.

Peter:

I just spoke with Jon Cohen from Science. I mentioned that you were being attacked completely unfairly and that it would be good if he could find some encouraging words to help you. I am wondering if one of you would also be prepared to talk to Jon.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email [b6] n

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 11:47 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Cc: Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Good LA Times article.

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just saw a piece in the LA Times that sums up the state of the origins "debate" pretty clearly:

https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2021- 09-28/evidence-against-a-lab-leak-as-covid-source

It's firewalled so here's the article:

Column: New evidence undermines the COVID lab-leak theory — but the press keeps pushing it

BY MICHAEL HILTZIK BUSINESS COLUMNIST
SEPT. 28, 2021 6 AM PT

When it comes to the pandemic, pseudoscience has outweighed real science at almost every turn. One of the best examples of that is the unsupported assertion that the virus causing COVID-19 escaped from a Chinese laboratory.

Despite mounting evidence that the virus reached humans through natural pathways — from infected animals such as bats — the lab-leak hypothesis recently jumped back into the news, thanks to CNN, the investigative news site the Intercept, and the Atlantic.

All treat the idea that the virus escaped from a lab credulously. They downplay or entirely ignore the latest scientific findings that support the theory that the virus' origin can be found in the animal kingdom — the view accepted by a preponderance of experts in virology.

It's a likely probability that this one originated from animals as well. But the possibility also remains that the virus leaked from a lab.
CNN'S SANJAY GUPTA OVERSTATES THE LAB LEAK THEORY

This is known as the zoonotic theory, from the term for a disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

We've reported before on the near absence of evidence for a lab leak, whether or not it's the product of a deliberate act.

Ever since the lab-leak claim first emerged during the Trump administration, where it was part of a White House information campaign demonizing China, one of the arguments in its favor has been that evidence for a zoonotic origin has also been spotty.

That argument has never been quite true — virologists know that animals have been the source of most of the viral diseases afflicting humanity — but it has become weaker than ever over the last year.

The question of the origin of COVID-19 isn't of merely academic interest. The answer could guide the world's preparation for future pandemics; if the virus emerged from a laboratory, then improving lab safety measures will be prioritized. If scientific opinion continues to coalesce around animal-to-human transmission, that will underscore the importance of regulating contact between humans and wildlife.

To put it another way, if we focus on the wrong answer, the right measures won't be taken. In a real sense, humankind's future depends on not being distracted by an unsupported, politically motivated claim about Chinese labs.

Before examining the flaws in the CNN, Intercept and Atlantic treatments, let's look at what's been published recently about the zoonotic path.

For context, keep in mind that the earliest cluster of COVID-19 cases, in late 2019, was identified in the environs of the Huanan seafood market in the Chinese metropolis of Wuhan. Lab-leak theorists find this significant, because it's 7.5 miles from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which does research on bat viruses.

A paper posted online earlier this month chiefly by researchers at France's Institut Pasteur and under consideration for publication in a Nature journal, however, reports that three viruses were found in bats living in caves in northern Laos with features very similar to SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19.

As Nature reported, those viruses are "more similar to SARS-CoV-2 than any known viruses."

Another paper, posted in late August by researchers from the Wuhan lab, reports on viruses found in rats also with features similar to those that make SARS-CoV-2 infectious in humans. Two other papers published on the discussion forum virological.org present evidence that the virus jumped from animals to humans at more than one animal market in Wuhan, not just the Huanan seafood market.

Given that these so-called wet markets have long been suspected as transmission points of viruses from animals to humans because they sell potentially infected animals, that makes the laboratory origin vastly less likely, according to a co-author of one of the papers.

"That a laboratory leak would find its way to the very place where you would expect to find a zoonotic transmission is quite unlikely," Joel Wertheim, an associate professor at UC San Diego's medical school, told me. "To have it find its way to multiple markets, the exact place where you would expect to see the introduction, is unbelievably unlikely."

As virologist Robert F. Garry of Tulane, one of Wertheim 's co-authors, told Nature, the finding is "a dagger into the heart" of the lab-leak hypothesis.

Garry and Wertheim are among the 21 expert co-authors of a "critical review" of virological findings on the origins of COVID-19. The review concludes, "There is currently no evidence that SARS-CoV-2 has a laboratory origin."

Now let's look at the recent reporting in support of the lab-leak theory.

On Sept. 19, CNN aired an hourlong documentary entitled "The Origins of COVID-19: Searching for the Source." Hosted by the channel's star science anchor, Sanjay Gupta, the program carries the veneer of an evenhanded approach.

Proponents of the zoonotic origin theory are given airtime, including Kristian Andersen of the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla and Peter Daszak, a prominent grant maker in the virology field.

But so are proponents of the lab-leak theory. They include Alina Chan, a researcher at the Broad Institute, a biomedical research center, and Josh Rogin, a Washington Post columnist. Neither has any experience in

virology. Chan is co-writing a book about COVID's origins that is expected to feature the lab-leak theory prominently, a fact not mentioned by CNN.

Yet at the top of the hour, referring to the common pattern of viruses jumping from animals to humans, Gupta says, "It's a likely probability that this one originated from animals as well. But the possibility also remains that the virus leaked from a lab."

By posing these two theories as simply two equally plausible solutions to a mystery, CNN glosses over the fact that the virological community regards the animal origin as vastly more likely than a lab leak. In fact, the two hypotheses are miles apart in credibility.

One of the program's chief targets is a report by a World Health Organization team issued in early 2021 that found spillover from an animal host to be "likely to very likely" and a laboratory incident an "extremely unlikely pathway."

Gupta calls the WHO report "the only scientific study of COVID's origins to date." That's not remotely accurate. There have been countless scientific studies, both before the WHO report and since. Indeed, Gupta mentions one of them, a seminal paper by Andersen and colleagues, published in March 2020. That paper termed the lab-leak theory "a speculative incomplete hypothesis with no credible evidence."

Much of the rest of the CNN program is filled with speculation about the Wuhan Institute, typically presented with portentous music on the soundtrack, suggesting subliminally that something sinister is going on there. The absence of information from the institute or the Chinese government is generally taken as tantamount to an admission of guilt.

"Over the course of 2020," Gupta declares, "more and more revelations emerged related to the Wuhan Institute of Virology."

One of these revelations concerned three staff members who reportedly sought hospital treatment for a flu-like illness in November 2019, before the COVID pandemic emerged.

Nothing has ever transpired to suggest these workers had COVID — November is flu season, after all. That they sought treatment at a hospital is immaterial, since it is well-known that people in China often go to hospitals for primary care, which residents of other countries would tend to receive in a doctor's office.

A CNN reporter appearing on air overstated the case, saying the patients were "hospitalized with an unknown illness." There has been no evidence that they were admitted to the hospital or that their illness was "unknown."

CNN doesn't bring its audience up to date on any of the latest research supporting the zoonotic theory, though it was published well before the air date and superseded what Gupta described as "the only scientific study" of COVID origins.

More recently, the Intercept trumpeted a purported scoop based on a leaked document — a grant proposal submitted in 2018 by Daszak's organization, the EcoHealth Alliance, to the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA.

The proposal, for a laboratory manipulation of a virus related to SARS, the viral disease that caused an outbreak of pulmonary disease in China in 2003. DARPA rejected the proposal, however, and there's no evidence that it was submitted to, much less approved by, any other funding body.

"Many questions remain about the proposal, including whether any of the research described in it was completed," the Intercept acknowledged.

Commentators on the Intercept's disclosure have displayed, perhaps in spite of themselves, that they lack the courage of their own convictions. In an article published Sept. 24, the Atlantic, unable or unwilling to delve into what the Intercept's document actually meant, if anything, settled for declaring that it made the lab-leak debate "even messier."

The magazine's Daniel Engber and Adam Federman wrote: "Does the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic have an unnatural origin? The answer hasn't changed: probably not. But we have learned something quite disturbing in the past few days, simply from how and when this information came to light."

By pretending that the debate itself is important, as if both sides have something to offer, they manage to report on a claim that has no substance. The approach also protects journalists from their persistent fear of landing on the wrong side of things — the authors preserve an out in case the lab-leak hypothesis turns out to be true, as unlikely as that is. If that happens, they can point to their lily-livered observations and say, "See, we knew it all along."

In this debate, however, the zoonotic camp has evidence and the lab-leak camp nothing to offer but innuendo.

Here's the true state of the discussion. There is no evidence that the virus leaked from the Wuhan laboratory or any other lab. There is no evidence that the Wuhan lab was working with a bat virus that had anything but a very distant resemblance to SARS-CoV-2. Viruses that resemble it much more closely have been found in natural settings a thousand miles from Wuhan, as the crow, or bat, flies.

Evidence that artificial manipulation of a virus gave rise to SARS-CoV-2 has faded, as scientists find more evidence that features of SARS-CoV-2 thought to be unnatural occur in nature. Meanwhile, evidence for zoonotic transmission is constantly accumulating. No one who reports on the issue without acknowledging these two trends should be trusted.

Los Angeles Times columnist Michael Hiltzik writes a daily blog appearing on latimes.com. His seventh book, "Iron Empires: Robber Barons, Railroads, and the Making of Modern America," has just been published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/hiltzikm and on Facebook at facebook.com/hiltzik.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date:	Mon, 17 May 2021 6:23:52 PM -0400
Sent:	Mon, 17 May 2021 6:22:18 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Roberts, Rich [b6] Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

I think you may well be correct because (factually) the one expt I'm referring to which inserted bat-CoV spikes into a SARS-CoV backbone was reviwed by NIH and because it had begun prior to the pause, it was allowed to continue.

However, the wording is an issue. My point is that the expectation and goal of the expt was to find out if a bat CoV would have been able to infect human cells, not to see if they could help SARS-CoV become more transmissible or virulent, or to understand anything in particular about SARS-CoV transmissibility or virulence.

I'm not on that paper, so (thankfully) I won't have to get into these issues publicly. I did ask Ralph to include a citation to our USAID contract because Zhengli's work discovering the virus was part of that project – in retrospect I wish I hadn't!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich [redacted]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 6:01 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Subject: RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Peter:

I'm not sure I buy the argument that the Ralph and Zhengli experiments were not GoF, just because they led to loss of function. That was probably not the aim of the experiment, just the result. Would you have considered them GoF if they had in fact improved infectivity?

I think it is best to find an alternative term to describe the experiments rather than relying on the loss of function.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 2:27 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Keusch, Jerry b6; Roberts, Rich < (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Subject: RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

EXTERNAL SENDER

Didn't see that one. Vincent's right that EcoHealth was not part of any gain-of-function work. He's wrong that the work between Ralph and Zhengli was actually 'gain of function'. The chimeric virus (bat spike, SARS-CoV backbone) actually lost some replication capacity – more like 'loss of function'.

The interview video clip is one I recorded in Singapore in December 2019 at a Nipah meeting. I didn't use the phrase gain of function, and wasn't referring to work we did, as Vincent says. Quite ridiculous, but easy to fool the public with this…

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:54 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6 b6; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Dmid

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
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b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:11 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research
https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research

In a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul, longtime NIAID Director Anthony Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied his institute has funded gain-of-function research.
By Daniel Payne

•

Updated: May 15, 2021 - 11:44am
A prominent Columbia University virologist claims that in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic a U.S. nonprofit

funded coronavirus experiments in Wuhan, China the results of which were used in "gain-of-function" virology research at the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Vincent Racaniello made the claim amid ongoing controversy over a recently resurfaced interview between himself and Peter Daszak, the president of the U.S. infectious disease nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.

Both EcoHealth Alliance and the scientist leading the research at UNC have been heavily funded over the years by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which has been directed since 1984 by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the public face of the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic under Presidents Trump and Biden.

Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied that NIAID has funded gain-of-function research in a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) at a Senate hearing.

Racianello's half-hour interview with Daszak took place in early December 2019 at the Nipah Virus International Conference in Singapore. Significant attention has been given to a segment in which Daszak appears to allude to having participated in "gain-of-function" experiments, a type of procedure in which scientists increase a virus's pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in order to study its potential for human infection.

"You can manipulate [coronaviruses] in the lab pretty easily," Daszak says in the interview. "Spike protein drives a lot of what happens with the coronavirus, zoonotic risk. So you can get the sequence, you can build the protein — and we work with Ralph Baric at UNC to do this — insert into the backbone of another virus, and do, do some work in the lab."

Those remarks, when they resurfaced this week, caused considerable controversy due to Daszak's role in funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars through his EcoHealth Alliance to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to bankroll coronavirus experiments there. The Wuhan lab sits just a few miles from where the first detected outbreak of COVID-19 occurred.

Speculation has swirled over the last year as to what role, if any, the Wuhan lab may have played in the origin of the pandemic, including whether it was engaging in any gain-of-function experiments that may have posed a pandemic risk.

Experiments 'confer a new property to the original virus'

Racaniello said that Daszak in the December 2019 interview was indeed describing gain-of-function experiments.

"Here is the idea," he said in an email exchange this week. "You go into caves in China and sample bats for CoVs. You collect bat guano and sequence it to find the viruses. You don't actually have the viruses, just their genome sequences. You want to know if these viruses have the ability to infect human cells."

"Since you don't have the viruses," he continued, "you just take the spike sequence from all these viruses and put it into a coronavirus that you work with in the lab. Then you see if that recombinant coronavirus can infect human cells. It's all done under containment to prevent any release. If the spikes of the bat CoV can allow the CoV to infect human cells, then they have the potential to infect humans and we should be making antivirals against them to prevent a pandemic."

Those kinds of experiments, Racaniello said, "are considered 'gain of function' because they would confer a new property to the original virus."

That research, Racaniello said, "was done in the laboratory of Dr. Ralph Baric in [the University of] North Carolina and was not funded by EcoHealth Alliance." When pressed, Racaniello revealed that EcoHealth did have an indirect role in the funding of Baric's work.

"EcoHealth Alliance provided funds to Zengli Shi at the Wuhan Institute of Virology to conduct bat surveillance for SARS-like CoVs," he said. "Baric then received the spike sequences from Wuhan to do his experiments independently."

"Daszak and Baric did not work together on this project," he added.

Anna Marie Skalka, a professor emerita at the Fox Chase Cancer Center and one of the authors of the bestselling textbook "Principles of Virology," did not expressly deny that Baric's research constituted gain-of-function, though she claimed that the overall issue was more complex than that.

"I prefer to describe the research in broader terms, as gain-of-function seems too narrow and has acquired negative connotations," she said. "The aim of such research is to learn as much as possible about the gene/protein in question so that one can begin to develop possible therapeutic or vaccine-related approaches."

Queries to Daszak and Baric on Racaniello's claims went unanswered.

The assertions from Racaniello — a four-decade veteran of academic virology who along with Skalka is also an author of "Principles of Virology" — constitute the sharpest allegations yet that both EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were involved, even if adjacently, with gain-of-function research prior to the pandemic.

Baric's research, meanwhile, has been the recipient of millions of dollars in funding from the NIAID over the years, much of it focused on coronaviruses, including experiments in the "replication and pathogenesis" of those viruses.

Racaniello himself forcefully defended such research. "There is a very clear reason to do these experiments and if we had done them even more we could have prevented the current pandemic," he said.

EcoHealth, meanwhile, has been the focus of controversy for the past year due not merely to its alleged association with coronavirus experiments but also to the fact that its work was for years heavily funded by the federal government, specifically the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

EcoHealth routed hundreds of thousands of NIAID dollars to the Wuhan lab in the years leading up to the pandemic to conduct coronavirus research there. Experts and commentators alike have called for a major investigation into the lab to determine if SARS-Cov-2 may have accidentally leaked from the facility and launched the pandemic.

The federal funding for the Wuhan project was pulled last year near the outset of the pandemic. Daszak himself told NPR last

year that the Wuhan experiments were "funded entirely through the NIH grant," as the news service put it.
The lab was the subject of part of the World Health Organization's investigation into the origins of COVID-19. That probe concluded earlier this year and determined that a lab-leak theory was unlikely, though world officials have called for additional investigations into the facility.
The international team of investigators reportedly only spent a single day at the Wuhan lab. Among the team's members — and the only U.S. representative on it — was Peter Daszak.

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Date: Sat, 8 May 2021 1:47:15 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 8 May 2021 1:46:23 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Some advice and help needed
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: Roberts, Rich b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 David Morens b6
CC: Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Robert Kessler b6

Rich,

I'll try to send something over tomorrow (Saturday). You should know that just about every single paragraph in that Nicholas Wade article is factually incorrect. It might be well-written, but it's still completely wrong.

I've heard of Andre Goffinet – he's very active on Twitter and is a self-styled COVID-origins 'researcher' (really a University neurologist researcher) who spends half of every day searching the web for snippets of information about Wuhan that he can spin into a deeper conspiracy web. The other half appears to be spent writing to journalists to try to promote these conspiracies. Clearly what he's searching for here is one or two laureates to retract their support for the letter so as to undermine our organization and our work.

I really appreciate your support at this moment – it's extremely ugly out there.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 10:52 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 David Morens < b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura < b6 ; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Some advice and help needed

Peter et al.

I have received a number of emails like the attached from some of the NLs who signed on.
The sender, Andre Goffinet, had originally written to me on April 23rd enquiring about my relationship with scientists in China. He was obviously trying to make a case that I was somehow helping the Chinese cover up what was going with the Wuhan lab and hence discredit the NL letter that I had organized. He got nowhere with that, but has now taken a different tack as illustrated in the attached letter.

I will send out a letter to all the NLs who signed on and try to defuse the situation. However, one thing I feel I should include is

Nicholas Wade's latest piece since that will probably come to the attention of most of them and is probably the best written article pushing the lab origin while trying to pretend it was unbiased.

I wonder if there is a good summary you would recommend I use (and quote) to assure the NLs that they should not regret joining the initial campaign. I'm not looking for anything long, but rather a brief summary and perhaps a link to a longer piece.

I would like to send something out tomorrow.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:20 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T < b6 ; David Morens b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich < b6 n>; Aleksei Chmura <c b6 ; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

Really interesting to hear those comments about "Blah blah" and "Deng deng". It just saddens me because I know Zhengli's English is not the best, and I don't think she realizes that every word she says publicly, even in response to a question at a University seminar, is being manipulated and used politically. It feels like racism to me.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:01 AM
To: David Morens <b6>; Peter Daszak <b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <b6; Robert Kessler <
b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

The letter to Blinken includes the following statement:

"…the release of these documents from the Department could help to refute contradictory statements that have been made regarding the possibility of a laboratory leak from the WIV." This could be taken in a positive sense, that the documents will refute the lab release hypothesis, although I don't think that's how they mean it.

Regarding what Peter previously said about Shi's use of the phrase blah blah, which will surely be characterized as dismissive and therefore put into a negative perspective. I have access to a senior endowed full professor of Chinese politics at Harvard and I asked about the meaning of blah blah when a Chinese native speaker uses it while speaking English. Here is the answer:

"In my experience many Chinese mistakenly use "blah, blah" as equivalent to the Chinese term "deng, deng" which means "and so forth" and has no negative connotation."

So Peter was right, and now we know the Chinese term it is trying to translate, however awkwardly. This might be useful in any conversation with a report about her remarks or the Republicans letter.

Jerry

From: David Morens <b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Roberts, Rich <b6>; Aleksei Chmura <
b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, i will reply eventually when i get some time, but until then, note yet another Josh Rogin editorial in this morning's Post, this time disclosing the Republican letter to Tony, which i have not yet seen and may or may not see. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 6, 2021, at 23:34, Peter Daszak <b6 wrote:
>
> Sorry for yet another email, but this one is so bizarre it's almost funny. It's a letter from the House E&C Committee Republicans to Blinken asking him to release the classified intel that people in the Wuhan lab were sick prior to COVID, and that the WIV does military research. It quotes some comments from a recent talk my collaborator Zhengli Shi from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, gave during a lecture at Rutgers. Some of the online conspiracists heard about the talk in advance and they packed the audience – some of their questions from the chat were read out. Her response included a very common "blah blah" phrase used in China when speaking English – here's the quote:
>
> During a March 23, 2021 seminar at Rutgers University, a WHO advisory committee member asked Dr. Shi if [knew]..

whether "the U.S. government claims of classified Chinese military research being carried out at the WIV [are] correct, and if so, did you have full awareness of and access to all aspects of this research?"[4]

Dr. Shi answered: From my knowledge, all our research work is open, is transparent. At the beginning of COVID-19, we heard the rumors that claimed our laboratory would have some project blah blah with army blah blah . . . but this is not correct, because I am the director and responsible for research activity. I don't know any kind of research work performed in this lab.[5]

This is ridiculous, of course, and they're obviously using that quote to suggest Dr. Shi doesn't take these questions seriously, but it's actually a racist trope – people in China use the phrase "blah blah" to simply mean "and so on, and so forth". Just unfortunate…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM
To: 'David Morens ([b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; 'Roberts, Rich' b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; 'Robert Kessler (b6
Subject: New: Letter from Republican Rep. Gallagher to Dr. Fauci re. WIV and gain of function
Importance: High

David,

A Republican representative sent a letter to Tony Fauci today asking some pretty simple questions that are clearly designed to play to their political base.

If Tony Fauci is going to respond to the attached letter that was made public today, I hope he's ready to point out that the work we did was NOT gain of function. This phrase has been bandied about now for a few months and is utterly incorrect.

If he decides to draft a response, I'd be happy to do a quick briefing with you and him to explain the work that has been done up to now with WIV, and was planned to be done on our NIAID grant.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Sun, 5 Sep 2021 1:21:14 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 5 Sep 2021 1:19:14 PM -0400
Subject: RE: FW: ASF --- foia
From: Peter Daszak [redacted]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted] Robert Kessler [redacted] >; Keusch, Jerry [redacted]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Thanks for the heads-up. The 900 pages of grant material I think is the stuff we've been processing through with our lawyers. It includes the full proposal for our grant in China, reports etc. as well as our current U01. It's extremely upsetting that these will now be dragged through the mud, but the truth is, there's nothing unusual or embarrassing in there – everything is completely normal and above board, and both were highly scored by reviewers.

In my view, this sort of stuff isn't going to get them the same level of interest that it did at the beginning of summer, so hopefully this will be another non-event, but let's see what drama they can dream up from it.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, September 5, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak [redacted] Robert Kessler < [redacted] Keusch, Jerry < [redacted]
Subject: Fwd: FW: ASF --- foia

Peter, have a stiffdrink before you read. But do not worry, this is thd new normal and there will be no "there" there..... d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: ASF --- foia
Date: Sun, 5 Sep 2021 16:57:49 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted]
To: David Morens [redacted]

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, September 3, 2021 9:29 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: ASF --- foia

Further on FOIA

900 pages of EcoHealth Alliance grant materials are going out (with redactions) today under a lawsuit with First Look Institute (The Intercept). In OD.

ASF --- I do not think you need to look at this

Also, as folks may be aware, and apropos of my email late last night, Congress does not have to go through the FOIA. So the tranche from last night was not in the usual NIH FOIA channel.

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Friday, September 3, 2021 12:09 AM
To: NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: ASF --- foia

We have closely monitored foia document releases with an eye toward items that are new/different/potentially problematic in terms of people using them to cause mischief. Nothing recently has fallen into those categories

NOW -- What is new and will be released soon, perhaps tomorrow

Unredacted emails requested by minority members of House Committee on Oversight and Reform

In OD, please see

HOGR minority requested emails 9/2/2021 9:03 PM

ASF I think it would be helpful for you to eyball **all** the redacted emails now being released in un-redacted form
For instance, for this entry, look at at the top one

NIH 2157 - 2161
NIH 2157 - 2161 redacted

We have gone through these, and the ones that might be worth a first look are:

- 2157-2161
- 2314-2324
- #14 and 15

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Date: Tue, 11 Jan 2022 7:35:41 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 11 Jan 2022 7:35:34 PM -0500
Subject: Re: Lancet/Horton -- Offline: The origin story—towards a final resolution?
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Attachments: image006.gif; image007.jpg; image001.png; image002.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.jpg

My favorite story today: "What a moron," Fauci could be heard saying quietly as Tuesday's hearing moved on. "Jesus Christ."
Marshall later responded in a statement: "Calling me a moron during a Senate hearing may have alleviated the stress of the least trusted bureaucrat in America, but it didn't take away from the facts.

https://www.politico.com/news/2022/01/11/anthony- fauci-gop-senators-financial-disclosure-526891

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President
EcoHealth Alliance

520 8th Avenue, New York, NY10018-6507, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Jan 11, 2022, at 12:01 PM, David Morens [b6] > wrote:

David M. Morens, MD

b6

[b6] [b6] [b6] (work)
[b6] [b6] [b6] (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH

email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]** [b6] >
Date: Tue, Jan 11, 2022 at 11:52 AM
Subject: FW: Lancet/Horton -- Offline: The origin story—towards a final resolution?
To: David Morens [b6]

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520

[b6] assistant: Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, January 1, 2022 12:48 PM
Subject: Lancet/Horton -- Offline: The origin story—towards a final resolution?

Volume 399, Issue 10319, 1–7 January 2022, Page 11

THE LANCET



Comment

Offline: The origin story—towards a final resolution?

Author links open overlay panelRichardHorton

https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140- 6736(21)02871-3Get rights and content

WHO has been a particular casualty in the dispute about the origins of SARS-CoV-2. Former US President Donald Trump's verbal attacks and his decision to defund the agency drew blood in Geneva—and the wounds are still visible. The allegation that WHO shared responsibility for the pandemic by adopting a policy of appeasement towards China has

proven impossible to refute. As a member-state organisation, WHO's staff are constitutionally bound to heed the instructions of the governments they serve. Only former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland had the courage to defy countries when she was WHO Director-General during the first SARS outbreak in 2003. But although WHO has been injured, the truth is that the agency has been a convenient punchbag for western nations looking to distract attention away from their own mistakes and malfeasance. A fair-minded observer might conclude that WHO has done its best with a weak hand. Look at the facts.



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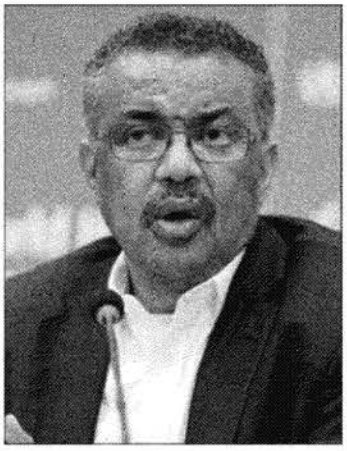
- Download : Download full-size image

In May, 2020, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution asking Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to identify the source of the virus and its route of entry into human populations. A workplan was soon devised, experts were invited, and, by October, 2020, a team and its terms of reference had been finalised. Virtual meetings with Chinese colleagues started and the WHO-appointed scientists conducted field visits in China between Jan 14 and Feb 10, 2021. They took an explicitly one health approach—reconstructing the early part of the outbreak, identifying and mapping products sold at the Huanan seafood market, and testing livestock, wildlife, pets, and zoo animals for evidence of infection. Their report was published on March 30, 2021. Far from ignoring the possibility of a laboratory leak, the team cited it as one of four possible pathways for igniting the pandemic. They concluded that a laboratory leak was "extremely unlikely", but they conceded that, although rare, laboratory accidents do happen, and especially so if laboratory protocols fell below acceptable safety thresholds. Critics of WHO argue that its scientists treated this investigation as an exercise in political diplomacy rather than rigorous science. The UK's *The Sunday Times* ran a front-page story in August, 2021, entitled "China, the WHO and the power grab that fuelled a pandemic". Their claim was that the Chinese Government had infiltrated the agency, a takeover that "sowed the seeds of disaster". This allegation is nonsense. Indeed, undeterred, phase two of WHO's investigation is already underway. A new team of 27 scientists has been appointed—the Scientific Advisory Group for the Origins of Novel Pathogens. Their mandate is to complete "an independent evaluation of all available scientific and technical findings…on the origins of SARS-CoV-2". They will need to move quickly. The window of opportunity for discovering crucial evidence about the origins of the pandemic is closing fast.



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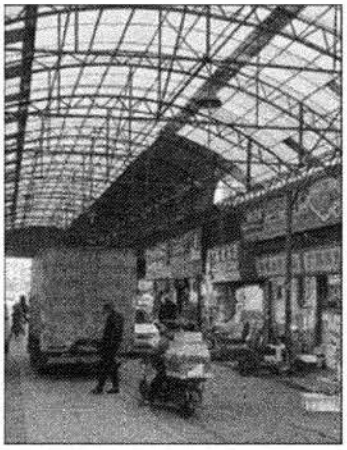
The laboratory leak theory will continue to garner support as long as the Chinese Government refuses to allow an independent investigation of the institutions conducting coronavirus research in Wuhan. But the two theories—laboratory leak versus zoonotic spillover—are not in equipoise. Recent work strongly supports a central role for the Huanan market in the origin story of the pandemic. Michael Worobey is an evolutionary biologist at the University of Arizona. He has been part of a team seeking to track the earliest events in the spread of SARS-CoV-2. After carefully sifting through the published evidence, he concludes in a paper published in *Science* that the earliest case cluster of COVID-19 had no connection with the seafood market, while other presentations certainly did. He reminds us that in the first *Lancet* article describing the clinical features of COVID-19 a third of cases had no links to the market. He insists there is no contradiction here. The fact is that, in a city of 11 million people "there was a genuine preponderance of early COVID-19 cases associated with Huanan Market". He emphasises the point—an "extraordinary preponderance". For a highly transmissible virus that can spread asymptomatically it is not surprising that not all cases were directly connected to the market. The most likely origin of SARS-CoV-2 was someone who had direct contact with an infected live animal in the Huanan market. Proponents of a laboratory leak have so far provided no evidence to undermine this explanation.



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Date:	Tue, 1 Jun 2021 8:29:05 AM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 1 Jun 2021 8:23:45 AM -0400
Subject:	House Republicans on Oversight & Reform Committee Letter to NIH
From:	Peter Daszak b6
To:	David Morens b6
CC:	Gerald Keusch b6 Rich Roberts b6
Attachments:	House Republicans Oversight & Reform Committees b6

Dear Colleagues,

This letter (attached) is a particularly offensive action from Republicans. Sent over to NIH on Friday, leaked then reported on Fox News that night https://www.foxnews.com/politics/coronavirus- national-institutes-health-wuhan-lab-grant-china-covid-19-comer-jordan-republicans.

- Implies that EcoHealth knew about an alleged China Govt cover up of lab and covid etc.
- Uses the fact that NIH imposed demands to EHA on our grant as the basis for accusing EHA of conspiring with China to cover-up COVID origins.
- States incorrectly that Dr. Fauci testified that he couldn't guarantee that "EcoHealth and WIV" haven't lied to the govt.

"These questions [the 10 demands from NIH] suggest that EcoHealth knew of the CCP's attempts to cover-up the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic and failed to act or inform the U.S. government. When asked if EcoHealth and WIV could have lied to the government, Dr. Fauci, you said, "I cannot guarantee that . . . because you never know."6 The actions of both EcoHealth and the CCP must be thoroughly investigated."

It's outrageous, of course, purely designed for political theater, of course, and worst of all, I don't get to publicly state how outrageous it is. The minute I speak out against it, I'll have 10X the number of libellous articles published about me over the next few days.

NIH has until June 11th to respond, with demand for staff briefing by June 4th.

At the very least this is a glorious waste of everyone's time, but in reality, it just adds to the drumbeat over the past couple of weeks.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2021 9:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Gerald Keusch b6; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

OK, TY, i have not thought this all through. I would like to get several colleagues to sign on. Trop Med folks are in, maybe would they consider Jerry, Rich , Jeff, or some folks who know the issues but outside of trop Med?

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On May 30, 2021, at 20:51, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
>
> OK, I agree, and just to translate - getting a few single runs in, rather than waiting for the 6's or the 4's is a good move – either way you get to a Century.
>
> Please let me know what I need to do. Obviously all published articles are better with your and colleagues names, without mine, I think…
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA
>
> Tel.: b6
> Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
> Twitter: @PeterDaszak
>
> *EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation*

From: David Morens <b6>
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2021 7:55 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Gerald Keusch <b6>; Rich Roberts <b6>
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Peter, i agree on all, and i am there to do what i can

A small thing perhaps but ASTMH wants to bang the drum , again, see the email I sent yesterday…. My feeling is that there are no home runs, but singles here and there might eventually load the bases

Trop Med is pushing me to help do another editorial. I think that might be good, not ad s slam dunk but as push back.

z as Take a look st that email and give me yet thoughts.

d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 30, 2021, at 19:31, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

Thanks David. I understand, and we need him at the helm. I'm hoping that Biden's 90 day intel deep 'dive' will help cool things down.

In the meantime, I'm increasingly worried that EcoHealth Alliance might get thrown under the bus for political expedience. There are amendments to bills that could rapidly and easily crush scientific collaboration with China, or even defund EcoHealth completely.

I would like, if possible to talk next week sometime and start trying to get the Biotech and virology community mobilized so they can start defending against bills that could have a major impact on lab research, collaboration with China, and international collaboration.

I know others are beginning to wake up to the possibility that this could be one of the endgames some on the right are aiming for – see the article in Nature this week: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01386-0 (also attached).

I'd like to reach out to the societies that spoke out when our grant was canceled and see what can be done to mobilize politically to defend science, and at the same time, hopefully, us here in the middle.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 2:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts < b6
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Peter, I have learned fom internal sources that for entirely political reasons Tony is being asked by very high levels to stay neutral about the origin. Not sure why he is going along however.... d

On 5/25/2021 10:57 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> This is exactly the politics I was talking about. I'm part of weekly meetings with the WHO COVID-19 origins mission as we develop Phase 2 plans, and we're tracking the politics closely. Right now the US response is pretty mild. I've seen a copy of the HHS letter and it's just more of the same sort of comments below. What we're worried about on the origins group is that if the lab leak rhetoric pushes too strongly, China will just close the door on Phase 2 of the work. Right now, the only possible way forward to actually get into China and do more work on COVID origins is via this WHO team, so it would be disaster if this hype messes it up.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
> New York, NY 10018-6507
> USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Gerald Keusch <b6
Rich Roberts <b6
Subject: Fwd: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Everybody's getting into the act, it seems….. d
Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6
> **Date:** May 25, 2021 at 07:27:31 EDT
> **Subject: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins**

U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Latest: Analysis: Timeline for how the Wuhan lab-leak theory suddenly became credible

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Date: Wed, 28 Apr 2021 5:30:01 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 28 Apr 2021 5:29:58 PM -0400
Subject: FW: WSJ COVID origins article today
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]>
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6] [b6] [b6]
[b6]

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 1:44 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]

Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today

Thanks Peter,

I had a long conversation with Drew Hinshaw a couple of weeks ago, I think via a referral from you. He seemed reasonable to me and I didn't feel there were any traps in what he was asking and how he was asking it. I think it is reasonably well balanced compared to some of the other crap out there. What he didn't include from my comments was that the hostile behavior of the US towards China had closed the door – so far – on any expectation of cooperation from China. There is no way they would open up a government containment lab to hostile foreigners seeking to shift blame for an incident any more than the US would open up the labs at Ft. Detrick including the IRF, Rocky Mountain or CDC. No wonder WHO rejected all of the suggested US government experts for the WHO international team, no doubt with the concurrence/pressure from the Chinese.

As an aside, does Robert Kessler or David have the text of the remarks Kamala Harris made to the UN on Monday, in which she says we need to be working to prepare better for the next outbreak. All I can find so far is the AP report which is then parroted in lots of media follow up. Thanks,
Jerry

From: Peter Daszak <[b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 1:01 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Rich Roberts < [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today
Importance: High

The WSJ article is probably this one, which came out yesterday and represents a bit of a winding back of the US State Depts hard stance on WHO origins mission report:

https://www.wsj.com/articles/u- s-aims-to-shape-new-phase-of-who-led-probe-into-origin-of-covid-19-11619547836?reflink=desktopwebshare_twitter

I've attached it as a pdf also.

Despite the headline, it says that the US will not be pushing for an independent investigation of a lab leak from WIV, that this now would need a whistleblower to find out more info. They call for full and rapid phase 2 of the WHO work. That's exactly what the report says needs to be done, and by the way, exactly what we're doing – weekly calls to design next phase of work. It makes you realize that the whole US stance was pure politics to make Biden look strong against China to continue to build his narrow support in the independents…

The 'whistleblower' comment is a bit of a cop out from my point of view – either they believe there is a lab leak and should demand an investigation, or they basically know there wasn't and should stop implying it – it's bad for public health to push conspiracies!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 11:05 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Rich Roberts b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today

And what article in WSJ is this referring to? If you also have a link send it on. Thanks.

Jerry

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory
Boston University, Boston MA 02118

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Rich Roberts < b6 Robert Kessler b6 Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today
Importance: High

Really good to see that language below. Is this related to Francis Collins testifying before House Energy & Commerce Committee today (11am) on Long Covid?

https://energycommerce.house.gov/committee- activity/hearings/hearing- on-the-long-haul-forging-a-path-through-the-lingering-effects-of

Looks like all of this US undermining the WHO report was simply political activity from State Dept to beat their chests re. China and keep the moderate Republican vote.

I hope this can be pulled back round – it's done some serious damage to the WHO report.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:20 AM
To: Peter Daszak [redacted]; Gerald Keusch b6 >; Rich Roberts b6
Robert Kessler b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Fwd: WSJ COVID origins article today

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [redacted]
> **Date:** April 28, 2021 at 10:18:03 EDT
> **To:** David Morens b6
> **Subject: Fwd: WSJ COVID origins article today**
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> > **From:** "Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> > **Date:** April 28, 2021 at 09:57:33 EDT
> > **To:** NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov >
> > **Subject: FW: WSJ COVID origins article today**
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Mciff, Colin (HHS/OS/OGA) b6
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021 9:55 AM
> > **To:** Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Hall, Bill (HHS/ASPA) (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
> > (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

Pace, Loyce (HHS/OS/OGA) [b6]; Tatem, Anne (HHS/OS/ASL) (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Espinosa, Kimberly (HHS/ASL) [b6]
Cc: Berger, Sherri (CDC/OCOO/OD) [b6]
Subject: RE: WSJ COVID origins article today

All, here are the points you are cleared to use for the hearings this morning.

- **Since the release of the Phase 1 WHO-led study and report into the origins of COVID-19, U.S. government scientists and experts have continued to evaluate it, to provide an independent technical assessment of the evidence provided, including what further studies would be critical in determining the source of the virus.**
- **In the U.S.-led joint statement signed by a cross-regional coalition of 13 other countries, we urged the WHO to commence phase 2 without further delay, in a way that is transparent, expert-led, and free from interference.**
- **The origins inquiry must be science-based and have access to the best information available.**
- **It is a *completely normal scientific process*—in the middle of an ongoing pandemic no less—to have experts review emerging data and information, and discuss openly the optimal studies for better understanding the origins of the pandemic.**
- **To that end, the United States stands ready to collaborate with the WHO and other Member States on key elements that would strengthen experts' ability determine the origins of the virus as they embark on phase 2 of the study.**

Let us know if you have any questions or need additional follow up,

Colin

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Date: Tue, 27 Jul 2021 2:24:13 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 27 Jul 2021 2:23:29 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Fox: Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Keusch, Jerry b6
Attachments: image004.gif; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.gif; image008.jpg

Another one I hadn't seen – key comment from CIA Director:

Burns, though, admitted it is "possible" that the intelligence community "may never be able to come to a definitive judgment" on the origins of COVID-19, but stressed that it is "not going to be for lack of hard work or effort on this issue to try to uncover as much as we can about what happened."

In other words – Biden successfully kicked the can down the road to the end of summer. Hopefully it'll reduce some of the ardor of the right wing nutjobs who keep pushing this. The fact that publications have now come out showing multiple new viruses in bats related to SARS-CoV-2, evidence of live wild CoV reservoir mammals in the markets, a review by eminent virologists, etc. etc. should help, but people aren't actually interested in the truth at this point I expect.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 12:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Keusch, Jerry b6 <
b6
Subject: FW: Fox: Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021 11:43 AM
Subject: Fox: Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues

White House
Published 1 hour ago

Biden to visit intelligence community as investigation into COVID-19 origin continues

Intel community has less than 30 days before Biden's deadline on COVID-19 investigation



By Brooke Singman |Fox News

China refuses to allow independent probe as COVID origins pressure mount

Fox News correspondent Rich Edson has the latest on China's accountability on 'Special Report'

President Biden is set to visit the Office of the Director of National Intelligence Tuesday afternoon amid the intelligence community's ongoing investigation into the origins of COVID-19.

The intelligence community is "aggressively" investigating the origins of COVID-19, after the president in May revealed that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" for the origins of COVID-19, "including whether it emerged from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident," and asked for "additional follow-up."

INTEL COMMUNITY 'AGGRESSIVELY' INVESTIGATING ORIGINS OF COVID-19

The president asked the intelligence community to "redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said.

It has been 62 days since Biden's announcement.

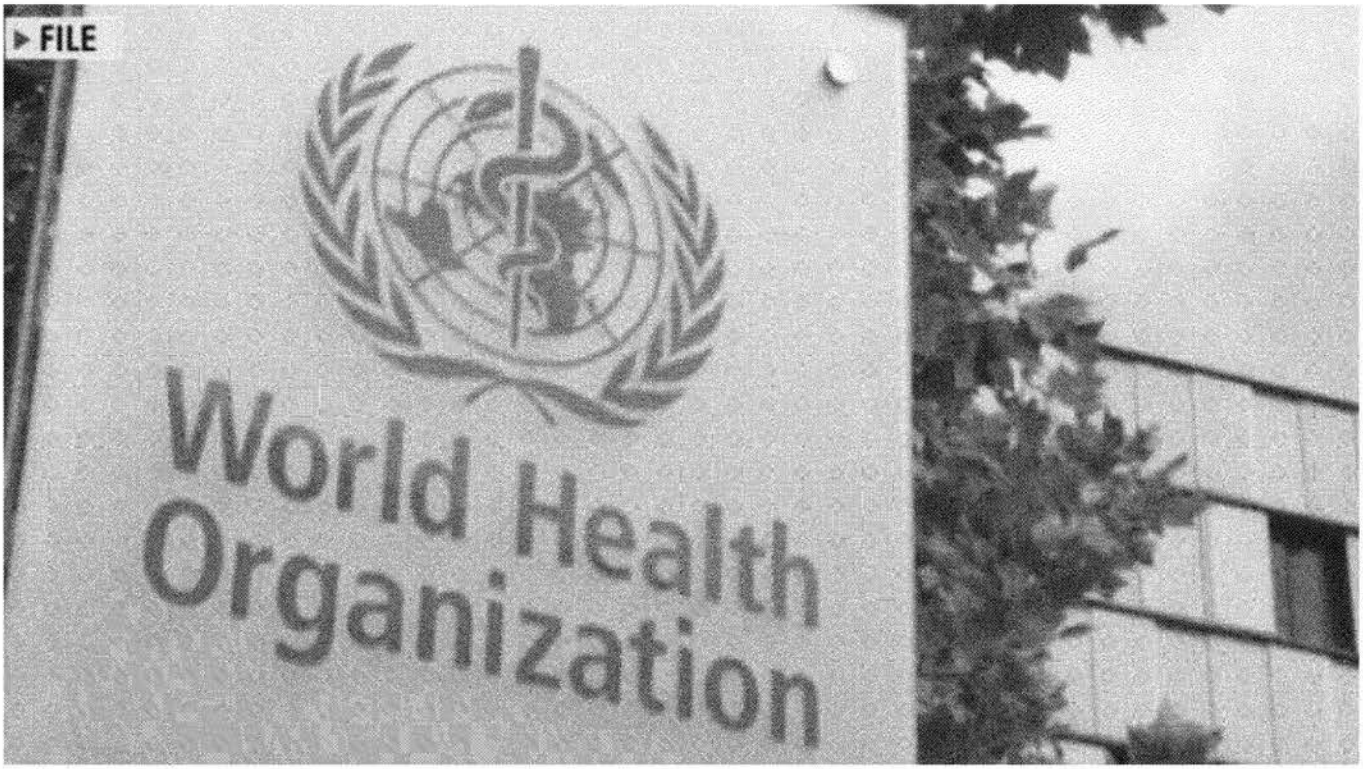
Last week during an interview with NPR, CIA Director Bill Burns said the intel community at this point "cannot offer a definitive conclusion about whether this originated in a lab accident or whether it originated in a natural transmission from infected animals to human beings."

"We are working very hard on this," Burns said. "It's not an academic problem. I mean, this affects not only the hundreds of thousands and millions of people around the world who have been affected by this, but it's also absolutely essential as we think ahead, not just to the United States, but in other parts of the world – about how do you prevent another pandemic crisis of this magnitude."

Burns said it is "extremely important to get to the bottom of this."

CHINA REFUSAL TO SUPPORT WHO COVID ORIGINS PROBE ACCELERATED BIDEN ANNOUNCEMENT ON US INVESTIGATION: OFFICIAL

"And the two realities are that the Chinese government has not been transparent, has not fully cooperated in the WHO's investigation initially — and it's more recently suggested it's going to refuse to cooperate in a follow up as well," Burns said. "And that is deeply unfortunate."



Video

He added: "We will continue to do everything we can to collect on this, work with the rest of the intelligence community and provide the best answers we can on this."

Burns, though, admitted it is "possible" that the intelligence community "may never be able to come to a definitive judgment" on the origins of COVID-19, but stressed that it is "not going to be for lack of hard work or effort on this issue to try to uncover as much as we can about what happened."

BIDEN: INTEL COMMUNITY TORN BETWEEN 'TWO LIKELY SCENARIOS' ON COVID-19 OUTBREAK SOURCE

Meanwhile, the president is set to address the intelligence community workforce and its leadership during his visit to thank them for their work in what the White House described as a "challenging time" for the community during the Trump administration.

"He's someone who believes in the role of the intelligence community of civil servants," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Monday in previewing the president's visit. "He believes they are the backbone of our government, and certainly he'll make that clear."

Psaki was asked whether Biden would have a different or contrasting message compared to his predecessor, former President Trump, who was skeptical of the intelligence community throughout his administration due to the investigation into whether his campaign colluded with the Russians to influence the 2016 presidential election, and the subsequent investigation into the origins of that probe and whether it began improperly.

Psaki on Monday replied, saying reporters can "make the inherent contrast" but said she did not believe that would be a "central part of his message" during Biden's visit to ODNI.

Brooke Singman is a Politics Reporter for Fox News. Follow her on Twitter at @BrookeSingman.

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Date: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 9:15:40 PM -0400

Subject: RE: origins of SARS-CoV-2

From: Peter Daszak [b6]

To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Kristian Andersen [b6]; Eddie Holmes [b6]; Angie Rasmussen [b6]; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>;

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

Yes – just saw that story – not much new in it and I did enjoy your quote even though I didn't know what you meant was a waste of time!! I think we all get it. In the end the give-away for this story is 1) the first pic they put up (the ubiquitous me in a car in front of the WIV with security guards) and 2) the quotes they highlight in giant font which are about the lab leak, nothing else… Tedious to be honest.

I've pasted it because it's subscription only and you shouldn't be giving them money…



Members of the World Health Organization team tasked with investigating the origins of COVID-19 arrive at Wuhan Institute of Virology earlier this year.

PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS PETER, REUTERS

● SCIENCE

● CORONAVIRUS COVERAGE

Why it's so tricky to trace the origin of COVID-19

A 90-day investigation into the source of SARS-CoV-2 has shown consensus that the virus was not engineered. But many other elements remain a mystery.

BY PRIYANKA RUNWAL

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 10, 2021

• 20 MIN READ

After 20 months, 219 million cases, and more than four million deaths, we've learned a lot about the COVID-19 pandemic. But the most polarizing question and central mystery remains: We still don't know where the virus that started it all actually came from. Most experts were not surprised in late August when a 90-day investigation by the U.S. intelligence community came up empty-handed on the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. A brief, one-page unclassified summary released on August 27 revealed the only point on which the intelligence community agreed: that the virus was "not developed as a biological weapon."

Understanding where, when, and how this pandemic started is important information for public health officials seeking to control its spread and even prevent future outbreaks. If the source of the virus is found to be bats or another animal, as many experts suspect, preventative measures might include curtailing contact between that animal and those living or working in close proximity. Measures could involve regular surveillance of animals and humans living where the virus is endemic to reduce the likelihood of future spillover—when a virus is transmitted to a human, directly or via a host animal, triggering an outbreak.

The results may also lead to broader policy decisions to curb deforestation and habitat fragmentation, and to block human settlements in known viral hot zones. Knowing where the pandemic virus arose could also lead to changes in human behavior, such as reducing demand for bushmeat and wildlife-derived products that drive the illegal wildlife trade. And if the virus is instead found to have leaked from a lab, that finding would no doubt spur scientists and policy-makers to find safer ways to study these pathogens.

> Historically looking back, we can have lab leaks.
>
> JESSE BLOOM VIROLOGIST

That's why scientists support a thorough, evidence-based investigation for the origins of COVID-19. But similar inquires during past epidemics have taken months to years to yield answers, and in several cases, the mystery remains unresolved.

"Science takes time," says Arinjay Banerjee, a virologist at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. "To go back and confidently identify the source is a difficult task."

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MORENS_NIH_025854
REL0000476635

Earlier this year, an international World Health Organization team visited the city of Wuhan, China, to assess the evidence China had provided about the origin of SARS-CoV-2. In a report that summarized their findings, the WHO suggested that it was "likely to very likely" that the virus first spread from infected bats to humans via an intermediate host animal.

This was the case with the 2002 SARS-CoV outbreak—the first pandemic of the 21st century; the virus most likely spilled over from cave-dwelling horseshoe bats in China to palm civets sold in live animal markets, where it reached humans. Similarly, the 2012 MERS-CoV epidemic is suspected to have originated in bats and was later transmitted to dromedary camels, which infected humans.

That WHO report also deemed a laboratory leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, known for its work with coronaviruses, as "extremely unlikely." But the conclusion sparked backlash from scientists and governments around the world, who argued that it's still too early to rule out a lab leak based on the evidence in hand. Other experts caution that political motivations could drive people to hasty conclusions.

"There is a progenitor virus out there somewhere, and we should look for it," says David Morens, senior scientific adviser on epidemiology to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. "But at some point, it crosses over from doing due diligence to wasting time and being crazy. We may have seen that point already."

Here's what we know so far about the scientific investigation into the origin of the pandemic, and what still needs to be done to find clear answers.

What evidence do virus detectives seek?

Tracing the origin of a virus requires extensive fieldwork, thorough forensics, and a fair bit of luck. The laborious endeavor can take years until scientists have the evidence they need to point to a source.

For diseases originating from animals, that evidence is typically a genetic match between virus sequences obtained from an animal and those from some of the first confirmed patients. The match may not be 100 percent, because viruses gather mutations or new genes over time and as they jump hosts. But with enough investigation, scientists have found nearly perfect matches of around 99 percent or better for some viruses—including the ones responsible for two previous coronavirus outbreaks.

Cat-like tree-dwelling palm civets, considered a delicacy and sold in street markets, quickly became the focus during the 2002-04 outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) that emerged in China's Guangdong Province, which resulted in more than 8,000 cases and nearly 800 deaths in 29 countries. Some of the first SARS cases included several infected restaurant chefs handling a variety of animals. Blood tests of animal traders in the region showed higher prevalence of antibodies against the SARS-associated coronavirus compared to healthy controls, with the highest levels recorded among those who traded primarily in masked palm civets.

A 2003 paper also showed that the nasal swab of a masked palm civet obtained from a live animal market in Guangdong yielded a 99.8 percent match between the full genome sequence of the SARS-CoV-like virus isolated from the civet and virus from a human. This indicated that the SARS-CoV-like virus had recently infected civets at the market.

But it became evident that these furry mammals weren't the original sources, as the virus was mostly absent among farmed masked palm civets prior to reaching the markets, and it was not widely circulating in its wild populations. Suspecting bats to be the natural reservoirs, given that they harbor other zoonotic viruses, researchers sampled blood, fecal, and throat swabs of bats in regions across China and in Hong Kong.

More than 10 years later, they identified horseshoe bats in a remote cave in southwestern China's Yunnan Province sporting virus strains that contain all the genetic pieces recorded in viral genomes from human patients. It's possible the strain that precipitated the 2002 epidemic was a product of recombination of different genetic strains found in these bats.

Scientists later used lessons from tracing the origins of the SARS virus to investigate the source of the 2012 Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) coronavirus outbreak, which infected more than 2,000 people in 37 countries and killed nearly 900.

The virus was first isolated from a 60-year-old businessman who died of severe pneumonia and multi-organ failure in June 2012 in a hospital in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Early efforts to trace the source focused on bats. In Saudi Arabia, throat swab, urine, fecal, and blood samples from wild bats, including those occurring in the area where the first patient lived and worked, showed indications of a MERS-like coronavirus in one Egyptian tomb bat fecal sample. But without a full genome sequence, the role of bats could not be evaluated.

Meanwhile, anecdotal reports suggested some patients had been exposed to dromedary camels or goats. A 2013 study found antibodies against MERS in blood samples collected from retired racing camels in Oman, which were missing in blood from European sheep, goats, and cattle. Similar blood surveys conducted in several countries within the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt, and Spain's Canary Islands also showed the presence of antibodies in camel blood, indicating the hoofed mammals were once infected by the virus.

But the strongest evidence of dromedary camels' involvement came from Qatar in October 2013, where a camel herd owner and his co-worker were diagnosed with MERS. Nasal swab tests indicated five of 14 camels on their farm were MERS-positive. Further, whole viral genome sequences obtained from humans and camels were 99.5 to 99.9 percent identical.

Scientists believe camels are the intermediate hosts and suspect bats to be the original reservoirs of MERS-CoV. That's because some bat species, like the vesper bats in South Africa, harbor viruses that are related to the one that causes MERS. But there's still an evolutionary gap between those bat viruses and the human or camel versions.

"We still haven't found those viruses that are very, very close," says virologist Chantal Reusken at the Dutch Institute for Public Health and the Environment in the Netherlands.

> This is all weaponized politically, which is unfortunate.
>
> DARRYL FALZARANO VIROLOGIST

What we know so far about COVID-19's origin story

One key difference with the SARS and MERS outbreaks is that scientists were able to identify the intermediate animal sources within months of their onset. For COVID-19, that link remains unknown.

In December 2019, some of the early COVID-19 cases in Wuhan were reported among vendors linked to the Huanan market, which was selling wild and farmed animals including badgers, racoon dogs, civets, hare, rats, snakes, and crocodiles.

Between January 1, when the market was closed, and March 2020, officials with the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention collected more than 900 swab samples of floors, walls, or surfaces of objects from the Huanan market, its drainage system, and the surrounding markets. They found that 73 samples were SARS-CoV-2 positive.

The Chinese CDC also collected more than 2,000 fecal and body swab samples from alive or frozen animals in Huanan and other markets in Wuhan, from animals raised by some Huanan market suppliers, and from several wild animals found in nearby provinces in southern China.

According to the WHO report, all those samples tested negative for SARS-CoV-2, and in some cases, for antibodies against the virus. But this sampling missed many live animals typically sold when the markets were open. Similar tests of thousands of livestock and poultry samples collected from across China in 2018, 2019, and 2020 as part of routine animal surveillance also tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.

Last year, scientists detected SARS-CoV-2-like virus strains in Sunda pangolin tissue samples that were seized in anti-smuggling operations in southern China in 2017 and 2018. Sought for their meat and scales used in traditional Chinese medicine, these pangolins are among the world's most trafficked mammals. But with only an 85.5 to 92.4 percent match between the human SARS-CoV-2 genome sequence and those obtained from pangolins, scientists can't mark them as the relevant hosts. Also, a team surveying Wuhan's wet markets between May 2017 and November 2019 found no pangolins being sold there.

And as was the case with MERS, comparing genome sequences from early COVID-19 patients with SARS-like coronavirus sequences directly from bats hasn't yet yielded a close enough match, either.

So far, the closet relative is a coronavirus labelled RaTG13. It was discovered in Chinese horseshoe bats near a cave in Yunnan shortly after six miners fell sick and three of them died due to an

unknown respiratory illness in 2012. RaTG13 shares 96.2 percent of its genome with human SARS-CoV-2. A coronavirus dubbed RmYN02 and derived from Malayan horseshoe bat poop collected in Yunnan Province in 2019 is 93.3 percent similar.

Scientists have also identified SARS-CoV-2-related viruses in bats outside China. This January a team isolated a coronavirus sequence showing a 92.6 percent match from two Shamel's horseshoe bats sampled in Cambodia in 2010. And in February a coronavirus named RacCS203 taken from acuminate horseshoe bats in Thailand's Chachoengsao Province showed 91.5 percent similarity in its genetic code.

Matches above 90 percent may sound high, but in genomic terms it's a wide evolutionary gap. After all, humans and bonobos are an 98.7 percent genetic match.

"The big problem is that bats are everywhere and there are so many species with a huge diversity of viruses, including coronaviruses," says Bart Haagmans, a virologist at the Erasmus Medical Center in the Netherlands. "It's difficult to find the bats with the virus that started the outbreak."

Why the lab-leak suspicion persists

Many scientists believe that SARS-CoV-2 originated in nature and is unlikely a product of laboratory engineering. In a March 2020 Nature Medicine study, for instance, Kristian Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, and his colleagues showed that some genetic features once considered unique to SARS-CoV-2—and thus potentially human-made—are found in nature. They found features like the furin cleavage site, which facilitates the virus's entry into human cells, and the receptor binding domain that allows the virus to anchor itself to human cells,also present in related viruses isolated from Malayan pangolins and bats.

But despite its likely natural origin, the theory that SARS-CoV-2 could have escaped from a laboratory continues to pique the interest of some scientists, several politicians, and many in the larger public sphere.

Part of the suspicion comes from the fact that the pandemic emerged very close to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, where researchers have been surveying bats for coronaviruses and maintaining a database of samples and virus sequences. "People look at the coincidence," Andersen says.

The institute's location doesn't surprise him, though. Wuhan is an extremely connected and populous city with several wet markets, and in the past, bat coronaviruses have been identified from the larger region. "There are labs close to where outbreaks can happen, and where these outbreaks happen is where you want to study them," Andersen says.

Still, experts and observers argue it's possible members of the Wuhan Institute of Virology staff were infected due to safety lapses while working with the SARS-CoV-2 virus or during fieldwork, and then they inadvertently spread the disease.

> What's frustrating is that with some transparency, it can all be cleared up.
>
> DARRYL FALZARANO VIROLOGIST

In a letter published in Science on May 14, some scientists suggested that the possibility of the virus escaping from the lab was not given due consideration during the WHO investigation. In a March 30 press briefing, WHO program manager Peter Ben Embarek, who led the COVID-19 fact-finding mission to China said: "Since [the lab leak theory] was not the key or main focus of the joint studies, it did not receive the same depth of attention and work as the other hypotheses."

The Wuhan institute's leading bat virologist Shi Zhengli said her laboratory records didn't indicate any match between virus samples her team had collected from China's bat caves and SARS-CoV-2 sequences. However, the WHO-China team couldn't access those records.

Laboratory accidents aren't unheard of. In Singapore, Taiwan, and China, four researchers in labs studying the SARS virus were accidently infected in the aftermath of the initial outbreak. In 2014, dozens of workers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta were potentially exposed to live anthrax bacteria resulting from a breach in safety procedures.

"Historically looking back, we can have lab leaks," says Jesse Bloom, a virologist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and lead author of the Science letter. "To be confident about what happened, we need more investigation."

Fresh controversy erupted when a May 23 Wall Street Journal story reported that an undisclosed U.S. intelligence report claimed three researchers at the Wuhan institute sought hospital care in November 2019 for "symptoms consistent with both COVID-19 and common seasonal illness." The identity of those researchers or the exact illness they had still remains unknown.

The WHO report found no records of COVID-19-related illness or evidence of infection among the institute's staff prior to December 2019. However, the team didn't have access to raw patient data from 174 early COVID-19 cases identified in Wuhan, half of which weren't connected to the Huanan market. This information could aid the quest to trace the pandemic's origin.

"What's frustrating is that with some transparency, it can all be cleared up," says virologist Darryl Falzarano at the University of Saskatchewan. "This is all weaponized politically, which is unfortunate."

What happens next

Several molecular dating analyses have suggested that SARS-CoV-2 was potentially circulating as early as October 2019. The WHO report therefore recommends searching for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in stored blood bank samples. This could help resolve the timeline for when the virus emerged, but the search for what started the pandemic may be a long and arduous one.

"You may have to spend the next 10 years sampling animals to find something that's really close," Falzarano says. "But you may not even find that perfect linkage."

The WHO team recommends searching for SARS-CoV-2-related viral sequences and antibodies in horseshoe bats mainly in southern China and in East and Southeast Asia. Similar surveys for potential intermediate host species could include pangolins, minks, rabbits, raccoon dogs, and domesticated cats, all of which have been infected by SARS-CoV-2 in the recent past.

Other projects include tracing wildlife farms that supplied markets in Wuhan and testing susceptible animals and people interacting with them, and analyzing the role of cold chains and frozen foods as a transmission source.

Recently, unpublished grant proposals and annual reports obtained by The Intercept gave insight into National Institutes of Health-funded coronavirus research in Wuhan in collaboration with New York-based non-profit EcoHealth Alliance.

In sophisticated, high-security facilities called Biosafety Level 3 labs, scientists tested the ability of new bat coronaviruses to infect humanized mice cells. These tests often used hybrid viruses created using a previously known SARS-like strain as the backbone and adding what's called a spike protein from a new virus that facilitates its entry into cells.

"It's standard virology research and it's addressing a really key question: What are the potential viruses that could emerge [as a potential threat to humans] and where are they found," says Andersen, who reviewed the documents on National Geographic's request. To him, the information doesn't indicate that SARS-CoV-2 was engineered in the Wuhan laboratory as the backbone strain used in their experiments is not the backbone of SARS-CoV-2.

Still, even before the grant documents came to light, some pundits were wondering if the laboratory will be investigated further for conducting any risky experiments or biosafety breaches.

"We don't know exactly what happened," Bloom says. "So, we can't rule out all possibilities"

Editor's Note: This story originally misspelled the name of the virologist at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla. It is Kristian Andersen.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 4:33 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Gerald Keusch b6 Robert Kessler < b6 ; Kristian Andersen b6 ; Eddie Holmes b6 >; Angie Rasmussen b6 Jason Gale b6
Subject: Fwd: origins of SARS-CoV-2

This lady totally misquotes me because she did't read her own notes and didn't let me go over the text as agreed to. The « waste of time » comment was about chasing lab leaks, not searching for viral origins

Grrrrrr……. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Priyanka Runwal b6
> **Date:** September 10, 2021 at 16:24:14 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Subject: Re: origins of SARS-CoV-2**
>
> Hi David,
> The story was finally published today: https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/why- its-so-tricky-to-trace-the-origin-of-covid-19
> I really appreciate you taking the time to speak with me and sharing your insights.
>
> On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 12:52 PM Priyanka Runwal b6 rote:
>
> b6
>
> On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 12:51 PM Priyanka Runwal b6 rote:
>
> Sounds good. Thank you.
> I'm at b6 Call me anytime.
>
> On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 12:45 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:
>
> No, but give me a number to call you. In a meeting now but should be free within the hour
>
> David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Priyanka Runwal b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 12:37 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Subject: Re: origins of SARS-CoV-2

Thank you for your reply. I can call you now or any other convenient time you prefer.
Is this the best number to reach you: **301 496 2263 ?**

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 12:26 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6 wrote:

> Sure, let me know…..
>
> David
>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health

Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
-
- b6

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From: Priyanka Runwal b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 12:26 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear David,
We spoke a while ago and my editor is looking to publish the story tomorrow.
I have, of course, included quotes from our earlier interview, but would you have any comment on the FOIA-ed grant proposals and suggestions of gain-of-function research The Intercept story cites:https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/
Your input would be helpful to our readers. I wouldn't take more than 10 minutes of your time. Let me know. Thank you.

On Fri, Jul 30, 2021 at 5:46 PM Priyanka Runwal b6 wrote:

> Thank you so much, David.
>
> On Fri, Jul 30, 2021 at 3:50 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:
>
> > Hi Priyanka, attached is the article I mentioned that came out yesterday, expaining in part why legitimate scientists are afraid to speak out about the "origins" stories.
>
> David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
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b6

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From: Priyanka Runwal <b6
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2021 6:36 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Subject: Re: origins of SARS-CoV-2

Hi David,
Here are my questions:
1) Given past pandemics, what about the SARS-CoV-2 origin narrative/debate surprises you?
2) As an expert, what's the proof you're looking for to pin down the origin--either in nature or the much-debated lab leak/engineering?
Essentially, what evidence will convince you of the rightful SARS-CoV-2 origin.
3) In the same context, what are key data/pieces of evidence we should have had by now but are missing? This could touch on the early surveillance China did and the WHO team reviewed.
4) Are there any questions about the origin that we (media) aren't asking or science we aren't understanding/appreciating that we should?

Please let me know when and what number to call you tomorrow. Thanks

On Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 10:47 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 > wrote:

Great, TY,

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
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- b6 b6 b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6
- b6

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From: Priyanka Runwal b6
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2021 10:15 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 >
Subject: Re: origins of SARS-CoV-2

Later tomorrow works for me.
I really appreciate you making the time.
I'll send some questions your way this afternoon. Thanks again.

On Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 10:03 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 > wrote:

> Possibly later tomorrow… My schedule is a bit messed up until next Tuesday as I am both working and have guests in town. My best times are typically late afternoons, like 4 or 5ish…. Also, it would be helpful if you could send me a few more sentences about specifically what you are looking for, so that I can perhaps pull out some of the key manuscripts, Ty,
>
> David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Priyanka Runwal < b6
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2021 10:05 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6

Subject: Re: origins of SARS-CoV-2

Hi David,
Thank you so much for your email.
I'm happy to work around your schedule to make this interview possible.
Would anytime this week work for you?

On Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 9:56 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <
b6
wrote:

> Hi Priyanka, our media office here suggested you may want to speak to me about the origins of SARS-CoV-2. Happy to do that, schedules permitting.
>
> David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6
b6

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--
Best,

Priyanka Runwal
@priyanka_runwal
Science, environment & health journalist
Bylines: The New York Times, Scientific American, STAT, National Geographic, Audubon Magazine, Science News, Live Science, others

--
Best,

Priyanka Runwal
@priyanka_runwal
Science, environment & health journalist
Bylines: The New York Times, Scientific American, STAT, National Geographic, Audubon Magazine, Science News, Live Science, others

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Priyanka Runwal
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Science, environment & health journalist
Bylines: The New York Times, Scientific American, STAT, National Geographic, Audubon Magazine, Science News, Live Science, others

Date: Sun, 25 Jul 2021 7:51:11 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 25 Jul 2021 7:50:09 PM -0400
Subject: Fauci speaks up again on CNN's State of the Union
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]

Another great set of quotes from Tony Fauci.

"It was a… proposal that was peer-reviewed and given a very high rating for the importance of why it should be done," Fauci said. "[The proposal was] to be able to go and do a survey of what was going on among the bat population, because everyone in the world was trying to figure out what the original source of the original SARS CoV-1 was."
The National Institutes of Health earmarked $600,000 for a nonprofit linked to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
"It was almost as if you didn't pursue that research you would be negligent because you were trying to find out how you could prevent this from happening again," Fauci said. "If we were starting to look for bats in Secaucus, New Jersey, or Fairfax County, Virginia, it wouldn't contribute very much to the standing of where SARS COV-1 originated."
Importantly, when questioned if work could be undertaken with these labs in the future, given the accusations of lack of transparency, he simply said NIH will always be careful about the risk rewards on research funded. Obviously it's pie in the sky to think we'll be funded to work with WIV by NIH next yr, but one day, these collaborations need to resume.

Here's the link: https://deadline.com/2021/07/anthony- fauci-cnn-state-of-the-union-jake-tapper-wuhan-lab-research-funding-1234799663/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Sunday, July 25, 2021 3:07 PM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]>; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' [b6]
Cc: 'David Morens' [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Fauci defending the funding of EcoHealth's grant with WIV in the Right wing press

Good to see Tony speaking up and defending NIAID's decision to fund this work (article attached as pdf). He's right – it was very highly scored.

My only question is…why not reinstate it!!!??? He could always specifically indicate "no chimeric virus work to be funded at WIV" or "only PCR studies" or some such. Just a thought…

Here's a key quote:

"Dr. Fauci attempted to explain the link between U.S. researchers and the Chinese laboratory clearly to Fox viewers and stress there was no 'risky research' involved.

'If you look at the research that was done, it was research that was highly recommended by peer review, our United States peer reviews. It got a very high score in the peer review system,' Fauci began.

'And the purpose of the research was very, very clear. It was to try to determine what was out there in the bat population that might be ultimately risky for us. It was done in the context of trying to find out what the precise environmental bat source was of SARS-CoV-1 so that we could prevent SARS-CoV-2.'

Dr. Fauci praised the 'qualified, highly respected Chinese scientists' that the National Institutes of Health had collaborated with at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and defended the funding of bat coronavirus research in China.

Fauci added: 'So, it was research that was done by qualified people. Right now, when there's all of this thing about China, that's a different situation now back then when you're dealing with qualified, highly respected Chinese scientists. So it isn't what was made out to be about dealing with really, really bad people. Because those scientists were very well-respected in the scientific community internationally.'"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 5:05 PM

To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Roberts, Ric[b6]Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>
Subject: RE: COVID origins issues and NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats

No relevant information I have heard of. It wouldn't surprise me as I know that Victor Dzau wants NAM to be engaged in these issues. I will ask my colleague Nicki Lurie if she is aware of any such initiative. She is on vacation in Europe now and may not be as rapidly responsive as she usually is.

Regarding the Academies, Victor is not only ambitious but also cautious and doesn't stick his head out very far. Marcia McNutt (NAS President) has been supportive of a rational science based inquiry into the origins and the separation of politics from science, sort of, but not very bold. John Anderson (NAE President) is the least engaged.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Roberts, Rich[b6] Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Hotez, Peter Jay <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>
Subject: COVID origins issues and NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats

Here's a request for any inside info you may have picked up.

I'm the chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Jerry used to be a member or Co-Chair and (ironically) David Relman was the Chair before me. The Forum is planning a workshop on COVID-19 for early Fall. I'm not on the organizing committee but heard they were planning a section on 'origins', then were told from the top (I believe Victor Dzau of NAM) that because there is no new research on this, it's not something that would be good for the workshop to publicly consider right now. They've dropped that session. I actually agree with this decision, but it certainly adds to the feeling that the NAM is being very hesitant on this issue.

Then I got an email from staff asking if I'd like to avoid giving my usual opening comments for the workshop as chair, given the nasty publicity I've been getting. I pushed back (strongly) and pointed out that a key goal of the conspiracy theorists is to attack, discredit and silence scientists who's opinions don't support their political agenda. Staff were very nice and somewhat apologetic about this and I'm now giving my usual opening.

They also mentioned that the academies (maybe NAM, but could be NASEM) are planning something on origins – maybe a consensus study, workshop or just a statement. I don't have more info, but the reason I'm concerned is that 1) David Relman is a member of the NASEM Intelligence Community Studies Board (science-intel agency interface) and he may be trying to use that to 'investigate' the lab leak agenda; or 2) there may be an effort for an NASEM committee to investigate COVID-19 origins. I note that in my last letter from the NIH office of the director, they requested an inspection of the Wuhan lab either by NIH scientists or through the NASEM.

The way the NAM and NASEM operate is that USG agencies go to them, or they approach agencies with an idea for a consensus study or workshop and then they're funded to do one. It sounds likely that this is happening, and would likely end up as a forum for all the lab leak accusations and gain-of-function myths to be brought up by known scientists (e.g. Drs. Relman, Lipsitch, Ebright and others). This could end up putting me in the awful situation of either having to publicly defend EcoHealth's work and get attacked in the press for this, or decline to take part in a National Academy activity despite being a member. Not looking forward to that moment!

Have any of you heard anything about this?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 4:42 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' b6; 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6
Cc: 'David Morens' b6; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Harold Varmus has been spotted in CT!

One of my Board members, Amy Attas, who's a veterinarian to the pets of people like Mike Bloomberg's wife, Elton John etc. goes to a monthly lunchtime talk series near her summer home in CT (I think). Harold Varmus spoke there a couple of Sunday's ago. Amy asked the first question along the lines "I'm on the Board of an organization working to prevent pandemics..what are the best strategies to prevent the next COVID?" His response: "Is that EcoHealth Alliance?" "If so, what they're doing is exactly what should be done..." He then rolled off a series of key goals to prevent pandemics.

Amy was delighted, and a number of other donors expressed an interest. Please pass on my regards and gratitude to Harold – this is exactly the sort of word of mouth endorsement we need right now, rather than the other sort we're getting from Fox News!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

From: Roberts, Rich <b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Peter Daszak b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

I haven't heard anything from Harold recently.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 ; Peter Daszak b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I totally agree with you that Tony was remarkable. I sent him a one word email, Bravo, and copied it to Patty Conrad so maybe he will see it as evidence of the support he has from the responsible scientific community.

Thanks for the response regarding the CNN reporters. I'll keep that in mind when I do talk to them and consider whether speaking with you might help them distinguish between good science and crap. I have no doubts about your expertise in science and knowing the difference between, well, good science and crap.

Harold is rather quiet – any sense of what he is up to?

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:50 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Peter Daszak b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

Tony was excellent in confronting Paul! It's high time that these senators are told the truth directly.

As for speaking with the reporters, in general I am always prepared to do that, but in this particular case I don't feel my credentials are necessarily the best when dealing with specifics. I have very much been an onlooker and not directly connected to any of the research itself. Peter Hotez and Peter D. are clearly much better informed and have the appropriate expertise. There are plenty of authors on the recent Lancet piece that would be good to include. I am happy to speak as an outsider, but would not want to be considered a knowledgeable expert.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Keusch, Gerald T < b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak < b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay < b6
Cc: David Morens < b6 >; Roberts, Rich < b6 ; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had a long talk with two CNN International reporters who are preparing a story essentially on the politics and the misinformation about the origins controversy. I was talking to them off the record but I decided they were legitimately exploring the issues and would likely be a voice of reason if they were given the necessary space to build their case and it was eventually shown.

I mentioned Peter Hotez to them, among some others, and while I mentioned Peter D as well I also said you were under constant attack and it might well be better to allow others to take up the fight on your behalf. GOF and the Goffers were part of the chat. I have agreed to be interviewed on the record and potentially to do a video session as they were potentially interested in using some of that as part of the report. Rich, I didn't specifically mention your name, but if you would be willing to speak with them I can do that when I next connect.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak < b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:30 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay
Cc: David Morens < b6 ; Roberts, Rich < b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T < b6 >; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: Tony Fauci's testimony today
Importance: High

I'm delighted to see Tony Fauci fighting to let everyone understand clear line between what is gain-of-function (work EcoHealth does NOT do), and what is not Gain of function (work EcoHealth did do with Wuhan).

It's a shame it will generate publicity, but he did this so well today that I'm hoping it might help get rid of the willful misinformation the Republicans are engaging in…

Here's a news piece on it https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/563874- fauci-paul-doesnt-know-what-hes-talking-about-and-i-want-to-say-that , and there's some pretty exciting video to watch. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFoaBV_cTek

Well done David on your briefing and practice runs!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: My AMA podcast on the origins of COVID19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14 &feature=youtu.be

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: b6
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6 9



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a 'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and

perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков < b6 >; Leendertz, Fabian b6 >; Peter Daszak < b6 ; LeendertzF b6 n >; Keith Hamilton b6 , John Watson b6 ; DEBBICHE, Hassene b6 >; Thea Kølsen Fischer < b6 ; BAERT, Primaël b6 >; SHEATH, Danny b6 Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) b6 ; STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan b6 ; DRURY, Patrick Anthony (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) , Ken Maeda < b6 >; M.P.G. Koopmans b6 b6 >; Hayman, David < b6 ; IVANOVIC, Dragana < b6 , Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Fa b6 >; Dominic Dwyer < b6
Cc: RYAN, Michael J. b6 ; Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria b6 ; BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim b6
Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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<C.L.28.2021 (Origins of SARS-CoV-2).pdf>

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Date: Sun, 18 Jul 2021 2:18:56 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 18 Jul 2021 2:14:53 PM -0400
Subject: Jake Sullivan
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Gerald Keusch [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Yes - very damaging. We all know they have no further intel and that anyone with any actual understanding of the science would draw the conclusion that the lab leak is, dare I quote the WHO team, "Extremely Unlikely"....

Just ridiculous politics at the moment. Jake Sullivan's Wikipedia page shows he's a Yale law school graduate working for the NSC who made public his goals on being appointed by Biden as: "On November 22, 2020, Sullivan was announced as President-elect Joe Biden's choice to be National Security Advisor.[28] Upon his appointment, Sullivan stated that the early priorities of Biden's National Security Council (NSC) are the COVID-19 pandemic, "restructuring the NSC to make public health a permanent national security priority", and China relations.[2] He also emphasized that the Biden administration aimed to repair American relations with allies that he regarded as being damaged during the Trump administration.[2]"

In other words - here we have the National Security staff deciding what the origins of a pandemic are, not scientists, not public health staff, but National Security. That, in a nutshell, is the problem. If you ask a National Security person with a law degree from an Ivy League College where the virus came from, you're likely to get a very US-centric political opinion, and in this case, one that isn't grounded in data and facts...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Friday, July 16, 2021 6:10 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6]>
Subject: just reported

Senior Biden officials including Jake Sullivan have just reported to the media that they have concluded the "lab leak" theory is highly credible and must be pursued. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Thu, 21 Jan 2021 12:57:50 AM -0500
Sent: Thu, 21 Jan 2021 12:56:02 AM -0500
Subject: RE: U.S. Department of State: Fact Sheet: Activity at the Wuhan Institute of Virology
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: David Morens b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
CC: Aleksei Chmura b6 >;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Well David – that 'fact' sheet below was from a previous administration. I've not seen any evidence of illnesses in the lab, but now that we have new leadership, please ask Tony to ask Blinken to send me an email with the information in it and I'll share it with the WHO team.

Feel free to also mention to Tony Fauci that I have deep respect for his moral leadership and would be happy to debrief him at any time on my return about the work we're doing here in China. I'm seeing data that has not been shared publicly outside a small group of scientists in China, and am digging in deep on all lines of evidence we're being shown.

Re. the head of NIH. Of course its disappointing but I think I understand the decision – Collins protected Fauci, and has a relatively neutral public image, so why rock the boat.

Whatever the case, one things for sure, the politicized, toxic BS that Pompeo has spouted around non-existant 'evidence' of a lab leak has led to a shutting down of US-China scientific relationship on this issue that basically damages public health. I'm seeing that every day now I'm back in Wuhan, and seeing the multiple attacks on me and EHA from the press daily. Collins regurgitated Pompeo's mantra, maybe just to be politically aligned and protect his job, so let's see if he shifts back now. I suspect not – his crusade against Chinese and expat Chinese scientists in the US has been a little bit too 'rigorous' I believe and hints at a misinformed person on what sort of work China is really doing here.

Please get the message to Tony that the only way to really understand the risk of these viruses, and protect the planet against the next COVID has to be working with our China counterparts. I'm uniquely situated to do that, clearly evidenced by being the only US member of this WHO mission. They are ready, willing and able to continue the work and I will be personally meeting with Zhengli Shi to set up the next steps. The only question is – does the US Govt now want to be part of that deep understanding of what led to COVID, or do we carry on the dumbass legacy of Trump & Pompeo…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2021 12:00 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 g >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: FW: U.S. Department of State: Fact Sheet: Activity at the Wuhan Institute of Virology

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 10:57 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of State: Fact Sheet: Activity at the Wuhan Institute of Virology

Fact Sheet: Activity at the Wuhan Institute of Virology

FACT SHEET

OFFICE OF THE SPOKESPERSON

JANUARY 15, 2021

For more than a year, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has systematically prevented a transparent and thorough investigation of the COVID-19 pandemic's origin, choosing instead to devote enormous resources to deceit and disinformation. Nearly two million people have died. Their families deserve to know the truth. Only through transparency can we learn what caused this pandemic and how to prevent the next one.

The U.S. government does not know exactly where, when, or how the COVID-19 virus—known as SARS-CoV-2—was transmitted initially to humans. We have not determined whether the outbreak began through contact with infected animals or was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan, China.

The virus could have emerged naturally from human contact with infected animals, spreading in a pattern consistent with a natural epidemic. Alternatively, a laboratory accident could resemble a natural outbreak if the initial exposure included only a few individuals and was compounded by asymptomatic infection. Scientists in China have researched animal-derived coronaviruses under conditions that increased the risk for accidental and potentially unwitting exposure.

The CCP's deadly obsession with secrecy and control comes at the expense of public health in China and around the world. The previously undisclosed information in this fact sheet, combined with open-source reporting, highlights three elements about COVID-19's origin that deserve greater scrutiny:

1. Illnesses inside the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV):

- The U.S. government has reason to believe that several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019, before the first identified case of the outbreak, with symptoms consistent with both COVID-19 and common seasonal illnesses. This raises questions about the credibility of WIV senior researcher Shi Zhengli's public claim that there was "zero infection" among the WIV's staff and students of SARS-CoV-2 or SARS-related viruses.
- Accidental infections in labs have caused several previous virus outbreaks in China and elsewhere, including a 2004 SARS outbreak in Beijing that infected nine people, killing one.
- The CCP has prevented independent journalists, investigators, and global health authorities from interviewing researchers at the WIV, including those who were ill in the fall of 2019. Any credible inquiry into the origin of the virus must include interviews with these researchers and a full accounting of their previously unreported illness.

2. Research at the WIV:

- Starting in at least 2016 – and with no indication of a stop prior to the COVID-19 outbreak – WIV researchers conducted experiments involving RaTG13, the bat coronavirus identified by the WIV in January 2020 as its closest sample to SARS-CoV-2 (96.2% similar). The WIV became a focal point for international coronavirus research after the 2003 SARS outbreak and has since studied animals including mice, bats, and pangolins.
- The WIV has a published record of conducting "gain-of-function" research to engineer chimeric viruses. But the WIV has not been transparent or consistent about its record of studying viruses most similar to the COVID-19 virus, including "RaTG13," which it sampled from a cave in Yunnan Province in 2013 after several miners died of SARS-like illness.
- WHO investigators must have access to the records of the WIV's work on bat and other coronaviruses before the COVID-19 outbreak. As part of a thorough inquiry, they must have a full accounting of why the WIV altered and then removed online records of its work with RaTG13 and other viruses.

3. Secret military activity at the WIV:

- Secrecy and non-disclosure are standard practice for Beijing. For many years the United States has publicly raised concerns about China's past biological weapons work, which Beijing has neither documented nor demonstrably eliminated, despite its clear obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention.
- Despite the WIV presenting itself as a civilian institution, the United States has determined that the WIV has collaborated on publications and secret projects with China's military. The WIV has engaged in classified research, including laboratory animal experiments, on behalf of the Chinese military since at least 2017.
- The United States and other donors who funded or collaborated on civilian research at the WIV have a right and obligation to determine whether any of our research funding was diverted to secret Chinese military projects at the WIV.

Today's revelations just scratch the surface of what is still hidden about COVID-19's origin in China. Any credible investigation into the origin of COVID-19 demands complete, transparent access to the research labs in Wuhan, including their facilities, samples, personnel, and records.

As the world continues to battle this pandemic – and as WHO investigators begin their work, after

more than a year of delays – the virus's origin remains uncertain. The United States will continue to do everything it can to support a credible and thorough investigation, including by continuing to demand transparency on the part of Chinese authorities.

Date: Fri, 23 Apr 2021 3:42:28 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 23 Apr 2021 3:41:54 PM -0400
Subject: RE: More on Michael Lauer's China probe at NIH
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)]; Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]

Very amusing!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2021 12:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura < [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Re: More on Michael Lauer's China probe at NIH

Is that because you are not a criminal, or just not sufficiently talented?

Bada-boom!.....

D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 23, 2021, at 12:22, Peter Daszak [b6]g > wrote:
>
> Here's a piece in Nature w/ universities calling for more openness and transparency on NIH China funding rules, so good folks don't fall foul of them.

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-00901-7

By the way, I want to take this opportunity to assure you I have not been and am not a member of the Chinese Govt's Thousand Talents Program…at least not that I know of, despite some nasty articles in the Rabid Right wing press.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2021 11:55 AM
To: 'David Morens' b6
Cc: 'Roberts, Rich' b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 Robert Kessler b6
Subject: article based on Michael Lauer's testimony this week

It feels a bit creepy to hear NIH boasting about the hard work it's doing to root out communist infiltration into our universities. Here's an article based on Michael Lauer's testimony at the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, commenting that there's just too much work for them to keep on top of. I saw similar comments from him at last year's NIH Advisory Committee to the Director meeting where he presented something like 250 people they'd investigated in collab with the FBI, a handful who'd been charged and 60+ found not to have any concerns. I wonder if, like the McCarthy Era, they even knew they'd been investigated and their organizations contact about them?

After seeing that last year, I asked the FBI if I was under investigation. They actually checked and confirmed I was not. It sounds and smells like a witch hunt to me and unfortunately the Grand Inquisitor is the person(s) who are dealing with my R01 – Collins and Lauer…

https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2021/apr/22/us- scientists-feared-compromised-china/

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2021 10:26 AM
To: Peter Daszak < b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Aleksei Chmura < b6 >; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: 2 pager with timeline of NIH-EHA grant issues and Political letters/bills etc.

TY, this will be helpful in keeping things straight. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Apr 22, 2021, at 23:32, Peter Daszak b6 > wrote:
>
> Dear All,
>
> I've lined up a timeline of all the NIH-EHA correspondence (almost all now available on the www.nlcampaigns.org website), as well as the political activities that have been happening over the past year of relevance – various bills, letters demanding information etc.
>
> Please feel free to share this doc with people who need to know. There are url links to all the political actions, and many more on the nlcampaigns website.
>
> Thanks again for all you're doing!
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
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Date:	Mon, 24 May 2021 12:15:42 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: WSJ: Intelligence on Sick Staff at Wuhan Lab Fuels Debate On Covid-19 Origin
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg

It's the same story that Mike Pompeo put out in a State Dept "factsheet' in Jan. Still no actual data, and this was refuted by WIV when we asked as part of WHO, now refuted again. Sounds like political games in the run up to the World Health Assembly (starts today I think).

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 12:04 PM
To: Gerald Keusch [b6] Peter Daszak [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: Fwd: WSJ: Intelligence on Sick Staff at Wuhan Lab Fuels Debate On Covid-19 Origin

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
> **Date:** May 23, 2021 at 16:00:41 EDT
> **Subject: WSJ: Intelligence on Sick Staff at Wuhan Lab Fuels Debate On Covid-19 Origin**

Intelligence on Sick Staff at Wuhan Lab Fuels Debate On Covid-19 Origin

Report says researchers went to hospital in November 2019, shortly before confirmed outbreak; Adds to calls for probe of whether virus escaped lab



A World Health Organization-led team investigating the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic visited the Wuhan Institute of Virology on Feb. 3.

By Michael R. Gordon, Warren P. Strobel and Drew Hinshaw
May 23, 2021 2:57 pm ET

WASHINGTON—Three researchers from China's Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care, according to a previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence report that could add weight to growing calls for a fuller probe of whether the Covid-19 virus may have escaped from the laboratory.

The details of the reporting go beyond a State Department fact sheet, issued during the final days of the Trump administration, which said that several researchers at the lab, a center for the study of coronaviruses and other pathogens, became sick in autumn 2019 "with symptoms consistent with both Covid-19 and common seasonal illness."

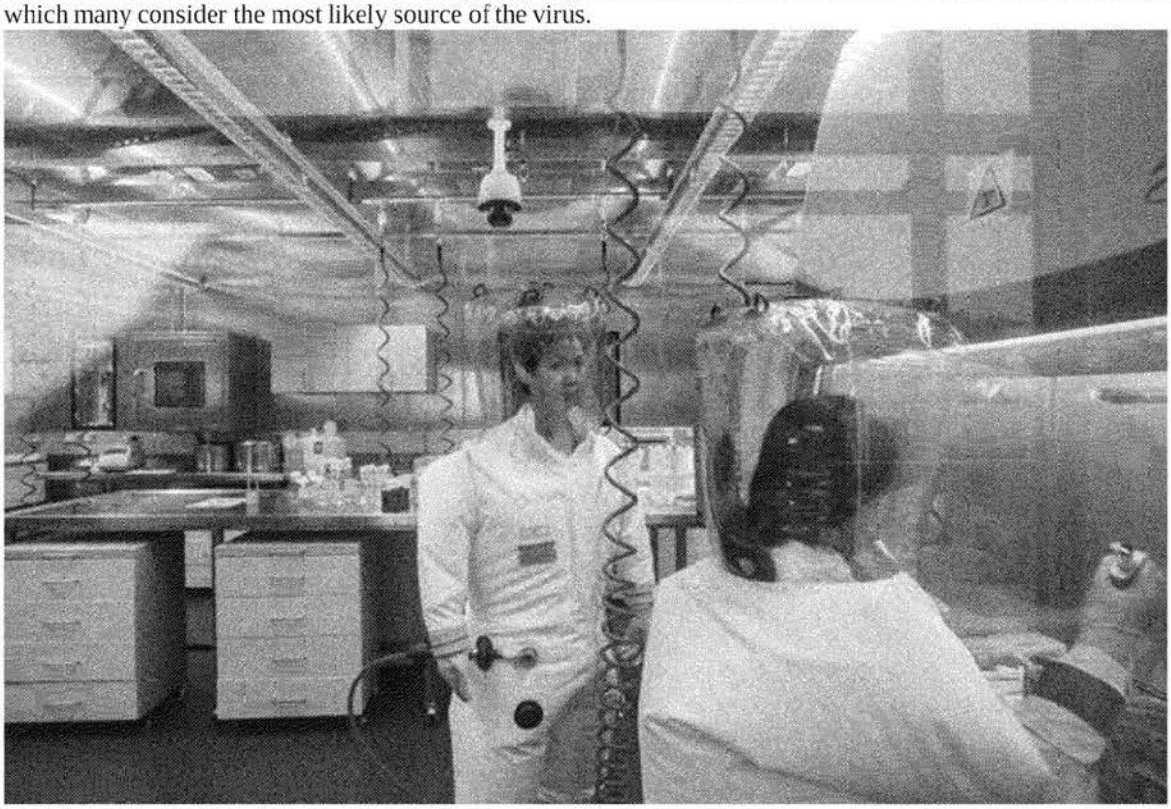
The disclosure of the number of researchers, the timing of their illnesses and their hospital visits come on the eve of a meeting of the World Health Organization's decision-making body, which is expected to discuss the next phase of an investigation into Covid-19's origins.

Current and former officials familiar with the intelligence about the lab researchers expressed differing views about the strength of the supporting evidence for the assessment. One person said that it was provided by an international partner and was potentially significant but still in need of further investigation and additional corroboration.

Another person described the intelligence as stronger. "The information that we had coming from the various sources was of exquisite quality. It was very precise. What it didn't tell you was exactly why they got sick," he said, referring to the researchers.

November 2019 is roughly when many epidemiologists and virologists believe SARS-CoV-2, the virus behind the pandemic, first began circulating around the central Chinese city of Wuhan, where Beijing says that the first confirmed

case was a man who fell ill on Dec. 8, 2019.
The Wuhan Institute hasn't shared raw data, safety logs and lab records on its extensive work with coronaviruses in bats, which many consider the most likely source of the virus.



Shi Zhengli, the top bat coronavirus expert at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, has said Covid-19 didn't leak from her laboratories. Dr. Shi shown in 2017.

Photo: johannes eisele/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images

China has repeatedly denied that the virus escaped from one of its labs. On Sunday, China's foreign ministry cited a WHO-led team's conclusion, after a visit to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, or WIV, in February, that a lab leak was extremely unlikely. "The U.S. continues to hype the lab leak theory," the foreign ministry said in response to a request for comment by The Wall Street Journal. "Is it actually concerned about tracing the source or trying to divert attention?"

The Biden administration declined to comment on the intelligence but said that all technically credible theories on the origin of the pandemic should be investigated by the WHO and international experts.

"We continue to have serious questions about the earliest days of the Covid-19 pandemic, including its origins within the People's Republic of China," said a spokeswoman for the National Security Council.

Covid-19's Origins

More WSJ coverage on the WHO's investigation, selected by the editors

- U.S. Aims to Shape New Phase of WHO-Led Probe Into Origin of Covid-19 (April 27)
- China Says Covid-19 Origin Probe Should Shift Focus to Other Countries (March 31)
- U.S. Calls for Independent Study of Covid-19 Origin (March 30)
- WHO Report Into Covid-19 Origins Leaves Key Questions Unanswered (March 29)
- WHO Team Expert Expects Covid-19's Origins Will Be Found 'Within A Few Years' (March 10)

"We're not going to make pronouncements that prejudge an ongoing WHO study into the source of SARS-CoV-2," the spokeswoman said. "As a matter of policy we never comment on intelligence issues."

Beijing has also asserted that the virus could have originated outside China, including at a lab at the Fort Detrick military base in Maryland, and called for the WHO to investigate early Covid outbreaks in other countries.

Most scientists say they have seen nothing to corroborate the idea that the virus came from a U.S. military lab, and the White House has said there are no credible reasons to investigate it.

China's National Health Commission and the WIV didn't respond to requests for comment. Shi Zhengli, the top bat coronavirus expert at WIV, has said the virus didn't leak from her laboratories. She told the WHO-led team that traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to investigate the origins of the virus that all staff had tested negative for Covid-19 antibodies and there had been no turnover of staff on the coronavirus team.

Marion Koopmans, a Dutch virologist on that team told NBC News in March that some WIV staff did fall sick in the

autumn of 2019, but she attributed that to regular, seasonal sickness.

"There were occasional illnesses because that's normal. There was nothing that stood out," she said. "Maybe one or two. It's certainly not a big, big thing."

It isn't unusual for people in China to go straight to the hospital when they fall sick, either because they get better care there or lack access to a general practitioner. Covid-19 and the flu, while very different illnesses, share some of the same symptoms, such as fever, aches and a cough. Still, it could be significant if members of the same team working with coronaviruses went to hospital with similar symptoms shortly before the pandemic was first identified.

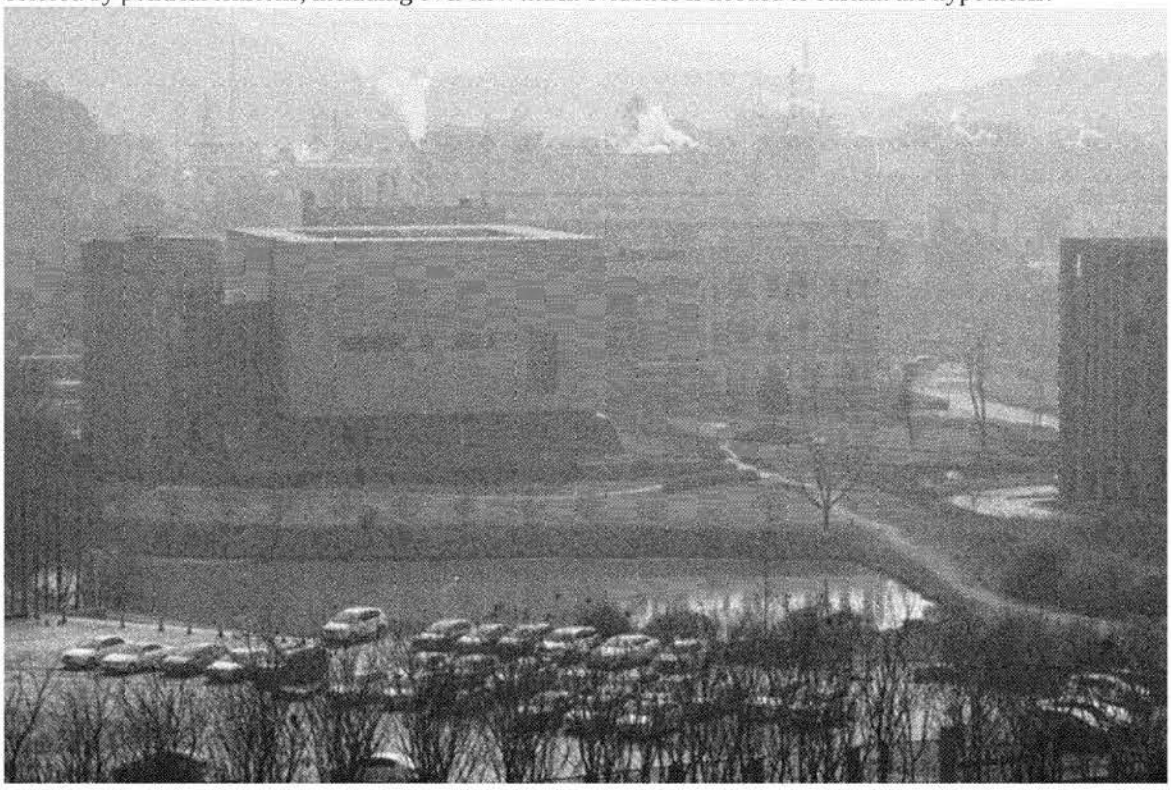
David Asher, a former U.S. official who led a State Department task force on the origins of the virus for then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, told a Hudson Institute seminar in March that he doubted that the lab researchers became sick because of the ordinary flu.

"I'm very doubtful that three people in highly protected circumstances in a level three laboratory working on coronaviruses would all get sick with influenza that put them in the hospital or in severe conditions all in the same week, and it didn't have anything to do with the coronavirus," he said, adding that the researchers' illness may represent "the first known cluster" of Covid-19 cases.

Long characterized by skeptics as a conspiracy theory, the hypothesis that the pandemic could have begun with a lab accident has attracted more interest from scientists who have complained about the lack of transparency by Chinese authorities or conclusive proof for the alternate hypothesis: that the virus was contracted by humans from a bat or other infected animal outside a lab.

Many proponents of the lab hypothesis say that a virus that was carried by an infected bat might have been brought to the lab so that researchers could work on potential vaccines—only to escape.

While the lab hypothesis is being taken more seriously, including by Biden administration officials, the debate is still colored by political tensions, including over how much evidence is needed to sustain the hypothesis.



A view of the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Photo: Ng Han Guan/Associated Press

The State Department fact sheet issued during the Trump administration, which drew on classified intelligence, said that the "U.S. government has reason to believe that several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019, before the first identified case of the outbreak, with symptoms consistent with both Covid-19 and seasonal illnesses."

The Jan. 15 fact sheet added that this fact "raises questions about the credibility" of Dr. Shi and criticized Beijing for its "deceit and disinformation" while acknowledging that the U.S. government hasn't determined exactly how the pandemic began.

The Biden administration hasn't disputed any of the assertions in the fact sheet, which current and former officials say was vetted by U.S. intelligence agencies. The fact sheet also covered research activities at the WIV, its alleged cooperation on some projects with the Chinese military and accidents at other Chinese labs.

But one Biden administration official said that by highlighting data that pointed to the lab leak hypothesis, Trump administration officials had sought "to put spin on the ball." Several U.S. officials described the intelligence as "circumstantial," worthy of further exploration but not conclusive on its own.

Asked about the Jan. 15 statement, State Department spokesman Ned Price said: "A fact sheet issued by the previous administration on January 15 did not draw any conclusions regarding the origins of the coronavirus. Rather, it focused on the lack of transparency surrounding the origins."

Though the first known case was Dec. 8, several analyses of the virus's rate of mutation concluded that it likely began spreading several weeks earlier.

The WHO-led team that visited Wuhan concluded in a joint report with Chinese experts in March that the virus most likely spread from bats to humans via another animal, and that a laboratory leak was "extremely unlikely."

However, team members said they didn't view raw data or original lab, safety and other records. On the same day the report came out, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the team hadn't adequately examined the lab leak hypothesis, and called for a fuller probe of the idea.

The U.S., European Union and several other governments have also called for a more transparent investigation of Covid-19's origins, without explicitly demanding a lab probe. They have called in particular for better access to data and samples from potential early Covid-19 cases.

Members of the WHO-led team said Chinese counterparts had identified 92 potential Covid-19 cases among some 76,000 people who fell sick between October and early December 2019, but turned down requests to share raw data on the larger group. That data would help the WHO-led team understand why China sought to only test those 92 people for antibodies.

Team members also said they asked for access to a Wuhan blood bank to test samples from before December 2019 for antibodies. Chinese authorities declined at first, citing privacy concerns, then agreed, but have yet to provide that access, team members say.

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Date: Sun, 16 May 2021 2:55:11 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 16 May 2021 2:51:57 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

Thanks for sharing. His comment "The original WHO study was not considered to have been as thorough or as objective as it needs to be." Seems harmless on the surface, but is grossly offensive to those of us who spent 4 miserable weeks in Wuhan, and many more miserable weeks being attacked in the press since that. It also demonstrates a total lack of understanding of the process of this study, and of the actual contents – 3 reasons why even just thi one sentence is inaccurate.

1) Re. 'not considered to have been as thorough' – It's actually more thorough than the internationally-negotiated Terms of Reference laid out. These specifically did not include any investigation of the lab. It was only after we got on the ground in Wuhan and were told a hard 'no' on looking into the lab leak hypothesis that I then reached out to Zhengli Shi and set up calls to break the ice on this, allowing us to visit the lab and ask the questions we did, and get new data from the lab. Looking back on this – why did I bother!

2) Re. '…or as objective as it needs to be'. It's been said repeatedly that the international experts on the WHO mission all unanimously considered the lab leak hypothesis extremely unlikely. If this is not objective, why not? Perhaps he's referring to the China side having also voted the same way – so what? Maybe because I was involved and somehow I can't think independently because I'm linked to the lab – so what? If >10 independent international experts viewed it as extremely unlikely, why is that not objective?

3) Re. calling it the 'original WHO study' is erroneous because it's ongoing. This was phase 1 and the recommendations in the report are for the phase 2 studies that are being designed right now. This is in the terms of reference that are published. It's fine for someone to not know these details, but if you don't know, you should suggest this was the 'original study' as if indicating there would be a future, different one.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 14, 2021 2:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]

b6 Rich Roberts b6
Subject: FW: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

David

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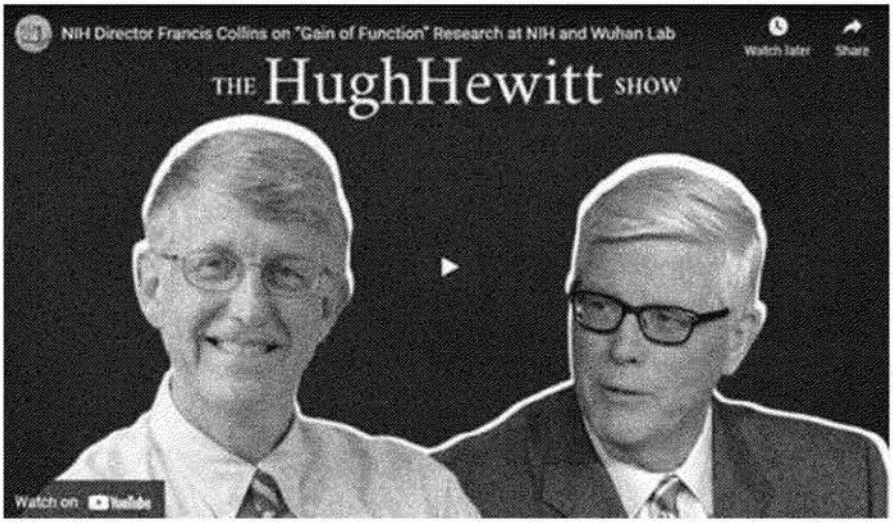
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, May 14, 2021 12:00 PM
Subject: Hugh Hewitt: NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and Wuhan Lab

THU, MAY 13, 2021 | BY HUGH HEWITT

NIH Director Francis Collins On "Gain of Function" Research At NIH and

Wuhan Lab



Transcript:
Dr. Francis Collins, director of NIH joined me this AM. He answered many objections about vaccinations and also discuss

HH: But first, let me ask you about gain of function research. It's become a contentious issue. I'm looking at an NIH symposium you held on gain of function. Could you explain for the Steelers fans out there what gain of function research is?

FC: Absolutely, and there has been a lot of noise about this. And a lot of the information is not accurate, so let me try. Basically, this is the kind of research where you're studying a particular pathogen in a very tightly controlled environment to try to understand what about that virus or that bacterium might we most want to be worried about that nature might develop into an even more dangerous organism. We do this under extremely tight circumstances. The NIH has only approved that kind of research in a couple of instances for influenza. We have never approved that for coronaviruses. But now, there's a buzz that maybe that Wuhan Institute of Virology was conducting that kind of research. We don't know that. There's no evidence for that. And let me say categorically, NIH would not have supported any such research on coronaviruses, because there are risks there that you might actually end up producing a virus that has a higher danger attached to it than what nature has already come up with. Again, the reason to do it is to try to have a little forecast of what we might need to watch out for that nature could develop. But that should only be done under very carefully controlled circumstances. We have in the United States a rigorous system for overseeing any kind of gain of function research like that. And it's only really been utilized twice for influenza.

HH: Now I just heard you say categorically the United States did not fund research of gain of function sort into the COVID virus in Wuhan. Would they have funded, can you say the same thing about gain of function

research period, of any sort, in Wuhan?

FC: We, of course, do not have internal insight as to what was going on at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. NIH strongly supports the position that we need more thorough investigation of what exactly were the origins of this virus. The original WHO study was not considered to have been as thorough or as objective as it needs to be. NIH, working with the State Department, the Agriculture Department, and WHO, is insisting upon a more careful and more objective analysis of everything that happened in Wuhan back in December of 2019.

HH: But can you rule out, Dr. Collins, the United States having funded any sort of gain of function research in Wuhan?

FC: We absolutely did not fund gain of function research in Wuhan.

HH: All right. That's great.

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Date: Thu, 20 May 2021 12:15:25 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 20 May 2021 12:15:23 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Interesting day at the coalface here at EHA
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments: COVID Conspiracy Theory Arthur Allen CaliforniaHealthLine 5-19-2021.pdf

Two things. David/Peter you may have seen the article Arthur Allen published yesterday (attached). I think I summed up what Peter says in the last part of the email below.
Second, I was on a call with the World Bank and the Ministry of Health of Turkey, who is looking to build a vaccine production facility and an emerging ID research lab. The Bank needed clarity on whether the latter was BSL-3 or BSL-4 for their required environmental and social risk assessment for a Bank loan. What emerged from the Turks was that the plan was BSL-3+. The only specific feature they mentioned was double HEPA filtered air exhaust. I'm wondering what it takes to go from BSL-3 to 3+, and if there is a set of clear criteria and requirements. So please fill me in if this is a formally codified concept for the engineering and/or the SOPs followed. Is it a standard BSL-3 facility (maybe double HEPA out) with BSL-4 procedures but using a PAPR for breathing air, or are their additional enhancements involved. Would it be suitable under currently understood regulations and certification criteria to work with a BSL-4 pathogen in a BSL-3+ facility? Does that matter, since as Peter has noted in the summary of the biosafety issues at WIV the regulations for working with the various pathogens varies from country to country and there is no single platinum standard.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 20, 2021 1:57 AM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Subject: Interesting day at the coalface here at EHA

Lots happening:

> 'Report' on COVID-19 origins from the Republicans House Intel Select Committee led by Devin Nunes that he stated was based on journalists' reporting of open source data. In other words, nothing new and nothing of any credibility. Report available here: https://republicans-intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/covid-19_and_the_wuhan_institute_of_virology_19_may_2021.pdf
> I now have a list of questions from the GAO. They are focused entirely on the circumstances surrounding the termination of our NIH grant. I've just sent them reams of information, including a detailed timeline with links to the letters on the NLcampaigns website and copies of other correspondence with NIH O/D. I'm naming names of who said what and when. I have an interview with them on Tuesday next week.
> I have a copy of the letter sent by HHS to WHO. This is the one where the State Dept said they didn't think WHO did a good enough job of the COVID origin mission, and HHS said they were going to demand investigation of a lab leak. It lists just about every recommendation that's already in the report. It then adds stuff about getting the lab audits, sending in lab biosecurity experts from other countries, having access to staff for interviews etc. None of this would ever be allowed if CDC's BSL-4 were targeted by Chinese conspiracists. None of this will likely ever happen. I believe HHS already knows that, as does the WHO DG, as does China. Just a massive waste of time for political point scoring by the Biden admin to look tough on China. Just unfortunate I'm right in the middle. One of their demands is access to the bat sample data that includes my samples. They're the same samples I reported to NIH every year….until they canceled my grant so I can't report them now. What a farce – you couldn't make this stuff up.

Cheers,

Peter

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Date: Tue, 7 Sep 2021 8:39:07 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 7 Sep 2021 8:36:32 PM -0400
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Garry, Robert F [b6] Kristian G. Andersen [b6] Edward Holmes [b6] >;
CC: Jason Gale [b6] [b6] David Morens [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; [b6]

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen <[b6]>; Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and

written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]
[b6]
[b6] g >; Garry, Robert F [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes [b6] > wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date:	Sun, 5 Sep 2021 12:05:22 PM -0400
Sent:	Sun, 5 Sep 2021 12:03:27 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Times, UK: How US cash funded Wuhan lab dealing in deadly viruses
From:	Peter Daszak <b6>
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>; Keusch, Jerry <b6>
Attachments:	image006.gif; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg

Pure unadulterated BS – the cables from Bill Switzer were lauding our research and the whole trip was set up to increase intl. collaboration. Disingenuous innuendo-filled reporting as usual. Book written by a hard right reporter who's cashing in on this conspiracy.

It's also BS to claim that international researchers weren't welcome. When Zhengli Shi spoke at the Nipah meeting in Singapore in early Dec. 2019, she openly advertised for intl. scientists to apply to WIV to work there.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Sunday, September 5, 2021 11:15 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Kessler, Robert (<b6>; Keusch, Jerry (<b6>
Subject: FW: Times, UK: How US cash funded Wuhan lab dealing in deadly viruses

David

David M. Morens, M.D.

CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Saturday, September 4, 2021 6:27 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Times, UK: How US cash funded Wuhan lab dealing in deadly viruses

CORONAVIRUS | BOOK EXTRACT

How US cash funded Wuhan lab dealing in deadly viruses

Controversial research to make diseases more potent was backed by Dr Anthony Fauci, chief medical adviser to the White House, reveals a new book on the cover-ups and conspiracies of the pandemic



The scientist Shi Zhengli was well known for sampling thousands of bats in her role as director of the emerging infectious diseases centre at the Wuhan Institute of Virology
CHINATOPIX VIA AP
Sharri Markson
Saturday September 04 2021, 12.01am BST, The Times

It's late March 2018 and the US career diplomat Rick Switzer has just flown home to Beijing after a trip to Wuhan. Along with his colleague Jamie Fouss, the US consul-general in Wuhan, he'd led a delegation of American environmental, science, technology and health consular staff to inspect the Wuhan Institute of Virology, where he'd met Shi Zhengli, the "batwoman". It was two years before a pandemic would arise from that very city — perhaps even that very laboratory — and he was deeply concerned about what he saw during his visit. The consular official at the US embassy in Beijing tapped out a "sensitive but unclassified" cable to send back to the State Department. He needed to let Washington know just what was going on inside China's new level-4 biocontainment facility dealing with the world's deadliest and most contagious pathogens. The cable warned of poor safety practices at the laboratory.

Switzer pressed send on the cable two weeks later, on April 19, 2018, with the subject line: "China Virus Institute Welcomes More US Co-operation on Global Health Security". It was an unusual choice of email subject, because the contents of his cable outlined how the opposite was true. The laboratory, built on the condition of international collaboration, was severely limiting the number of international researchers who could work inside its walls.

The Wuhan Institute of Virology level-4 lab had originally been built in conjunction with the Jean Mérieux BSL-4 Laboratory in Lyons, France. It was to be China's first high-containment laboratory under the direction of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which is under People's Liberation Army control. Construction of the laboratory began in 2004 and took 11 years to complete, finally finishing on January 31, 2015. The project cost $44 million. It is a vast building, with four floors stretching over 3,000 sq m (32,000 sq ft). It was accredited in February 2017 by the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment, and began working on live viruses by 2018.

There were "intense clashes" between the French and Chinese parties during the construction phase, according to a Chinese Academy of Sciences video. It was far from a smooth process. Even before the deal was signed, there was strong objection in France to co-operating on such a laboratory in Wuhan, but the scientists advocating the collaboration won.

Once the laboratory was up and running, the French were soon kicked out. While the initial funding, training and construction was in conjunction with the French, according to Switzer and Fouss's cable, "it is entirely China-funded and has been completely China-run since a 'handover' ceremony in 2016". And despite being built in the name of international scientific collaboration, few international researchers were welcome to work inside the facility. "Institute officials said there would be 'limited availability' for international and domestic scientists who had gone through the necessary approval process to do research at the lab," the cable stated.

So a laboratory working with the most lethal pathogens known to humankind had effectively cut off collaboration with the international community.



Security keep watch outside the Wuhan institute during a visit by the World Health Organisation in February. The institute was accredited in 2017 and began working on live viruses by 2018
THOMAS PETER/REUTERS

What made this particularly alarming was the work the laboratory was conducting. Disturbingly, Switzer and Fouss discovered the laboratory was setting up its very own database identifying all deadly viruses with pandemic potential. It would be its own version of a concept called the Global Virome Project (GVP), the cable stated. "The GVP aims to launch this year as an international collaborative effort to identify within ten years virtually all of the planet's viruses that have pandemic or epidemic potential and the ability to jump to humans," the cable read.

The cable quoted a Wuhan Institute of Virology official saying: "We hope China will be one of the leading countries to initiate the Global Virome Project." But in the meantime, the institute official told Switzer and Fouss that they were already running a similar project of their own.

This revelation — of such a database being developed by a laboratory where the US had no oversight — should have been highly alarming. Except it's unclear whether anybody with any level of seniority ever read this cable after it was sent to the State Department and intelligence apparatus in Washington.

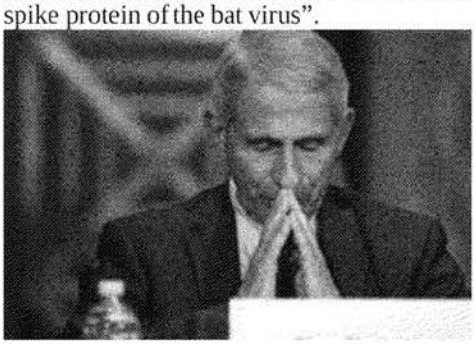
The cable made clear the extent of the US involvement with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. "In the last year, the institute has also hosted visits from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation and experts from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston." It said the Galveston branch had trained the Wuhan lab technicians in lab management and maintenance while the US National Science Foundation had just concluded a workshop with the Wuhan Institute in Shenzhen involving 40 scientists from the US and China.

It also made clear — at this early stage — how America was funding the coronavirus research at the Wuhan lab. "NIH was a major funder, along with the National Science Foundation of China, of Sars research by the Wuhan Institute of Virology," the cable states. The paragraphs that follow are redacted.

Shi Zhengli was well known in the close-knit scientific community that studied bat coronaviruses. She had become a scientific celebrity after discovering the closest virus to Sars in bats. As the director for the Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, she became known as the "batwoman" for her sampling of thousands of bats in remote caves.

It was nothing compared with the global fame she would attract after the pandemic outbreak. Her institute's research, with all its risks, would be exposed for the world to judge.

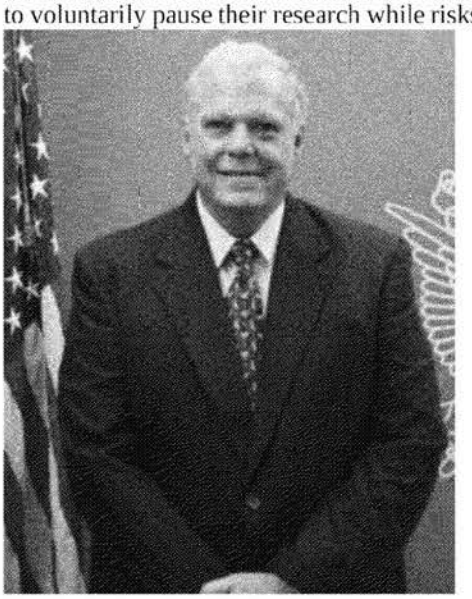
Shi has in total collected 19,000 samples and coronavirus was detected in 2,481 of them, according to information she provided to the World Health Organisation in February this year. She had been engaging in genetically modifying viruses since at least 2006. A paper published in the *Journal of Virology* that year shows she was trying to determine how coronaviruses gain the ability to skip from one species to another by "inserting different segments from the human SARS-CoV spike protein into the spike protein of the bat virus".



Dr Anthony Fauci defended the scientists who had undertaken the controversial gain-of-function research which aims to make viruses more infectious and deadlier or more virulent, often to humans
STEFANI REYNOLDS/XINHUA/ALAMY

When questions arose in China about whether her laboratory was the source of the outbreak at the start of February last year — three months before President Trump raised the prospect — Shi snapped. "Those who believe and spread rumours, shut your dirty mouth," she posted on the WeChat social media app on February 6. Instead, she said, Covid-19 "is nature's punishment for

uncivilised living habits of human beings. I, Shi Zhengli, use my life to guarantee that it has nothing to do with our lab."
Just how dangerous was the research she was conducting, often without the watchful eyes of international partners? What were Shi and her colleagues up to, and who was funding it?
Of particular focus would be her "gain-of-function" experiments. Gain-of-function research aims to make viruses more infectious and deadlier or more virulent, often to humans. The technical definition is research that "involves experimentation that is expected to increase the transmissibility and/or virulence of pathogens". It can result in a pathogen acquiring new abilities; for example, a bat virus becoming able to infect humans or a virus that wasn't airborne having the ability to become so.
This research, which has been carried out in the US and other western countries as well as China, has been justified by scientists who claim it could help predict pandemics by discovering which viruses are capable of becoming infectious to humans. They say this allows them to pre-emptively develop vaccines and therapeutics. But only two laboratories globally were doing gain-of-function research on coronaviruses prior to the pandemic.
Other research projects may not strictly fall into the gain-of-function category but are equally dangerous. They include bringing back to life very old viruses and manipulating them in a laboratory. This type of research deals with what are referred to as "potential pandemic pathogens".
To many outside the scientific community, this type of experimentation sounds absurd. How is it even legal, given the astronomical risks? Debate has raged about the grave dangers of allowing gain-of-function research to take place. There are two main concerns. Firstly, it can be misused for malevolent military purposes such as bioweapons. Secondly, it can accidentally cause a pandemic.
Global controversy around this type of research ignited in 2012, when scientists wanted to see if it would be possible for bird flu (H5N1) to evolve naturally into a virus that was capable of human-to-human transmission, and thus cause a pandemic. Their stated intention was to be able to predict which viruses could turn into a pandemic. Scientists fiercely opposed to gain-of-function research formed a body called the Cambridge Working Group in 2014. There were 200 esteemed signatories. They released a letter specifically warning that accidents while scientists were experimenting with these dangerous viruses could cause "an accidental pandemic" that could infect a quarter of the world's population. "Accident risks with newly created 'potential pandemic pathogens' raise grave new concerns," their letter said. "Laboratory creation of highly transmissible, novel strains of dangerous viruses, especially but not limited to influenza, poses substantially increased risks. An accidental infection in such a setting could trigger outbreaks that would be difficult or impossible to control. Historically, new strains of influenza, once they establish transmission in the human population, have infected a quarter or more of the world's population within two years."
This type of research carries such a grave risk of causing a pandemic that President Obama paused funding for gain-of-function experiments in 22 fields in 2014, including research involving Sars, influenza and Mers viruses. This happened after an outcry in the scientific community about the dangerous experiments some virologists were conducting. "Specifically, the funding pause will apply to gain-of-function research projects that may be reasonably anticipated to confer attributes to influenza, Mers, or Sars viruses such that the virus would have enhanced pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in mammals via the respiratory route," the White House statement, dated October 17, 2014, said. "During this pause, the US government will not fund any new projects involving these experiments and encourages those currently conducting this type of work — whether federally funded or not — to voluntarily pause their research while risks and benefits are being reassessed."



Jamie Fouss, the US consul-general in Wuhan
CHINA.USEMBASSY- CHINA.ORG.CN
Before the ban took effect, Dr Anthony Fauci, a director at the NIH, had welcomed a voluntary pause on gain-of-function research but argued that "the benefits of such experiments and the resulting knowledge outweigh the risks. It is more likely that a

pandemic would occur in nature [than as a result of a laboratory accident or leak], and the need to stay ahead of such a threat is a primary reason for performing an experiment that might appear to be risky."

Fauci, 80, with his calm and measured manner of speech, has cultivated an image as a wise grandfatherly figure. Called "America's doctor" in the media, he has spent 50 years in public service, joining the NIH during the Vietnam War after studying as a physician. He was appointed director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in 1984. Like many medical officials around the world, he became a household name during the pandemic.

Fauci's organisation was very familiar with the work undertaken at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, with the NIH and the National Science Foundation visiting the facility in the year prior to April 2018. In total, the NIH has funded at least 60 scientific projects at the Wuhan Institute of Virology over the past decade. USAID, the federal aid agency, funded at least 16 (ten of which were jointly funded with the NIH), the Department of Health and Human Services funded three, the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and the China–US Collaborative Program on Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases individually each funded one project in conjunction with the Wuhan Institute. Other institutions that frequently collaborate with the institute include the New York Blood Center, the University of North Carolina and University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. At the same time Obama cut off funding for gain-of-function research in America, US money was still flowing to China for risky coronavirus research.

Fauci defended the scientists who had undertaken the highly controversial gain-of-function research that had prompted the global debate, saying they had "conducted their research properly and under the safest and most secure conditions". The same research that some international scientists said should be banned, Fauci described as "important". "Within the research community, many have expressed concern that important research progress could come to a halt just because of the fear that someone, somewhere, might attempt to replicate these experiments sloppily," he wrote in his 2012 paper.

The mandatory "pause" or ban on gain-of-function research was inexplicably lifted under the Trump administration in 2017. No adequate explanation has been given for why this decision was made. There was no public debate. On December 19, 2017, the NIH announced it would resume funding gain-of-function research involving Mers, Sars, coronaviruses and influenza after a new "framework" had been developed by the Department of Health and Human Services.



Scientists from the Wuhan lab worked with bats carrying Sars-like viruses
SUNDAY TIMES INSIGHT

Senior administration officials told me Fauci did not raise the issue of kickstarting gain-of-function research with any senior figures in the White House. There was one White House meeting, which Fauci requested with the Office of Science and Technology Policy, where he raised the issue of gain-of-function research. "It kind of just got rammed through," a senior source claimed.

I asked the former national security adviser Robert O'Brien about this. "I was in meeting after meeting with Dr Fauci, and that never came up," he says. "I don't know if he alerted anyone. I never heard about it until I was out of office." Mike Pompeo, who was director of the CIA from 2017 to 2018, said he didn't know if Fauci got permission from anyone to re-start the dangerous research, particularly with regard to contributing funding via sub-grants to the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci didn't even tell his boss, Alex Azar, the health secretary, who only found out the US restriction on gain-of-function research had been lifted from media reports in 2021.

In hindsight we can clearly see that health authorities, the US government and international governments all ignored the warnings from eminent scientists, and allowed the dangerous scientific research to go ahead. The public was never brought into these debates. A pandemic is something that affects all of us — we have lost loved ones, battled serious illness, lost jobs, had our businesses and ways of life destroyed. While the origins of Covid-19 have not yet been established, it's clear this type of research carries grave risks.

What was even more terrifying was that not only was the NIH funding gain-of-function research in the US — but it was funding research in China, where it had no oversight and no way of knowing how safe the laboratories were where these risky experiments were taking place.

Extracted from What Really Happened in Wuhan: the Cover-Ups, the Conspiracies and the Classified Research by Sharri Markson, to be published by HarperCollins on September 30 at £20. Available to order now at amazon.co.uk

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Date:	Thu, 8 Jul 2021 1:56:39 PM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 8 Jul 2021 1:56:36 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?
From:	"Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6] >; David Morens [b6] >;
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image005.png

I just emailed Jeremy Farrar to ask him WTF is going on with BMJ?

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 1:54 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6] >
Subject: RE: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

I think this is a really good move. The BMJ was a well-respected journal that also did 'news-ey' type articles for physicians, but this is just a garbage pro-lab leak innuendo-filled piece that openly attacks EcoHealth and my name. The following comments are not factual reporting – more hype and character assassination, all of them implying my intent to act nefariously:

"Daszak effectively silenced debate"

"Some of the scientists in this area very quickly closed ranks."

"Daszak's behind-the-scenes role in orchestrating the statement in the *Lancet*"

"as journalists helped to amplify Daszak's message and to silence scientific and public debate."

"This, he says, is why they began marching in unison behind Daszak."

"WHO and the *Lancet* both launched investigations last year (box 2), but Daszak was involved in both, and neither has made significant progress."

Pretty offensive stuff and a regurgitation of earlier crap written by the same author on the web. I guess BMJ gets value out of this because it directly criticizes tht Lancet – their main competitor. What a ridiculous conflict of interest they're displaying themselves!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 1:33 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

Do any of you know what has become of Peter Smith, a former editor of BMJ? I would like to contact him about what has happened to a formerly quality journal, in fact more highly regarded than the Lancet.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 1:17 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

Really disappointed they gave space to this scheister – he's been trolling the internet darkweb with lab leak theories for at least a year.

Peter Hotez commented that BMJ has been putting out anti-vaxx articles too recently…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:03 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
[b6]
Subject: FW: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:43 AM
Subject: BMJ: The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

The covid-19 lab leak hypothesis: did the media fall victim to a misinformation campaign?

BMJ 2021; 374 doi: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n1656 (Published 08 July 2021) Cite this as: BMJ 2021;374:n1656 Paul D Thacker, investigative journalist

- *Madrid*

- thackerpd{at}gmail.com
  Twitter @thackerpd

The theory that SARS-CoV-2 may have originated in a lab was considered a debunked conspiracy theory, but some experts are revisiting it amid calls for a new, more thorough investigation. **Paul Thacker** explains the dramatic U turn and the role of contemporary science journalism

For most of 2020, the notion that SARS-CoV-2 may have originated in a lab in Wuhan, China, was treated as a thoroughly debunked conspiracy theory. Only conservative news media sympathetic to President Donald Trump and a few lonely reports dared suggest otherwise. But that all changed in the early months of 2021, and today most outlets across the political spectrum

agree: the "lab leak" scenario deserves serious investigation.

Understanding this dramatic U turn on arguably the most important question for preventing a future pandemic, and why it took nearly a year to happen, involves understanding contemporary science journalism.

A conspiracy to label critics as conspiracy theorists

Scientists and reporters contacted by *The BMJ* say that objective consideration of covid-19's origins went awry early in the pandemic, as researchers who were funded to study viruses with pandemic potential launched a campaign labelling the lab leak hypothesis as a "conspiracy theory."

A leader in this campaign has been Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance, a non-profit organisation given millions of dollars in grants by the US federal government to research viruses for pandemic preparedness.[1] Over the years EcoHealth Alliance has subcontracted out its federally supported research to various scientists and groups, including around $600 000 (£434 000; €504 000) to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.[1]

Shortly after the pandemic began, Daszak effectively silenced debate over the possibility of a lab leak with a February 2020 statement in the *Lancet*.[2] "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that covid-19 does not have a natural origin," said the letter, which listed Daszak as one of 27 coauthors. Daszak did not respond to repeated requests for comment from *The BMJ*.

"It's become a label you pin on something you don't agree with," says Nicholas Wade, a science writer who has worked at *Nature*, *Science*, and the *New York Times*. "It's ridiculous, because the lab escape scenario invokes an accident, which is the opposite of a conspiracy."

But the effort to brand serious consideration of a lab leak a "conspiracy theory" only ramped up. Filippa Lentzos, codirector of the Centre for Science and Security Studies at King's College, London, told the *Wall Street Journal*, "Some of the scientists in this area very quickly closed ranks."[3] She added, "There were people that did not talk about this, because they feared for their careers. They feared for their grants."

Daszak had support. After he wrote an essay for the *Guardian* in June 2020 attacking the former head of MI6 for saying that the pandemic could have "started as an accident," Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust and co-signer of the *Lancet* letter, promoted Daszak's essay on Twitter, saying that Daszak was "always worth reading."[4]

Daszak's behind-the-scenes role in orchestrating the statement in the *Lancet* came to light in November 2020 in emails obtained through freedom of information requests by the watchdog group US Right To Know.

"Please note that this statement will not have EcoHealth Alliance logo on it and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization or person," wrote Daszak in a February email, while sending around a draft of the statement for signatories.[5] In another email, Daszak considered removing his name from the statement "so it has some distance from us and therefore doesn't work in a counterproductive way."[6]

Several of the 27 scientists who signed the letter Daszak circulated did so using other professional affiliations and omitted reporting their ties to EcoHealth Alliance.[3]

For Richard Ebright, professor of molecular biology at Rutgers University in New Jersey and a biosafety expert, scientific journals were complicit in helping to shout down any mention of a lab leak. "That means *Nature*, *Science*, and the *Lancet*," he says. In recent months he and dozens of academics have signed several open letters rejecting conspiracy theory accusations and calling for an open investigation of the pandemic's origins.[7][8][9]

"It's very clear at this time that the term 'conspiracy theory' is a useful term for defaming an idea you disagree with," says Ebright, referring to scientists and journalists who have wielded the term. "They have been successful until recently in selling that narrative to many in the media."

The *Lancet*'s editor in chief, Richard Horton, did not respond to repeated requests for comment but, after *The BMJ* had sent him questions, the *Lancet* expanded Daszak's conflicts of interest on the February statement and recused him from working on its task force looking into the pandemic's origin.[10][11]

The *Lancet* letter ultimately helped to guide almost a year of reporting, as journalists helped to amplify Daszak's message and to silence scientific and public debate. "We're in the midst of the social media misinformation age, and these rumours and conspiracy theories have real consequences," Daszak told *Science*.[12] Months later in *Nature*, he again criticised "conspiracies" that the virus could have come from the Wuhan Institute of Virology and complained about "politically motivated organisations" requesting his emails.[13]

That summer *Scientific American*, one of the oldest and best known popular science magazines in America, published a complimentary profile of Daszak's colleague, Shi Zhengli, a centre director at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which has been funded by EcoHealth Alliance.[14]

EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology earned additional sympathetic reporting after the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) cancelled its grant to EcoHealth Alliance in April last year—allegedly on President Trump's order—because of its ties to Wuhan, a decision protested by 77 Nobel laureates and 31 scientific societies.[15] (The NIH has subsequently awarded EcoHealth Alliance new funding.)

Efforts to characterise the lab leak scenario as unworthy of serious consideration were far reaching, sometimes affecting reporting that had first appeared well before the covid-19 pandemic. For example, in March 2020 *Nature Medicine* added an editor's note ("Scientists believe that an animal is the most likely source of the coronavirus") to a 2015 paper on the creation of a hybrid version of a SARS virus, co-written by Shi.[16]

Wade explains, "Science journalists differ a lot from other journalists in that they are far less sceptical of their sources and they see their main role as simply to explain science to the public." This, he says, is why they began marching in unison behind Daszak.

The U turn

By the end of 2020, just a handful of journalists had dared to seriously discuss the possibility of a lab leak. In September, *Boston* magazine reported on a preprint that found the virus unlikely to have come from the Wuhan seafood market, as Daszak has argued, and that it seemed too well adapted to humans to have arisen naturally. However, the story failed to garner much attention, similarly to a little noticed investigative report by the Associated Press in December that exposed how the Chinese government was clamping down on research into covid-19's origins.

In January this year, *New York* magazine ran a sprawling story detailing how the pandemic could have started with a leak from the lab in Wuhan. The hypothetical scenario: "SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes covid-19, began its existence inside a bat, then it learned how to infect people in a claustrophobic mine shaft, and then it was made more infectious in one or more laboratories, perhaps as part of a scientist's well-intentioned but risky effort to create a broad-spectrum vaccine." Scientists and their media allies swiftly criticised the article.

But mainstream outlets from the *New York Times* to the *Washington Post* are now treating the lab leak hypothesis as a worthy question, one to be answered with a serious investigation. In a recent interview with the *New York Times*, Shi denied that her lab was ever involved in "gain of function" experiments (box 1) that enhance a virus's virulence. But the newspaper reported that her lab had been involved in experiments that altered the transmissibility of viruses, alongside interviews with scientists who said that far more transparency was necessary to determine the truth of SARS-CoV-2's origins.17

Box 1

What is "gain of function" research?

After two teams genetically tweaked the H5N1 avian flu virus in 2011 to make it more transmissible in mammals, biosafety experts voiced concerns about "gain of function" research—experimental research that involves altering microbes in ways that change their transmissibility, pathogenicity, or host range.

In the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* in 2012, Lynn Klotz predicted an 80% chance that a leak of a potential pandemic pathogen would occur sometime in the next 12 years. Two years later a Harvard epidemiologist, Marc Lipsitch, founded the Cambridge Working Group to lobby against such experiments.

At that time, three safety lapses involving dangerous pathogens led to a safety crackdown at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lipsitch later argued in 2018 that the release of such a pathogen would "lead to global spread of a virulent virus, a biosafety incident on a scale never before seen."

Gain of function research was briefly paused because of these concerns, although critics debate as to when it restarted. For more than a decade, scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology have been discovering coronaviruses in bats in southern China and bringing them back to their lab for gain of function research, to learn how to deal with such a deadly virus should it arise in nature.

The closest known relative of the SARS-CoV-2 virus was found in a region of China almost 1000 miles from the Wuhan Institute of Virology—yet the pandemic apparently started in Wuhan. Biosafety experts have noted that lab leaks are common but rarely reported, as hundreds of lab accidents had happened in the US alone.27

RETURN TO TEXT

Two major events are probably responsible for the media's change in tune. First, Trump was no longer president. Because Trump had said that the virus could have come from a Wuhan lab, Daszak and others used him as a convenient foil to attack their critics. But the framing of the lab leak hypothesis as a partisan issue was harder to sustain after Trump left the White House.

Second, after months of negotiation the Chinese government finally allowed the World Health Organization to come to Wuhan and investigate the pandemic's origin. But in January 2021 WHO, which included Daszak on the team, returned with no evidence that the virus had arisen through natural spill-over.18 More worryingly, members were allowed only a few hours of supervised access to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

The White House then released a statement making clear that it did not trust China's propaganda denying that the virus could have come from one of the country's labs. "We have deep concerns about the way in which the early findings of the covid-19 investigation were communicated and questions about the process used to reach them," said the statement. "It is imperative that this report be independent, with expert findings free from intervention or alteration by the Chinese government."

The following month the *Washington Post* editorial board called for an open and transparent investigation of the virus's origins, highlighting Shi's experiments with bat coronaviruses that were genetically very similar to the one that caused the pandemic.19 It asked, "Could a worker have gotten infected or inadvertent leakage have touched off the outbreak in Wuhan?" The *Wall Street Journal*, citing a US intelligence document, recently reported that three Wuhan Institute of Virology researchers were admitted to hospital in November 2019.20

To follow any US financial ties and to better understand how the pandemic started, Republicans have launched investigations of government agencies that fund coronavirus research, and one investigative committee has sent a letter to Daszak at EcoHealth Alliance demanding that he turn over documents. Meanwhile, Senate Republicans and Democrats have started to discuss an independent investigation of the virus's origins.

A hard truth to swallow

The growing tendency to treat the lab leak scenario as worthy of serious investigation has put some reporters on the defensive. After Robert Redfield, former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, appeared on CNN in March, *Scientific American*'s editor in chief, Laura Helmuth, tweeted, "On CNN, former CDC director Robert Redfield shared the conspiracy theory that the virus came from the Wuhan lab." The following day, *Scientific American* ran an essay calling the lab leak theory "evidence free." And a week later a *Nature* reporter, Amy Maxmen, labelled the idea that the virus could have leaked from a lab as "conjecture."

Helmuth did not respond to questions from *The BMJ*.

Some media outlets have attempted to justify their past reporting about the lab leak hypothesis as simply a matter of tracking a "scientific consensus" which, they say, has now changed. *Vox* posted an erratum noting, "Since this piece was originally published in March 2020, scientific consensus has shifted."

The "scientific consensus" argument does not sit well with David Relman, a microbiologist at Stanford University, California. "We can't even begin to talk about a consensus other than a consensus that we don't know [the origins of SARS-CoV-2]," he recently told the *Washington Post*.[21]

A year lost

While the narrative took months to change in the media, several high profile intelligence sources had treated the lab leak theory seriously from early on. In April 2020, Avril Haines joined two other former deputy directors of the Central Intelligence Agency to write an essay in *Foreign Policy* asking, "To what extent did the Chinese government misrepresent the scope and scale of the epidemic?"[22] A week later, one of the former intelligence officials who wrote that essay gave similar quotes to *Politico*.

Ignoring these early warnings led to a year of biased, failed reporting, says Wade. "They didn't question what their sources were saying," he says of the reporters who helped to sell the conspiracy theory narrative to the public. "That is the simple explanation for this phenomenon."

An impartial, credible investigation?

As the news media scramble to correct and reflect on what went wrong with nearly a year of reporting, the episode has also highlighted quality control issues at the ubiquitous "fact checking" services.

Prominent outlets such as *PolitiFact*[23] and FactCheck.org[24] have added editor's notes to pieces that previously "debunked" the idea that the virus was created in a lab or could have been bioengineered—softening their position to one of an open question that is "in dispute." For almost a year Facebook sought to control misinformation by banning stories suggesting that the coronavirus was man made. After renewed interest in the virus's origin, Facebook lifted the ban.[25]

Whether a credible investigation will be made into the lab leak scenario remains to be seen. WHO and the *Lancet* both launched investigations last year (box 2), but Daszak was involved in both, and neither has made significant progress.

Box 2

Timeline

2019

September Weeks before the pandemic erupts, Jeremy Farrar (Wellcome Trust) and Anthony Fauci (US National Institutes of Health; NIH) help oversee a World Health Organization report highlighting an "increasing risk of global pandemic from a pathogen escaping after being engineered in a lab"

November Three researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology are admitted to hospital, says a previously undisclosed US intelligence document reported by the *Wall Street Journal* on 23 May 2021

31 December China notifies WHO of "cases of pneumonia of unknown aetiology" in Wuhan City

2020

1 February Jeremy Farrar holds a teleconference with Anthony Fauci and others to discuss the outbreak's origins

6 February A commentary from Chinese researchers based in Wuhan, arguing that "the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan," is posted and later removed from ResearchGate (the user account "Botao Xiao" is also deleted)

19 February An open letter is published in the *Lancet* from 27 scientists including Peter Daszak and Jeremy Farrar, who "strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that covid-19 does not have a natural origin"

19 February*Science* magazine reports: "Scientists 'strongly condemn' rumors and conspiracy theories about origin of coronavirus outbreak," quoting Daszak as saying, "We're in the midst of the social media misinformation age, and these rumors and conspiracy theories have real consequences, including threats of violence that have occurred to our colleagues in China."

22 February*New York Post* publishes an article by a China scholar arguing that "coronavirus may have leaked from a lab"—subsequently censored by Facebook

6 March Kristian Andersen (Scripps Research Institute) thanks Jeremy Farrar (Wellcome), Anthony Fauci (NIH), and Francis Collins (NIH) "for your advice and leadership as we have been working through the SARS-CoV-2 'origins' paper." The paper is published on 17 March in *Nature Medicine* and states, "Our analyses clearly show that SARS-CoV-2 is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated virus."

24 April NIH abruptly cuts funding to EcoHealth Alliance, allegedly on President Trump's order

28 April Three former US intelligence agents write in *Foreign Policy* asking whether the virus emerged from nature or escaped

from a Chinese lab
21 May*New York Times* depicts the Wuhan Institute of Virology as a victim of "conspiracy theories"
27 May*Nature* reports the lab leak hypothesis as "coronavirus misinformation" and "false information"
8 June The science magazine *Undark* reports that the lab leak is a conspiracy theory "that's been broadly discredited"
30 December Associated Press investigation finds documents from March 2020 showing how Beijing has shaped and censored research into the origins of SARS-CoV-2

2021

February Facebook places warning on an article by Ian Birrell about the origins of covid-19. Facebook says that these warnings reduce article viewership by 95%
13 February Jake Sullivan, US national security adviser, expresses "deep concerns" about WHO's covid-19 investigation, calling on China to be more transparent
March*Washington Post* calls for serious investigations of the lab leak hypothesis
30 March WHO releases a report on its investigation into the origins of covid-19, listing the lab leak as least likely of the possible scenarios considered. Hours earlier, WHO's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, acknowledged that the lab leak hypothesis should "remain on the table" and called for a more extensive probe
30 March The US, Australian, Japanese, Canadian, UK, and other governments express concern over WHO's investigation and call for "transparent and independent analysis and evaluation, free from interference and undue influence"
26 May Facebook lifts its ban on posts referencing the lab leak hypothesis
RETURN TO TEXT

In recent weeks, several high profile scientists who once denigrated the idea that the virus could have come from a lab have made small steps into demanding an open investigation of the pandemic's origin.
The NIH's director, Francis Collins, said in a recent interview, "The Chinese government should be on notice that we have to have answers to questions that have not been answered about those people who got sick in November who worked in the lab and about those lab notebooks that have not been examined." He added, "If they really want to be exonerated from this claim of culpability, then they have got to be transparent."[26]
But the nature of this investigation has still not been decided.

Footnotes

- Competing interests: I am paid by various media outlets for journalism stories and consult part time for a non-profit institute focused on brain disorders. I run a newsletter called the *Disinformation Chronicle*.
- Provenance and peer review: Commissioned, not externally peer reviewed.

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https://bmj.com/coronavirus/usage

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Date: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 4:38:47 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 4:34:42 PM -0400
Subject: RE: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]

I would always be wary with WSJ. It's good that you're talking to him though..

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 12:48 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Roberts, Ric [b6]
Subject: Re: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.

I got a call from Drew Hinshaw at the WSJ for an interview on Tedros call for investigation of the lab origin story. It looks like we will talk in the morning.

Do either of you know him and how he approaches a story? Good guy or one to be wary of?

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 7, 2021, at 12:42 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:
>
> To add to that – another damaging article in the New York Times today.
>
> https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/07/health/coronavirus- lab-leak-who.html
>
> Please read the details and at the end the comment from Jamie Metzl – these people are lining up to shut down scientific research on viruses in wildlife – that's the exact opposite of what we'll need to do if we want to be prepared for the next pandemic.

I can't fight this fight on my own – I'm cited in this article as usual, along with Marion Koopmans – both of us under daily attack from these conspiracists. We need bigger and louder voices fighting against this movement before it starts to do damage to scientific research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 11:25 AM
To: 'Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]' < b6 >; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]; 'Keusch, Jerry' < b6
Subject: EcoHealth and myself feeling the pressure here.
Importance: High

Just read your email about being allowed to do interviews on the WHO report David. Interesting and disappointing. Clearly the issue of COVID origins is not the political problem – it's the WHO report that's the problem. It's quite telling really, that the Biden Admin decided the WHO report would be a political football and therefore NSC/White House agenda, not a scientific issue and therefore NIH/NIAID agenda.

This is a symptom of a bigger issues – over the last 2-4 weeks, all of the allies who would normally talk to reporters about the science have either been silenced/sidelined, or are following a political agenda, e.g. the White House, the WHO Director-General (who single-handedly threw the whole WHO expert team under the bus), the former CDC director, and now NIAID – all following the political line.

The attacks reached a crescendo over this same period with daily op-eds in NY Post, WSJ, Daily Caller and other Right Wing papers bleeding over into CNN and even NPR. My Board are now beginning to get concerned and this puts me personally in a very difficult position – it's a risk to my job, my family's security, and my career. It's not a real problem yet – if the attacks die down a bit (which I believe they will), and if my Board continue to support me (I believe they will), the long game will win out.

But at this point I'm reaching out to call for help! Can we line up some allies who will help speak publicly about the science here on wildlife-to-human spillover vs. lab leak? Critically, there is still no evidence at all that a lab leak occurred, there is also no evidence at all that EcoHealth (or NIAID) funded or supported Gain-of-function work in China. Likewise, stories about EcoHealth 'hiding' DoD funding, being funded by China, not clearly indicating the source of funding on all public documents, etc. etc. are false and/or misleading. Still, the damage is being done and I'm worried that today the momentum is with the conspiracists.

Any and all ideas are welcome – ASTMH, NAM, NASEM, others?

Jerry – what about reaching out to Benjamin Corb and others?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 ; Keusch, Jerr b6 ; Peter Daszak b6 u
>
Subject: Fwd: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Guys, see below..... The Biden admin apparently won't let any of us at NIH, including Tony, discuss the WHO report....

On the surface this sounds bad, but there is the possibility they just want one org to manage the message because they are trying to put out a fire. Or am I just Pollyanna? d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview
Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 17:43:09 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6
To: David Morens (b6

<image001.gif>

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03

31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD [b6]
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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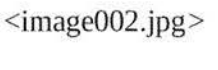

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Cc: NIAID OCGR NSWB <NIAIDOCGRNSWB@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: (FYI only): Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens –

For your awareness (and in case she also reaches out to you directly), Mariana Lenharo followed up today on her request to speak with you or another NIAID expert about the WHO report, which as you know came out today. We've been asked to refer requests for comment about the report to the National Security Council, and we will be directing her there.

Best,
Hillary

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Thanks for the background! Once we know what the WHO report says, we'll be better poised to make decisions about how to handle requests to discuss it… as you note, it is a bit of a hot issue.

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:46 AM
To: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

That's fine, although I think she wants me because I spoke to her before, and because I published the major paper dealing with it, along with Breman at FIC and ex-FIC director Keusch, and other authors.

Also, just off the record, we may want to not give this to Tony as he has been unfairly criticized over some of the issues. It could be a hot subject for him….d

---

From: Hoffman, Hillary (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Hi Dr. Morens,

Thanks for sending. I'll write back to this reporter and ask her to send a fresh request to the press office once the WHO report is available – we can at that time better assess whether it makes sense for you or another NIAID expert to speak with the media about it.

Best,
Hillary

Hillary Hoffman, Ph.D., Writer/Editor
Office of Communications and Government Relations, NIAID, NIH
5601 Fishers Lane #6G38
Rockville, MD 20852
b6
b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:26 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE b6 >
Subject: Fwd: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Mariana Lenharo < b6
> **Date:** March 16, 2021 at 18:21:42 EDT
> **To:** "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Subject: Origin of COVID-19 - Possible Interview**
>
> Dear Dr. Morens,
>
> I hope you are doing well. It's been a few months since we spoke for the article on the origins of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Now, as the WHO mission to study the origins of the virus is about to publish their report, I'm planning to write a new article on the topic to analyze the mission's conclusions.
>
> I was wondering if you would be available for a new interview on this topic once the full report is published (it should be either this week or the next one).
>
> I'm very interested to get a sense of how the scientific community is evaluating the mission's effort into finding the origin of SARS-CoV-2.
>
> Thank you so much,
>
> **Mariana Lenharo**
> Science and Health Journalist
> T. b6
> Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Wed, Oct 21, 2020 at 11:02 AM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 > wrote:

> Thanks, you did a great job!
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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- b6 ssistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
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- b6

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<image002.jpg>

From: Mariana Lenhard b6
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 9:18 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

The story for which I interviewed you was published this morning. Here is the link:
https://elemental.medium.com/why- covid-19s-origin-story-is-still-a-mystery-46b0b336f122

Thank you again for the collaboration and I hope to be able to interview you again for future stories.

Kind regards,

Mariana

On Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:07 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 > wrote:

> I will be at b6 b6 b6 my cell…. ty
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
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> - b6
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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Thank you, Dr. Morens. How about we schedule the call for tomorrow, Wednesday, at 12:30?

Should I reach you at your office number [b6] [b6] [b6]

Thank you very much!

Best,

Mariana

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:04 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:

> Mariana, it looks like I have tomorrow from about 1215 to 130
>
> Late Thu might work after 4 or 5, not sure when earlier meeting will be done.
>
> Friday looks good except about 1 to about 4
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> [b6] [b6] [b6]
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>
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>
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **From:** Mariana Lenharo [b6]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 12:37 PM
> **To:** Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
> **Subject:** Re: FW: approved RE: (Origin of COVID-19 article) FW: Possible interview - Dr. David M.

Morens

Dear Dr. Morens,

Thank you so much for getting back to me. I have a pretty open schedule in the next few days. These are the times I'll be available:

Wednesday: anytime after 8 am
Thursday: from 8 am to 9 am OR anytime after 1 pm
Friday: from 8 am to 3 pm

Please let me know if any of those work for you and how would you prefer to be contacted at that time.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T: b6
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

On Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:03 PM Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

> Hi Mariana,
>
> Our media office indicated you would like to speak to me at some point this week. Let me know when. I am always busy and moving between various offices and meetings, bu5t I do have spaces of free time here and there. In general, mid afternoons, eg, from 130 until 330 or later, are not good….
>
> TY
>
> <image001.gif>
> David M. Morens, M.D.
> CAPT, United States Public Health Service
> Senior Advisor to the Director
> Office of the Director
> National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
> National Institutes of Health
> Building 31, Room 7A-03
> 31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
> Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
> b6 b6 b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
> b6
> b6

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From: Mariana Lenharo [b6]
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 2:50 PM
To: NIAID NEWS (NIH/NIAID) <NIAIDNEWS@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Possible interview - Dr. David M. Morens

Hello!

My name is Mariana Lenharo, I'm a science and health journalist and I'm working on a story about the work of scientists investigating the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic. This story will be published in Elemental (https://elemental.medium.com/), a Medium publication focused on science-backed health coverage.

As I was reading about this topic, I came across this very interesting article, "The Origin of COVID-19 and Why It Matters" and I'd love to interview one of the authors, Dr. David M. Morens. This would be a 20-30-minute interview by phone/skype/zoom preferably this week. Please let me know if you think this would be possible.

Thank you very much!

Kind regards,

Mariana Lenharo
Science and Health Journalist
T. [b6]
Email | Twitter | LinkedIn | Portfolio

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Date: Mon, 13 Sep 2021 3:50:24 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 13 Sep 2021 3:50:18 PM -0400
Subject: Re: foia
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Gerald Keusch b6 Robert Kessler b6 >;

I'm assuming that can only be on NIH account.

I'll have a look to see if any of us said anything offensive about anything or anyone over the past 2 yrs. can't imagine we did!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY 10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Sep 13, 2021, at 2:51 PM, David Morens b6 > wrote:
>
> peter, just got foia'd by a guy looking for all emails from me to you since 2019. sorry. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Mon, 13 Sep 2021 11:14:10 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 13 Sep 2021 11:14:08 AM -0400
Subject: Re: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Peter Daszak b6

I just followed up with Simone McCarthy who is writing due SCMP on the GoF issues and noted the Intercept crap and the virus growth curve. I had previously sent her my perspective via email. Now I said the sinister implications of the intercept take was pure BS because the virus level was different only at the first time point, it was not a human pathogen, it was a legal and legitimate experiment by NIH regulations, EHA reported it as they were supposed to, and there are no scientifically valid extrapolations to human virulence or risk.

I also said it was important for her to set the record straight What did I miss and I'll be happy to follow up before she posts her article.

Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

> On Sep 13, 2021, at 10:48 AM, David Morens b6 > wrote:
>
> Never heard of them and presume they come from the Dark Side of the moon, pun intended…
> d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Sep 13, 2021, at 00:16, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
> >
> > I was tempted to respond - it really irritated me for some reason - more than others. Maybe because he (almost certainly a he) comes across as otherwise intelligent...
> >
> > In the end I deleted and blocked...as I'm supposed to!
> >
> > Cheers,
> >
> > Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Sunday, September 12, 2021 10:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; David Morens
b6 b6 >
Subject: FW: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication

I finally made contact with Pink Floyd and it's a nameless email. I took the last part to heart, had a nice day, said FU to Pink Floyd, and had a lovely dinner out here in the Berkshires.

Have either of you encountered this one before?

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine
Associate Director
National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory Boston University, Boston MA 02118

-----Original Message-----
From: b6 b6 >
Sent: Sunday, September 12, 2021 10:09 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: The Lancet: Interview request about the publication

Dear Professor, Mister/Madam

Congratulations to your publication (Calisher et al. (2020)) in the journal THE LANCET which has attracted many attentions.

However, you have to explain seriously this report about your publication (which has been published in The Daily Telegraph in UK): Revealed: How scientists who dismissed Wuhan lab theory are linked to Chinese researchers Cover-up alleged over Lancet letter that effectively shut down scientific debate into whether coronavirus was manipulated or leaked from lab

https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/09/10/revealed- scientists-dismissed-wuhan-lab-theory-linked-chinese/

Reference:

Calisher, C., Carroll, D., Colwell, R., Corley, R. B., Daszak, P., Drosten, C., ... & Turner, M. (2020). Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19. The Lancet, 395(10226), e42-e43.

I hope you can accept my interview and give a serious answer in the public media.

Have a nice day!

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Date: Sat, 1 May 2021 9:32:17 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 1 May 2021 9:28:16 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Wash Post editorial
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6> Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6> Roberts, Rich <b6>

Yes saw that. It's clearly just anti-China rhetoric because no one in their right mind would expect China to open up the lab to real inspection considering a year of conspiratorial accusations. Just as no one in CDC would openly invite a Chinese delegation to inspect their BSL-4 facility.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: <b6>
Website: <b6>g
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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-----Original Message-----
From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Sent: Saturday, May 1, 2021 8:49 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>>; Peter Daszak <b6>>; Roberts, Rich <b6>>
Subject: RE: Wash Post editorial

I have cancelled my subscription to WaPo with the reason being their irrational conspiratorial writing about the origins of the outbreak. Urge your friends to do likewise. I will send a note to that effect to Tony. That might get their attention if he were to follow through.

Jerry

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Saturday, May 1, 2021 7:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Subject: Wash Post editorial

Colleagues, yet again today, for the umpteenth time, the Post has its lead editorial, unsigned, muddying the waters about the origins of SARS-CoV-2. Not much different from the previous ones, they just won't let this man-made virus stuff go.... d

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Date: Fri, 26 Mar 2021 11:42:02 AM -0400

Sent: Fri, 26 Mar 2021 11:42:00 AM -0400

Subject: RE: !!!!!!!!!!! FW: CNN: Ex-CDC head claims without evidence Covid-19 began in a China lab

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>

To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]>;

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

ACAV, of which you are a member (!!!!) has a subcommittee on lab safety for dangerous viruses called SALS, or Subcommittee on Arbo and Zoonotic Virus Lab Safety, which has been monitoring these accidents for decades. In fact they are RARE, and Bob should know because the main people who have been leading SALS have been CDC people. The very reason we have BSL-3 and -4 is to not only prevent such accidents but preventing viral escape if they do occur. Anyone who has ever worked in such a lab will attest to the extraordinary rigor entailed.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] ssistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- [b6] [b6] [b6]
- [b6]

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 11:35 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]

Subject: RE: !!!!!!!!!!! FW: CNN: Ex-CDC head claims without evidence Covid-19 began in a China lab

Does little to solidify his public health legacy!

He says "It's not unusual for respiratory pathogens that are being worked on in a laboratory to infect the laboratory worker. ... That's not implying any intentionality. It's my opinion, right? But I am a virologist. I have spent my life in virology,"

Problem is – they didn't have this bloody respiratory pathgoen in the lab prior to them being sent a sample on Dec 29th/30th.. Ridiculous comment. None of the bat covs they had in culture (3 beta covs) were anything related to SARS2. Pure 'bollocks' as we would say back home…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 11:22 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6 b6
Subject: !!!!!!!!!!! FW: CNN: Ex-CDC head claims without evidence Covid-19 began in a China lab

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520

Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 9:25 AM
Subject: CNN: Ex-CDC head claims without evidence Covid-19 began in a China lab

Ex-CDC head claims without evidence Covid-19 began in a China lab

By Julia Hollingsworth, Meg Wagner and Melissa Macaya, CNN
Updated 9:08 AM ET, Fri March 26, 2021

What you need to know

- **JUST IN:** Former CDC head Dr. Robert Redfield says he believes the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic is a lab in China — a controversial theory without evidence.
- The current CDC director is concerned about a new surge in Covid-19 cases, as the US surpassed 30 million infections since the start of the pandemic.
- AstraZeneca updated its data on how well its Covid-19 vaccine works, saying the vaccine showed 76% efficacy against symptomatic disease.

33 min ago

WHO's comments on Covid-19's origins contradicts Redfield's claims it began in a China lab

From CNN's Jamie Gumbrecht

In a clip released this morning on CNN, Dr. Robert Redfield, the former director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta he believes the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic is a lab in China — a controversial theory without evidence.

A World Health Organization team exploring origins of the coronavirus in Wuhan, China, is expected to release a report of its findings soon, but has already said a lab-related incident is "extremely unlikely."

The most likely causes of transmission of the Covid-19 virus to humans, the WHO team said, are introduction through an intermediary host species or transmission through the trade of frozen products. The team has also investigated direct transmission from an animal reservoir to human.

In early February, World Health Organization expert Peter Ben Embarek said that the team investigating the origins of the

coronavirus in Wuhan have identified two scenarios that most likely caused the transmission of Covid-19 to the human population.
"Our initial findings suggest that the introduction through an intermediary host species is the most likely pathway and one way that will require more studies and more specific targeted research," Embarek said during a news conference.
He added that the possibility of transmission through the trade of frozen products was also likely.
Embarek also noted two other hypotheses the team had probed while investigating the origin of the virus.
One hypothesis was a "direct zoonotic spillover," meaning, direct transmission from an animal reservoir to a human.
"The hypothesis of a direct spillover from an original animal source into the human population is also a possible pathway and is also generating recommendation for future studies," he said.
The fourth hypothesis was the possibility of a laboratory-related incident, but that this was the least likely of the four to be the cause of the virus' introduction to humans.
"Findings suggest that the laboratory hypothesis is extremely unlikely to explain the introduction of the virus to the human population," Embarek said.
Meanwhile, Chinese officials and state media have promoted an unsubstantiated, so-called "multiple-origin" theory, suggesting the pandemic may have started in various locations around the world, even a US military lab.
35 min ago

Dr. Sanjay Gupta: "We still don't know" how the Covid-19 pandemic started

Dr. Sanjay Gupta on March 26. CNN
Moments ago, CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta reported that the former head of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Robert Redfield, told him that he believes the coronavirus pandemic came from a lab in China.
It is a controversial, politically charged theory — one the World Health Organization calls "extremely unlikely." There has been no clear evidence to support this "lab leak" theory.
"We still don't know — a year later — exactly how this pandemic started," Gupta said.
Gupta said there's a "back and forth" happening right now when it comes to the pandemic's origins, with different officials around the world claiming different theories.
"Chinese officials have started increasingly pointing to a multiple-origin theory, saying that this pandemic may have started in multiple places, even around the world, including US military labs. That's unsubstantiated," Gupta said.
34 min ago

Exclusive: Former CDC director makes controversial claim that Covid-19 began in a China lab

From CNN's Jamie Gumbrecht
Dr. Robert Redfield, then director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, attends a hearing in Washington, DC, in September 2020. Andrew Harnik/Pool/Getty Images
Dr. Robert Redfield, the former director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta he believes the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic is a lab in China — a controversial theory without evidence.
"If I was to guess, this virus started transmitting somewhere in September, October in Wuhan," Redfield told Gupta in a clip that aired Friday on CNN New Day. "That's my own feelings. And only opinion. I'm allowed to have opinions now."
Redfield, a virologist who led the CDC under former President Donald Trump, said he thinks the virus originated inside a lab in China and "escaped," not necessarily intentionally.
There is no clear evidence to support the "lab leak" theory, although it has played an ongoing role in conspiracies and speculation, including statements from Trump. The World Health Organization has called it "extremely unlikely."
"Now, I am of the point of view that I still think the most likely aetiology of this pathogen in Wuhan was from a laboratory, escaped. The other people don't believe that. That's fine. Science will eventually figure it out. It's not unusual for respiratory pathogens that are being worked on in a laboratory to infect the laboratory worker," Redfield told Gupta.
Redfield's comments appear in the documentary "COVID WAR: The Pandemic Doctors Speak Out," which airs Sunday at 9 p.m. ET on CNN.
Watch Dr. Sanjay Gupta's interview here:
1 hr 34 min ago

6 US states still have not shared when they plan to vaccinate everyone 16 and older

From CNN's Ashley Ahn, Jacqueline Howard, and Virginia Langmaid
Most US states have announced plans to open up coronavirus vaccination to everyone eligible under US Food and Drug Administration emergency use authorization.
Just six states still have not told CNN when they plan to start vaccinating everyone 16 and older: Alabama, Arkansas, New

Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Wyoming.
Another six states — Alaska, Mississippi, West Virginia, Utah, Georgia and Arizona — have already expanded coronavirus vaccine eligibility to anyone 16 and older, and a CNN analysis finds that at least 28 more plan to open up to people 16 and older by the end of April.
Here's a timeline of when states have said they will open vaccination eligibility to the general public:

- March 29: Oklahoma, Texas, Ohio, North Dakota, Louisiana
- March 30: Minnesota
- March 31: Indiana
- April 1: Montana, Connecticut
- April 2: New Hampshire
- April 5: Michigan, Tennessee, Idaho, Iowa, Florida, Nevada
- April 7: North Carolina
- April 9: Missouri
- April 12: Illinois, Kentucky
- April 15: California
- April 19: Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island
- April 27: Maryland
- April, no set date: New Mexico, Virginia, Colorado
- May 1: Wisconsin, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington
- May 3: South Carolina
- May or later: Nebraska, Kansas, Hawaii, Delaware

RELATED
As some states open Covid-19 vaccines to all, many are still weeks away
1 hr 53 min ago

Go There: CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta will answer your questions about the coronavirus pandemic

As the US surpasses 30 million coronavirus cases since the start of the pandemic, the CDC director is concerned about a new surge in Covid-19 cases.
CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta has the latest on Covid-19 news. What questions do you have for him?
1 hr 51 min ago

EU leaders squabble over vaccine supplies, as tension grows over AstraZeneca shortfalls

From CNN's Frederik Pleitgen, Livvy Doherty and Rob Picheta

European Council President Charles Michel, top of screen, speaks with European Union leaders during a virtual summit in Brussels, Belgium, on March 25. Yves Herman/Pool/AP
European Union leaders met Thursday at a virtual summit designed to push AstraZeneca to speed up its deliveries of tens of millions of Covid-19 vaccines bound for the bloc, hoping to present a united front as it continues to wrangle with the drug giant over the shortfall.
But the virtual summit exposed tense divisions within the EU itself; several countries expressed concerns that doses are being distributed unfairly around the region, and part of the meeting was hijacked by Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, who demanded a greater share of shots for his country.
"We have worked hard to ensure that the gap within the #EU in terms of vaccination coverage for the population does not widen any further," Kurz tweeted after the meeting, adding that he expects "a fairer delivery of vaccines in the EU" in the coming months.
What the EU agreed: The EU has been engaged in a tense back-and-forth with AstraZeneca over vaccine supplies to the bloc after the firm said it would not be able to meet its full delivery targets.
That shortfall has led to internal squabbles over which countries are prioritised when sought-after vaccine deliveries arrive. EU leaders agreed Thursday to tighten rules to allow for an export ban on vaccines but has so far stopped short on actually imposing a ban.
European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the bloc will create "transparency" by introducing a principle of proportionality and reciprocity on vaccine supply chains.
In a swipe targeted at Britain, she added that she had "no knowledge so far of UK exports," essentially accusing it of implementing a de facto export ban. Von der Leyen said she was "waiting for that transparency."
The UK's vaccine rollout has far outpaced Europe's, but the country, which recently left the EU, relies on exports from the bloc

for some of its doses.
"The bottom line is: we invite others to match our openness," von der Leyen said.
The background: Rising coronavirus infection rates across much of Europe have created an increasingly dire backdrop to the quarrelling. France imposed tougher restrictions on social gatherings on Thursday as it battles a third wave of Covid-19, while sharp rises in case loads have been reported this week in Germany, Poland and the Netherlands.
Von der Leyen said she still expects to achieve the goal of vaccinating 70% of the EU's adult population by this summer.
"But of course we all know we could have been much faster if all pharmaceutical companies had fulfilled their contracts," she added.
2 hr 11 min ago

France clears vets and dentists to give vaccines to "speed up campaign"

From CNN's Pierre Bairin in Paris
A pharmacist prepares a dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine in Nantes, France, on March 25. Loic Venance/AFP/Getty Images
France will allow veterinarians and dentists to give Covid-19 vaccines in order to "speed up the campaign," the French national health authority (HAS) said in a press release Friday.
"The arrival of additional doses of vaccines will make it possible to carry out vaccinations on a larger scale as of April and require the mobilization of more professionals in order to rapidly vaccinate all those concerned," the agency said.
These new categories of health workers vaccinating comes in addition to doctors, nurses, pharmacists and medical students, including those who have retired. Most will be receiving a training specific to the Covid vaccines.
France is in the midst of a third wave of coronavirus infections, and its stalling vaccination campaign has done little to stem the tide.
On Thursday, Prime Minister Jean Castex described the situation in Paris as "extremely worrying," and the country has banned outdoor gatherings of more than six people in an effort to reduce transmission.
4 hr 5 min ago

India sees third day of record-high Covid cases since last year

From CNN's Esha Mitra in New Delhi
A health worker preserves a swab sample for a Covid-19 test at Government Kanwatiya hospital, on March 22, in Jaipur, India. Himanshu Vyas/Hindustan Times/Getty Images
India has reported its highest jump in new Covid-19 cases since last year for a third consecutive day.
On Friday, the country reported 59,118 new Covid-19 cases, its highest rise since October 18, according to a CNN tally of figures from the Indian Ministry of Health.
The country has been reporting more than 35,000 new cases daily for over a week in a recent surge in infections after they fell in January and February this year.
Randeep Guleria, director at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, told CNN on Wednesday "it is the beginning of a second wave."
India has reported more than 11.8 million total cases of coronavirus including over 160,000 virus-related deaths, according to the Ministry of Health. The country has distributed more than 55 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines.
4 hr ago

At least 10 dead in fire at Mumbai Covid-19 hospital

From CNN's Esha Mitra in New Delhi
Smoke rises from a fire that broke out at Dreams Mall Sunrise Hospital in Mumbai, India on March 26. Divyakant Solanki/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock
At least 10 people were killed in a fire Friday at a Covid-19 hospital in a Mumbai mall, senior police official Prashant Kadam said.
"At around 12:30 a.m. at night, a fire broke out on the first floor at Dream Mall, next to it there was Sunrise Covid care center where about 76 Covid patients were admitted," Kadam told reporters early Friday.
Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar said Friday patients had been evacuated to another facility and the cause of the fire was being investigated.
Sunrise Hospital has described itself as the first hospital in Asia to be located in a mall.
New cases: Mumbai reported 5,504 new Covid-19 cases on Thursday, bringing the total to 380,115 in the city. According to the Indian Ministry of Health, Maharashtra state, of which Mumbai is the capital, contributed more than 50% of the new cases reported in the country on Thursday.
Mumbai is the district with the third-highest active cases across the country, the Ministry of Health said Wednesday.

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Date: Mon, 8 Mar 2021 3:21:30 PM -0500
Sent: Mon, 8 Mar 2021 3:21:28 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Yet another article
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]>; Kessler Robert [b6]>;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

So what's the rebuttal? The Washington Post won't be interested in denigrating their own editorial board opinion pieces. Its interesting that the guy in charge of the editorial board, Fred Hiatt, is the son of a former Dean of Harvard School of Public Health, Howard Hiatt (now 95 years old). This made me think about connecting with former IOM President Harvey Feinberg (who succeeded Howard Hiatt at HSPH) and figuring out some way to respond publicly to the WaPo stuff. Harvey chose not to support the letter I organized to the NASEM presidents, or to sign on to the Op-Ed in The Hill, but that probably doesn't capture his views or concerns, which I believe are rather to the left.

I think there needs to be some response which won't be buried by the attention now devoted to the stimulus package, voting rights, Andrew Cuomo, filibuster and getting vaccine out to people and in their arms, to the exclusion of most everything else. I'm wondering if there is some way to stimulate the editorial team at Science, Jon Cohen, Meredith Wadman, also Kai Kupferschmidt to write something about the follow up from NIH to Peter, the threats, the security, the WHO team and the fact he is the only American to be selected by WHO and the only one who has personal connections to Wuhan to be able to have real conversations about what happened. I'm willing to reach out to prod them along. 60 minutes would be another given the program they did last year, and the interest in the WHO report which will greatly increase when its published and the yahoos begin to denigrate its value.

David, what do you think might be a next step (note I sent this to your gmail account so if you respond to all it will stay just among us friends and colleagues). I'm willing to get on it.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 11:37 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Kessler Robert [b6]
Subject: RE: Yet another article

Same one I sent you a bit ago…… I think the Post is being duped by its own columnists

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director

Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 10:04 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Kessler Robert < [b6] g >
Subject: Yet another article

Josh rogin, who drama-queened up the state dept cables about their Wuhan visit now had a book and he's touting it in an excerpt in politico todsy.

It's one hit piece a day at this point!

https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/03/08/josh- rogin-chaos-under-heaven-wuhan-lab-book-excerpt-474322

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

On Feb 25, 2021, at 6:53 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Just going through your emails over last few days. It turns out that this is the source of the annoying letter from the Republicans – complete misinterpretation of the facts – WIV is eligible, but no contracts are current or pending. The R wing press and Trumpian republicans then used this to try to attack NIH-WIV-EHA again, no doubt to have another dig at Tony Fauci, and play to their base.

I also saw Pompeo had an Opinion in the WSJ attacking the Wuhan lab again… Tedious…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 12:24 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T <[b6]
Subject: FW: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)

b6

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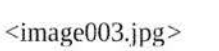
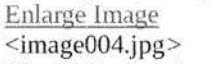


From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 8:34 AM
Subject: NY Post: Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

Wuhan lab at heart of COVID outbreak may get three more years of US funding

By Post Editorial Board
February 21, 2021 | 5:37pm | Updated
Enlarge Image

The Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China. Photo by HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP via Getty Images
The Wuhan Institute of Virology remains the most likely source of the coronavirus pandemic, yet it is set to receive US taxpayer dollars for the next three years. Worse, the cash will fund more animal research.
The National Institutes of Health told the Daily Caller that the Wuhan lab has an active Foreign Assurance file that authorizes it for US funding until 2024. When the virus first broke out, the Wuhan Institute had reportedly been testing coronaviruses in bats with $600,000 of US funding routed via the nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.
The NIH terminated that EcoHealth grant, with the promise to restore it if an independent investigation cleared the Wuhan Institute of involvement in the outbreak. Now a World Health Organization delegation tasked with investigating the lab has preliminarily concluded that a leak was "extremely unlikely," which may let the contract resume. Never mind that the head of the WHO and the US State Department remain unwilling to rule out that possibility.
Here's where it gets really swampy: Not only did the WHO delegation fail to do its own investigation, merely accepting reports from China's government, the WHO team's only American member happens to be the EcoHealth Alliance's president, Peter Daszak — who demands that Washington unequivocally accept the delegation's findings. (This also tells you how pathetic the whole WHO investigation was.)
Anthony Bellotti, who heads nonpartisan watchdog group White Coat Waste Project, called for EcoHealth to be stripped of funding and asked Congress to finally conduct a real investigation into how the pandemic really started.
If this grant goes ahead, you'll know the Biden administration is committed to restoring Washington business-as-usual in all its disgusting ingloriousness.
Filed under Coronavirus , editorial , taxpayers , world health organization , 2/21/21

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MORENS_SUBPOENA_012764
MORENS_NIH_024164
REL0000476754

Date: Sat, 20 Mar 2021 1:12:42 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 20 Mar 2021 1:10:31 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Good idea Rich,

My meeting is on Friday 26th. I'll send you the slide deck the night before – it will be modified from the talk I gave to you and can then be shared (I'll have to delete a couple of slides first).

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 12:36 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens < [b6] >
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

Peter:

After you make your presentation would there be some material that I can share with the NLs? I want to bring them up-to-date on what has been happening.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA

Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g>
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 12:31 AM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T <[b6]>; David Morens [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6 >
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

EXTERNAL SENDER

I really appreciate this Rich and although it's disheartening to see the deflection, I think it's important that the NIH Director doesn't only receive the Republican attacks and realizes there are others out there that still care about political interference with the process of freely engaging in funded scientific research.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 11:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6 g>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens <
b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce

Peter:

Thanks for sharing this. It is very discouraging to see these kinds of attacks continuing and very disturbing that Dave Relman is involved.

I am attaching an email I received on Wednesday from Francis in response to a letter I had sent to him (at the bottom of the thread). While at least he responded to this one it was merely a deflection.

As for another investigation, hopefully you will be able to convince them that it would be a huge waste of time and money.

Unless the Chinese undergo a complete about turn, they are not going to be cooperative in any additional way over and above their response to the WHO investigation.

If you see any additional way in which I might help please do let me know.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
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Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 9:08 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; David Morens b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Letter to Francis Collins from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

This letter from Republican leaders of Committee on Energy & Commerce was filed yesterday. I don't know what normally happens with this, but I'm assuming NIH will respond and I won't have to do anything. Note that Dr. Relman is cited and center, and I believe he's agitating to head up an inquiry from the NASEM. I've thought this for a long time after he approached me a couple of times a year ago to inquire about my work in China.

This letter is part of a barrage of daily attacks at this point. Today, the US Right to Know filed a FoIA at Erasmus Univ Netherlands where Marion Koopmans (also on the WHO mission) works, for emails to me and the WHO people, adding to multiple broadsheet articles over the past week from WSJ and less sophisticated right wing papers. I don't know if they can FoIA a foreign Univ, but I've now got to spend hours of my time with their lawyers and ours to find out.

On the good side, I was asked to brief staffers at the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, which I'm assuming will be a positive experience, and I'm reaching out to the State Dept and NSC to offer briefings on WHO findings ahead of the report. Additionally, 60 minutes is doing a piece on the report and interviewed me, but I suspect they're going to dwell on the lab release hypothesis.

Meanwhile, I'm drafting a response to the 10 conditions from Collins & Lauer and will have a draft within a few days for your comments if that's ok. Given Biden's theatrical show at the China summit today, I don't hold up much hope that this sort of aggression is going to dissipate quickly…

Cheers,

Peter

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Date: Mon, 17 May 2021 2:26:58 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 17 May 2021 2:26:43 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Didn't see that one. Vincent's right that EcoHealth was not part of any gain-of-function work. He's wrong that the work between Ralph and Zhengli was actually 'gain of function'. The chimeric virus (bat spike, SARS-CoV backbone) actually lost some replication capacity – more like 'loss of function'.
The interview video clip is one I recorded in Singapore in December 2019 at a Nipah meeting. I didn't use the phrase gain of function, and wasn't referring to work we did, as Vincent says. Quite ridiculous, but easy to fool the public with this…
Cheers,
Peter

Peter Daszak
President
EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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USA

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak
EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:54 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6] [b6] [b6]
[b6]

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:11 PM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OCGR Leg <NIAIDOCGRLeg@mail.nih.gov>; NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Just the News: Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research
https://bit.ly/2S57PcE

Virologist: NIAID grantee funded Wuhan coronavirus studies used in gain-of-function research

In a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul, longtime NIAID Director Anthony Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied his institute has funded gain-of-function research.
By Daniel Payne

Updated: May 15, 2021 - 11:44am
A prominent Columbia University virologist claims that in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic a U.S. nonprofit funded coronavirus experiments in Wuhan, China the results of which were used in "gain-of-function" virology research at the University of North Carolina.
Dr. Vincent Racaniello made the claim amid ongoing controversy over a recently resurfaced interview between himself and Peter Daszak, the president of the U.S. infectious disease nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance.
Both EcoHealth Alliance and the scientist leading the research at UNC have been heavily funded over the years by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which has been directed since 1984 by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the public face of the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic under Presidents Trump and Biden.
Fauci categorically and repeatedly denied that NIAID has funded gain-of-function research in a tense exchange Tuesday with Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) at a Senate hearing.
Racianello's half-hour interview with Daszak took place in early December 2019 at the Nipah Virus International Conference in Singapore. Significant attention has been given to a segment in which Daszak appears to allude to having participated in "gain-of-function" experiments, a type of procedure in which scientists increase a virus's pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in order to study its potential for human infection.
"You can manipulate [coronaviruses] in the lab pretty easily," Daszak says in the interview. "Spike protein drives a lot of what happens with the coronavirus, zoonotic risk. So you can get the sequence, you can build the protein — and we work with Ralph Baric at UNC to do this — insert into the backbone of another virus, and do, do some work in the lab."
Those remarks, when they resurfaced this week, caused considerable controversy due to Daszak's role in funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars through his EcoHealth Alliance to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to bankroll coronavirus experiments there. The Wuhan lab sits just a few miles from where the first detected outbreak of COVID-19 occurred.
Speculation has swirled over the last year as to what role, if any, the Wuhan lab may have played in the origin of the pandemic, including whether it was engaging in any gain-of-function experiments that may have posed a pandemic risk.

Experiments 'confer a new property to the original virus'

Racaniello said that Daszak in the December 2019 interview was indeed describing gain-of-function experiments.
"Here is the idea," he said in an email exchange this week. "You go into caves in China and sample bats for CoVs. You collect bat guano and sequence it to find the viruses. You don't actually have the viruses, just their genome sequences. You want to know if these viruses have the ability to infect human cells."
"Since you don't have the viruses," he continued, "you just take the spike sequence from all these viruses and put it into a coronavirus that you work with in the lab. Then you see if that recombinant coronavirus can infect human cells. It's all done under

containment to prevent any release. If the spikes of the bat CoV can allow the CoV to infect human cells, then they have the potential to infect humans and we should be making antivirals against them to prevent a pandemic."
Those kinds of experiments, Racaniello said, "are considered 'gain of function' because they would confer a new property to the original virus."
That research, Racaniello said, "was done in the laboratory of Dr. Ralph Baric in [the University of] North Carolina and was not funded by EcoHealth Alliance." When pressed, Racaniello revealed that EcoHealth did have an indirect role in the funding of Baric's work.
"EcoHealth Alliance provided funds to Zengli Shi at the Wuhan Institute of Virology to conduct bat surveillance for SARS-like CoVs," he said. "Baric then received the spike sequences from Wuhan to do his experiments independently."
"Daszak and Baric did not work together on this project," he added.
Anna Marie Skalka, a professor emerita at the Fox Chase Cancer Center and one of the authors of the bestselling textbook "Principles of Virology," did not expressly deny that Baric's research constituted gain-of-function, though she claimed that the overall issue was more complex than that.
"I prefer to describe the research in broader terms, as gain-of-function seems too narrow and has acquired negative connotations," she said. "The aim of such research is to learn as much as possible about the gene/protein in question so that one can begin to develop possible therapeutic or vaccine-related approaches."
Queries to Daszak and Baric on Racaniello's claims went unanswered.
The assertions from Racaniello — a four-decade veteran of academic virology who along with Skalka is also an author of "Principles of Virology" — constitute the sharpest allegations yet that both EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were involved, even if adjacently, with gain-of-function research prior to the pandemic.
Baric's research, meanwhile, has been the recipient of millions of dollars in funding from the NIAID over the years, much of it focused on coronaviruses, including experiments in the "replication and pathogenesis" of those viruses.
Racaniello himself forcefully defended such research. "There is a very clear reason to do these experiments and if we had done them even more we could have prevented the current pandemic," he said.
EcoHealth, meanwhile, has been the focus of controversy for the past year due not merely to its alleged association with coronavirus experiments but also to the fact that its work was for years heavily funded by the federal government, specifically the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.
EcoHealth routed hundreds of thousands of NIAID dollars to the Wuhan lab in the years leading up to the pandemic to conduct coronavirus research there. Experts and commentators alike have called for a major investigation into the lab to determine if SARS-Cov-2 may have accidentally leaked from the facility and launched the pandemic.
The federal funding for the Wuhan project was pulled last year near the outset of the pandemic. Daszak himself told NPR last year that the Wuhan experiments were "funded entirely through the NIH grant," as the news service put it.
The lab was the subject of part of the World Health Organization's investigation into the origins of COVID-19. That probe concluded earlier this year and determined that a lab-leak theory was unlikely, though world officials have called for additional investigations into the facility.
The international team of investigators reportedly only spent a single day at the Wuhan lab. Among the team's members — and the only U.S. representative on it — was Peter Daszak.

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Date: Thu, 9 Sep 2021 4:58:01 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 9 Sep 2021 4:57:49 PM -0400
Subject: RE: New line of attack today as expected, based on higher viral load in mouse lungs etc..
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
CC: Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Attachments: image002.jpg; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image001.jpg

..and let's not forget that the virus with 10,000x viral load in mice, was actually a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence!

In fact, the opposite – the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find – it reduces risk!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 4:49 PM
To: 'David Morens [b6] [b6] 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Robert Kessler [b6] 'Aleksei Chmura' [b6]
Cc: Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Subject: New line of attack today as expected, based on higher viral load in mouse lungs etc..

Note – cc'ing Jeff Sturchio, who's working with us at EHA.

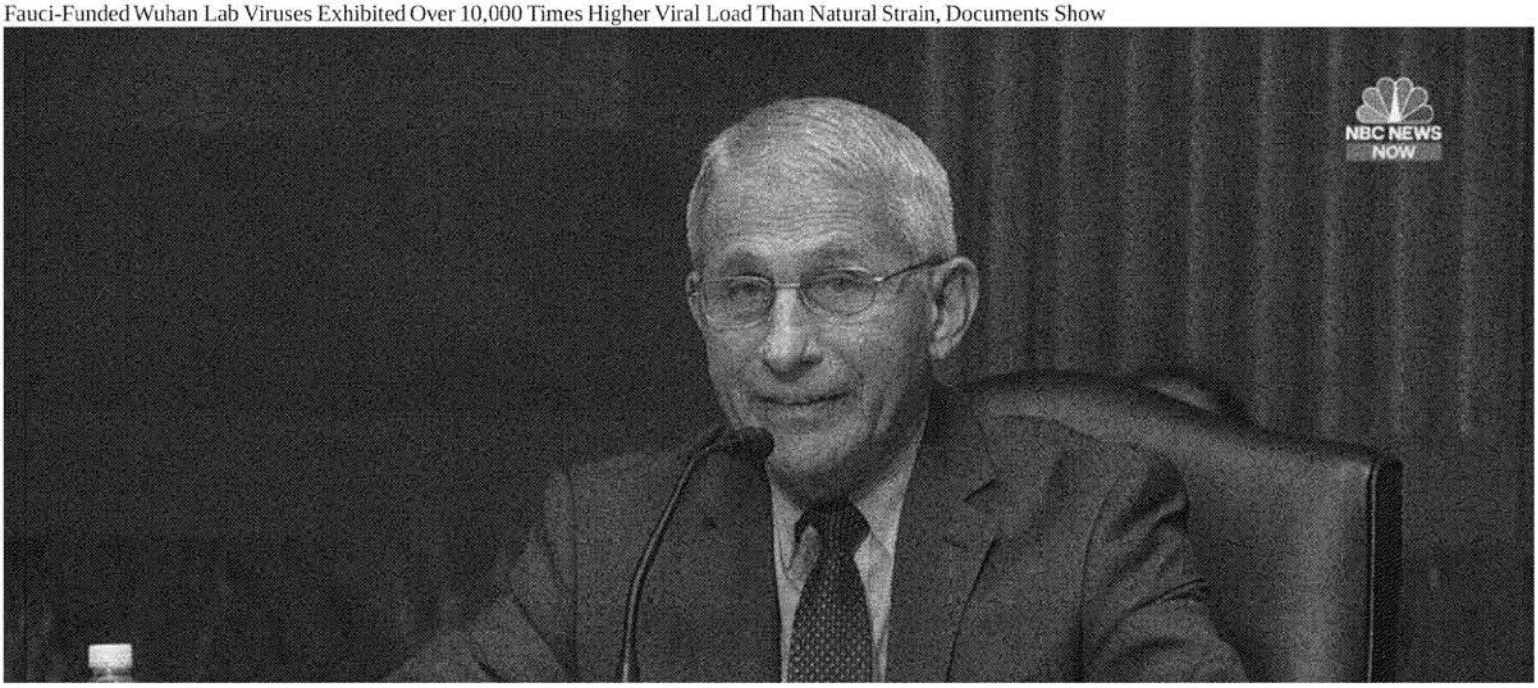
Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain. Good response from NIH spokesperson: An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

The other important thing for NIH spokespeople to say is that P3CO rules are for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans.

https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth-alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP

Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show



DAILY CALLER NEWS FOUNDATION

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ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.**

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.

Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.

EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.

"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."

"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.

EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

B.2 (Year 4 NIAID CoV Report_Final for eRA Commons.pdf)

1R01AI110964 Year 4 Report PI: Daszak, Peter

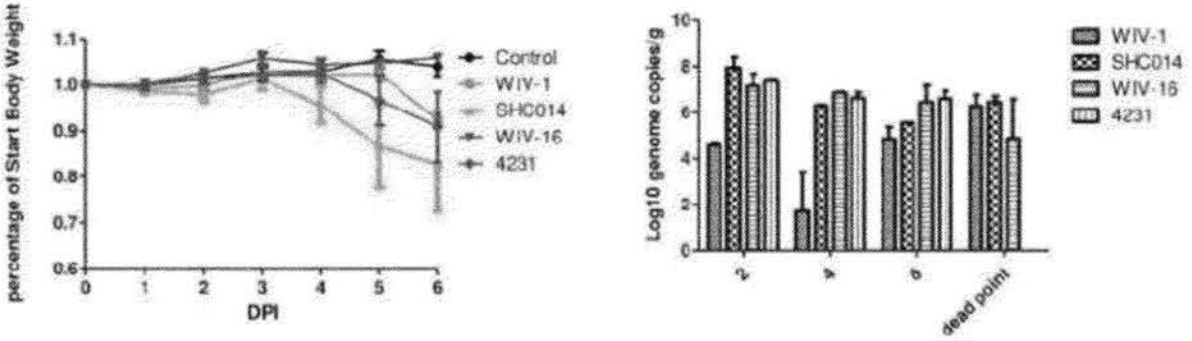

***Figure 35.** In vivo infection of SARSr-CoVs in hACE2-expressing mice. (a, left) Body weight change after infection; (b, right) Viral load in lung tissues*

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)

"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."

The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.

"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.

EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.

EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.

Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function

research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.
The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review.
Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

SECTION IV – AI Special Terms and Conditions – 5R01AI110964-05

Clinical Trial Indicator: No
This award does not support any NIH-defined Clinical Trials. See the NIH Grants Policy Statement Section 1.2 for NIH definition of Clinical Trial.

Page-5

NIH Notice of Award | Version: 1 - 01 Jun 2018 12:52:50 | Generated on: 6/19/2018 12:03:35 AM

If any experiments proposed in this award result in a virus with enhanced growth by more than 1 log compared to wild type strains, you must notify your NIAID Program Officer and Grants Management Specialist immediately. Further research involving the resulting virus(es) may require review by the Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with the Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens (https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf).

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)
An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."
"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."
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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:07 PM
To: 'David Morens b6 '; Keusch, Gerald T b6 Robert Kessler b6 'Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: More incoming expected tonight from the Intercept
Importance: High

David – I hope you saw my email response to Kristian Andersen (below). We're expecting a story tonight from the Intercept that accuses EHA of breaking the rules with our work in Wuhan re. GoF, and in general.

Their main angle is the GoF issue. They're maintaining that our expts on bat-CoVs were GoF, despite us stating that these are not viruses that have ever been shown to infect people, something required in the P3CO definitions. They're also following Ebright's focus on one of expts in WIV that shows a chimera with a bat SARSr-CoV spike insert leading to higher viral load in mouse lungs than the parental strain (WIV1 – it's fig. 35 in the year 4 report, aim 3, p. 29 – attached). Again that doesn't mean GoF because these are both bat viruses. Furthermore, the NoA states that we should report 1 log or higher growth to NIH and stop the expt. Our view is that this is exactly what we did – we reported to NIH and that's the report that the Intercept has now FoIA'd. It's all somewhat moot in any case because at least two of the other viruses who's spikes were inserted, have also been cultured and therefore none of the chimeras are of higher risk than those parental strains.

They might also try to accuse us of breaking the agreement on releasing genetic data publicly, which we suggested we'd do 6 months after receiving 'final sequences' or upon publishing. Jesse Bloom emailed me to ask for these data and is clearly trying to catch us out. However, we published all SARSr-CoV genetic sequence data on Genbank prior to our publication in Nature Comms last year. There are many reasons why other results may not be able to be released as rapidly as we would like, given the pandemic and rapid breakdown in communication with colleagues in Wuhan, but of course, that won't stop these folks trying to cause problems and get a story out.

Hope you're able to brief folks who need to know that 1) we're aware of these accusations; 2) we won't be speaking in detail to the press about them; 3) we will be giving very short statements if we have to that clearly push back in the way I've outlined above, via our EHA spokesperson – Robert Kessler. We believe the story tonight might be a bit more aggressive than yesterday, but for anyone who understands this work, it does not prove GoF.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 3:48 PM
To: 'Kristian G. Andersen' b6
Cc: 'David Morens' b6 'Garry, Robert F' b6 'Edward Holmes' <
b6 >; 'Jason Gale' <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; 'Rasmussen, Angie' b6
Robert Kessler b6 'Stephen Goldstein' b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 Garry, Robert F b6 Edward Holmes <
edward.holmes@sy b6 Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie b6 b6

Robert Kessler [b6] Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

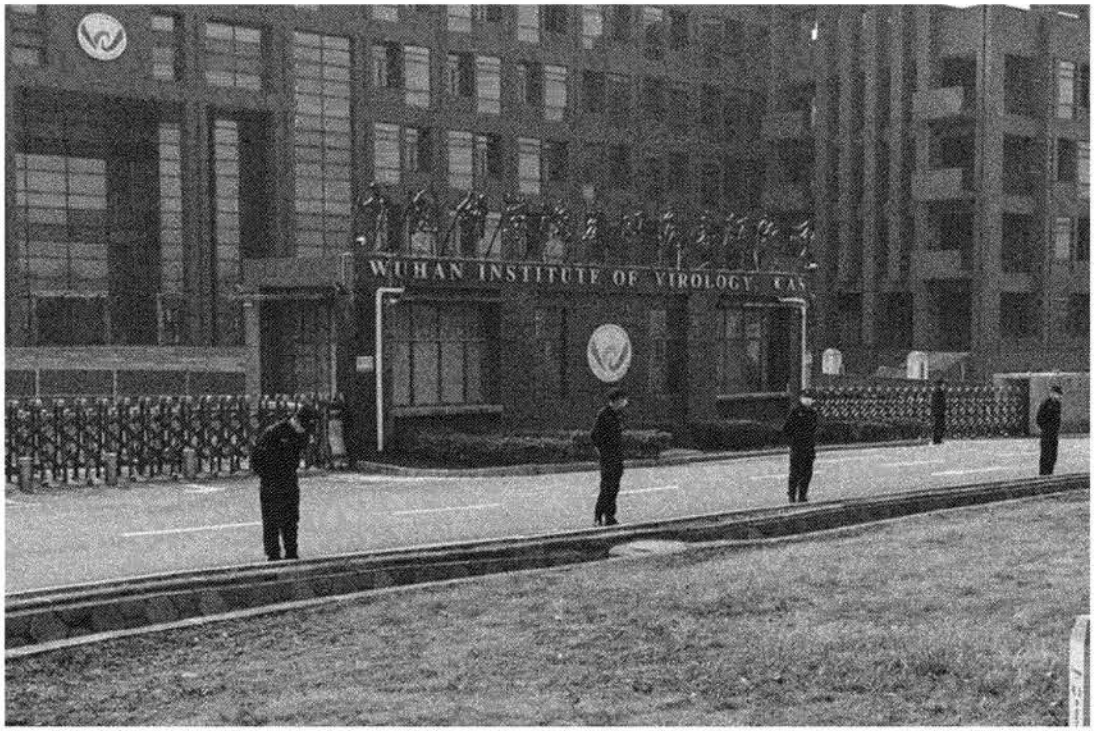
As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h
> NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With
> @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release



New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
theintercept.com



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

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15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989-understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…
"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988-risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.

7h
There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak <[b6]
Cc: Garry, Robert F [b6]; Kristian G. Andersen <[b6]; Edward Holmes <[b6]; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6] Robert Kessler <[b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak <[b6] wrote:

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F <[b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]
[b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen <[b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]
[b6]
[b6] Garry, Robert F [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

> External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes [b6] > wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <
> > j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI

https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Mon, 10 May 2021 2:09:17 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 10 May 2021 2:09:15 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Letter to science from David Relman criticizing WHO report
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Peter:

It is balanced and reasonably fair, but at this point the lab-leak theorists will grab at anything, which is probably why it is best to say nothing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 2:03 PM
To: David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Letter to science from David Relman criticizing WHO report

EXTERNAL SENDER

Just sharing this letter that will come out in Science on Thursday. It's reasonable and balanced, but it will be used by the press to hype up the lab-leak again, and claim that scientists are breaking rank with the narrative pushed by me (the lancet paper) and others (the Nature paper on origins).

I spoke with Ralph about it – he signed on because it was reasonable and didn't attack gain of function. I think it will be damaging, but am certainly not talking to journalists about it. This is for WHO to deal with, in my opinion.

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: James Gorman <jmg@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 10:45 AM
To: Peter Daszak <[redacted]>; Robert Kessler [redacted]>
Subject: upcoming letter in Science

Hi Peter,

A group of lab scientists, many of whom haven't been heard from before, have joined in criticism of WHO report and the idea that a lab leak is highly unlikely.

This seems to be a change in who is taking up the idea that a new investigation is needed. I don't want to try to adjudicate all the arguments in covering this but I've attached the advance media copy of the letter which is embargoed until Thursday at 2 p.m. and wonder if you could comment on a couple of things.

What do you think about a new investigation as they describe it in the letter?

And has your view of the likelihood of an accidental lab leak changed at all?

They treat both theories, accidental lab leak and natural origin, as equivalent. (accidental lab leak in their view does not require that SARS-CoV-2 is a result of laboratory experimentation. It includes a natural origin of the virus or a near ancestor somehow infecting one of the lab staff.)

--

James Gorman
jmg@nytimes.com
@jimgorman

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Date: Fri, 7 May 2021 11:08:35 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 7 May 2021 11:08:30 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak <[b6]
Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]
Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

David:

Probably not too helpful to describe every growth of a virus in a lab is a GOF experiment.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:44 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler
[b6]; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter, I just tsalked to Ms. Eban for an hour, and connected her with Jim LeDuc and Jeff T. I also sent her a paper I and others wrote with David Baltimore 10 years ago about the BENEFITS of GOF research vis a vis the 1918 flu virus. To wit, the growing up of the virus and studying it in primate challenges, and in vitro, yielding hugely important info on flu pathogenesis.

Rich, this relates to my own feeling that GOF is a double-edged sword, so to speak, that while we must work to prevent dangerous use of virologic techniques, totally agree on that point, we must also consider that every infection of a cell, in tissue culture, organ culture, experimental animals, humans, whatever, is in essence a GOF experiment (and also a loss of fuinction experiment, since host adaptation usually results in ftness penalties), without which we would have no viral vaccines except vaccinia, and arguably not even that.

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The Wade article also cites some ideas by a guy named David Robertson. Do you know him? I do not. But he posits that the SARS-CoV-2 precursor may have become a "generalist" by circulating between bats and mammals, maybe even humans. No eviodence for this, but the idea makes alot of sense to me. Plausible in my mind, what do u think?

David

On 5/7/2021 6:20 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

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Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:01 AM
To: David Morens b6; Peter Daszak <daszak b6 >
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6; Aleksei Chmura b6; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

The letter to Blinken includes the following statement:

"…the release of these documents from the Department could help to refute contradictory statements that have been made regarding the possibility of a laboratory leak from the WIV." This could be taken in a positive sense, that the documents will refute the lab release hypothesis, although I don't think that's how they mean it.

Regarding what Peter previously said about Shi's use of the phrase blah blah, which will surely be characterized as dismissive and therefore put into a negative perspective. I have access to a senior endowed full professor of Chinese politics at Harvard and I asked about the meaning of blah blah when a Chinese native speaker uses it while speaking English. Here is the answer:

"In my experience many Chinese mistakenly use "blah, blah" as equivalent to the Chinese term "deng, deng" which means "and so forth" and has no negative connotation."

So Peter was right, and now we know the Chinese term it is trying to translate, however awkwardly. This might be useful in any conversation with a report about her remarks or the Republicans letter.

Jerry

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura < b6 ; Robert Kessle b6
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, i will reply eventually when i get some time, but until then, note yet another Josh Rogin editorial in this morning's Post, this time disclosing the Republican letter to Tony, which i have not yet seen and may or may not see. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 6, 2021, at 23:34, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

Sorry for yet another email, but this one is so bizarre it's almost funny. It's a letter from the House E&C Committee Republicans to Blinken asking him to release the classified intel that people in the Wuhan lab were sick prior to COVID, and that the WIV does military research. It quotes some comments from a recent talk my collaborator Zhengli Shi from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, gave during a lecture at Rutgers. Some of the online conspiracists heard about the talk in advance and they packed the audience – some of their questions from the chat were read out. Her response included a very common "blah blah" phrase used in China when speaking English – here's the quote:

During a March 23, 2021 seminar at Rutgers University, a WHO advisory committee member asked Dr. Shi if [knew].. whether "the U.S. government claims of classified Chinese military research being carried out at the WIV [are] correct, and if so, did you have full awareness of and access to all aspects of this research?"[4]

Dr. Shi answered: From my knowledge, all our research work is open, is transparent. At the beginning of COVID-19, we heard the rumors that claimed our laboratory would have some project blah blah with army blah blah . . . but this is not correct, because I am the director and responsible for research activity. I don't know any kind of research work performed in this lab.[5]

This is ridiculous, of course, and they're obviously using that quote to suggest Dr. Shi doesn't take these questions seriously, but it's actually a racist trope – people in China use the phrase "blah blah" to simply mean "and so on, and so forth". Just unfortunate…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM
To: 'David Morens b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; 'Roberts, Rich' b6
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura b6 ; 'Robert Kessler (b6
Subject: New: Letter from Republican Rep. Gallagher to Dr. Fauci re. WIV and gain of function
Importance: High

David,

A Republican representative sent a letter to Tony Fauci today asking some pretty simple questions that are clearly designed to play to their political base.

If Tony Fauci is going to respond to the attached letter that was made public today, I hope he's ready to point out that the work we did was NOT gain of function. This phrase has been bandied about now for a few months and is utterly incorrect.

If he decides to draft a response, I'd be happy to do a quick briefing with you and him to explain the work that has been done up to now with WIV, and was planned to be done on our NIAID grant.

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Date: Sat, 8 May 2021 1:55:12 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 8 May 2021 1:51:03 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: Roberts, Rich <b6>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
CC: Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>

I also think it's important to let the journalist know that nothing in the work we were doing in China could be reasonably called "Gain of function". The only recombinant viruses were bat-CoVs, with spike proteins of other bat-CoVs. None had enhanced transmissibility or cell infectivity. None are known to be infectious to people.

I believe the whole 'gain of function' phrasing used to describe the Wuhan CoV research is just a ruse to scare a gullible public – journalists today have been using phrases like "making viruses more dangerous in the lab in Wuhan" etc. None of this is true.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Roberts, Rich <b6>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:09 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Peter Daszak <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

David:

Probably not too helpful to describe every growth of a virus in a lab is a GOF experiment.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs

240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:44 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] g >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6]; Aleksei Chmura < [b6] Robert Kessler < [b6] >; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
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Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM
To: 'David Morens [b6]'; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]

Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura[b6]'Robert Kessler ([b6])'[b6]
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Date: Sat, 13 Mar 2021 10:54:35 PM -0500
Sent: Sat, 13 Mar 2021 10:54:32 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]

Collins/Lauer are both deplorable. We will get them in the end, their end, rear end, and out.

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 11:31 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>
Subject: FW: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Jerry, David,

Unfortunate response from Michael Lauer. Please read the email chain below – I had a zoom call with my program officers at NIAID and Matthew Fenton, who'd spoken with Michael Lauer who said he would like to talk to the scientists behind the grant, not the lawyers. I emailed him to politely request a conversation and his response is below. Not sure what to do next. I think sending him a response to the 10 demands on the grant (his two letters, attached) might be a way forwards, but I'll need to check in with lawyers first.

Any idea why he gave me this obnoxious response? Is this some sort of 3-dimensional chess I'm supposed to play or is he seriously suggesting I go to Wuhan and obtain a vial of virus (condition #1).

Maybe I'm just reading too much into it and the letters explain what I'm supposed to do?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: + [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 11:08 PM
To: [b6]; 'Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6] 'Cristina (NIH/NIAID) Cassetti' [b6]; 'Post, Diane (NIH/NIAID) [E]' [b6] Erik (NIH/NIAID) Stemmy' [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Matthew and all,

Thank you again for taking with me last week - it was heartening to hear that there might be a way towards resolution.

I sent an email to Michael Lauer the day after we spoke, as you suggested, asking him politely for a meeting. Unfortunately, the response today was less than genial. Both my email and Michael's response are below (the two letters he refers to are attached here). Any guidance you could give me on how to respond would be very useful.

I was thinking I could just send detailed responses to each of the conditions in the letters – there are 10 in total – explaining what I've done to address them (e.g. the WHO mission work where I asked about the missing person and database, uploading our subcontract details to the NIH system, publishing some of the data, preparing to publish more etc.). I could also explain why the majority of these conditions are just not possible to address given the current geopolitics. The problem is that if I respond in writing, the lawyers who are working for us pro bono would say that this might end up undermining any opportunity for legal action, given that they believe NIH has acted illegally with these actions. I'm willing to take the risk, but I don't understand why Dr. Lauer wouldn't at the very least explain what he expects.

What do you think the best response would be?

Cheers,

Peter

On Wed, Mar 10, 2021 at 5:37 AM Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <[b6]> wrote:

> Dear Dr. Daszak
>
> Attached please find two letters that I sent you previously.
>
> Sincerely,
> Michael S Lauer, MD
>
> Michael S Lauer, MD
> NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
> 1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
> Bethesda, MD 20892
> Phone: [b6]
> Email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 10:02 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>, Alison Andre <b6>
Subject: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,

I spoke yesterday with my program officer and other NIAID staff regarding our grant on the risk of coronavirus emergence (2R01AI110964-06) that includes collaboration with scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, China. Dr. Matthew Fenton joined the meeting and told me about his conversation with you about the conditions currently in place on our grant and my efforts to address some of them via my recent work in Wuhan with the WHO. He also commented that you would be willing to talk with me, as PI of this award, about a pathway to reinstate this grant. I would very much value this and am emailing to see if we can arrange a time that's suitable for you, perhaps next week if possible?

I'm cc'ing my assistant Alison Andre, who can help arrange a suitable time, and also our Chief of Staff Aleksei Chmura, who I would hope could join us, as someone who can access any relevant information on this award, and gained his own Ph.D as part of our original R01 work in China. I want to reassure you that I would not request to talk with legal counsel or bring them into a conversation, and that this would be a discussion with scientists focused on the goals of the grant, focused on research to protect us all against further coronavirus spillover.

Sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date:	Fri, 10 Sep 2021 1:31:32 AM -0400
Sent:	Fri, 10 Sep 2021 1:27:37 AM -0400
Subject:	Nasty piece in the Intercept
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
CC:	Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Attachments:	image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.jpg; image012.jpg; image015.jpg; image016.jpg; image017.jpg; image018.jpg; image002.jpg

This story is disappointing reading as Robert forewarned us yesterday. Intercept has interviewed 11 scientists about the work FoIA'd and 8 said it was Gain of function and risky, even though none said it was likely origin of COVID. One of those saying it was GoF was Vincent Racaniello, which is a huge disappointment to be honest. Here's the link:
https://theintercept.com/2021/09/09/covid- origins-gain-of-function-research/

Angela Rasmussen was one of the people who spoke out in defense that this work was not GoF, pointing out correctly 3 things:

1) These viruses do not meet the definition of gain of function, which is currently defined as per the P3CO rules, and with NIH as the agency of note to check if a proposal meets that definition. Here it is (from https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf):

Section II. Scope and Definitions For the purposes of this HHS P3CO Framework:

A. A potential pandemic pathogen (PPP) is a pathogen that satisfies both of the following:

1. It is likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations; and

2. It is likely highly virulent and likely to cause significant morbidity and/or mortality in humans.

B. An enhanced PPP is defined as a PPP resulting from the enhancement of the transmissibility and/or virulence of a pathogen. Enhanced PPPs do not include naturally occurring pathogens that are circulating in or have been recovered from nature, regardless of their pandemic potential

Angela's point is that these viruses can't possibly meet definition because they haven't even been reported from people, or shown to transmit from one mouse to another, so it's a huge stretch to assume they would be "likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations"

2) From the quotes, the 8 scientists seem to believe that because one of the chimeras grew faster than the parental strain early on, it therefore 'gained function' and therefore the expt. was a GoF expt. Actually, in addition to the above ruling this out as GoF, if you look at the figure lower in the story, the higher viral load was in the first 2-4 days, with the parental strain (WIV-1) catching up in viral load later on.

3) The GoF rules were designed for manipulation of a human pathogen known able to cause illness in a way that runs the risk of it becoming more transmissible (per above). However, what people are forgetting here is that this is the insertion of a spike protein from one bat virus into another bat virus. Any increased virulence would have been due to picking up phenotypic traits from a virus that already existed, not due to the creation of a novel phenotype.

Of course, all this is just complicated and 'sciencey', and all the public needs to see is 1) frankenviruses and 2) some good scientists believe it was dangerous. Very disappointing.

NIH DOCUMENTS PROVIDE NEW EVIDENCE U.S. FUNDED

GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH IN WUHAN

U.S.-funded experiments in China posed biosafety risks but did not cause Covid-19 pandemic, scientists say.



Sharon Lerner, Mara Hvistendahl, Maia Hibbett

September 9 2021, 9:03 p.m.

DOCUMENTS OBTAINED BY The Intercept contain new evidence that the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the nearby Wuhan University Center for Animal Experiment, along with their collaborator, the U.S.-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, have engaged in what the U.S. government defines as "gain-of-function research of concern," intentionally making viruses more pathogenic or transmissible in order to study them, despite stipulations from a U.S. funding agency that the money not be used for that purpose.

Grant money for the controversial experiment came from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is headed by Anthony Fauci. The award to EcoHealth Alliance, a research organization which studies the spread of viruses from animals to humans, included subawards to Wuhan Institute of Virology and East China Normal University. The principal investigator on the grant is EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak, who has been a key voice in the search for Covid-19's origins.

Scientists unanimously told The Intercept that the experiment, which involved infecting genetically engineered mice with "chimeric" hybrid viruses, could not have directly sparked the pandemic. None of the viruses listed in the write-ups of the experiment are related to the virus that causes Covid-19, SARS-CoV-2, closely enough to have evolved into it. Still, several scientists said the new information, which the NIH released after it was sued by The Intercept, points to biosafety concerns, highlighting a general lack of oversight for research on pathogens and raising questions about what other information has not been publicly disclosed.

"As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19,

by an airborne coronavirus.



National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci listens during a briefing on the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on March 26, 2020 in Washington, DC.

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The experiment also raises questions about assertions from Fauci and NIH Director Francis Collins that NIH-funded projects at the Wuhan Institute of Virology did not involve gain-of-function research. In May, Fauci testified before Congress: "The NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." The documents do not establish whether Fauci was directly aware of the work.

Scientists working under a 2014 NIH grant to the EcoHealth Alliance to study bat coronaviruses combined the genetic material from a "parent" coronavirus known as WIV1 with other viruses. They twice submitted summaries of their work that showed that, when in the lungs of genetically engineered mice, three altered bat coronaviruses at times reproduced far more quickly than the original virus on which they were based. The altered viruses were also somewhat more pathogenic, with one causing the mice to lose significant weight. The researchers reported, "These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice."

But the terms of the grant clearly stipulated that the funding could not be used for gain-of-function experiments. The grant conditions also required the researchers to immediately report potentially dangerous results and stop their experiments pending further NIH review. According to both the EcoHealth Alliance and NIH, the results were reported to the agency, but NIH determined that rules designed to restrict gain-of-function research did not apply.

The Intercept consulted 11 scientists who are virologists or work in adjacent fields and hold a range of views on both the ethics of gain-of-function research and the Covid-19 origins search. Seven said that the work appears to meet NIH's criteria for gain-of-function research.

One said that the experiment "absolutely does not meet the bar" for gain-of-function research. "You can't predict that these viruses would be more pathogenic, or even pathogenic at all in people," said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist with the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization at the University of Saskatchewan. "They also did not study transmissibility at all in these experiments," meaning that the scientists did not look at whether the viruses could spread across a population.

Three experts said that, while they did not have enough knowledge of U.S. policies to comment on whether the research met NIH criteria, the experiment involving humanized mice was unnecessarily risky.

One virologist, Vincent Racaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Columbia University, said while he considered the mouse experiment described in the document to clearly fall into the gain-of-function category, he didn't see it as problematic. "You can do some kinds of gain-of-function research that then has unforeseen consequences and may be a problem, but that's not the case here," said Racaniello.

Robert Kessler, communications manager for EcoHealth Alliance, denied that the work on the humanized mice met the definition of gain-of-function research. Kessler insisted that bat viruses are not potential pandemic pathogens because, he said, "a bat virus is not

known to be able to infect humans." The proposal justified the work on WIV1 by explaining that it is "not a select agent" — referring to a list of closely monitored toxins and biological agents that have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health — and "has not been shown to cause human infections, and has not been shown to be transmissible between humans."

But the group's bat coronavirus research was focused on the very threat that bat viruses pose to people. Kessler did acknowledge that, while the original bat coronavirus in the experiment did not spread among humans, the research was designed to gauge how bat coronaviruses could evolve to infect humans.

All but two of the scientists consulted agreed that, whatever title it is given, the newly public experiment raised serious concerns about the safety and oversight of federally funded research. "In my point of view, the debate about the definition of 'gain-of-function' has been too much focused on technical aspects," said Jacques van Helden, a professor of bioinformatics at Aix-Marseille Université. "The real question is whether or not research has the potential to create or facilitate the selection of viruses that might infect humans." The experiments described in the proposal clearly do have that potential, he said.

NIH spokesperson Elizabeth Deatrick said that the agency had considered the research — and decided not to restrict it under its own rules. "In 2016, NIAID determined that the work was not subject to the Gain-of-Function (GoF) research funding pause and the subsequent HHS P3CO Framework," Deatrick wrote, referring to criteria put in place in 2017 to guide the agency's funding decisions about research that involves, or is reasonably anticipated to involve, potential pandemic pathogens.

Republican members of Congress have alleged, without sufficient evidence, that gain-of-function research in Wuhan sparked the coronavirus pandemic. As part of an inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, they have twice grilled Fauci in Congress on his role as NIAID director.

In a heated exchange in July, Republican Sen. Rand Paul accused Fauci of lying when he claimed that NIH did not fund gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Experts now say that the documents support the contention that NIH funded gain-of-function work, though not in the specific instance where Paul alleged it. "There's no question," said Racaniello, of Columbia University, who pointed to the decreased weight of the mice infected with the chimeric viruses that was described in the research summaries sent to NIH. "From the weight loss, it's gain of function. Tony Fauci is wrong saying it's not."

But the documents do not prove Paul's claim that Fauci was lying, as they do not make clear whether Fauci read them. Nor do they in any way support Paul's allegation that Fauci was "responsible for 4 million people around the world dying of a pandemic" — or that anyone intentionally caused Covid-19. What is clear is that program officers at NIAID, the agency that Fauci oversees, did know about the research.

A paragraph describing the research, as well as two figures illustrating its results, were included in both a 2018 progress report on the bat coronavirus grant and an application for its 2019 renewal. And NIH confirmed that it reviewed them.

"NIH has never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans," the agency said in a statement, echoing remarks by Collins, the NIH director, posted to its website in May. "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease." Similar research funded by NIH had aided in the development of vaccines against the coronavirus, the statement continued.

The White House did not respond to questions about the research.

Shifting Definitions, Growing Viral Load

The humanized mouse experiment fits with the overall goal of the $3.1 million grant, which was titled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence" and aimed at preventing a pandemic by predicting the circumstances under which a bat coronavirus could evolve to infect humans. The researchers took an ambitious three-pronged approach: screening people with high exposure to wildlife, mathematical modeling, and lab experiments on viruses. Peter Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, has worked closely with scientists in China for years, and roughly $750,000 of the grant was allocated for the Wuhan Institute of Virology. An additional nearly $300,000 went to East China Normal University, where researchers did field sampling.

In a 2005 paper, Daszak's team showed that the first SARS virus originated in bats. Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, is caused by a coronavirus that emerged in 2012 and also believed to come from bats, which are now a prime target for virologists trying to understand and combat emerging diseases. Daszak has long maintained that his research is critical to preventing outbreaks.

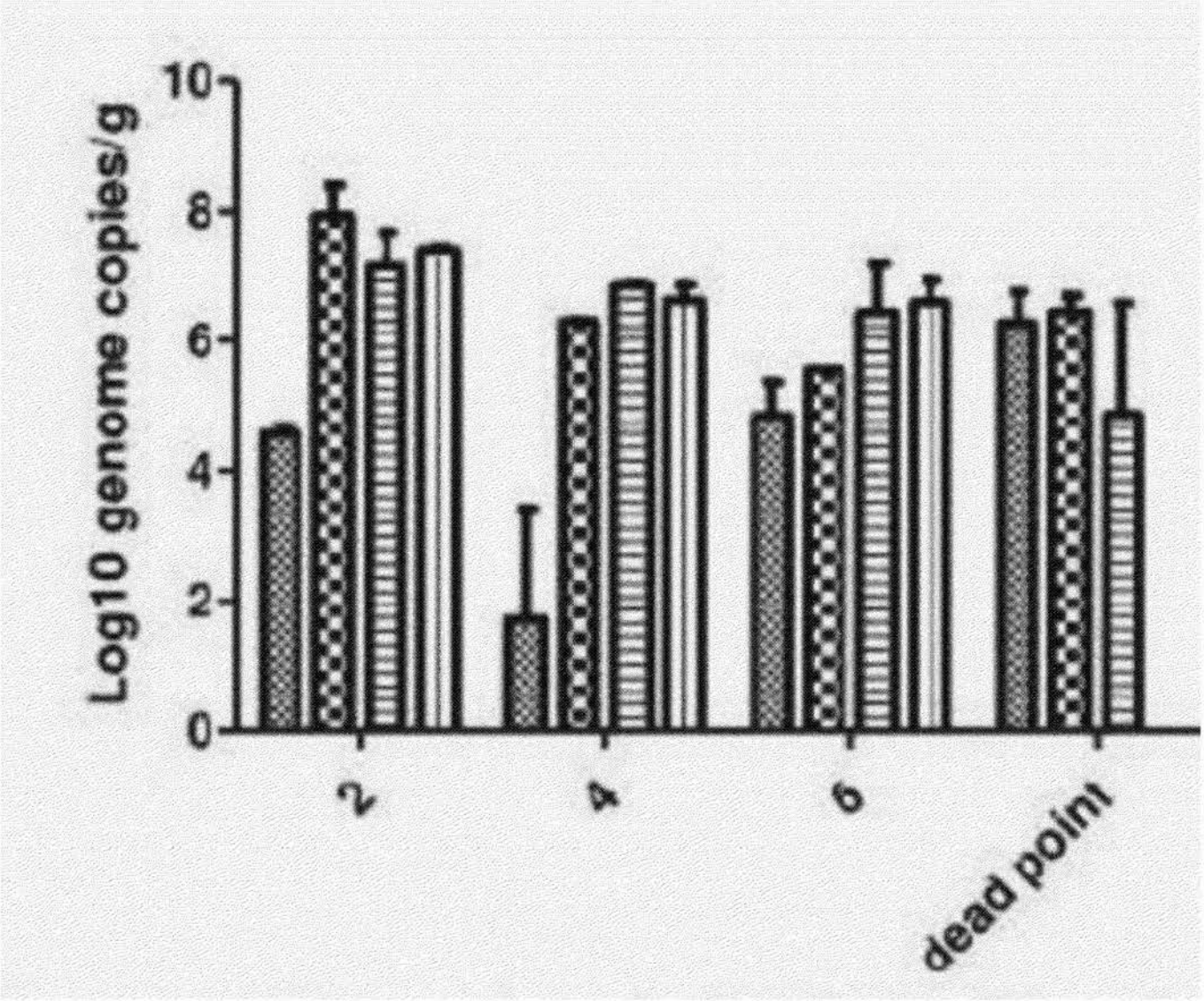
But the research on the bat viruses in Wuhan showed that infecting live animals with altered viruses can have unpredictable consequences. A report to NIH on the project's

progress in the year ending in May 2018 described scientists creating new coronaviruses by changing parts of WIV1 and exposing genetically engineered mice to the new chimeric viruses. Research published in 2017 in the journal PLOS Pathogen showed that, in cells in a laboratory, similar chimeric viruses reproduced less effectively than the original. NIH cited that research as one of the reasons the moratorium on gain-of-function research of concern didn't apply to this experiment. "It was a loss of function, not a gain of function," the email from NIH explained. (NIH also pointed out that the changes to the chimeric viruses "would not be anticipated to increase virulence or transmissibility in humans.")

Inside the lungs of the humanized mice, however, the novel viruses appear to have reproduced far more quickly than the original virus that was used to create them, according to a bar graph shown in the documents. The viral load in the lung tissue of the mice was, at certain points, up to 10,000 times higher in the mice infected with the altered viruses than in those infected with WIV1. According to Deatrick, the NIH spokesperson, the difference in the rates of viral reproduction — which were particularly pronounced two and four days after the mice were infected with the virus — didn't amount to gain of function because, by the end of the experiment, the amount of virus produced by the parent and chimeric strains evened out. "Viral titers were equivalent by the end of the experimental time-course," Deatrick wrote. The email also said, "NIH supports this type of research to better understand the characteristics of animal viruses that have the potential to spill over to humans and cause widespread disease."

Scientists The Intercept consulted expressed differing views on whether the increase in viral load could be translated to an increase in transmissibility, which relies on the virus's ability to replicate. To some, the jump in viral load indicated that the modified RNA virus could replicate far more rapidly than the original in the lungs of the mice, likely leading to increased pathogenicity and spread. Rasmussen, of the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, pointed out that viral load is not identical to reproduction rate, noting: "This shows the chimeric viruses replicated a little faster, but that tells us exactly nothing about transmissibility. Furthermore, WIV1 caught up by the end of the experiment. We see differences in the rate of viral replication all the time, but it is often not directly correlated with pathogenicity."

Another figure in the documents suggests that at least one of the altered viruses not only enhanced viral reproduction, but also caused the humanized mice to lose more weight than those exposed to the original virus — a measure of the severity of illness.



A graph from a report on NIH-funded research in Wuhan shows viral load in lung tissues of humanized mice.

Screenshot: FOIA Document

NIH requires the increase in viral reproduction to be immediately reported, according to a note in the Notice of Award the agency issued in July 2016. "No funds are provided and no funds can be used to support gain-of-function research covered under the October 17, 2014 White House Announcement," the note said. If any new MERS-like or SARS-like chimeras show "enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log over the parental backbone strain," the note continued, the researchers were instructed to stop all experiments with the viruses and send the data to NIAID grant specialists, as well as to the Wuhan Institute of Virology biosafety committee. The enhanced growth of the chimeric coronaviruses in the humanized mice was, at one point, up to 4 log greater — or 10,000 times — the rate of the original virus. But there are no indications the research was stopped.

In fact, the bat coronavirus grant was renewed for a five-year period in 2019, although

the Trump administration suspended funding in April 2020 amid the Covid-19 pandemic and spiraling concerns about its origins. (Funding was later reinstated but under strict conditions that Daszak said were impossible for his group to meet.)

Kessler, EcoHealth Alliance's communications manager, also pointed to the fact that the grant was renewed in 2019 — after EcoHealth Alliance had twice submitted documents detailing the experiment — as evidence that the organization did nothing wrong. "If there had been any violations, they would not have done so," he said.

Long History of Controversy

The practice of making chimeric viruses in order to study how they might become more contagious was under scrutiny long before the pandemic. Proponents of such gain-of-function research argued that it can help virologists better understand and defend against natural outbreaks. But critics said that they were unreasonably dangerous.

In October 2014, the federal government put a moratorium on funding gain-of-function research on potential pandemic pathogens that could be "reasonably anticipated" to lead to spread in humans, as outlined in a 2017 guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services. In December 2017, the moratorium was lifted and replaced with new guidelines for oversight of research using potential pandemic pathogens. The grantees reported that the humanized mouse experiment was done between June 2017 and May 2018. Gain-of-function research was thrust into the spotlight again in 2020, amid speculation that the Wuhan Institute of Virology had conducted such research and that it was somehow linked to the pandemic.

While the new information about the research on humanized mice does not provide the "smoking gun" for proponents of what has become known as the "lab leak theory," it lends the hypothesis credence, according to Stuart Newman, a professor of cell biology who directs the developmental biology laboratory at New York Medical College. "Making chimeric coronaviruses, mixing and matching RBDs [a part of the virus that allows it to attach to receptors] and spike proteins is exactly the scenario imagined by many lab-leak scenario proponents," said Newman. "The fact that this was an established research paradigm in the Wuhan lab … definitely makes the laboratory origin more plausible."

The documents about the research were released by NIH after The Intercept submitted a Freedom of Information Act request in September 2020, later suing to have it fulfilled. The request sought copies of these and other grant proposals that Daszak submitted to the agency, as well as the agency's communications about the proposals. NIH originally denied The Intercept's request on the grounds that releasing Daszak's proposals would undermine an ongoing investigation. Counsel for the agency later admitted that NIH had

not reviewed many of the records before making that assertion.

"The contents of the grants raise serious questions about the review processes and oversight relating to risky pathogen research," said Alina Chan, a Boston-based scientist and co-author of the upcoming book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19." The new information in the documents warrants further inquiry into whether researchers may have omitted information about other concerning experiments, she said. "The question is: What else did they do in more recent years that we're not aware of?"

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6 g >
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 4:58 PM
To: 'David Morens[b6]; 'Keusch, Gerald T[b6]>; 'Robert Kessler
[b6] >; 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]' <
Cc: 'Jeff Sturchio [b6]>
Subject: RE: New line of attack today as expected, based on higher viral load in mouse lungs etc..

..and let's not forget that the virus with 10,000x viral load in mice, was actually a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence!

In fact, the opposite – the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find – it reduces risk!

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 4:49 PM
To: 'David Morens [b6]>; 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6]>; 'Robert Kessler [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]g)' <
Cc: Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Subject: New line of attack today as expected, based on higher viral load in mouse lungs etc..

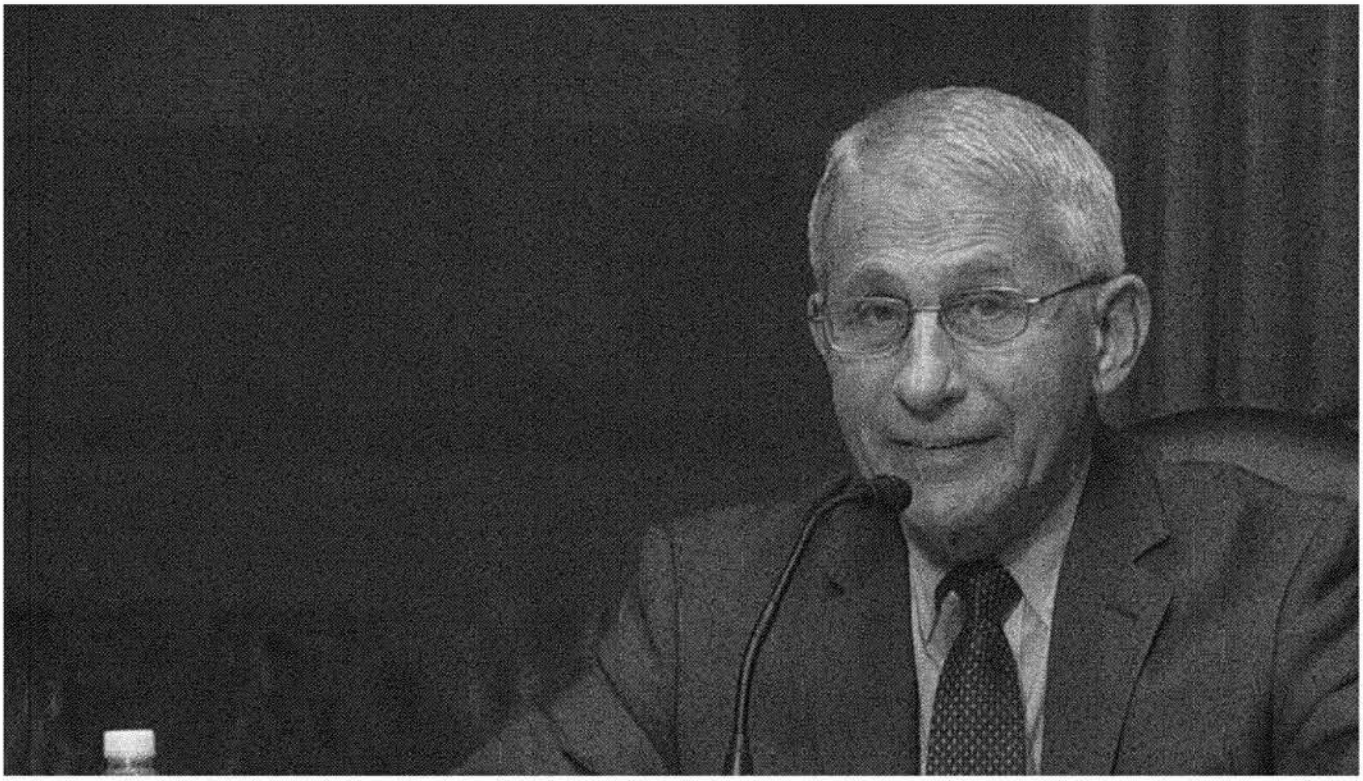
Note – cc'ing Jeff Sturchio, who's working with us at EHA.

Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain. Good response from NIH spokesperson: An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

The other important thing for NIH spokespeople to say is that P3CO rules are for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans.

https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth- alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP
Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show



DAILY CALLER NEWS FOUNDATION

ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER
September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.**

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, b6 the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the

original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.
Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.
EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.
"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."
"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.
EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

B.2 (Year 4 NIAID CoV Report_Final for eRA Commons.pdf)

1R01AI110964 Year 4 Report PI: Das

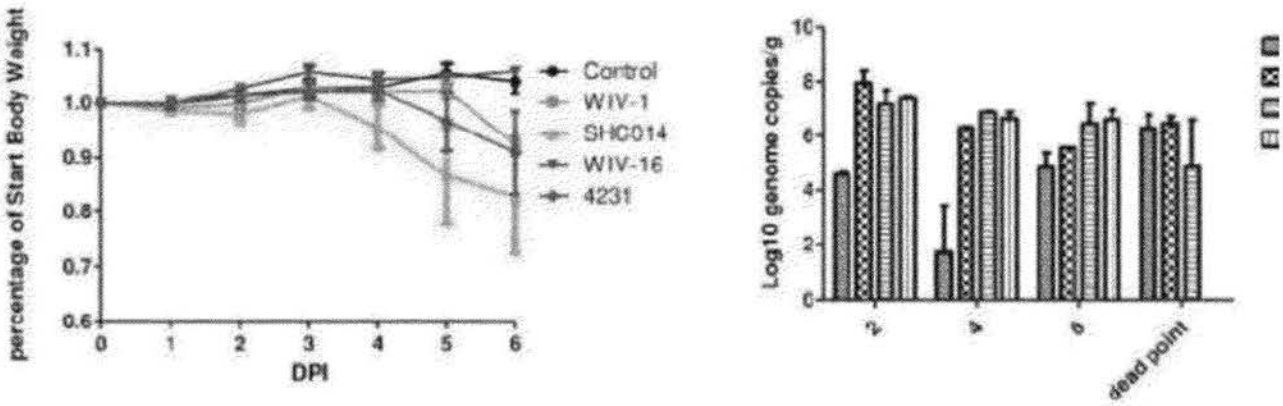


Figure 35. *In vivo infection of SARSr-CoVs in hACE2-expressing mice. (a, left) Body weight c infection; (b, right) Viral load in lung tissues*

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)
"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."
The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.
"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.
EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.
EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.
Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic

pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.

The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review.

Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

SECTION IV – AI Special Terms and Conditions – 5R01AI110964-05

Clinical Trial Indicator: No
This award does not support any NIH-defined Clinical Trials. See the NIH Grants Policy Stat
Section 1.2 for NIH definition of Clinical Trial.

Page-5

NIH NGA 8 | Version: 1 - 01/16/2018 12:52:00 Generated on: 6/18/2018 4:02:35 AM

If any experiments proposed in this award result in a virus with enhanced growth by more t log compared to wild type strains, you must notify your NIAID Program Officer and Grants Management Specialist immediately. Further research involving the resulting virus(es) may require review by the Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with the Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens (https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf).

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)

An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."

"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses

circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."

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Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:07 PM
To: 'David Morens' <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>; 'Aleksei Chmura' <b6>
Subject: More incoming expected tonight from the Intercept
Importance: High

David – I hope you saw my email response to Kristian Andersen (below). We're expecting a story tonight from the Intercept that accuses EHA of breaking the rules with our work in Wuhan re. GoF, and in general.

Their main angle is the GoF issue. They're maintaining that our expts on bat-CoVs were GoF, despite us stating that these are not viruses that have ever been shown to infect people, something required in the P3CO definitions. They're also following Ebright's focus on one of expts in WIV that shows a chimera with a bat SARSr-CoV spike insert leading to higher viral load in mouse lungs than the parental strain (WIV1 – it's fig. 35 in the year 4 report, aim 3, p. 29 – attached). Again that doesn't mean GoF because these are both bat viruses. Furthermore, the NoA states that we should report 1 log or higher growth to NIH and stop the expt. Our view is that this is exactly what we did – we reported to NIH and that's the report that the Intercept has now FoIA'd. It's all somewhat moot in any case because at least two of the other viruses who's spikes were inserted, have also been cultured and therefore none of the chimeras are of higher risk than those parental strains.

They might also try to accuse us of breaking the agreement on releasing genetic data publicly, which we suggested we'd do 6 months after receiving 'final sequences' or upon publishing. Jesse Bloom emailed me to ask for these data and is clearly trying to catch us out. However, we published all SARSr-CoV genetic sequence data on Genbank prior to our publication in Nature Comms last year. There are many reasons why other results may not be able to be released as rapidly as we would like, given the pandemic and rapid breakdown in communication with colleagues in Wuhan, but of course, that won't stop these folks trying to cause problems and get a story out.

Hope you're able to brief folks who need to know that 1) we're aware of these accusations; 2) we won't be speaking in detail to the press about them; 3) we will be giving very short statements if we have to that clearly push back in the way I've outlined above, via our EHA spokesperson – Robert Kessler. We believe the story tonight might be a bit more aggressive than yesterday, but for anyone who understands this work, it does not prove GoF.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 3:48 PM
To: 'Kristian G. Andersen' <b6>
Cc: 'David Morens' <b6>; 'Garry, Robert F' <b6>; 'Edward Holmes' <b6>; 'Jason Gale' <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; 'Rasmussen, Angie' [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]>; 'Stephen Goldstein' <b6>
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV- 1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this

happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Garry, Robert F b6 Edward Holmes < b6 ; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Stephen Goldstein b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that

mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [b6]g > wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h
> NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With
> @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release



New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
theintercept.com



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…
"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.

7h

There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6 >; Kristian G. Andersen b6 ; Edward Holmes < b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6 Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:
>
> To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.
>
> The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen b6 >; Edward Holmes b6
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net >; b6 ; b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes b6

Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net> [b6] [b6] [b6] >; Garry, Robert F [b6];

Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes [b6] > wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) < j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Sun, 30 May 2021 8:51:11 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 30 May 2021 8:50:57 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Gerald Keusch b6 Rich Roberts b6

Agreed – it's a threat to international collaboration with China that goes way beyond NIAID and will affect the Biotech and Life Sciences industries, I believe. I have no idea how they reach out to Congress, the Senate and the White House, but I'm sure there are trade groups or lobbyists who must be getting concerned.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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From: David Morens b6
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2021 8:37 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Gerald Keusch b6 ; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

PS, i am less
worried about EcoHealth being thrown under the bus. I think tony will draw. a line in the sand on that. It is not us at niaid but all the innuendo and group think that are most damaging. This is no longer a science issue but a crazy McCaryhy-esque issue. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 30, 2021, at 19:31, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Thanks David. I understand, and we need him at the helm. I'm hoping that Biden's 90 day intel deep 'dive' will help cool things down.

In the meantime, I'm increasingly worried that EcoHealth Alliance might get thrown under the bus for political expedience. There are amendments to bills that could rapidly and easily crush scientific collaboration with China, or even defund EcoHealth completely.

I would like, if possible to talk next week sometime and start trying to get the Biotech and virology community mobilized so they can start defending against bills that could have a major impact on lab research, collaboration with China, and international collaboration.

I know others are beginning to wake up to the possibility that this could be one of the endgames some on the right are aiming for – see the article in Nature this week: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-01386-0 (also attached).

I'd like to reach out to the societies that spoke out when our grant was canceled and see what can be done to mobilize politically to defend science, and at the same time, hopefully, us here in the middle.

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 2:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]; Rich Roberts < [b6]
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Peter, I have learned fom internal sources that for entirely political reasons Tony is being asked by very high levels to stay neutral about the origin. Not sure why he is going along however.... d

On 5/25/2021 10:57 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> This is exactly the politics I was talking about. I'm part of weekly meetings with the WHO COVID-19 origins mission as we develop Phase 2 plans, and we're tracking the politics closely. Right now the US response is pretty mild. I've seen a copy of the HHS letter and it's just more of the same sort of comments below. What we're worried about on the origins group is that if the lab leak rhetoric pushes too strongly, China will just close the door on Phase 2 of the work. Right now, the only possible way forward to actually get into China and do more work on COVID origins is via this WHO team, so it would be disaster if this hype messes it up.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 g >; Gerald Keusch b6 Rich Roberts b6
Subject: Fwd: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Everybody's getting into the act, it seems….. d
Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
> **Date:** May 25, 2021 at 07:27:31 EDT
> **Subject: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins**

U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Latest: Analysis: Timeline for how the Wuhan lab-leak theory suddenly became credible

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Date: Thu, 2 Dec 2021 10:39:33 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 2 Dec 2021 10:39:13 PM -0500
Subject: Re: call from Victor Dzau just now
From: "Hotez, [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: keusch [b6] David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Jeff Sturchio [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]>;
Attachments: House E&C letter to NAM 2021.11.30.pdf

It's late and I will re read your note tomorrow. Good news is that Victor at least had the courage to phone you, and that I'm sure Jerry's efforts and the others to reach Victor forced his hand to do so. The far right aggression cannot stand, best Peter

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Hospital Endowed Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development

University Professor, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Donate to our COVID-19 Vaccine Development

E-mail: [b6]
Twitter: @peterhotez
Skype: [b6]
Linkedin Peter Hotez

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Daily Beast Contributor https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/peter- j-hotez
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Senior Coordinator / Executive Support: Douglas Soriano
[b6]
Phone: [b6]
Fax: 713-798-2299

iPhone

On Dec 2, 2021, at 8:58 PM, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

Victor Dzau, President of NAM called me tonight. He told me he wanted to reassure me that they will not be throwing me under the bus, and that they are not naïve and realize the nature of these allegations, but with 16 pages of allegations + citations and references, they can't just ignore it. He said they have a procedure that has been carefully worked out that they'll have to adhere to, in which a 'standing committee' of the council will review the allegations and decide whether to investigate or not. He said I'll have plenty of opportunity to respond to them at some point and the whole process will be private to protect me. I pointed out that it doesn't protect me if I don't know the process and can't be assured a fair hearing if it's behind closed doors.

He then said I'd have to step back from my duties on various committees for the period of the initial review, and if they investigate, that period as well. He said those are the policies and procedures they have. I asked if I could see the policies and he said NAM doesn't make them public. I pointed out that a membership society should protect its members and the process should be open to them. He said I should trust him that there are policies, and he got a little bit irritated that I was pushing back. I explained that I have a Board I answer to, who will straight away say I need to see a copy of the policies, so my lawyers can review them. He said he will check to see if Council made a decision to keep them private or if they can be shared. If not, I'll have my lawyers draft a letter and demand them, if it gets to the point that they do an investigation.

At the end of our call he pointed out that he shouldn't really have called me (according to their process) and was doing this to give me his support. I thanked him for that, but then mentioned that it's a very lonely place when your funders, political representatives, president of your country, the press, your colleagues (some of them), and hate-filled gangs of ne'er-do-wells attack you on a daily basis. I mentioned that I've heard the same comments from many people about how I 'shouldn't worry' and that 'this probably won't go anywhere' and 'I should trust them', but that in the end I have a duty to my family, and our staff to stand up against this sort of attack. I told him that I am also not naïve, and that the system NAM is operating under is based on goodwill, and is therefore weak when these attacks happen. I let him know that if this does go the wrong way, and the committee decide I should be removed from NAM, I will not do this lying down and without a fight. A bit aggressive maybe, but Victor is protecting his position and the institution rather than a member's reputation here.

I think the general thrust of this is that there will probably be an investigation. I think the next step is for me to get a response ready to these 16 pages of BS (I've attached them again for your enjoyment) and get ready for being ostracized for a period of time while a bunch of good-intentioned people decide whether I'm of high enough moral fiber to stay in their gang.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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---

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 3:33 PM
To: 'keusch' <b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' b6 David Morens b6 <
b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Subject: FW: follow-up from the NAM

Just keeping you abreast of what the NAM are saying. I don't have a response on my request for the specific policy that says I can't take part in NAM activities while these allegations are under review (I suspect there are none).

However I did get the weird email below saying I should keep all this confidential – maybe it's because Victor's seen your email Jerry.

I don't know if they realize that the Republicans already published the letter in full on their website! Maybe I should let her know that.

I also, ironically got a notice to cast my vote for NAM Home Secretary today, so I voted for this person's rival. I'm sure they'd be equally as opaque, but it's at least some empowerment.

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena [b6]
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 1:45 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
Subject: Re: follow-up

Peter,

The conduct review process is handled with extreme confidentiality within the NAM and I would ask that you also consider it a highly confidential process, not to be shared with anyone.

Elena

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH
NAM Home Secretary
University of California, San Francisco

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 3:48 PM
To: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena
Cc: Aleksei Chmura
Subject: RE: follow-up

Thank you for the call today Elena. I've cc'd our Chief-of-Staff, Dr. Aleksei Chmura, who also joined us. I appreciate your explanation and will do my best to adhere to the policies of the NAM as we go through this process.

My only hope is that the review can be as rapid as possible. Our organization has been the focus of a horrific series of political attacks from the hard right wing as part of their political goals regarding Dr. Fauci, NIH and ultimately the Biden administration. These tie up resources and staff answering pages upon pages of false accusations, all carefully worded to give the impression of a thoughtful and sincere inquiry.

Again, I want to reassure you that none of the accusations from Republicans on the House E&C Committee have the slightest bearing in fact. We have acted honorably and with the highest scientific integrity throughout the pandemic, and simply want to be allowed to continue our work without constant, politically-motivated harassment.

sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Fuentes-Afflick, Elena b6
Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 6:25 PM
To: b6
Subject: follow-up

Dr. Daszak,

Thank you for speaking with me this afternoon.

In accordance with the NAM's policy related to conduct, I am writing to inform you that we have received written allegations of misconduct. As we undertake our review process, you are not eligible to participate in any NAM and/or NASEM activities for the duration of the review.

Best,
Elena Fuentes-Afflick

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH
NAM Home Secretary
University of California, San Francisco

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Date: Thu, 29 Jul 2021 1:09:22 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 29 Jul 2021 1:09:13 PM -0400
Subject: Re: My latest in PLOS Biology
From: "Hotez, Peter Jay" [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Also pdf version looks nicer suitable for printing

Please send it to everyone!

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP
Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology
Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
University Professor
Department of Biology, Baylor University

Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study
Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs
Texas A&M University
Baker Institute Fellow in Disease & Poverty and Adjunct Professor of Bioengineering, Rice University
Adjunct Professor, University of Texas, School of Public Health

Founding Editor-in-Chief, PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases
E-mail: [b6]
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Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
[b6]
Phone: [b6]

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 29, 2021, at 12:00 PM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] > wrote:

Peter, this is dynamite! Exactly what needs to be said and pulling no punches. The best part is asking the US President (and I would add other government leaders as well) to take a strong stand. May I share confidentially with Tony and our "inner office" folks? d

On 7/29/2021 12:43 PM, Hotez, Peter Jay wrote:

https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.3001369

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Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
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Like us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/BCMNationalSchoolOfTropicalMedicine/

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Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 26, 2021, at 8:33 AM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

TY, look forward to that. We HAVE TO keep chipping away at the insanity d

On 7/25/2021 5:23 PM, Hotez, Peter Jay wrote:

Many thanks David, FYI I have an article in PLOS Biology scheduled for this week that details the far right aggression targeting prominent US scientists and how this fits in with a larger scheme for authoritarian control. I think Tony will appreciate this as well! Warmest Peter

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Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 25, 2021, at 4:17 PM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] **b6** wrote:

If they hate your guts, that's, like, the highest compliment you can get. Congratulations are in order....

PS, great quote from you on TV a couple days ago: "anti-science aggression from the political Right", that says it all in a nutshell.... Science, all we do, our whole careers, that field of endeavor that has extended our lifespan by 20+ years, cured most cancers, landed men on the moon, given us TVs, computers, and tanning salons for fat unfashionable presidents, is now the enemy. Someone has turned off the juice on the Enlightenment.... d

On 7/25/2021 4:36 PM, Hotez, Peter Jay wrote:

It's getting crazy out there, my latest run-in with Governor DeSantis of Florida and Laura Ingraham at Fox News. They hate my guts.

https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2021/7/15/2040161/- Ron-DeSantis-fed-COVID-crow-by-doctor-he-d-ridiculed-on-Fox-News



Ron DeSantis fed COVID crow by doctor he'd ridiculed on Fox News

www.dailykos.com

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Senior Coordinator / Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano

b6

Phone: b6

Fax: 713-798-2299

<Outlook-whaa4ygz.png>

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, July 25, 2021 3:10 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay
Cc: Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: explicit language warning!

He probably doesn't know how to F*%$ himself, as he claerly failed anatomy. And all the other med school subjects. d

On 7/25/2021 3:20 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Here's a story, not for the faint-hearted.
>
> It's a question for Senator (Dr.) Rand Paul, from a member of the public who called into one of his public Q&A sessions.
>
> Obviously, one doesn't condone this base level of public discourse, but I found myself curiously buoyed by it after his months of continued attacks…
>
> Here's a story:
>
> https://goodwordnews.com/senator- rand-paul-said-to-get-fucked-at-virtual-town-hall/
>
> Here's the video on Twitter:
>
> https://twitter.com/phil_lewis_/status/1418676246003818496?s=10
>
> Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Sunday, July 25, 2021 3:07 PM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald T' [b6] 'Roberts, Rich' < b6 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6
Cc: 'David Morens' < b6 >; Robert Kessler < b6 g >
Subject: Fauci defending the funding of EcoHealth's grant with WIV in the Right wing press

Good to see Tony speaking up and defending NIAID's decision to fund this work (article attached as pdf). He's right – it was very highly scored.

My only question is…why not reinstate it!!!??? He could always specifically indicate "no chimeric virus work to be funded at WIV" or "only PCR studies" or some such. Just a thought…

Here's a key quote:

"Dr. Fauci attempted to explain the link between U.S. researchers and the Chinese laboratory clearly to Fox viewers and stress there was no 'risky research' involved.

'If you look at the research that was done, it was research that was highly recommended by peer review, our United States peer reviews. It got a very high score in the peer review system,' Fauci began.

'And the purpose of the research was very, very clear. It was to try to determine what was out there in the bat population that might be ultimately risky for us. It was done in the context of trying to find out what the precise environmental bat source

was of SARS-CoV-1 so that we could prevent SARS-CoV-2.'

Dr. Fauci praised the 'qualified, highly respected Chinese scientists' that the National Institutes of Health had collaborated with at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and defended the funding of bat coronavirus research in China.

Fauci added: 'So, it was research that was done by qualified people. Right now, when there's all of this thing about China, that's a different situation now back then when you're dealing with qualified, highly respected Chinese scientists. So it isn't what was made out to be about dealing with really, really bad people. Because those scientists were very well-respected in the scientific community internationally.'"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T <b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 5:05 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6 Roberts, Rich <b6 >; Hotez, Peter Jay <b6
Cc: David Morens <b6 Robert Kessler <b6
Subject: RE: COVID origins issues and NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats

No relevant information I have heard of. It wouldn't surprise me as I know that Victor Dzau wants NAM to be engaged in these issues. I will ask my colleague Nicki Lurie

if she is aware of any such initiative. She is on vacation in Europe now and may not be as rapidly responsive as she usually is.

Regarding the Academies, Victor is not only ambitious but also cautious and doesn't stick his head out very far. Marcia McNutt (NAS President) has been supportive of a rational science based inquiry into the origins and the separation of politics from science, sort of, but not very bold. John Anderson (NAE President) is the least engaged.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g >
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6 Hotez, Peter Jay [b6
Cc: David Morens [b6 ; Robert Kessler < [b6 g >
Subject: COVID origins issues and NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats

Here's a request for any inside info you may have picked up.

I'm the chair of the NASEM Forum on Microbial Threats. Jerry used to be a member or Co-Chair and (ironically) David Relman was the Chair before me. The Forum is planning a workshop on COVID-19 for early Fall. I'm not on the organizing committee but heard they were planning a section on 'origins', then were told from the top (I believe Victor Dzau of NAM) that because there is no new research on this, it's not something that would be good for the workshop to publicly consider right now. They've dropped that session. I actually agree with this decision, but it certainly adds to the feeling that the NAM is being very hesitant on this issue.

Then I got an email from staff asking if I'd like to avoid giving my usual opening comments for the workshop as chair, given the nasty publicity I've been getting. I pushed back (strongly) and pointed out that a key goal of the conspiracy theorists is to attack, discredit and silence scientists who's opinions don't support their political agenda. Staff were very nice and somewhat apologetic about this and I'm now giving my usual opening.

They also mentioned that the academies (maybe NAM, but could be NASEM) are planning something on origins – maybe a consensus study, workshop or just a statement. I don't have more info, but the reason I'm concerned is that 1) David Relman is a member of the NASEM Intelligence Community Studies Board (science-intel

agency interface) and he may be trying to use that to 'investigate' the lab leak agenda; or 2) there may be an effort for an NASEM committee to investigate COVID-19 origins. I note that in my last letter from the NIH office of the director, they requested an inspection of the Wuhan lab either by NIH scientists or through the NASEM.

The way the NAM and NASEM operate is that USG agencies go to them, or they approach agencies with an idea for a consensus study or workshop and then they're funded to do one. It sounds likely that this is happening, and would likely end up as a forum for all the lab leak accusations and gain-of-function myths to be brought up by known scientists (e.g. Drs. Relman, Lipsitch, Ebright and others). This could end up putting me in the awful situation of either having to publicly defend EcoHealth's work and get attacked in the press for this, or decline to take part in a National Academy activity despite being a member. Not looking forward to that moment!

Have any of you heard anything about this?

Cheers,

Peter

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---

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 4:42 PM
To: 'Roberts, Rich' b6 ; 'Keusch, Gerald T' < b6 ; 'Hotez, Peter Jay' < b6
Cc: 'David Morens' b6 >; Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: Harold Varmus has been spotted in CT!

One of my Board members, Amy Attas, who's a veterinarian to the pets of people like Mike Bloomberg's wife, Elton John etc. goes to a monthly lunchtime talk series near her summer home in CT (I think). Harold Varmus spoke there a couple of Sunday's ago. Amy asked the first question along the lines "I'm on the Board of an organization working to prevent pandemics..what are the best strategies to prevent the next COVID?" His response: "Is that EcoHealth Alliance?" "If so, what they're doing is exactly what should be done..." He then rolled off a series of key goals to prevent pandemics.

Amy was delighted, and a number of other donors expressed an interest. Please pass on my regards and gratitude to Harold – this is exactly the sort of word of mouth endorsement we need right now, rather than the other sort we're getting from Fox News!

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Roberts, Rich < b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 Peter Daszak < b6 Hotez, Peter Jay b6 >
Cc: David Morens b6 ; Robert Kessler < b6 >
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

I haven't heard anything from Harold recently.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: (b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Roberts, Rich [b6 Peter Daszak <
b6 Hotez, Peter Jay [b6
>
Cc: David Morens [b6 Robert Kessler <
b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I totally agree with you that Tony was remarkable. I sent him a one word email, Bravo, and copied it to Patty Conrad so maybe he will see it as evidence of the support he has from the responsible scientific community.

Thanks for the response regarding the CNN reporters. I'll keep that in mind when I do talk to them and consider whether speaking with you might help them distinguish between good science and crap. I have no doubts about your expertise in science and knowing the difference between, well, good science and crap.

Harold is rather quiet – any sense of what he is up to?

Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:50 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6 ; Peter Daszak <
b6 ; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6
>
Cc: David Morens [b6 n >; Robert Kessler <
b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

Jerry:

Tony was excellent in confronting Paul! It's high time that these senators are told the truth directly.

As for speaking with the reporters, in general I am always prepared to do that, but in this particular case I don't feel my credentials are necessarily the best when dealing with specifics. I have very much been an onlooker and not directly connected to any of the research itself. Peter Hotez and Peter D. are clearly much better informed and have the appropriate expertise. There are plenty of authors on the recent Lancet piece that would be good to include. I am happy to speak as an outsider, but would not want to be considered a knowledgeable expert.

Rich

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email: (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Hotez, Peter Jay b6
Cc: David Morens b6; Roberts, Rich b6; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: RE: Tony Fauci's testimony today

EXTERNAL SENDER

I had a long talk with two CNN International reporters who are preparing a story essentially on the politics and the misinformation about the origins controversy. I was talking to them off the record but I decided they were legitimately exploring the issues and would likely be a voice of reason if they were given the necessary space to build their case and it was eventually shown.

I mentioned Peter Hotez to them, among some others, and while I mentioned Peter D as well I also said you were under constant attack and it might well be better to allow others to take up the fight on your behalf. GOF and the Goffers were part of the chat. I have agreed to be interviewed on the

record and potentially to do a video session as they were potentially interested in using some of that as part of the report. Rich, I didn't specifically mention your name, but if you would be willing to speak with them I can do that when I next connect.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6 redacted] >
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 12:30 PM
To: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6 redacted]; Roberts, Rich < [b6 redacted]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6 redacted]; Robert Kessler [b6 redacted] >
Subject: Tony Fauci's testimony today
Importance: High

I'm delighted to see Tony Fauci fighting to let everyone understand clear line between what is gain-of-function (work EcoHealth does NOT do), and what is not Gain of function (work EcoHealth did do with Wuhan).

It's a shame it will generate publicity, but he did this so well today that I'm hoping it might help get rid of the willful misinformation the Republicans are engaging in…

Here's a news piece on it https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/563874- fauci-paul-doesnt-know-what-hes-talking-about-and-i-want-to-say-that , and there's some pretty exciting video to watch. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFoaBV_cTek

Well done David on your briefing and practice runs!

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak <[b6]
Cc: David Morens <[b6]>; Roberts, Rich <[b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: My AMA podcast on the origins of COVID19

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4NkcU7JK14&feature=youtu.be

Peter Hotez, MD, PhD, DSc (hon), FASTMH, FAAP

Dean, National School of Tropical Medicine
Professor, Departments of Pediatrics, Molecular Virology & Microbiology

Health Policy Scholar
Baylor College of Medicine

Texas Children's Chair of Tropical Pediatrics
Co-Director, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development
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Texas A&M University
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Skype: b6
Linkedin Peter Hotez
Amazon Author Center: https://www.amazon.com/Peter- J.-Hotez/e/B001HPIC48
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Executive Assistant: Douglas Soriano
b6

Phone: b6



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 15, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Peter Daszak <
b6
> wrote:

*****CAUTION:*** This email is not from a BCM Source. Only click links or open attachments you know are safe.**

David – please pass this information on to Tony and Clifford if you possibly can,

The WHO DG, Dr. Tedros set up a 6am Monday morning meeting with the current WHO Origins team – the international experts who went to Wuhan to work with our China counterparts on COVID origins. He announced they'd be disbanding the team, setting up a separate structure and moving to a system whereby a new team will be formed to do Phase 2 of the work in China. The stated goal is to follow member state's wishes and improve transparency in the way the origins team is selected. Sadly it will reduce transparency because there will now be a 'behind closed doors' decision from the member states on who of the nominees are put forward to WHO, then another 'behind closed doors' decision from WHO on who is selected, with, we've been told, the DG of WHO having final say.

From my point of view it's a real problem because given the political pressure from the Right wing, it might prevent my future involvement in this work. This means my 17 years + of collaboration with the very people in China who we need to work with, will not be part of Phase 2 work – including designing the animal testing protocols that are my key expertise. Disbanding the current team will also significantly delay the work and this threatens to undermine our capacity to do the trace-back, as antibodies wane among wildlife farmers in rural China who we've proposed should be interviewed and tested in Phase 2, for example. The current team has a good working relationship with the China side and has made significant progress over the last few months, meeting weekly as an international expert group and working with our

Chinese counterparts to update the WHO report, include new data and get phase 2 Terms of Reference thrashed out. We'd reached the beginnings of consensus on this.

It will also be seen as an implicitly political move on behalf of WHO, and one that projects a perception of undermining the hard work we did to produce buckets of new data in the WHO report. The rest of the team are very angry about the way we've been repeatedly undermined by politics, and we're working on a communications strategy right now.

David, I'm not sure who is the US representative for WHO Covid origins negotiations. It was publicly announced that Tony would represent the US at WHO, but it may be a State Dept or other HHS person. I think it's important that Tony and perhaps Clifford know what's happening.

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: BOEHME, Catharina Cora b6
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Владимир Дедков <b6>; Leendertz, Fabian <b6> Peter Daszak <b6>; LeendertzF <b6> Keith Hamilton <b6>; John Watson <b6>; DEBBICHE, Hassene <b6> Thea Kølsen Fischer <b6> BAERT, Primaël <b6>; SHEATH, Danny b6 Nguyen, Hung (ILRI) b6 STREIJFFERT, Carlos Johan <b6>;

DRURY, Patrick Anthony <[b6]>; Ken Maeda <[(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)]>; M.P.G. Koopmans (
[b6]) [b6]
>; Hayman, David <[b6]
IVANOVIC, Dragana [b6]>; Dr. Elmoubasher Abu Baker Abd Farag <
[b6]>; Dominic Dwyer <
[b6]
Cc: RYAN, Michael J.[b6]; Dr VAN KERKHOVE, Maria[b6]; BEN EMBAREK, Peter Karim [b6]
Subject: Circular Letter to Member States - Origins of SARS-CoV-2

Dear all,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday. Please find attached for your information and on behalf of the DG our communication to member states, shared with them as a circular letter this evening. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for follow up discussions.
Please keep this confidential during the next days. We will have a member state briefing and discussion on this subject on Friday.

With my best regards,
Catharina

P.S. I hope I have the correct list of emails addresses.

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<C.L.28.2021 (Origins of SARS-CoV-2).pdf>

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Date:	Wed, 10 Mar 2021 11:29:50 PM -0500
Sent:	Wed, 10 Mar 2021 11:30:48 PM -0500
Subject:	FW: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments:	Daszak 7 8 20 Reactivation & Suspension with seven demands.pdf; NIH Response to EcoHealth Response to Suspension_10_23_20 Three further demands.pdf

Jerry, David,

Unfortunate response from Michael Lauer. Please read the email chain below – I had a zoom call with my program officers at NIAID and Matthew Fenton, who'd spoken with Michael Lauer who said he would like to talk to the scientists behind the grant, not the lawyers. I emailed him to politely request a conversation and his response is below. Not sure what to do next. I think sending him a response to the 10 demands on the grant (his two letters, attached) might be a way forwards, but I'll need to check in with lawyers first.

Any idea why he gave me this obnoxious response? Is this some sort of 3-dimensional chess I'm supposed to play or is he seriously suggesting I go to Wuhan and obtain a vial of virus (condition #1).

Maybe I'm just reading too much into it and the letters explain what I'm supposed to do?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6]g>
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 11:08 PM
To: [b6](b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6); 'Erbelding, Emily (NIH/NIAID) [E]' <[b6]; 'Cristina (NIH/NIAID) Cassetti' [b6]ost, Diane

(NIH/NIAID) [E]' <postd@niaid.nih.gov>; 'Erik (NIH/NIAID) Stemmy' <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>
Subject: Re: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06
Importance: High

Dear Matthew and all,

Thank you again for taking with me last week - it was heartening to hear that there might be a way towards resolution.

I sent an email to Michael Lauer the day after we spoke, as you suggested, asking him politely for a meeting. Unfortunately, the response today was less than genial. Both my email and Michael's response are below (the two letters he refers to are attached here). Any guidance you could give me on how to respond would be very useful.

I was thinking I could just send detailed responses to each of the conditions in the letters – there are 10 in total – explaining what I've done to address them (e.g. the WHO mission work where I asked about the missing person and database, uploading our subcontract details to the NIH system, publishing some of the data, preparing to publish more etc.). I could also explain why the majority of these conditions are just not possible to address given the current geopolitics. The problem is that if I respond in writing, the lawyers who are working for us pro bono would say that this might end up undermining any opportunity for legal action, given that they believe NIH has acted illegally with these actions. I'm willing to take the risk, but I don't understand why Dr. Lauer wouldn't at the very least explain what he expects.

What do you think the best response would be?

Cheers,

Peter

On Wed, Mar 10, 2021 at 5:37 AM Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <b6> wrote:

> Dear Dr. Daszak
>
> Attached please find two letters that I sent you previously.
>
> Sincerely,
> Michael S Lauer, MD
>
> Michael S Lauer, MD
> NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
> 1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
> Bethesda, MD 20892
> Phone: b6
> Email:

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 10:02 PM
To: "Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E]" <b6>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura <b6>, Alison Andre <b6>

Subject: Regarding 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Lauer,

I spoke yesterday with my program officer and other NIAID staff regarding our grant on the risk of coronavirus emergence (2R01AI110964-06) that includes collaboration with scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, China. Dr. Matthew Fenton joined the meeting and told me about his conversation with you about the conditions currently in place on our grant and my efforts to address some of them via my recent work in Wuhan with the WHO. He also commented that you would be willing to talk with me, as PI of this award, about a pathway to reinstate this grant. I would very much value this and am emailing to see if we can arrange a time that's suitable for you, perhaps next week if possible?

I'm cc'ing my assistant Alison Andre, who can help arrange a suitable time, and also our Chief of Staff Aleksei Chmura, who I would hope could join us, as someone who can access any relevant information on this award, and gained his own Ph.D as part of our original R01 work in China. I want to reassure you that I would not request to talk with legal counsel or bring them into a conversation, and that this would be a discussion with scientists focused on the goals of the grant, focused on research to protect us all against further coronavirus spillover.

Sincerely,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date:	Wed, 23 Jun 2021 12:36:28 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 23 Jun 2021 12:36:07 AM -0400
Subject:	Notes from Today's call
From:	Peter Daszak <b6>
To:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; peter hotez [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura <b6>; Alison Andre <b6>
Attachments:	Countering COVID anti-science attacks. Call 6.22.21.docx

Thanks very much for spending time today on "Countering COVID-19 Anti-Science Attacks".

I've written up notes, with a first shot at a paragraph description of a meeting, and who put their hand up to contact whom.

All good movements need a name. I think "Committee to counter the anti-science movement (CASM)" is a good start…Certainly feels like a Chasm's opening up before our feet these days…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Date: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 8:31:12 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 8 Sep 2021 8:29:14 PM -0400
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs
From: Peter Daszak < b6
To: Garry, Robert F [b6] Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6] Edward Holmes [b6] >; Jason Gale [b6] Rasmussen, Angie [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

That's interesting about Jesse Bloom – I wasn't aware of that work and hadn't really heard of him before this year to be honest. I suspect that like many people his view of his own research is that it's highly professionally managed and carefully controlled re. biosafety. He clearly has a different view of the work at WIV & by other leading Chinese scientists and seems suspicious of their motives in many of his public comments. This can't be based on their published work – it's often excellent. It just seems like a difficulty people have teasing apart their viewpoint about the Chinese Govt from their opinion about individual scientists. Anyone who's been on the ground in China rapidly realizes that the two are not the same.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Garry, Robert F [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Peter Daszak < [b6]; Kristian G. Anderser [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6] >; Jason Gale < [b6] Rasmussen, Angie [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6] Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and

potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6], Robert Garry [b6], Edward Holmes [b6], Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>, "Rasmussen, Angie" [b6], Robert Kessler [b6], Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Kristian G. Andersen b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: David Morens b6 >; Garry, Robert F b6 ; Edward Holmes < b6 ason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie < b6
Robert Kessler b6 >; Stephen Goldstein < b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates" in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative. However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

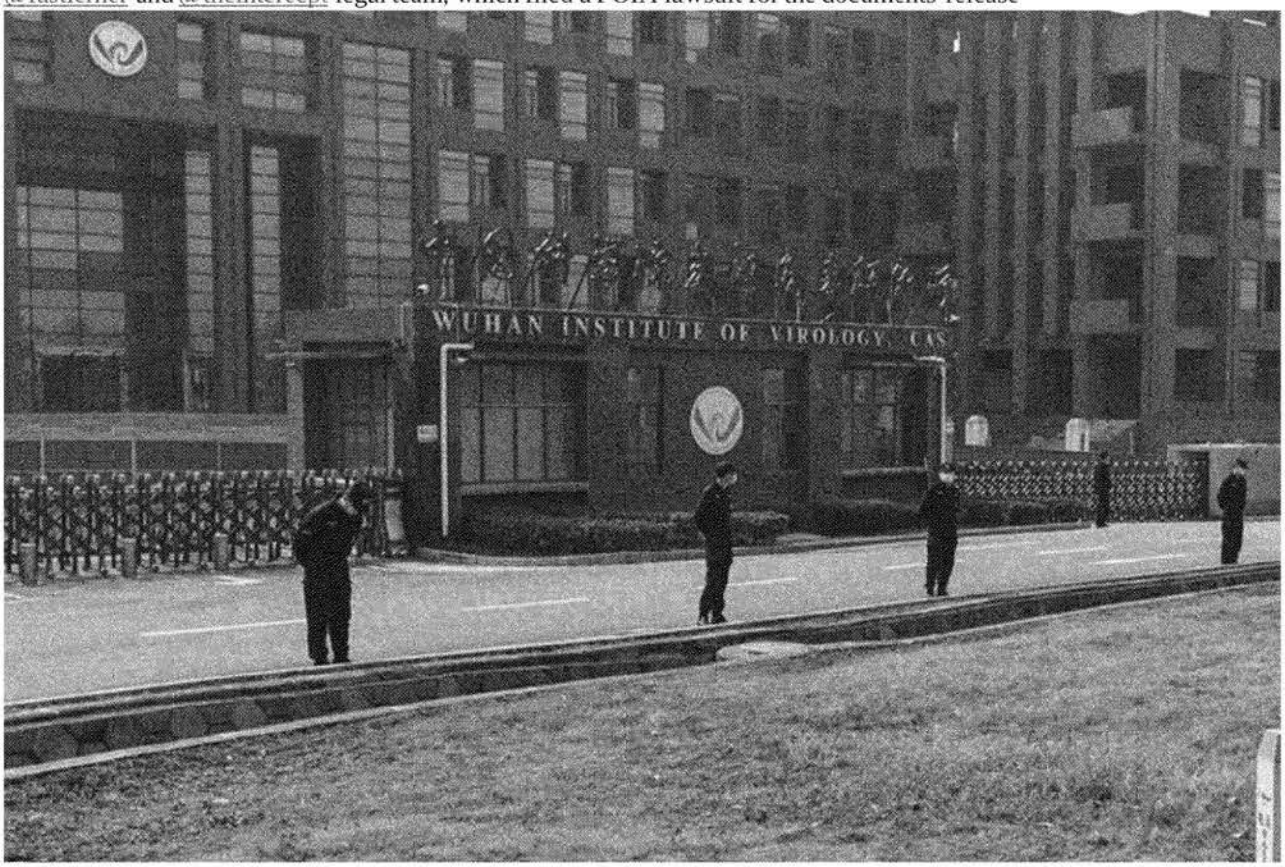
On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl

.

15h

NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release



New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
theintercept.com



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.

15h The full documents are here: “Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence”
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…
"Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"
https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…



Mara Hvistendahl
@MaraHvistendahl

.
7h
There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F b6; Kristian G. Andersen b6; Edward Holmes < b6 ason Gale b6 >; b6 ;Robert Kessler < b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.

The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.

Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Garry, Robert F[(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6]; [b6]; [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes [b6]
Cc: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6] [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6] [b6]
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

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Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes [b6] wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/

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Date: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 7:12:23 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 7:12:47 PM -0500
Subject: RE: Briefing Tony
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

No surprise about that FoIA - don't forget we've had one Republican filing a law to defund EcoHealth (https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr591/BILLS- 117hr591ih.pdf), another calling for EcoHealth to be defunded in the NY Post piece, and Pompeo banging on about Wuhan once every couple of weeks.

All of this will likely go nowhere significant, but expect more foias....

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]
[b6] >
Subject: Re: Briefing Tony

It's more in the line of govt secret, but too comp;licated to explain in an email. But I learned the tricks last year from an old friend, Marg Moore, who heads our FOIA office and also hates FOIAs.

Incidentally, Tony and I and a few other people here all got a huge FOIA yesterday seeking any and all documents, emails, etc., that mention the words "Wuhan Institute" or "WIV". It appears that this comes from folks tied to politics, who want specifically to know about anything NIH has had to do with WIV, or any scientists working with WIV. The original request was I think far broader, but we negotiated it down to just those two terms. You names will not show up in this FOIA, at least not from my info. d

--
david..... PS, I will be on Public Health Service deployment from 10 December 2020 until 23 January 2021. During this time I will have limited access to email and phone contact. Ty, dmm

Date:	Sun, 5 Sep 2021 2:33:42 PM -0400
Sent:	Sun, 5 Sep 2021 2:32:54 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: FW: ASF -– foia
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Robert Kessler [b6] >; Keusch, Jerry [b6]
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; image005.png; image013.png; image021.png; image022.png; image023.png; image024.png; image025.png; image026.png; image027.png; image028.png; image029.png; image030.png; image031.png; image032.png; image033.png; image034.png; image035.png

You're right – at some point this becomes so boring and repetitive that it doesn't get traction, but some of these reporters are really good at making up stories – checkout this doozie below…

https://thenationalpulse.com/breaking/daszak-deletes-tweet-from-wuhan-fauci-conerence/

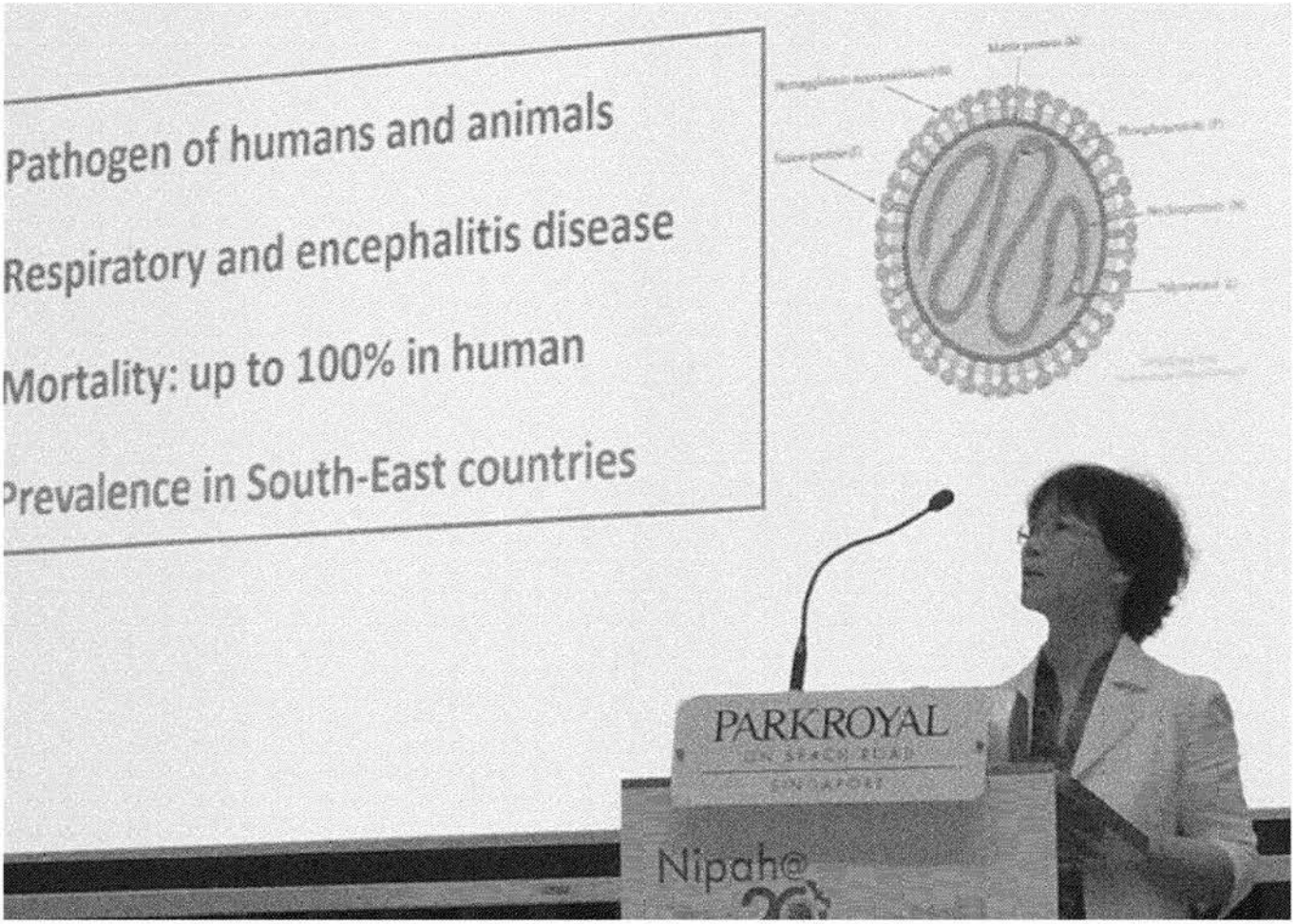
I deleted it after the lab leakers started their craziness because it has Zhengli's email address in it. The fact that I was at the conference is public knowledge and I regularly mention it to reporters – it was December 2019 just before the first cases of COVID were happening.

Cheers,

Peter

EcoHealth's Peter Daszak Deletes Tweet Revealing Wuhan Lab Researchers At Fauci-Funded Conference.

AUGUST 28, 2021 NATALIE WINTERS



SHARE THIS NEWS

EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak – the disgraced proponent of the COVID-19 "natural origins" theory and longtime collaborator of the Chinese Communist Party – deleted a tweet revealing his attendance at an event sponsored by Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases featuring Wuhan Institute of Virology researchers.

Posted on December 10th, 2019, just weeks before the Chinese government reported its first case of COVID-19, the tweet revealed Daszak's attendance at the Nipah Virus International Conference in Singapore.

"The two-day session was co-hosted by Duke-NUS Medical School (Duke-NUS) and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). Also listed as organizers are the World Health Organization and the National Institute of Allergy

and Infectious Diseases," reports the site Some Bitch Told Me. CEPI was founded with a sizable investment from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

In the now-deleted tweet, Daszak details how Shi Zhengli, the Wuhan Institute of Virology's "bat lady," calls for "open and transparent international scientific collaboration on pandemic risk pathogens" at her lab's Biosafety Level 4 (BSL-4) facility. He follows up with a slide explaining how "you can train in the BSL-4 lab in Wuhan."

Peter Daszak @PeterDaszak · 10 Dec 2019

Zhengli Shi from the Wuhan Inst of Virology describing open and transparent international scientific collaboration on pandemic risk pathogens like #Nipah at their BSL-4 lab

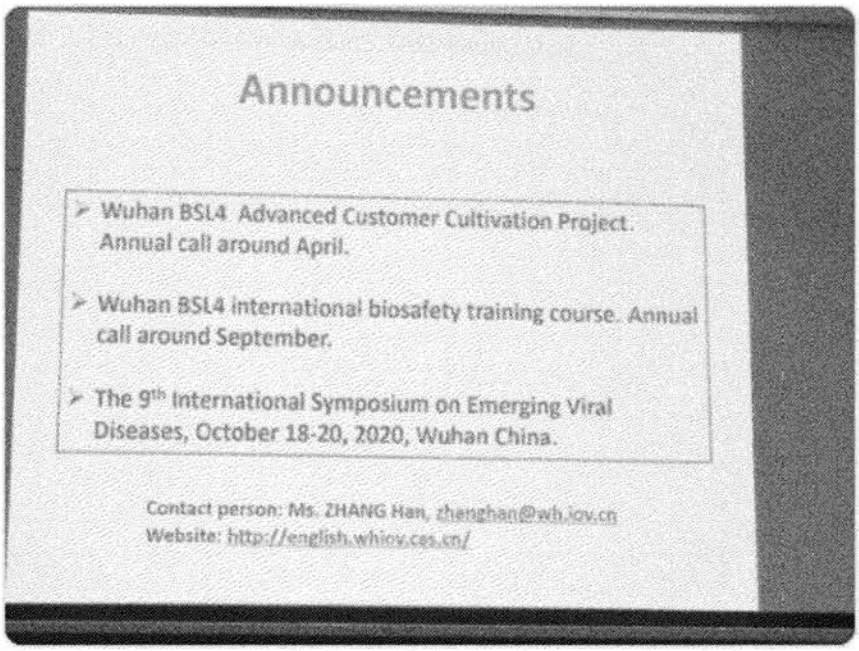


2 7

Peter Daszak
@PeterDaszak

Follow

You can train in the BSL-4 lab in Wuhan - see details below



1:08 AM - 10 Dec 2019

NOW-DELETED TWEET.

Daszak's deletion of the tweet follows The National Pulse unearthing the scientist's extensive conflicts of interest with the Chinese Communist Party and its Wuhan Institute of Virology. These ties ultimately led to his recusal from the *Lancet*

COVID-19 commission, where he used his position to discredit the "lab leak" theory and spread disinformation about the origins of the virus.

The unearthed post also follows Fauci, whose NIAID sponsored the event, denying affiliation with the Wuhan lab.

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Should Joe Biden Resign? *

- Not Sure
- No
- Yes

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Email *

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Natalie Winters

Natalie Winters is an Investigative Reporter at the National Pulse and contributor to The National Pulse podcast.

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E b6
Sent: Sunday, September 5, 2021 1:34 PM
To: Peter Daszak < b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Keusch, Jerry < b6
Subject: Re: FW: ASF --- foia

But I think that's the important thing: since there is nothing to find, there is little they can do with it. Maybe at some point these nutters will move on to another conspiracy.... d

On 9/5/2021 1:19 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Thanks for the heads-up. The 900 pages of grant material I think is the stuff we've been processing through with our lawyers. It includes the full proposal for our grant in China, reports etc. as well as our current U01. It's extremely

upsetting that these will now be dragged through the mud, but the truth is, there's nothing unusual or embarrassing in there – everything is completely normal and above board, and both were highly scored by reviewers.

In my view, this sort of stuff isn't going to get them the same level of interest that it did at the beginning of summer, so hopefully this will be another non-event, but let's see what drama they can dream up from it.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: +[b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]
Sent: Sunday, September 5, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak <[b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6] Keusch, Jerry < [b6]
Subject: Fwd: FW: ASF --- foia

Peter, have a stiffdrink before you read. But do not worry, this is thd new normal and there will be no "there" there..... d

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: ASF --- foia
Date: Sun, 5 Sep 2021 16:57:49 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] [b6]



David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health

Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, September 3, 2021 9:29 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: ASF --- foia

Further on FOIA

900 pages of EcoHealth Alliance grant materials are going out (with redactions) today under a lawsuit with First Look Institute (The Intercept). In OD.

ASF --- I do not think you need to look at this

Also, as folks may be aware, and apropos of my email late last night, Congress does not have to go through the FOIA. So the tranche from last night was not in the usual NIH FOIA channel.

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Friday, September 3, 2021 12:09 AM
To: N[b6] <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: ASF --- foia

We have closely monitored foia document releases with an eye toward items that are new/different/potentially problematic in terms of people using them to cause mischief. Nothing recently has fallen into those categories

NOW -- What is new and will be released soon, perhaps tomorrow

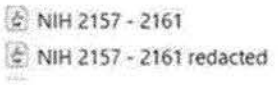
Unredacted emails requested by minority members of House Committee on Oversight and Reform

In OD, please see

HOGR minority requested emails 9/2/2021 9:03 PM

ASF I think it would be helpful for you to eyball **all** the redacted emails now being released in un-redacted form

For instance, for this entry, look at at the top one



We have gone through these, and the ones that might be worth a first look are:

- 2157-2161
- 2314-2324
- #14 and 15

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Date: Tue, 5 Oct 2021 6:21:02 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 5 Oct 2021 6:17:48 PM -0400
Subject: Talking with Elizabeth Warren's staff
From: Peter Daszak b6
To: Roberts, Rich b6 Gerald Jerry Keusch b6 David Morens b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6 >; peter hotez b6
CC: Robert Kessler b6 >;

Rich – let me know if you need any information at all prior to talking with Sen. Warren's staff. I'm happy to join you in case they have questions about the work and the negative press from the Right.

Let me know and I'll send any information that might help.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Roberts, Rich <b6
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 12:33 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >; Gerald "Jerry" Keusch <b6 David Morens < b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 >; peter hotez <b6
Subject: RE: Please help!

Peter:

Finally located a good contact at Elizabeth Warren's office.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA

Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g>
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 10:55 AM
To: Gerald "Jerry" Keusch <b6>; Roberts, Rich b6 David Morens b6 >;
Aleksei Chmura b6 >; peter hotez b6
Subject: Please help!

EXTERNAL SENDER

Sorry to do this but I'm under pressure here and Jeff sachs' latest discrediting of our name publicly is not helping. Apparently a letters been sent to my board calling on them to fire me.

It's being reported in the NY Post today. Let me know if you can't read it on this link.

https://www.google.com/amp/s/nypost.com/2021/10/01/calls- grow-for-ouster-of-wuhan-lab-tied-daszak-as-head-of-nyc-health-nonprofit/amp/

My board chair is Nancye green - she's v supportive but everyone has limits. Her email address is b6

Would you be willing to write an email to her this week to express your support for me and disgust at the way we are being attacked? It might be good to also mention that ecohealth has a critical mission that needs to stay the course through these ugly politics.

Sorry to be so blatant but I'm worried that this level of attack is hard to stand up against.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

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Date:	Thu, 17 Jun 2021 10:36:21 AM -0400
Sent:	Thu, 17 Jun 2021 10:36:15 AM -0400
Subject:	FW: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH
From:	"Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >
To:	David Morens b6 b6 >;
Attachments:	image003.gif; image004.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.gif; image004.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; 2021-06-11 Letter from Five HSGAC Members to Sec. Becerra and Dir. Collins.pdf

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 gov >
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 7:26 PM
To: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Subject: Re: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

TY! d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 16, 2021, at 19:07, Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6> wrote:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>
Date: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 11:30:55 AM
To: "Peter Daszak <b6>g>, "Keusch, Jerry <b6>" <b6>"Rich Roberts <b6>; "Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Subject: FW: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
<b6> <b6> <b6> (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
<b6> <b6> <b6>
<b6>

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 11:21 AM
Subject: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

Published 42 mins ago

GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS,

NIH

Group demands unredacted copies of Fauci emails

By **Tyler Olson | Fox News**

A group of Republican senators is demanding a trove of documents on behind-the-scenes deliberation within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) about the origin of the coronavirus and the possibility it escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Sens. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., Rick Scott, R-Fla., Josh Hawley, R-Mo., James Lankford, R-Okla., and Rand Paul., R-Ky., authored the letter asking for the documents. The letter says the "release of approximately 4,000 pages of NIH email communications and other documents from early 2020 has raised serious questions about NIH's handling of COVID-19."

The emails the senators are referring to were released by outlets like the Washington Post and Buzzfeed via Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Among the questions raised by the materials, according to the senators, are how seriously officials, including National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, took the lab leak theory before later dismissing it.

"These documents, though heavily redacted, have shed new light on NIH's awareness of the virus' origins in the early stages of the COVID19 pandemic," the senators said in a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and NIH Director Francis Collins.

2021-06-11 Letter From Five... by Fox News

"It is unclear the extent to which NIH officials, including Dr. Fauci, considered the possibility that the virus originated in a laboratory and what, if any, actions they took to seriously investigate this possibility," they continued. "It is also unclear why NIAID officials eventually decided to

downplay the likelihood that the virus originated in a laboratory and, instead, promote that it originated naturally."

The letter, sent last week but released Monday, notes a handful of highly publicized exchanges, including one email Fauci sent to his deputy, Hugh Auchincloss.

"Hugh: It is essential that we speak this AM. Keep your cell phone on," Fauci wrote in an email with a subject line that referenced gain of function research. This email was among those obtained by Buzzfeed. "Read this paper as well as the email that I will forward you now. You will have tasks today that must be done."

"The paper you sent me says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but have since been reviewed and approved by NIH," Auchincloss said in an email to Fauci, which was also published by Buzzfeed. "Not sure what that means since Emily is sure that no Coronavirus work has gone through the P3 framework. She will try to determine if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Scott said Tuesday that Americans "deserve answers" about the origins of the pandemic that shut down the economy, killed hundreds of thousands and had rippling consequences through society, from increased drug abuse to children falling behind in school due to remote learning.

"The American people deserve the truth and transparency that Senator Scott has been calling for since this pandemic started. We know the Communist Chinese government is responsible for the coronavirus pandemic, and they lied to cover it up with the help of the World Health Organization (WHO)," a spokesperson for Scott said. "It's been over a year since Senator Scott called for a congressional hearing into the WHO and its role in covering up the pandemic. Now, the American people deserve answers about how this pandemic got started and who is responsible. It's time for accountability."

The senators, all members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, are requesting unredacted copies of the recently released FOIA troves from the Washington Post, Buzzfeed and Judicial Watch.

Security personnel gather near the entrance of the Wuhan Institute of Virology during a visit by the World Health Organization team in Wuhan in China's Hubei province on Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan) (AP)

They're also requesting very broadly "[a]ll records" from Fauci, Auchincloss, Collins and several other officials "referring or relating to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, COVID-19, coronavirus, EcoHealth Alliance, or Dr. Baric's 2015 coronavirus study."

HHS did not respond to a request for comment.

The possibility that the coronavirus escaped from a Chinese lab was largely panned last year by the media and experts. But Fox News reported in April 2020 that some in the intelligence community were taking the lab leak possibility seriously. And emerging facts led many, especially Republicans, to put more stock in the theory in recent months.

House and Senate Republicans have pushed the Biden administration to release more information on the possibility that China was at fault for allowing the coronavirus to escape from a lab. This has been done through other document requests, a bill that would force the president to declassify intelligence related to the lab leak theory and more.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki and President Biden have also indicated in recent months that the administration takes the possibility of a lab leak seriously. But the White House has stood behind Fauci even as his recently released emails show he was concerned with the Wuhan Institute of Virology early in the pandemic only to dismiss the lab leak theory later.

Date: Mon, 17 May 2021 2:23:10 PM -0400
Sent: Mon, 17 May 2021 2:22:12 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Keusch, Jerry [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler [b6]
Attachments: image004.gif; image005.jpg; image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg

I spoke to him for an hour off-the-record before he wrote this (last week). He was fully on-board the conspiracy stuff, largely because Nicholas Wade is a buddy of his from NYT days and because all of the juicy half-truths that fit together quite nicely for him – RaTG13, miners etc.
I repeatedly pointed out that there is no evidence of a lab leak whatsoever, only suggestions that china covered up. I told him I asked Zhengli Shi all of the questions that these theories demand, and that the answers she gave are normal, and indicative of stuff that happens at labs (taking a database offline, getting hacked, removing images of former staff from the web etc.). I said, the only reason to follow a lab leak theory is if, therefore, you don't trust what a Chinese scientist is saying. He point blank told me he did not. I guess that's the essence of this whole thing, given that we will never have definitive proof…
He cites Ian Lipkin's comment about BSL-2 as a reason for concern. We've been doing our homework on this and I'll be sending you all a document in a couple of days with info on whether the cultivation of bat-CoVs in Wuhan at BSL-2 was appropriate or not. Turns out that in the USA we culture rabies at BSL-2 (a human pathogen), other human pathogens (e.g. Zika, including animal expts), and bat viruses (e.g. Cedar virus, a paramyxovirus close to Hendra/Nipah not known to infect people). Even chimeric Cedar virus with Nipah and Hendra genes inserted is a BSL-2 agent.
Full details to follow… Suffice it to say that this is poorly-researched, disingenuous hype from our scientist colleagues, sadly.
Cheers,
Peter

Peter Daszak
President
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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak
EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 11:42 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3
Peter, don't read this until you take a couple blood pressure pills.
I may well contact him on background and tell him he was right the first time.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)

b6 b6 b6

b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 9:49 AM
Subject: Donald G. McNeil Jr.: How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory* https://bit.ly/3olxtG3

How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Lab-Leak Theory*



Donald G. McNeil Jr.

In early spring 2020, I reported an article for The New York Times on which I put the tentative headline: "New Coronavirus Is 'Clearly Not a Lab Leak,' Scientists Say."

It never ran.

For two reasons.

The chief one was that inside the Times, we were sharply divided. My colleagues who cover national security were being assured by their Trump administration sources — albeit anonymously and with no hard evidence — that it *was* a lab leak and the Chinese were covering it up. We science reporters were hearing from virologists and zoologists — on the record and in great detail — that the odds were overwhelming that it was *not* a lab leak but an animal spillover.

Frankly, the scientists had more credibility.

The other reason my story never ran was that it was 4,000 words long and full of expressions like "polybasic cleavage site," "RNA-dependent RNA polymerase gene" and "O-linked glycan shields." Editors would open it, their eyeballs would bleed, and they would close it and find something else to do.

(Back then, editors blanched even at "spike protein" and "receptor binding domain," but we've all had a crash course in virology this year, haven't we?)

Although it never ran, others like it did elsewhere. The experts all agreed that the SARS-CoV-2 virus was not a deliberate weaponization of a previously known virus and that it had no obvious signs of lab manipulation (more details below). They noted that blood sampling showed that brief "spillovers" of animal viruses into humans happen often without causing large outbreaks. Therefore, they argued, the odds were that this was another virus that got lucky, like SARS and MERS and the 2009 pandemic flu: it had dwelled long enough inside a civet or camel or pig or something to infect human-like cells, and then had hit the big city.

For about a year, that was the general wisdom among science writers. The "lab-leak theory" migrated back to the far right where it had started — championed by the folks who brought us Pizzagate, the Plandemic, Kung Flu, Q-Anon, Stop the Steal, and the January 6 Capitol invasion. It was tarred by the fact that everyone backing it seemed to hate not just Democrats and the Chinese Communist Party, but even the Chinese themselves. It spawned racist rumors like "Chinese labs sell their dead experimental animals in food markets."

China retorting to Trump administration nonsense with nonsense of its own — such as suggesting that U.S. military officers planted the virus during a visit to Wuhan in October 2019 — did not help.

And now to the present day.

Two weeks ago, my former New York Times science news colleague Nicholas Wade wrote an article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (and on Medium) arguing that the lab-leak theory deserves a harder look.

It has since been sent to me a dozen times with notes asking "What do you think?"

My first reaction was dismissive, even though I very much respect Nick as a journalist. (Some of his work is controversial and he can be cranky, but who am I to criticize anyone on those grounds?) I covered the pandemic from its earliest days and I disagreed with his retelling of how the leak-vs.-spillover debate began.

Also, I was offended by some aspects, such as his attacks on Dr. Anthony S. Fauci of the National Institutes of Health and Peter Daszak of the EcoHealth Alliance, both of whom I have known for years; I know both are dedicated to saving lives, and they have always told me the truth — or what they honestly believed to be the truth at the time, because evidence sometimes changes. They are now both getting death threats, and that is repulsive.

The N.I.H.-funded EcoHealth Alliance does not do dangerous lab research; it doesn't even have a lab. It hunts for dangerous viruses in the field; its zoologists teach people how to safely gather samples from bats, birds, chimpanzees and other creatures fortified with claws, teeth, beaks, muscles and pathogens.

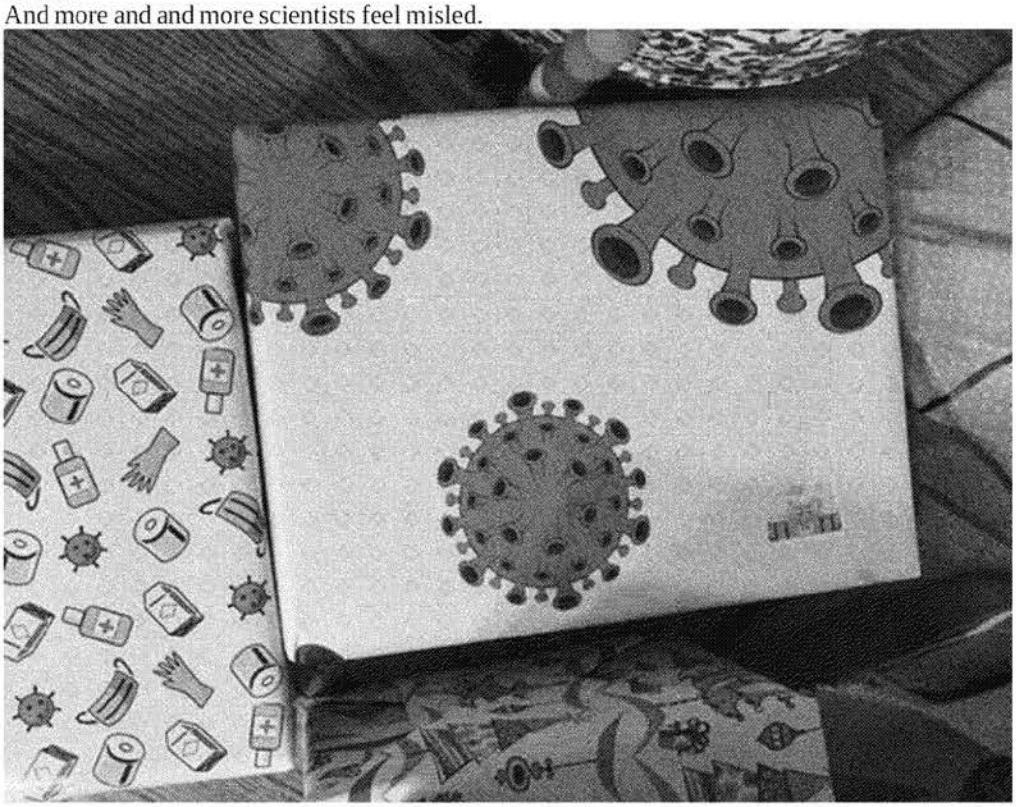
That's work I consider as essential as staffing the radar stations that watch for missiles coming over the North Pole. The Trump administration was insane to cut off funding for it. You need to know what's coming at you. Actually cooking up novel threats is a different matter, of which more below.

I was also bothered by Nick quoting Dr. Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To my mind, after being warned about the virus by his Chinese counterpart in the first week of January, Dr. Redfield failed to shout from the rooftops and move mountains — and now 600,000 Americans are dead. He also raised the specter of a flu-Covid "twindemic" that turned out to be virological alarmism.

But…but…but…but…but…

The deeper I read into the papers and articles Nick cited, the clearer it became how much new information had trickled out in the last year. Not new to the most intense and well-educated followers of this topic, but new to the greater public debate. I include articles like this, this, this, this and this by Yuri Deigin, Rossana Segretto, Milton Leitenberg, Josh Rogin, Nicholson Baker and others.

And more and and more scientists feel misled.



I now agree with Nick's central conclusion: We still do not know the source of this awful pandemic. We may never know. But the argument that it *could* have leaked out of the Wuhan Institute of Virology or a sister lab in Wuhan has become considerably stronger than it was a year ago, when the screaming was so loud that it drowned out serious discussion.

And China's lack of candor is disturbing. It denies access to the institute's lab logs and whatever messages were swapped during its own investigations, took down 2018 statements critical of lab biosecurity protocols, retaliated against Australia for advocating an open investigation and sharply restricted the W.H.O. investigators.

Calls for a better probe are mounting. Last week, 18 biologists, including leading and outspoken experts on this pandemic like the Harvard epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch and Yale immunologist Akiko Iwasaki, published a letter in Science calling for a new investigation and demanding that Chinese labs and public health agencies open their records to outside scrutiny.

To my mind, China could be forgiven for its standoffishness in early 2020. It was busy fighting its own pandemic. And if China

had, say, arrogantly offered to teach the American C.D.C. how to investigate America's killer hamburgers — the equivalent of the way the Trump administration spoke to China back then — we would have snubbed them too.

But now, 17 months later, China is persistently acting like a nation hiding something.

Also worrying: the hunt for the spillover theory's smoking gun — a very closely related natural virus in a human or an animal — has gone on for over a year. Success would mean big prizes for the discoverer — especially from the Chinese government, which could say "See??"

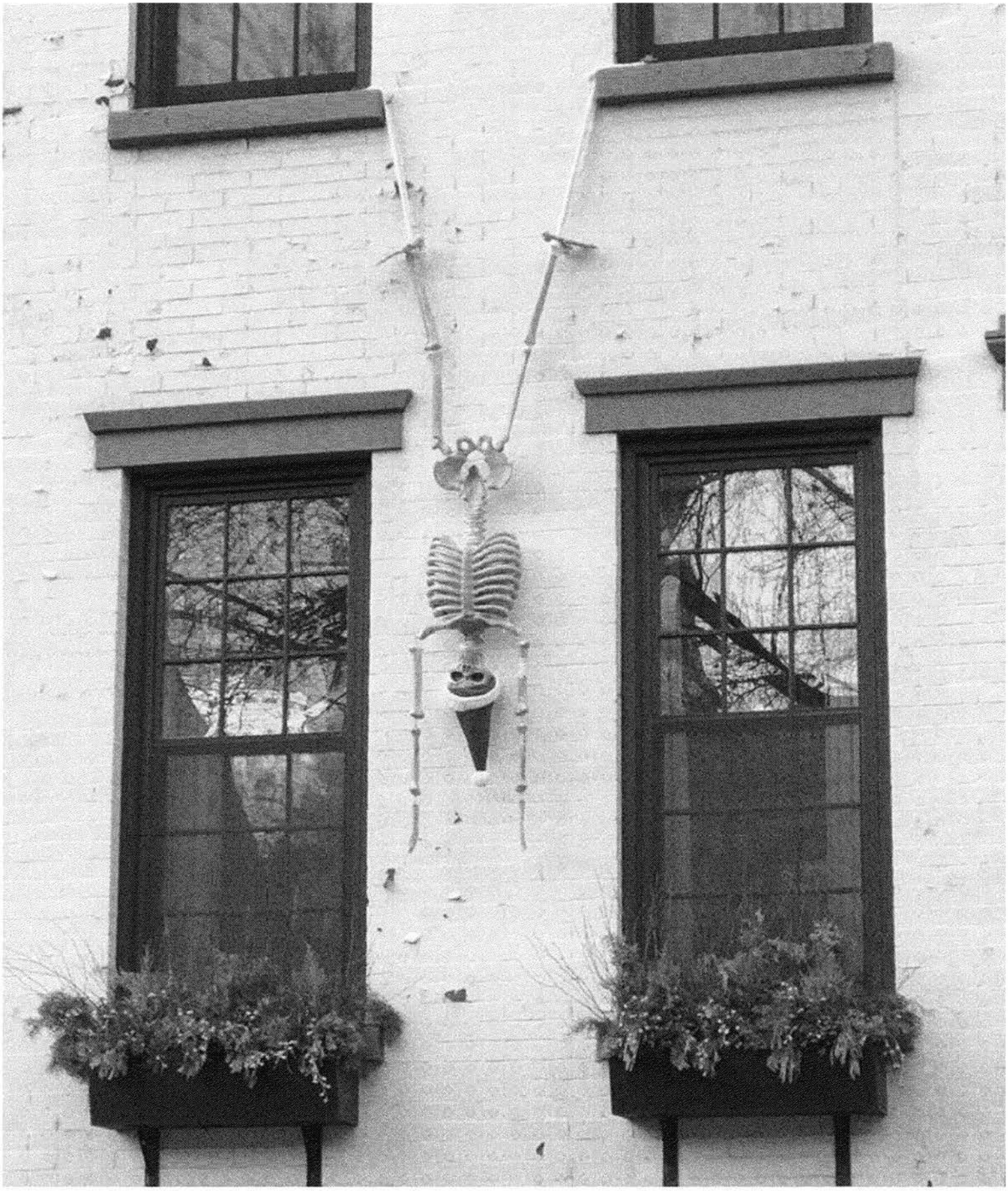
And yet — zip. That doesn't mean it won't be found. But by now we might have expected at least some smoking shell casings.

I had been skeptical of the "lab leak" theory because animal spillover is such an obvious answer. Genetics has proven that almost every disease mankind has faced jumped from animals: bubonic plague from rodents, measles probably from cows, whooping cough maybe from dogs, and so on.

Also, the leak idea was just *too* conveniently conspiratorial.

I've covered several pandemics and studied others and one element is consistent: they start in utter confusion that defies any sense that an evil genius at work. Doctors know something's wrong, but aren't sure what. That was true when American veterans started dying of pneumonia after a 1976 convention (Legionnaire's disease); when the Bronx Zoo's birds started dropping dead in 1999 (West Nile virus); when young nurses fell ill in Mexico City in 2009 (swine flu); when camel butchers died in Saudi Arabia (MERS); and when Brazilian babies were born with shrunken heads (Zika).

This pandemic's opening days were also shrouded in fog, and yes, there *was* a government coverup. But it was outed immediately and it didn't emanate from Beijing.



In late December 2019, doctors at hospitals near the Huanan Seafood Market began seeing a strange viral pneumonia they couldn't identify. On Dec. 30, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission issued a warning.

It was quickly picked by disease-alert websites like FluTrackers and ProMED; the W.H.O. put out an alert the next day. The New York Times wrote its first article on January 6, from Beijing; I started helping my China colleagues soon after.

By that time, one coverup had been underway for a week. Wuhan's politically ambitious mayor, Zhou Xianwang, was eager to protect the local party congress he had scheduled for January and the pot-luck dinner for 40,000 Wuhanese he hoped would get him into the Guinness Book of Records.

On January 1, his police silenced the nervous doctors. The Hainan Seafood Market was closed and hosed down.

That was the equivalent of trampling a crime scene. The market's wild game sellers — who might have had the infected animal, if there was one — scattered. Any live animals or fresh meat probably went to other markets or into the trash. Customers disappeared. The chance to use the market as the hub of a good epidemiological investigation was lost.

At the same time, other events occurred that looked like coverups, but maybe weren't. As soon as it was clear that the threat was a dangerous new coronavirus, the local health commission and then the national one ordered diagnostic and genetics labs to destroy their samples or surrender them to high-level biosecurity labs. Most labs chose incineration — another crime scene wrecked.

That smacked of coverup, and was treated as such by the Trump administration, but it's actually standard safety procedure to prevent outbreaks. Our C.D.C. gave the same order in 2014 when it realized that hospital labs had samples from Ebola patients being treated in Dallas and Omaha. "We told the labs in Texas and Nebraska to destroy them or send them to Fort Detrick," Dr. Pierre E. Rollin, who recently retired from the C.D.C after 26 years of fighting global outbreaks, told me. "You can call that a cover-up, but it was a public health decision."

During those first days in Wuhan, a major misconception circulated — that the virus did not spread easily between people. The W.H.O. repeated it, so did we. But that was not necessarily deliberate misinformation. With the market closed, the epicenter had scattered a few dozen cases across a city of 11 million. Very few PCR tests existed, and it was the height of flu season. At such times, it's hard to know who infected whom with what.

Also, I don't believe the image of China as a Teflon pyramid with Xi Jinping at the apex, the evil emperor who sees every sparrow that falls. It's like other big countries, even totalitarian ones: messy, with competing scientists and petty bureaucrats. Its flaws often become public despite Beijing's rigid control of the internet.

Each day back then, the rumors got more bizarre. Some scientists claimed the virus had snake genes. Others said it was part H.I.V., triggering claims that it was a bio-weapon.

Some of that fog of war lifted after Beijing sent Dr. Zhong Nanshan, the country's renowned epidemiologist, to Wuhan to demand the truth. On January 20th, Dr. Zhong warned on national TV that the virus was spreading rapidly and that outsiders should stay away. On January 23, Wuhan was cut off from the world, Mayor Xian apologized, and China launched its brutal but amazingly successful effort to crush its epidemic.

The first article I know of blaming the Wuhan Institute of Virology ran on January 26 in the Washington Times, a conservative paper founded by the Unification Church. It seemed based on two elements — the lab was in the same city (albeit nine miles from the market), and a brief, speculative quote from an Israeli biowarfare expert, Dany Shoham.

"Certain laboratories in the institute have probably been engaged, in terms of research and development in Chinese [biological weapons], at least collaterally, yet not as a principal facility of the Chinese BW alignment," the paper quoted Dr. Shoham as saying. Any work on biological weapons would be "definitely covert," he added.

When I reached Dr. Shoham by telephone later, he spoke very cautiously. He had not been misquoted, he said, but he emphasized that he had never said that deadly virus came from that lab. He had said only that it "was possible" that such a virus could have come from such a lab.

But the rumor was off and running.

Then, on February 3 — a week later — scientists from that Institute produced what smelled like a smoking gun.

They published an article on Nature's open-access website saying one of the hundreds of coronaviruses gathered from bat caves that was in their freezers was a 96.2 percent match to SARS-CoV-2.

They called it RaTG13 (indicating a *R*hinolophus *a*ffinis horseshoe bat captured in *T*ong *G*uan cave in Yunnan in 20*13*).

For conspiracy theorists, that was the clincher — if the lab had a 96 percent match, it must have leaked the killer.

But many of the world's top virologists leapt to say "Not so fast."

Coronaviruses mutate slowly, so a 4 percent mismatch in the 30,000 base pairs of the two viruses meant RaTG13 and SARS-CoV-2 had diverged maybe 40 years ago, evolutionary geneticists said.

On February 16, as rumors swirled, five of the world's top virologists got together to publish a letter on virological.org explaining why animal origin was more likely.

The letter, titled "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2," was later republished in the journal Nature.

Its basic argument was that any lab trying to make a super-dangerous virus would start with the backbone of one already known to be pretty dangerous, like 2002 SARS. This new virus was so different from SARS, especially in its receptor binding domain — the crucial bit where the spike protein binds to the ACE2 receptor on the surface of a human cell — that logically no one would have chosen it.

The binding domain was much closer to one that had been recently found in pangolin viruses, so it was likely the pandemic virus

had jumped from bats to an animal — perhaps pangolins but not necessarily.
Also, the new virus had a cleavage site unlike those in related coronaviruses. (After binding to a cell, the spike has to "cleave" or split open, to meld with the surface and inject its RNA.) The new virus's cleavage site was an unusual set of amino acids in an unusual spot on the genome. Such unexpected choices seemed more likely to happen during the constant random evolution that goes on in nature rather than the logic-driven "let's try this next" methods of a lab.
Also the virus's spikes had "glycans" which act as shields to protect them from antibodies. A virus sunbathing in a friendly lab cell culture wouldn't need to evolve shields, while a virus constantly fighting off immune system attacks because it was evolving inside an animal would, they argued.
Therefore, they concluded, "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."
The paper's first author, Kristian G. Andersen of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, is still vigorously defending the paper's basic premise — that an animal origin is by far the most likely.
But other eminent virologists, including at least one of his co-authors, are wavering.
During the uproar that ensued after the institute revealed that the RaTG13 strain was in its freezers, Dr. Daszak argued that merely having a virus in a frozen fecal pellet meant little. Infections take place only when viruses are warmed up and growing in cell cultures or animals.
Dr. Daszak had worked for years with Dr. Shi Zheng-li, the "Bat Woman" who now runs the Wuhan institute. His zoologists and field veterinarians had taught her bat-sampling — a dangerous practice even in caves with tourists in bathing suits wandering around.
Freezers contain hundreds of viruses. It is too expensive to fully sequence all of them and impossible to grow them all out in cell culture, he explained. So labs create a set of "bookmarks." They sequence one short gene, called RdRP, that seldom mutates and keep a list of their RdRPs. Sometimes they post their lists to a public database like GISAID or Genbank.
Since the world had previously been looking only for relatives of the dangerous 2002 SARS or MERS, he said, labs would care only if a virus' RdRP gene closely matched those.
"If it doesn't, it's of no interest, so you pop it back in the freezer," he said.
Later, if a new dangerous virus turns up, labs can check their bookmarks for a match, thaw that one out and sequence all of it. That was why RaTG13 was found so quickly, he said. Ditto for pangolin virus sequences found in the freezers of the South China Agricultural University.
Because there were no viruses with closer RdRP matches either in public databanks or in a private Wuhan Institute list of 630 unposted RdRP genes he had seen, he said, the Wuhan lab presumably held nothing closer than a 40-year-distant relative of the killer virus.
"Believe me, if there had been, *no one* would have kept that a secret," he said to me more than a year ago. "It would be a huge discovery. We'd be over the moon."
Dr. Shi herself later told Scientific American that, when news of the new virus erupted, her first fear was that it had come from her institute. She did not sleep for days, she said, until she had finished checking her lab's logs and assured herself that it had not.
Since then, though, more has come to light about the work done by Dr. Shi's teams.
The most startling bit of information was that, rather than "finding" RaTG13 in her freezers in February, Dr. Shi had worked with it since at least 2016, but under a different name, RaBtCoV/4991.
RaBtCoV/4991 had not been gathered at random but from a mineshaft in which miners digging bat guano got pneumonia, some fatally. Dr. Shi's lab sequenced enough of it to be able to say it was the most "SARS-like" of the viruses from that investigation.
There were arguments over whether the miners died of fungal pneumonia, viral pneumonia or both, but that link made it a likely suspect for any lab wanting to explore dangerous viruses. Not mentioning her previous work with it was troubling.
Also, Dr. Shi was trained by Ralph S. Baric of the University of North Carolina in building "chimera" viruses — taking, for example, the spike protein from a new virus and splicing it to the backbone of a known one like SARS. He invented "no-see-um" techniques that left no trace of the splice.
(Interestingly, Dr. Baric is one of the signers of the letter to Science demanding a more thorough investigation of all Wuhan labs.)
Then, to see if the new chimeras could infect people, they were tested against human airway cells and "humanized" mice — mice bred to have human ACE-2 receptors on their organs.
There is debate over whether this is truly "gain of function" research. Some argue that gain of function strictly involves taking a virus already *known* to endanger humans and trying to make it more lethal or more transmissible.
So Dr. Fauci was answering truthfully in his bitter exchange with Senator Rand Paul on May 11.
But many other scientists feel this is a distinction without a difference. They feel that building any new virus from suspect parts and then seeing if it infects humans is just as risky.
Like nuclear bomb testing, the need for "gain of function" research is hotly contested.
Proponents argue that it is the only way to stay ahead of epidemics: in a world full of emerging diseases, if you can figure out which pathogens are only a few amino acids tweaks shy of disaster, you can develop and stockpile vaccines and antibodies against them.
Opponents say that, noble as that goal may be, it is inherently too dangerous to pursue by building Frankensteins and poking them to see how strong they are.
Despite constantly rising biosafety levels, viruses we already know to be lethal, from smallpox to SARS, have repeatedly broken loose by accident.

Most leaks infect or kill just a few people before they are stopped by isolation and/or vaccination. But not all: scientists now believe that the H1N1 seasonal flu that killed thousands every year from 1977 to 2009 was influenza research gone feral. The strain first appeared in eastern Russia in 1977 and its genes were initially identical to a 1950 strain; that could have happened only if it had been in a freezer for 27 years. It also initially behaved as if it had been deliberately attenuated, or weakened. So scientists suspect it was a Russian effort to make a vaccine against a possible return of the 1918 flu. And then, they theorize, the vaccine virus, insufficiently weakened, began spreading.

Also, Dr. Shi's teams had done work on inserting cleavage sites into viruses and seeing if that enhanced their ability to infect human cells.

All this raises a disturbing possibility: What if some Wuhan scientist — someone in Dr. Shi's lab or perhaps at the Wuhan Center for Disease Control right near the market, or possibly some military scientist she trained but could not control — did something like take the likely suspect virus RaBtCoV/4991 and use it as the "backbone" for a set of chimeras with different receptor binding domains? What if that scientist was trying in 2019 to attach binding domains from viruses recently found in dying pangolins seized from wildlife smugglers in southern China? What if someone got tempted to add a cleavage site to see if that supercharged it?

What if various such chimeras were passaged through cultures of human cells or humanized mice? Wouldn't that speed up mutations into forms likely to infect humans even faster than nature can? Wouldn't that mean that something that looked like the current pandemic strain *could* emerge, polybasic cleavage sites, O-linked glycans and all?

And what if someone doing that work in a less secure lab than should have been permitted got infected before catching the subway home?

It's a lot of ifs, and it's pure speculation, which has been going on since mid-last year.

Jon Cohen of Science magazine put essentially these very questions to Dr. Shi back in August, 2020.

She said no such work took place in her lab, and that the RaBtCoV/4991 virus had only been sequenced, not isolated or grown out as a virus before the sample was used up. Everyone in her lab had tested negative for antibodies to SARS-like coronaviruses so there was no evidence of an outbreak inside, she said. And she had been assured through regular conversations with other Wuhan labs that that they had no leaks either.

Doubts have been raised about that, including the question: since Covid-19 was racing through Wuhan in early 2020, how likely would it be that *no one* in her lab tested antibody-positive? Wouldn't some have gotten infected outside?

Ultimately, much of the debate comes down to this: Is Dr. Shi telling the whole truth? And even if she is, are all her similarly skilled colleagues in Wuhan? Are they being allowed to do so by their government — which has a history of silencing scientists? Chinese scientists were allowed to interact with W.H.O. investigators only in a very tightly controlled way and very little of the report was devoted to the lab leak theory, which it all but dismissed.

Opening up the 2019 logs of every lab in Wuhan and the 2019–2020 emails between scientists and health officials would go a long way to restoring trust.

And the failure to discover any wild viruses that look like evolutionary intermediate steps on the way to SARS-Cov-2 is troubling.

So virologists are feeling more doubts.

Nick Wade quoted David Baltimore, who won the 1975 Nobel Prize for his work with viruses, as saying the specific amino acid sequences in the cleavage site made "a powerful challenge to the idea of a natural origin." (This has prompted a complex debate among evolutionary geneticists over which specific rungs on the RNA-DNA ladder are statistically most likely to appear in a bat virus.)

I spoke about Nick's article last week with Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, the renowned Columbia University virus hunter who was one of the five co-authors on the seminal "proximal origin" paper.

He favored a natural origin theory, he said, in part because he had assumed that all the Wuhan Institute's 2019 work with SARS-like viruses had been done in its top-level BSL-4 lab, which was cleared to operate in 2017. (State Department cables from 2018 raised questions about how well-run the lab was.)

But later he learned of studies with Dr. Shi's name on them showing that work he considers dangerous had been done in level BSL-2 labs, which he considers highly porous to leaks, not just in 2016, but in 2020.

"That's screwed up," he said. "It shouldn't have happened. People should not be looking at bat viruses in BSL-2 labs. My view has changed."

That is still not, as he pointed out, direct evidence of a lab leak. There *is no proof* of a leak.

But the Occam's Razor argument — what's the likeliest explanation, animal or lab? — keeps shifting in the direction of the latter.

The hardest evidence that it was an animal is still what it was early last year: On January 1, right after the market was closed down, and then again on January 12, Huazhong Agricultural University and Dr. Shi's Institute gathered almost 600 samples from the block-long warren of shuttered stalls.

Of those swabs, about six percent were positive for the virus, according to Xinhua, China's state news agency. Most came from the western end, where the wildlife was sold. And most, Dr. Shi said, were from spots near or below floor level — the handles of roll down steel shutters and the drains over the floor gutters.

Finding virus in six percent of surface samples was more than might be expected even in a hospital during flu season, Trevor Bedford, an evolutionary geneticist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle who does flu studies told me last year.

And the most logical explanation for finding that much virus on the floor and in the drains, he speculated, was not coughing

humans. It was the blood of a butchered animal being sloshed around as the market was hosed out.

Yes, there were cases in early December with no connection to that market, but that's not impossible. Livestock is shipped in batches, Wuhan has other live markets. Also, viruses are known to create "stuttering chains of transmission" as they become more transmissible. We've seen the rise of increasingly transmissible variants this year and we know this virus alternates between rare transmission and superspreading.

And the wildlife trade is not some dinky smuggling operation. As the W.H.O. report detailed, there are large farms in China raising civets, badgers and other formerly wild animals for food. A bat virus could have raced through them, adapting itself to more human-like animals, the same way the human virus raced through Dutch mink farms.

Also, farmers all over Asia enter caves to dig bat guano for garden fertilizer. A study Dr. Daszak's alliance did on villagers living near caves found that three percent had antibodies to bat viruses. That translates to up 7 million inhabitants of rural southeast Asia potentially catching such viruses each year. There may be many small outbreaks that die out without spreading far. Ebola did that at least 19 times we know of between 1976 and 2014, the year the virus reached a big city for the first time.

So there we are. All we have so far is speculation, and all the explanations are unsatisfactory.

The whole thing may just be a cold case, and stay that way forever. But there are more embers left to sift. The whole world, China included, needs a hard answer, *whoever* is to blame — so we can prevent this from happening again.

**The title is from the 1964 film "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love The Bomb," which is about human lies and safety failures — and ends with clips of atomic weapons tests depicted as the real thing. Not that I think the pandemic is funny. But neither is nuclear war.*

Donald G. McNeil Jr.

New York Times, 1976–2021. Global health beat 2002–2021. Last assignment: lead reporter on the Covid-19 pandemic.

b6

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Date: Mon, 25 Oct 2021 6:37:15 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 25 Oct 2021 6:36:35 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Short version of our response to NIH - bullets for sharing.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]

Thanks for the comments David – I'll incorporate them today.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens <[b6]
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 6:31 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]g >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Short version of our response to NIH - bullets for sharing.

Peter, this is an excellent draft. I will suggest some wordsmithing tweets later today. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Oct 25, 2021, at 00:22, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:
>
> David,
>
> Attached is a single sheet with bullets explaining why Dr. Tabak was wrong and hopefully convincing folks at NIH to stop criticizing EHA's reporting compliance.
>
> Please don't share the full letter yet – we'll edit that and get it to NIH by Tuesday hopefully.
>
> I'm also worried that folks at NIH might use it to further twist the knife so they can avoid looking like they made a mistake

– which they did!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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Date: Thu, 8 Jul 2021 1:46:58 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 8 Jul 2021 1:45:46 PM -0400
Subject: RE: And to Bernard Roizman
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6]

Agree with you reaching out in this way Jerry. It's fine to be contrarian and also to state that it's possible a lab leak happened, but at some point it's good to be on the right side of history – pretty sure that there'll be no damning lab leak evidence, but plenty of damning wildlife farm stuff coming down the pike…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 1:22 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]; David Morens ([b6]
Subject: And to Bernard Roizman

I don't expect to hear back from either of them, but it is at least an attempt to get them to rethink and refine what they said and what concerns they had.

Jerry

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 1:17 PM
To: [b6]
Subject: RE: Lancet Letter

Dear Professor Roizman,

I expect you have seen the Lancet letter, which was published online earlier this week (attached). You may not have seen some of the press reports about the message it contains. I am attaching several of the reports I saw yesterday which I compiled in one file, and another from DC based Washington Examiner I saw this morning. While most have been objective in reporting on what we say in the Lancet, a few continue to emphasize the view that the Chinese in one way or another are responsible, and take note that two prominent scientists who signed the Lancet letter of February 2020, including you and Peter Palese did not sign the new letter. Your brief comments in the Wall Street Journal in May of this year, as well as quotes from Peter, are being used as evidence for the lab leak speculation, but I see no data being offered.

It is essential for science to be clear, objective and transparent about what we know and what valid scientific evidence is available to base our conclusions until new information becomes available which requires us to revise our views. As you know and taught for decades, science is always working on the basis of a working assumption, which is another way of saying the scientific method. There is new science to support the evolution of CoV-2 in nature, which I am sure you have seen, and a very new preprint of a review of the origins just published by Eddie Holmes and a group of highly respected colleagues around the world, which I am also attaching for your convenience.

Because your decision to decline signing the new letter to Lancet is now being used to promote confusion about the most likely story although the scientific evidence is so one-sided I simply want to say it would greatly help the scientific community to pursue good science if you were to expand on your comments – what is it that 24 of your cosigners of the 2020 letter have missed? Your views carry weight. I don't mean to offend you by this email, and in reality I am writing because I think highly of you and respect your scientific productivity. If there is really something significant and serious behind your quoted comments it remains opaque to me, and 23 others who signed the new letter. I always keep in mind a takeoff on the Washington Post's tagline, Science Dies in Darkness. Our responsibility as scientists is to shed light.

Jerry Keusch

Gerald T. Keusch, M.D.
Professor of Medicine and International Health
Boston University School of Medicine
Associate Director, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories
620 Albany Street
Boston, MA 02118

From: Roizman, Bernard [BSD] - MIC b6
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 8:52 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: Lancet Letter

Dear Professor Keusch

I am responding to your e-mail. It is with deepest regret that **I must decline** to sign the letter

intended for publication in Lancet.
My reasons are personal.
In due time I hope to have the opportunity to discuss the issues with you.
Sincerely,

Bernard Roizman Sc. D.
Joseph Regenstein Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus
Departments of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and Cell Biology
The University of Chicago

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Date: Tue, 23 Feb 2021 6:08:22 PM -0500
Sent: Tue, 23 Feb 2021 6:08:20 PM -0500
Subject: Re: Briefing Tony
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Great - I'll look out for emails and will make sure I'm available. I'll be brief and to the point - I can do a short overview of the mission and respond to any questions on any topic we covered during the month in China

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On Feb 23, 2021, at 2:35 PM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] > wrote:
>
> Thanks for reminding me, but I am pretty sure it is OK now to use my NIH email because 1) I haven't been a bad boy, and 2) the brown shirts have left town, and 3) it is no loger a cardinal sin to know Dr. Daszak!
>
> However, your point is well taken, as I often do say subversive things without realizing it.....
>
> I wonder what Tony is thinking about Peter's grant situation. He hasn't told anyone as far as I know, and we won't bring it up. he might do so, but I would be surprised.
>
> Also, Peter, I heard t5hat he want's Cliff Lane to be on that call. You may remember that Cliff went to China last spring to look at the COVID situation. david
>
> --
> david..... PS, I will be on Public Health Service deployment from 10 December 2020 until 23 January 2021. During this time I will have limited access to email and phone contact. Ty, dmm

Date: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 12:38:58 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 2 Oct 2021 12:38:56 PM -0400
Subject: Re: Please help!
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] peter hotez [b6]

Yes absolutely. It's usually better to email on a week day. Would Monday be OK or do you think quicker reaction to that awful paper is better?
Jerry

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 2, 2021, at 12:32 PM, Roberts, Rich [b6] wrote:

Peter:

Finally located a good contact at Elizabeth Warren's office.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, October 2, 2021 10:55 AM
To: Gerald "Jerry" Keusch [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; peter hotez [b6]
Subject: Please help!

EXTERNAL SENDER

Sorry to do this but I'm under pressure here and Jeff sachs' latest discrediting of our name publicly is not helping. Apparently a letters been sent to my board calling on them to fire me.

It's being reported in the NY Post today. Let me know if you can't read it on this link.

https://www.google.com/amp/s/nypost.com/2021/10/01/calls- grow-for-ouster-of-wuhan-lab-tied-daszak-as-head-of-nyc-health-nonprofit/amp/

My board chair is Nancye green - she's v supportive but everyone has limits. Her email address is [b6]

Would you be willing to write an email to her this week to express your support for me and disgust at the way we are being attacked? It might be good to also mention that ecohealth has a critical mission that needs to stay the course through these ugly politics.

Sorry to be so blatant but I'm worried that this level of attack is hard to stand up against.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

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Date: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 6:49:51 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 6:49:39 PM -0400
Subject: 2 political developments yesterday
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6];

Just keeping on top of these actions:

First, there was a Bipartisan Bill from Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on China interference that I sent emails about a couple of weeks ago. It's a huge bill mainly focused on IT and competition, but Section 214 p. 118 refers to COVID origins and EHA's work. It's not very invasive – the request would be a report from respective agencies within 180 days of enacting bill. https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/BILLS- 117s1169is/summary Full bill as presented here: https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/DAV21598%20- %20Strategic%20Competition%20Act%20of%202021.pdf . Yesterday it was debated in Committee and approved 21-1 (dissenter was Rand Paul). The hearings are recorded and you can listen to them here https://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/protecting- us-biomedical-research-efforts-to-prevent-undue-foreign-influence. Interestingly Michael Lauer from NIH testified, but stuck entirely to their (somewhat overzealous in my opinion) efforts to prevent misuse of NIH data/undisclosed funding from China etc. His written testimony is here: https://www.help.senate.gov/download/testimony/lauer- testimony

Second, with likely no chance of going anywhere, Sen. Josh Hawley (R), who's a fairly rabid Trumpian (the only senator to oppose the anti-Asian Hate Crimes Bill), put out a draft Bill to "declassify Wuhan Lab Covid origins intelligence". Details are in this write up from his website: https://www.hawley.senate.gov/hawley- braun-introduce-bill-requiring-biden-declassify-wuhan-lab-leak-intelligence

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Tue, 18 May 2021 5:42:53 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 18 May 2021 5:42:32 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Not to be shared, see attachment
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] keusch, Gerald T [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.png

…and that's the correct determination, from my understanding of these rules. This is the creation of chimeras from a known pathogenic human virus – SARS-CoV – so it's covered by the rule, but Ralph began this work before the pause and produced them during that period, so asked permission to continue and NIH granted that.

All other work, including that conducted at WIV and that planned (but not conducted) by our now-suspended grant did NOT involve SARS-CoV, and concerned bat-CoVs that have never been shown to infect people, i.e. was not covered by the rule and therefore was deemed NOT to be GoF when NIH reviewed the grant, and reviewed the annual research plans.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 5:33 PM
To: dasz >> Peter Daszak [b6]>; keusch, Gerald T <[b6]; Roberts, Rich <[b6]
Subject: Not to be shared, see attachment

-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: FW: Sen Paul tweet
Date: Tue, 18 May 2021 21:20:15 +0000
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 sistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 5:14 PM
To: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Sen Paul tweet

Determination from NIAID.

From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 4:46 PM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: Sen Paul tweet

He links to this document
https://www.sciencemag.org/sites/default/files/documents/43088final.pdf

page 64 is letter to NC

"may include…"

October 21, 2014

Ms. Sherrie Settle
Director, Proposal Management
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Office of Sponsored Research
Administrative Office Bldg, Suite 2200
104 Airport Drive #1350
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-1350

RE: 5U19 AI107810-02

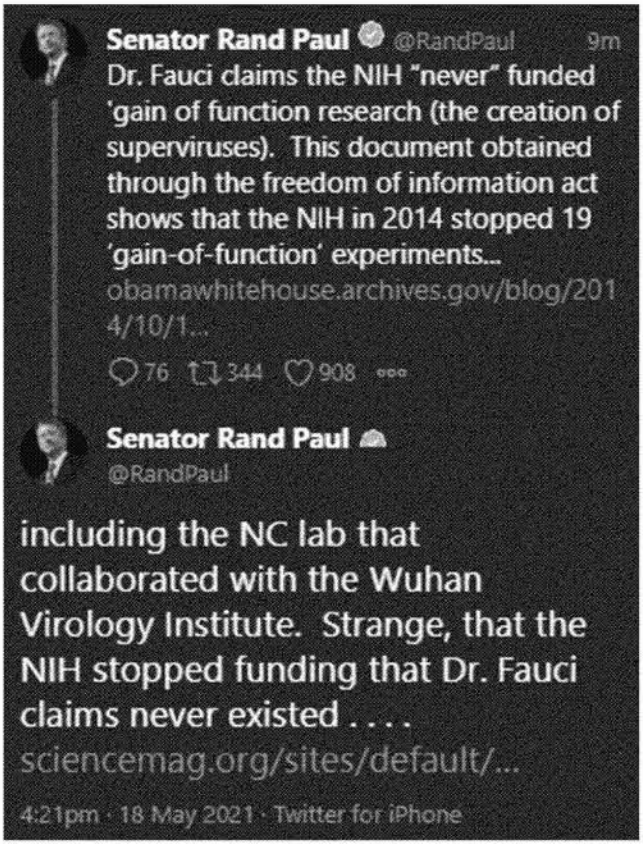
Dear Ms. Settle:

NIAID has determined that the above referenced grant may include Gain of Function (GoF) research that is subject to the recently-announced U.S. Government funding pause (http://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/gain-of-function.pdf), issued on October 17, 2014. The following specific aims appear to involve research covered under the pause:

Project 1: Role of Uncharacterized Genes in High Pathogenic Human Coronavirus Infection - Ralph S. Baric, PhD- Project Leader

- Specific Aim 2. Novel functions in virus replication in vitro.
- Specific Aim 3. Novel functions in virus pathogenesis in vivo.

From: Crawford, Chase (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 4:32 PM
To: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6; Billet, Courtney (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Haskins, Melinda (NIH/NIAID) [E]; Selgrade, Sara (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Subject: for awareness



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Date: Tue, 13 Apr 2021 12:43:19 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 13 Apr 2021 12:43:17 PM -0400
Subject: FW: Documents re: EcoHealth Alliance grant
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6; David Morens b6
b6

Here is the other email from Meredith. At least she reinforces that the news is the October letter from Lauer.

I read my initial note to them again. I love my reference to the Sec State, which can in the future give rise to the lyrical "Blinken, Blanken and Nod".

From: Meredith Wadman b6
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 8:23 PM
To: Jon Cohen b6 >; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Subject: RE: Documents re: EcoHealth Alliance grant

Jerry,

Thanks for the long and thoughtful email.

I agree with Jon on almost everything—I am sorry not to see a way forward to report more on this but the fact is, unless and until the Chinese government allows an exhaustive examination of the Shi lab, its frozen specimens and its records, with interviews of all the staff, the lab escape theory will never be put to rest. And I am willing to wager the Chinese will never, ever allow this.

Where I guess I depart from Jon is on the "the truth will out" optimism. Even if incontrovertible evidence is found of an intermediate mammalian host, the true believers will continue to truly believe, along with those who believe the 2020 election was stolen.

Jon, the new-ish info I believe Jerry's referring to (Jerry correct me if I'm wrong) was this letter from October 2020 from NIH's Mike Lauer to Daszak et al imposing more conditions and demands on the restarting of the grant.
https://www.nlcampaigns.org/NIH_Response_10_23_20_further_demands.pdf

Best regards,

Meredith

Meredith Wadman, BM, BCh
Senior Reporter
Science Magazine
1200 New York Avenue N.W., #1144
Washington, D.C. 20005

Email: b6
Cell and Signal: b6
Twitter: @meredithwadman

From: Jon Cohen b6
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 6:23 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Meredith Wadman
Subject: Re: Documents re: EcoHealth Alliance grant

Hi Jerry,

The problem I have with the origin story is there are no new data. It's just an endless rehashing of speculations, and the expectation that the WHO team would come up with convincing data was absurd. I saw the WHO mission as opening a door to get at some questions, but I did not think the lab origin hypothesis would or could be seriously investigated with China's cooperation. As for Peter's involvement, the conflict of interest exists, but we long have balanced perceived conflicts of interest with expertise. And he surely had no more COI than the 17 Chinese scientists on the mission. If the other international scientists wanted to ignore his input, there were 16 of them. I find the complaint a head scratcher. Josh Rogin is doing what journalists do when they write a questionable story: He's doubling and tripling down. He has no solid evidence of anything, but he surely has an opinion.

All that said, I don't see a clear story that moves the ball forward. Yes, this is surrounded by politics. But truth will out. Something will surface, I am confident, that clarifies origin. Until then, theories will thrive.

I didn't see anything newsowrthy on Roberts' website. Is there something you can point to that's specific and newsworthy?

I much appreciate the note.

Best,

Jon

On Apr 12, 2021, at 2:05 PM, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

I'm sure you know that the follow up letters detailing the escalating demands from NIH and the conditions they set for restoring EcoHealth Alliance's access to the suspended funding have been posted on Rich Roberts website (https://www.nlcampaigns.org/), which means they are accessible to the interested public. While there is a lot of attention currently being given to the WHO report after their visit to China, most of it is critical in an unreasonable and unhelpful manner. In fact, on January 13, before the team was in China, Kai kupferschmidt cites Marc Lisitch as follows: "the WHO team will need to consider the hypothesis that the virus was accidentally released from the lab, says epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health: 'Otherwise, the report won't have done its job.' " That was before they got started, setting up preconditions that might be considered a bit presumptuous following two week of quarantine conversations and just two weeks of field visits and interviews in person. Afterwards Lipsitch tweeted: Marc Lipsitch@mlipsitch·Mar 22 To be explicit, the @WHO mission's conclusion that a lab accident was unlikely was unjustified (as @alisonannyoung notes they are frequent) but even if true, global pandemics are also uncommon, so by definition the sequence of events leading to one do not happen all the time." Since the report was published, however, WHO through Peter Ben Embarek and interviews by team members including Peter Daszak, have been trying to make it clear to anyone who can stop talking long enough to listen to what they are saying is that this was an initial visit and much more must be done to dig into the actual data and follow the leads before a reasonable assessment of the origin can be prepared. By ranking the hypotheses by their likelihood, based on what we know about emergence, does not preclude reviewing all of them by a future independent team of experts assembled by WHO, even the same group as the first time. To me it just puts the onus on the primary need to spend time and resources on what must be the initial spillover events in nature *whether or not there was a later unintentional leak from a lab*, which is critical to understand how we can preempt such events in the future at the source. You can't do that with an unintentional release of an agent from a lab by a worker who is unknowingly infected, even when the best safety and security standards are adhered to (and as you know, the ability to read the infamous State Department cables from 2018 put an entirely different spin on the limited technical staff at the lab, as Pompeo and then Trump tried to do. Tedros' more recent comments, which seem to undercut and push back on his own team, seems to must be influenced by external political pressures – maybe even the Biden administration trying to appear tough on China too, maybe implying it would impact funding decisions for WHO work, even though we don't talk about the China virus or Kung flu any more. And were the conditions reversed and the Chinese were attacking us for unintentionally releasing a deadly infectious agent from a USG lab would we accede to their demands to inspect the Ft. Detrick lab? After all, the only episode I know where there might have been a deliberate release of a pathogen is the anthrax letters in the US, potentially involving USAMRID scientist Bruce Ivins.

Something needs to be said in a high level, professional, scientific and evidence based publication to counter the strange conspiratorial opinion piece by Josh Rogin in the Washington Post and more subtle reports from others, including Marc Lipsitch. What we need is to be more thoughtful and discrete, and while Blanken's most recent comments about China

and the origins of CoV-2 were slightly less aggressive than previous comments, they failed to strike a note that might actually generate more communication with the Chinese. I was interviewed by a Wall Street Journal senior reporter on Friday, and even he sounded better than Rogin and Blanken. I think the political issues surrounding the WHO choice of Peter Daszak to serve on the team, while rejecting three nominees from the US government, all of whom seemed technically competent, speaks volumes. Peter is expert in the transmission pathways from bats to people, has worked to identify bat coronaviruses with WIV and so has a personal and professional relationship which is the basis of scientist to scientist trust, and he understands wildlife spillover pathways like few others in the world and deserved to be appointed by his credentials. But to reject three reasonable US nominees and pick Peter also says something about the surrounding issues, and why the US government should be grateful to Peter for taking on this assignment. It is totally inappropriate to attack him by inferring he has conflicts of interest and cannot be objective. The reason he is a member of NAM, chairs the Forum on Microbial Threats, chaired the Vital Directions report on pandemic preparedness, and chairs the Lancet Task Force on COVID origins, spread, and One Health implications is because he is one of the best qualified people in the world.

I am a friend and colleague of his I have a lot of direct connections with him. I funded his proposal to Fogarty in 2002 under the Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases Initiative, which was renewed in 2012 long after I left. He was on a NASEM committee I co-chaired in 2007-2008 on a sustainable surveillance system for zoonotic EIDs, we served together on the Forum on Microbial Threats for many years, he chaired the Vital Directions committee I was appoint to by Victor Dzau, he is chairing the Lancet Task Force I was appointed to, and we planned to link EcoHealth Alliance and our BU BSL-4 lab in our separate submission to the EID Research Center grant program from NIAID, in which he was successful and we were not – and we continue to discuss our role in his program. All of this presents more than a perception of potential COI for me. It will require a clear separation and a totally objective platform to write about these pressures from conservative congressmen to "journalists", conspiracy theorists, and those who just see an opportunity to oppose what used to be called gain of function research, not because there was anything but a natural origin to CoV-2 but because the controversy provides the chance to call for restrictions of what can and should be researched even within high and maximum containment laboratory facilities.

But you two can, and whatever you might pick up on it will carry weight and be heard and respected. That's why I'm writing to you now in the hope that if you aren't already thinking about the newsworthiness and importance of this what I am talking about in this email might stimulate you to think about it.

Jerry Keusch

Date: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 10:24:20 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 10:22:07 PM -0400
Subject: RE:
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

It elevates their status.

By the way - second night running that I've had crank calls at home on our landline.

It seems like from the minute I wake up till the minute I sleep, it's 100% lab-leak garbage.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 8:56 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Subject:

Katherine Eban who did the Vanity Fair article is now on TV peddling conspiracy…. Shameless…. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date:	Wed, 30 Jun 2021 11:01:55 AM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 30 Jun 2021 10:56:28 AM -0400
Subject:	For the 'Attacks on science' file
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Rich Roberts [b6] peter hotez [b6] David Morens [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC:	Robert Kessler [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.png; Gain-of-Function Advocate's Partner Serves On Lancet's COVID-19 Committee. - The National Pulse.pdf; SCALP_ Daszak Recused from COVID Commission After National Pulse Exposés_.pdf

Dear all,

I'm very conscious of not loading up your email inboxes with the issues that are going on, and agree with Rich Roberts that the big issue here is how the right wing media and others are conducting a largescale attack on science, rather than constantly being inundated with lab leak emails.

To that end, I want to give you a concrete example from today of how the media is expanding its anti-science attacks (https://thenationalpulse.com/breaking/baric- partner-serves-on-lancet-vaccine-committee/). National Pulse is a right wing online press that's been pushing the lab leak and anti-vaccine issue, and a campaign against Dr. Fauci (and myself). They are now targeting a colleague of Ralph Baric who was the lead on the Remdesivir work – Tim Sheahan. This is the same playbook as they have done with Tony Fauci, with me, Peter Hotez and even the climate scientists in the past. They start agitating to remove them from committees by publicizing their membership and how they think it is inappropriate. They put pressure on funders, on the committee members, on the organizers, and on politicians, and look to have scientists removed.

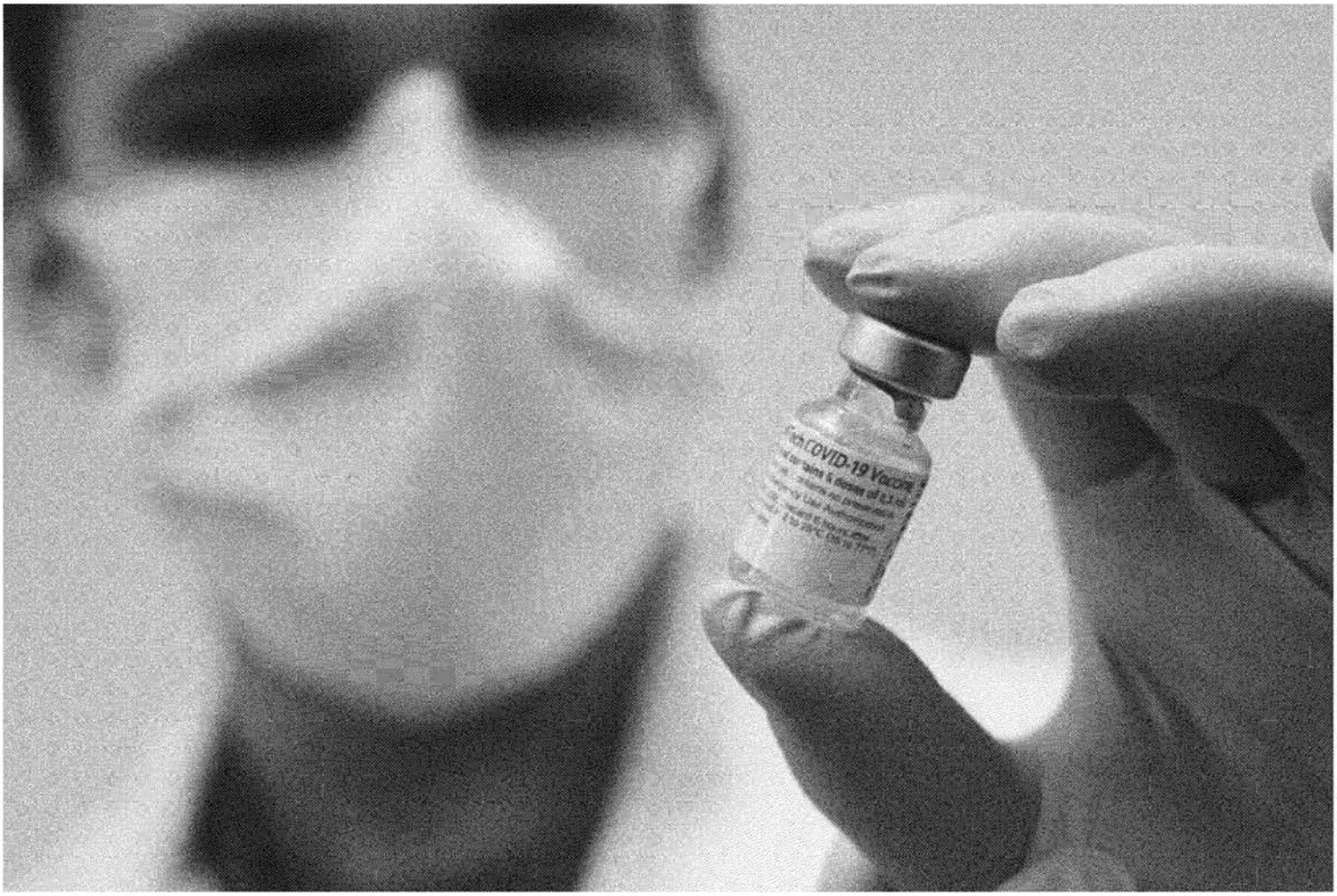
The same journal published a piece called "SCALP: Daszak recused from covid commission after repeated national pulse exposes" last week (https://thenationalpulse.com/breaking/scalp- daszak-recused-from-covid-commission-after-repeated-national-pulse-exposes/). They are now moving on to their next target. This is a small operation, but like Steve Bannon's podcasts, it is widely read by right wingers, circulated and amplified by others, and then reaches the mainstream right wing press like the WSJ, NY Post and others. That's a demonstrable pattern I've seen repeatedly with my own negative attacks.

In the next couple of days, I'll update our docment re. calling for a NASEM meeting to focus on countering the anti-science agenda, and I believe these are further examples of this issue.

I've copied the article below, and attached both articles as pdfs above.

Gain-Of-Function Advocate's Partner Serves On Lancet's COVID-19 Committee.

JUNE 29, 2021 NATALIE WINTERS



A longtime research partner of Dr. Ralph Baric – a Wuhan Institute of Virology collaborator who's advised on how to "make money" from pandemics – remains on the *Lancet* journal's COVID-19 commission.

Dr. Timothy Sheahan's position on the Vaccines and Therapeutics committee of the *Lancet* task force, which recently recused EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak, represents yet another conflict of interest for the Chinese Communist Party-linked commission.

has worked alongside Baric for nearly two decades, including working at his lab while in graduate school and later teaching at the same institution: the University of North Carolina (UNC) Chapel Hill Gillings School of Global Public Health.

"In 2003, he came to UNC Chapel Hill for graduate school joining the laboratory of Ralph Baric to study how the recently emerged SARS coronavirus had jumped from wild animals into humans," Sheahan's bio notes. After working for pharmaceutical industry giants such as GlaxoSmithKline, Sheahan returned to UNC to serve as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Epidemiology, where Baric also teaches and conducts "gain-of-function" research with his "longtime collaborators" at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"Long before the novel coronavirus began its spread across the world, Ralph Baric and Timothy Sheahan were suiting up in full-body protective equipment," a profile on the researchers notes. The October 2020 article documents the pair's robust collaboration on coronavirus research and joint "partnerships" with pharmaceutical companies:

Sheahan has been interested in coronaviruses for a long time as well. The 2002 SARS outbreak caught his attention while working as a lab technician at Harvard Medical School and Mass General Hospital. At the time, he'd already been researching graduate schools and soon stumbled across the Baric Lab. He began working there as a Ph.D. student in 2003. Now an assistant professor, Sheahan continues to collaborate with Baric, studying coronaviruses and, specifically, striving to create vaccines and drugs to stop them.

Thanks to a partnership with biotech company Gilead Sciences, Baric and Sheahan were already testing a drug to combat coronavirus replication before the one that causes COVID-19 hit the world. Remdesivir was first used as an antiviral to treat patients with Ebola virus, and it was Sheahan and Baric who discovered that it could also work against all coronaviruses they tested, including SARS-CoV-2. Their studies supported the use of remdesivir in the first U.S. COVID-19 patient.

Beyond Sheahan's ties to the pharmaceutical industry appearing to pose a conflict of interest, his longstanding relationship with Baric also calls into question his role on the *Lancet* committee.

MUST READ: **'Risk Of Being Bitten By Bats Still Exists': Wuhan Lab ERASED Reports Of Bats Biting Researchers.**

The National Pulse unearthed video of Baric lecturing conference attendees on how to "make money in the next pandemic." Speaking over a slide labeled "Global

Catastrophe: Opportunities Exist," Baric details stocks and industries that surged during the Ebola outbreak:

"I wanted to give you good news. There are winners out there, right? So if you ever want to be prepared and make money in the next pandemic, if that's what you want to do, buy stock in Hazmat suit makers and protective clothing or companies that make antiviral drugs for that particular pandemic."

"Some products do well. 1918 including masks, same thing today," he advises in the 2018 speech.

Baric also posits that "pandemics really are times of opportunity" before reiterating "there is an opportunity for people to have political gain, financial gain, and personal gain during times of social upheaval, and that will probably occur."

Does China Owe Reparations for COVID-19? *

- No
- Yes
- Not Sure

Your e-mail is required to confirm your vote. This is to stop spammers. If you use a fake email, your vote won't be counted.

Email *

Submit



Natalie Winters

Natalie Winters is an Investigative Reporter at the National Pulse and contributor to The National Pulse podcast.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date:	Tue, 15 Jun 2021 4:51:13 PM -0400
Sent:	Tue, 15 Jun 2021 4:50:52 PM -0400
Subject:	RE: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX
From:	Peter Daszak <b6>
To:	Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Keusch, Jerry b6 Rich Roberts b6
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg

Really good to see this – the 2nd sentence in particular is extremely valuable:

"However, misinformation, unsubstantiated claims, and personal attacks on scientists surrounding the different theories of how the virus emerged are unacceptable, and are sowing public confusion and risk undermining the public's trust in science and scientists, including those still leading efforts to bring the pandemic under control."

The comment about "minimizing conflicts of interest" and implying that natural origin and lab leak are just two scenarios worth investigating, is of less use – the WHO mission is the only viable game in town to do this work, and I've been accused of having 'egregious' conflicts and this was pointed to in the Science letter that David Relman coordinated. Can't help this undermines my role in the work. It also undermines the WHO work, which clearly indicated that one of these scenarios was far more likely. Given the paper in Nature on live wildlife trade in Wuhan this week, and the paper in Cell on another close virus from bats in China, it seems one is clearly more worth our concern than the other – that's how science works, is it not – hypothesis, data, thesis (conclusion)…?

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 4:42 PM
To: Peter Daszak; b6 Keusch, Jerry; b6 <b6>; Rich Roberts; b6
Subject: FW: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 2:20 PM
Subject: Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies
https://bit.ly/2SAi6xX

Let Scientific Evidence Determine Origin of SARS-CoV-2, Urge Presidents of the National Academies

Statement | June 15, 2021

The origin of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and the circumstances of the first cases of human infection, remain unknown. Science is our best tool to ascertain, or to understand to the extent possible, the origins of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, which could help prevent future pandemics. However, misinformation, unsubstantiated claims, and personal attacks on scientists surrounding the different theories of how the virus emerged are unacceptable, and are sowing public confusion and risk undermining the public's trust in science and scientists, including those still leading efforts to bring the pandemic under control. We urge that investigations into the origins of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 be guided by scientific principles, including reliance on verifiable data, reproducibility, objectivity, transparency, peer review, international collaboration, minimizing conflicts of interest, findings based on evidence, and clarity regarding uncertainties. In the case of SARS-CoV-2, there are multiple scenarios that could, in principle, explain its origin with varying degrees of plausibility based on our current understanding. These scenarios range from natural zoonotic spillover (when a virus spreads from non-human animals to humans) to those that are associated with laboratory work. Scientists need to be able to evaluate all of these scenarios, and all viable hypotheses, with credible data. Data accessibility, transparency, and full cooperation from China, of course, will be essential for a proper and thorough investigation.

Although much still needs to be done to stop the pandemic, particularly in developing nations, science has made remarkable headway, especially through the rapid development of effective vaccines. The same scientific robustness, rigor, and cooperation should be applied to examining important questions about how the pandemic began.

Marcia McNutt
President, National Academy of Sciences
John L. Anderson
President, National Academy of Engineering
Victor J. Dzau
President, National Academy of Medicine

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Date:	Wed, 26 May 2021 4:31:49 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 26 May 2021 4:31:37 PM -0400
Subject:	Found it: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins
From:	Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
To:	Peter Daszak [b6] >; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] (b) (6) >; Rich Roberts [b6] >;
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

https://www.wsj.com/articles/inquiry- into-covid-19s-origins-splits-u-s-and-china-11621969480

From: Keusch, Gerald T
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 4:26 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

Thanks, and I totally agree with all you say. Do you have a link to that statement by the Chinese delegate?

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 4:00 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Rich Roberts < [b6] >
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

Finishing off my sentence…

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening…..That's straight from the WHA yesterday where apparently the Chinese delegate stated that "In the view of China, our role in the COVID-19 origins investigation is now over"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 3:43 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]g >; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I sure do agree with the last complete sentence in Peters note. That's what I would hope to get across to the reporter tomorrow. I'll stay away from the science I sort of understand but not the granularity where all of the important insights reside. One of my mentors (not Donald Rumsfeld) always said "know what you know" as applied to clinical medicine. The implication was to also know what you don't know because that's what you need to add to the I know bucket.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:39 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Rich Roberts < [b6]
Subject: RE: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

I was just talking about that statement with a couple of our Board members. My view is this is Biden's way of punting it down the road for 90 days, hoping the hype dies down, and hoping something shifts the narrative. He looks like he's doing something, while everyone knows that the US intelligence agencies are unlikely to get any more clarity in the meantime.

The real clarity will come when people are allowed back into China to actually do some research. The more lab leak discussion, the less chance of that happening. That's a direct

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6]; [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]
Subject: FW: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
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[b6] assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
[b6]
[b6]

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:09 PM
Subject: Axios: Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins

1 hour ago - World

Biden asks intelligence community to intensify investigation of COVID origins



Zachary Basu

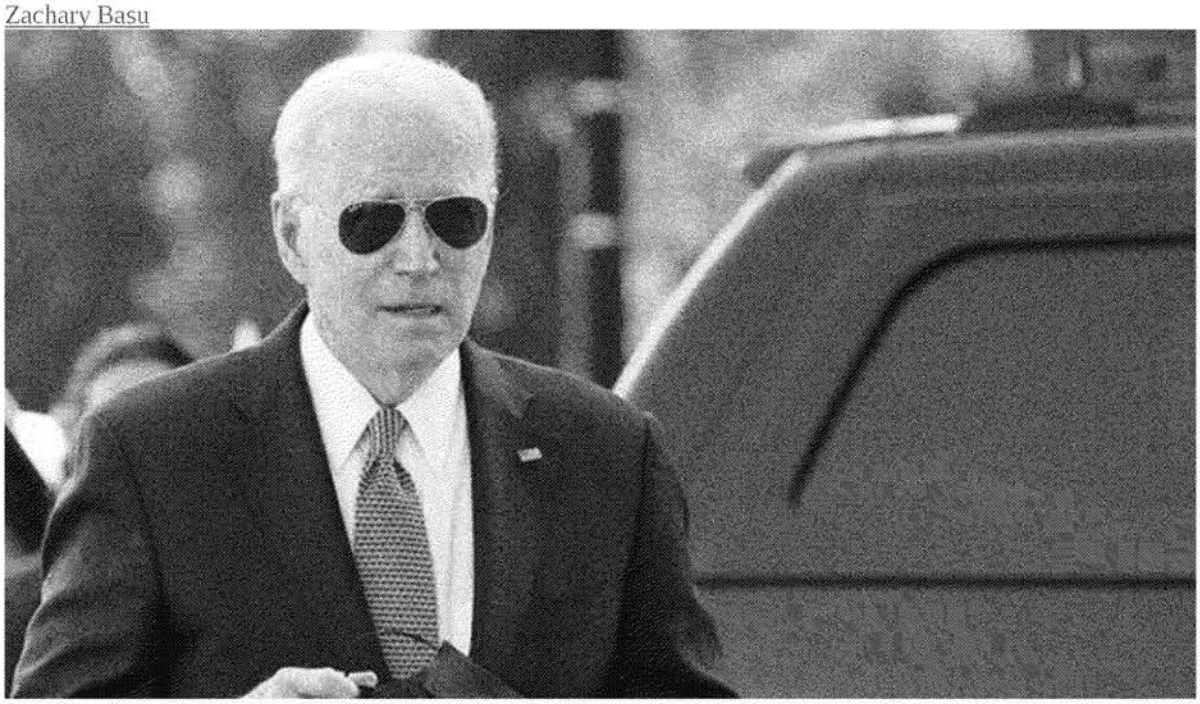

Photo: Win McNamee/Getty Images

President Biden announced Wednesday he has asked the U.S. intelligence community to "redouble their efforts" to investigate the origins of the coronavirus and provide a report within 90 days that "could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion."

Why it matters: The debate over the origins of COVID-19 has been reinvigorated in recent days by previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, that three researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology fell ill enough to be hospitalized in November 2019.

The state of play: Biden said in a statement that the U.S. intelligence community had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" for the origins of the virus — one, that it emerged from human contact with an infected and animal, and two, that it was the result of an accidental laboratory leak.

- A joint team from the World Health Organization and China issued an inconclusive report in March that described the so-called lab-leak theory as "extremely unlikely."
- But the report has been criticized by the U.S. and WHO leadership for its methodology and lack of transparency from the Chinese government, and top U.S. officials have called for a new investigation.

What they're saying: Biden said the U.S. intelligence community's current position is that "while two elements in the IC leans toward the former scenario and one leans more toward the latter – each with low or moderate confidence – the majority of elements do not believe there is sufficient information to assess one to be more likely than the other."

- "I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Biden said in a statement.
- "As part of that report, I have asked for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for China. I have also asked that this effort include work by our National Labs and other agencies of our government to augment the Intelligence Community's efforts. And I have asked the Intelligence Community to keep Congress fully apprised of its work."

Our thought bubble: Whether COVID-19 ultimately originated in an animal or in a lab, the bulk of the evidence is in China, which limits what the U.S. can find out. But Biden's statement underscores the fact that this debate will not end any time soon, and that the U.S. could ramp up pressure on China to cooperate.

Go deeper: The COVID lab-leak theory goes mainstream

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Date: Sat, 8 May 2021 1:19:38 PM -0400
Sent: Sat, 8 May 2021 1:19:36 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment
From: "Roberts, Rich" [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]
Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]
Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

David:

I share your opinion of the Wade article.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Saturday, May 8, 2021 1:16 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Roberts, Rich [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter, I agree, and I think we should try to not use the term GOF, notly because it suggests something nefarious, but also, at least as I would define it, it doesnt apply to your work, as you just said. In my mind it doesn;'t apply to Ralph's work either.

Secondly, I re-read the Wade article carefully, and did NOT conclude that just about everything he said was wrong. I think it is the best researched, and most literate and thorough media article on the subject. BUT. I think it is biased and uses cherry-picked facts. Moreover, it tries to pretend non-bias in a disingenuous way.

In short, high order sophistry.

I am also troubled by David Baltimore's opinion that finding a furn-cleavage site indicates human manipulation. I suspect that may not be true, since these viruses hyper-circulate in bats and spillover into mammals and people frequently, and also frequently recombine in spike protein sequences. But I am not knowledgeable about such things. In this context, the idea of David Robertson, cited in the Wade article, is of particular interest: the idea that the precursor virus had become a "generalist" by long evolving through bats and mammals including humans. Something analogous happens with arboviruses, e.g., dengue, which serially pass through humans and mosquitos every couple weeks, and have to be well adapted to two very different alternating hosts.... d

On 5/8/2021 1:51 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

I also think it's important to let the journalist know that nothing in the work we were doing in China could be reasonably called "Gain of function". The only recombinant viruses were bat-CoVs, with spike proteins of other bat-CoVs. None had enhanced transmissibility or cell infectivity. None are known to be infectious to people.

I believe the whole 'gain of function' phrasing used to describe the Wuhan CoV research is just a ruse to scare a gullible public – journalists today have been using phrases like "making viruses more dangerous in the lab in Wuhan" etc. None of this is true.

Cheers,

Peter

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President

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---

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:09 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Peter Daszak [b6]
Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]
Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

David:

Probably not too helpful to describe every growth of a virus in a lab is a GOF experiment.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
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240 County Road
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USA
Tel: [b6] [b6]
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: [b6]

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:44 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] Robert Kessler < [b6]>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter, I just tsalked to Ms. Eban for an hour, and connected her with Jim LeDuc and Jeff T. I also sent her a paper I and others wrote with David Baltimore 10 years ago about the BENEFITS of GOF research vis a vis the 1918 flu virus. To wit, the growing up of the virus and studying it in primate challenges, and in vitro, yielding hugely important info on flu pathogenesis.

Rich, this relates to my own feeling that GOF is a double-edged sword, so to speak, that while we must work to prevent dangerous use of virologic techniques, totally agree on that point, we must also consider that every infection of a cell, in tissue culture, organ culture, experimental animals, humans, whatever, is in essence a GOF experiment (and also a loss of fuinction experiment, since host adaptation usually results in ftness penalties), without which we would have no viral vaccines except vaccinia, and arguably not even that.

Her interest in David B results from his comments in the Wade article about the SARS-CoV-2 furin cleavage site, about which I am a tiny bit skeptical, not fully understanding the complexities of cleavage site evolutions in RNA viruses. I asked Jeff and his folks to comment. He and I had a discussion about David's comments yesterday, but I will let him follow up on that, since he has been thinking about RNA virus cleavge sites with respect to flu A and other viruses for over 20 years. It seems to be more complicated than one might think..

The Wade article also cites some ideas by a guy named David Robertson. Do you know him? I do not. But he posits that the SARS-CoV-2 precursor may have become a "generalist" by circulating between bats and mammals, maybe even humans. No eviodence for this, but the idea makes alot of sense to me. Plausible in my mind, what do u think?

David

On 5/7/2021 6:20 PM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Really interesting to hear those comments about "Blah blah" and "Deng deng". It just saddens me because I know Zhengli's English is not the best, and I don't think she realizes that every word she says publicly, even in response to a question at a University seminar, is being manipulated and used politically. It feels like racism to me.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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---

From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:01 AM
To: David Morens [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]
Cc: Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] obert Kessler < [b6]
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah "comment

The letter to Blinken includes the following statement:

"…the release of these documents from the Department could help to refute contradictory statements that have been made regarding the possibility of a laboratory leak from the WIV." This could be taken in a positive sense, that the documents will refute the lab release hypothesis, although I don't think that's how they mean it.

Regarding what Peter previously said about Shi's use of the phrase blah blah, which will surely be characterized as dismissive and therefore put into a negative perspective. I have access to a senior endowed full professor of Chinese politics at Harvard and I asked about the meaning of blah blah when a Chinese native speaker uses it while speaking English. Here is the answer:

"In my experience many Chinese mistakenly use "blah, blah" as equivalent to the Chinese term "deng, deng" which means "and so forth" and has no negative connotation."

So Peter was right, and now we know the Chinese term it is trying to translate, however awkwardly. This might be useful in any conversation with a report about her remarks or the Republicans letter.

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6] >
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) ; Roberts, Rich [b6] Aleksei Chmura < [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6] >
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, i will reply eventually when i get some time, but until then, note yet another Josh Rogin editorial in this morning's Post, this time disclosing the Republican letter to Tony, which i have not yet seen and may or may not see. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 6, 2021, at 23:34, Peter Daszak [b6] wrote:

Sorry for yet another email, but this one is so bizarre it's almost funny. It's a letter from the House E&C Committee Republicans to Blinken asking him to release the classified intel that people in the Wuhan lab were sick prior to COVID, and that the WIV does military research. It quotes some comments from a recent talk my collaborator Zhengli Shi from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, gave during a lecture at Rutgers. Some of the online conspiracists heard about the talk in advance and they packed the audience – some of their questions from the chat were read out. Her response included a very common "blah blah" phrase used in China when speaking English – here's the quote:

During a March 23, 2021 seminar at Rutgers University, a WHO advisory committee member asked Dr. Shi if [knew].. whether "the U.S. government claims of classified Chinese military research being carried out at the WIV [are] correct, and if so, did you have full awareness of and access to all aspects of this research?"[4]

Dr. Shi answered: From my knowledge, all our research work is open, is transparent. At the beginning of COVID-19, we heard the rumors that claimed our laboratory would have some project blah blah with army blah blah . . . but this is not correct, because I am the director and responsible for research activity. I don't know any kind of research work performed in this lab.[5]

This is ridiculous, of course, and they're obviously using that quote to suggest Dr. Shi doesn't take these questions seriously, but it's actually a racist trope – people in China use the phrase "blah blah" to simply mean "and so on, and so forth". Just unfortunate…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM

To: 'David Morens [b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T < [b6]>; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura [b6]; 'Robert Kessler ([b6]
Subject: New: Letter from Republican Rep. Gallagher to Dr. Fauci re. WIV and gain of function
Importance: High

David,

A Republican representative sent a letter to Tony Fauci today asking some pretty simple questions that are clearly designed to play to their political base.

If Tony Fauci is going to respond to the attached letter that was made public today, I hope he's ready to point out that the work we did was NOT gain of function. This phrase has been bandied about now for a few months and is utterly incorrect.

If he decides to draft a response, I'd be happy to do a quick briefing with you and him to explain the work that has been done up to now with WIV, and was planned to be done on our NIAID grant.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 1:10:25 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 16 Jun 2021 1:03:47 PM -0400
Subject: FW: We've lost two significant funders this week
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >
To: David Morens b6 b6 >;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 8:41 PM
To: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >
Subject: Fwd: We've lost two significant funders this week

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: June 8, 2021 at 20:40:11 EDT
To: "Roberts, Rich" b6
Cc: Peter Daszak <b6> "Keusch, Jerry" b6
Subject: Re: We've lost two significant funders this week

Peter, i had some long discussions with the Trop med folks today

They want me to write something, a follow up to what we did last july.

But they are 14 leaders not on the same page

I suggested a follo
w up one year later that does NoT emphasize rebutting the crazies but says here is what is needed now, urgently, and includes 5-10 things such ad 1 international open collegial collaboration
with China and other countries in the region, wider sampling/sequencing to look at the sarbecovirus universe, phylogenetics, serosurveys, etc.
Can you and your folks help me compile a list of top research priorities with supporting data?

I would also ask for good msps of Rhinolophus range separated by those species that are and are not enzootic for SARS-like viruses

ETc….

The focus would be : proactive. This is an emsrgrncy. Science needs to get cracking! What must me do asap? (Funding you, and then what?). d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 8, 2021, at 19:54, Roberts, Rich b6 wrote:

Peter:

OK – let me know. Before I would write anything it would be good to know exactly what they are proposing.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:16 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6 Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 Keusch, Jerry b6
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week

EXTERNAL SENDER

That's a very kind offer Rich. I think it might be very helpful with Gates right now.

Let me get more information from Jon Epstein who manages the grant and find out who you could reach out to potentially.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Roberts, Rich b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Keusch, Jerry b6
Subject: RE: We've lost two significant funders this week

Peter:

I would be happy to write to these funders if you think it might help

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 11:59 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Keusch, Jerry b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
Subject: We've lost two significant funders this week

Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

Thanks for sharing.

We're getting mounting damage at EcoHealth. One of our corporate funders has pulled out because of the news (Swiss Re). They donated $30K per year and I talked with the senior execs about pandemic risk.

We heard today that our brand new 3-year Gates Foundation grant for One Health work in India will now be "re-assigned". They're telling us they'll still fund us, but I think they're just being polite. This is a loss of $500K per year.

I'm extremely worried right now. People's jobs, careers, reputations are on the line, not just mine – the Gates grant is Jon Epstein's.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoIHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:59 AM
To: Peter Daszak (b6; Keusch, Jerry (b6; Rich Roberts (b6
Subject: FW: Miami Herald [Opinion]: Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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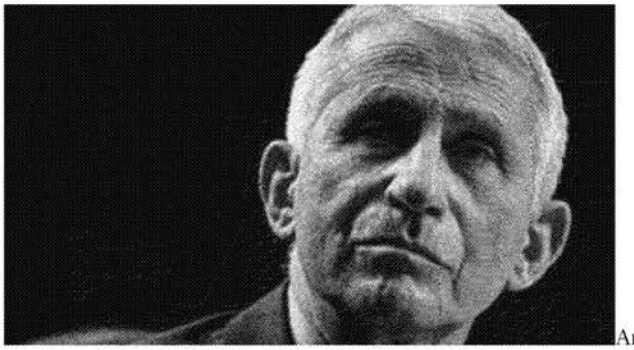
From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:47 AM
Subject: Miami Herald [Opinion]: Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab

Despite Trump's new round of bullying, Fauci says COVID likely didn't leak from a Chinese lab | Opinion

BY ANDRES OPPENHEIMER
JUNE 08, 2021 09:13 AM,
UPDATED 19 MINUTES AGO


Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, says the coronavirus likely jumped species, from animal to human. *GETTY IMAGES*

Former President Trump, perhaps trying to divert attention from his own disastrous handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, is now lashing out against Dr. Anthony Fauci for allegedly failing to seriously consider that the virus might have originated from China's Wuhan

lab,
rather
than
from
an
animal's
transmission
to
humans.

But
judging
from
what
Fauci
told
me
in
a
June
4
interview,
the
most
respected
U.S.
infectious
diseases
expert
has
not
yet
seen
any
convincing
evidence
that
the
virus
may
have
escaped
from
a
Chinese
lab.

Fauci,
who
heads
the
U.S.
National

Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and is a top medical adviser to President Biden, said, “It is more likely” that — much like SARS, ebola, influenza and HIV — COVID-19 “originated from an animal reservoir and jumped species to humans.” He added, “There’s the possibility that it came from the lab,

but
I
believe
that
that's
a
much
less
likely
possibility."

In the interview, scheduled to be aired Sunday , June 13 n "Oppenheimer Presenta" on CNN en Español, Fauci said that it's "important" to try to find out the exact origin of the pandemic, so that we can prevent it from happening again.

Biden
has
asked
U.S.
intelligence
agencies
to
investigate
the
origins
of
COVID-
19
and
come
back
with
a
report
before
the
end
of
August.

Asked how the investigation into the source of the virus should be conducted, Fauci said that the World Health Organization has indicated that it will go back to China to continue its investigation.

"I
think
it
needs
to
be
done
in
a
collegial

way, with the collaboration of the Chinese scientists, because you're going to have to have cooperation and do it in a way that you can best get the information," he said.

Regarding his emails obtained by BuzzFeed and the Washington Post through the Freedom Of Information Act, Fauci told me that his

critics
“cherrypick
things
out
of
context”
when
they
claim
that
he
knew
more
than
he
was
saying
publicly
about
the
possibility
that
the
virus
came
out
of
a
Chinese
lab.

Stressing
that
he
never
totally
discarded
the
lab
theory
—
though
he
never
thought
it
was
a
major
possibility
—
Fauci
added

that, "I think what has increased is the interest, not necessarily the evidence."

Right-wing media have had a field day with the Fauci emails, claiming that he was alerted about the "lab theory" early on and allegedly failed to take it seriously. Much of their claims are based on a Jan.

31, 2020, email, in which infectious-disease expert Kristian Andersen wrote to Fauci that some of the virus' features "[potentially] looked engineered."

But what most right-wing media fail to mention is that, a few weeks later, Andersen concluded, upon further investigation, that the "lab theory" was implausible. So the criticism that Fauci was wrongfully hiding the "lab theory" from the public does not hold up.

Of course, Trump now is trying to paint Fauci as the culprit for the fact that America holds the world's record for COVID-19 deaths in

absolute numbers. In a mass email on June 3, Trump claimed that "President Trump was right about the China Virus coming from the Wuhan Lab," and suggested that Fauci was defending China.

But, until we see any hard evidence that COVID-19 emerged from the Wuhan lab, Trump's accusations should be seen

as
just
another
attempt
to
bypass
science
and
divert
public
attention
from
the
COVID-
19
deaths
caused
by
his
failure
to
tackle
the
pandemic.

Remember,
Trump
knew
early
on
that
COVID
would
be
deadly
—
he
is
on
tape
telling
author
Bob
Woodward
this
in
February
2020
—
but
chose
to
lie

to
the
American
people
for
fear
that
it
would
ruin
his
re-
election
chances.
What's
more,
Trump
consistently
refused
to
wear
a
mask
or
preach
social
distance,
as
scientists
were
recommending.

As
I
wrote
at
the
time

Trump
neglected
his
main
duty
—
to
protect
the
American
people.

Granted,
investigations

into the origins of COVID-19 are justified and should continue. And there's no question that China's dictatorship is responsible for its delay in alerting the world about the deadly virus as soon as it started.

But barring solid evidence that the virus originated from a Chinese lab, Trump remains the villain

—
and
Fauci
the
hero.

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Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 5:30:37 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 5:30:34 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Response to Michael Lauer letters
From: "Roberts, Rich" b6
To: David Morens b6
CC: Keusch, Gerald T b6

One has to be careful with subtlety! We are not always dealing with individuals who understand the word.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: David Morens b6 >
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 5:26 PM
To: Roberts, Rich b6
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 b6
Subject: Re: Response to Michael Lauer letters

EXTERNAL SENDER

Rich is correct. An alternative strategy might be to start out by saying, subtly, that this is outrageous. No individual grantee has ever, in the history of nih, been asked to guarantee the political actions of another nation. This subcontract was a scientist to scientist collaborative agreement, not a commitment to surveil and validate the political actions of another nation.

It really is outrageous. What does the AClU say on this? D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Mar 30, 2021, at 16:36, Roberts, Rich < b6 wrote:
>
> Sorry – I forgot to copy you on this.
>
> Rich
>
> Richard J. Roberts
> New England Biolabs
> 240 County Road
> Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
> USA
> Tel: b6 b6
> Fax: (978) 412 9910
> email: b6
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Roberts, Rich
> **Sent:** Tuesday, March 30, 2021 3:43 PM
> **To:** Peter Daszak b6
> **Subject:** FW: Response to Michael Lauer letters

Peter:

I agree with most of Dave's suggestions. I have added a few comments myself.
My biggest concern is that you are being asked to do things that no ordinary grantee would be expected either to do, or be able to do. If you really wanted to carry through on a number of these items you should join the CIA.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6 b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 1:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 ; Keusch, Jerry b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6
>
Cc: Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Response to Michael Lauer letters

EXTERNAL SENDER

Peter, attached some edits for consideration. In general I think it makes the right points and presents a strong case. My comments are mostlly minor word-smithing, plus clarifying and simplifying as much as possible, since this will probably be read by Lauer but will perhaps be leaked and read by many others. david

On 3/29/2021 2:10 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> Hi Jerry, David, and Rich
>
> I can't remember which of you offered to review our draft response to Michael Lauer at NIH, but it would be very helpful if one of you could. I'm sending it to my pro bono lawyers as well, and they'll rip into it, but your advice and edits (using track changes) would be most helpful…
>
> By the way, the WHO report comes out Tuesday morning our time (I think).
>
> I'll have a final draft version tomorrow that I'll try to get out to you early.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
> **Peter Daszak**
> *President*
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 5:00:27 PM -0400
Sent: Tue, 17 Aug 2021 5:00:25 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.
From: "Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)" b6
To: b6 b6 b6
CC: b6 b6 b6
Attachments: Untitled attachment 08287.jfif; Untitled attachment 08290.png; Untitled attachment 08293.png; Untitled attachment 08296.png; Untitled attachment 08299.png; Untitled attachment 08302.jfif; Untitled attachment 08305.gif; Untitled attachment 08308.jfif

---

Please let me know when you can share it under embargo. I know Science goes mental when their own journos don't get stuff first. But it's helpful to have the luxury of time to properly read papers without the haste to get something out ASAP. JG

---- Original Message ----

From: Peter Daszak b6

To: JASON GALE,

CC: b6

At: 08/18/21 00:51:28 UTC+10:00

Add to that a preprint we'll be posting next week that suggests 50,000 – 400,000 people are actually infected by bat SARSr-CoVs in SE Asia each year, and a comment from the international members of the WHO team that'll be in Nature this week or next.

As long as these articles keep up their 'drip, drip' with actual new data and analyses, all the lab leak hypothesis has is re-hashing of the same innuendo-filled vitriol.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200

New York, NY 10018-6507

USA

Tel.: b6

Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org

Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:30 AM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6
Subject: Re: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

Thanks Peter,

Totally agree that It's quite sad to see the attacks on scientists and science from Wade. It's the very basis for the "lab leak" hypothesis, so no surprise.

Wade is old enough to know this, but anyone that thinks that Jeremy Farrar and Tony Fauci are part of the "problem" has literally [in the case of Tony] not been paying attention for 50 years.

Looking forward to Wade and his ilk going ballistic as two new papers favoring natural origin appear shortly in *Cell* and *Science*.

Bob G.

From: Peter Daszak b6
Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 7:40 AM
To: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" <b6>, Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6
b6 Robert Garry b6
Subject: Nicholas Wade's piece today in Bull Atom. Sci.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Nicholas Wade's at it again – another miserable innuendo-filled attack on science and the process by which scientists email, talk and come to decisions. Nothing new of course, just trash journalism published in a pseudo-scientific journal. Pretty shameless smear on some of us – no facts of course, no sue-able accusations, just snipey comments and excerpts from Social Media. It's as if we can't now be scientists and actually colleagues who break bread and share a glass any more.

https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/how-covid-19s-origins-were-obscured-by-the-east-and-the-west/

The irony is in the ending – he claims the lab leak is an albatross hanging around China's neck that they won't be able to shake off until they open up the lab videos, books, freezers etc. The truth is his and others continued attacks are what put the albatross there in the first place. Does anyone really believe that if China gave access to all the above and no further evidence was found, that these folks would simply say "OK, it wasn't a lab leak after all"!!!

Cheers,

Peter

How COVID-19's origins were obscured, by the East and the West

By Nicholas Wade | August 17, 2021

A bus carrying a team of experts from the World Health Organization departs an airport in Wuhan on Jan. 14, 2021, after arriving in the Chinese city to investigate the origins of the coronavirus pandemic. That investigation is widely seen as having been obstructed by Chinese authorities. (Photo by Kyodo News via Getty Images)

Some 20 months after the Covid-19 pandemic first broke out, its origins remain obscure. A vigorous campaign of concealment by the Chinese authorities is the principal reason. But China received considerable help, strange to say, from senior medical research officials in the United Kingdom and United States who mishandled and effectively derailed the initial inquiry into the virus's origins.

The mishandling began at a pivotal teleconference held on February 1, 2020. The organizer was Jeremy Farrar, director of the Wellcome Trust, a large medical research charity in London. News of the conference emerged with the release this June of emails

from the office of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Farrar supplied further information in his book *Spike*, published on July 22.

The conference was held to discuss the unanimous view of a group of virologists that the SARS2 virus had been manipulated in a lab. Yet within a few days of the meeting, the virologists abruptly reversed their conclusion. The meeting's participants were later involved in two letters to scientific journals that stated the virus must have emerged naturally and that condemned any suggestion of manipulation as a conspiracy theory. These two letters, to *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*, shaped the views of the mainstream media for more than a year.

Letters published by *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* in early 2020.

Even today, no one can say for sure whether the SARS2 virus emerged naturally or escaped from a lab. Much less could anyone have been sure back then. If the conferees had stuck to known facts, they would have left the question open to the two hypotheses, and the full exploration of the virus's origins might not have been sidetracked for over a year.

More significant, the Chinese government would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to manipulate the World Health Organization (WHO) into setting terms of reference that favored China's obstructive goals and kept WHO inspectors who visited China this February from accessing records vital to understanding the origin of the

pandemic. China now insists those terms of reference cannot be changed, blocking further investigation into the origin of the SARS2 virus. "The two groups that produced the infamous letters in *The Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* paved the way for the Chinese government and helped enormously to facilitate all of that," says Milton Leitenberg, an arms control expert at the University of Maryland. The reversal of the virologists' conclusion about SARS2's artificial origin is thus a matter of some significance.

At 10:32 p.m. on the evening before the February 1 conference, Fauci had received an electrifying memo from Kristian G. Andersen, a virologist at the Scripps Research institute in California. Andersen reported that the virus seemed to be man-made. "The unusual features of the virus make up a really small part of the genome," he wrote, referring presumably to a genetic component known as a furin cleavage site, which greatly enhances the virus's infectivity, "so one has to look really closely at all the sequences to see that some of the features (potentially) look engineered."

A key email from Kristian Andersen to Anthony Fauci.

Andersen went on to note that "after discussions earlier today, Eddie, Bob, Mike and myself all find the genome inconsistent with expectations from evolutionary theory"—meaning that, in their unanimous view, the virus didn't come from nature. "Those opinions could still change," Andersen added. Eddie is Edward C. Holmes of the University of Sydney. Bob is Robert F. Garry of Tulane University. Mike is Michael Farzan at Scripps Research.

The message sent Fauci into a whirlwind of activity. "You will have tasks today that must be done," he emailed his deputy director, Hugh Auchincloss, two hours later at 12:29 am on February 1. One of these urgent tasks evidently concerned NIAID funds that had been passed, via the EcoHealth Alliance of New York, to Zhengli Shi, China's leading bat virus expert, at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Fauci was doubtless anxious to check whether his agency's funding of Shi's work had complied with US law, which banned funding gain-of-function research from 2014 to 2017 and required it be reported to a government panel thereafter. "Gain of function" refers to research in which a pathogen's ability to cause disease is enhanced. Auchincloss replied a few hours later that efforts were underway to ascertain "if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Meanwhile Farrar, who had independently heard of the Andersen team's conclusion from Holmes, says in *Spike* that he arranged a teleconference set for 7 p.m. London time, convenient for both Washington and Australia, where Holmes was based.

The participants included Fauci and possibly his nominal boss, Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health. (Farrar says in *Spike* that Collins was present, but Collins's name is not on the list of invitees in the Fauci emails.) Officials on the UK side were Farrar and Patrick Vallance, the chief scientific adviser to the UK government. The others were mostly virologists, including Andersen, Holmes, and Andrew Rambaut of the University of Edinburgh.

Far from being selected at random, the conferees were associated through a complicated web of relationships, a sort of virologists' old boy network that included senior medical officials in China. Farrar was well acquainted with George Fu Gao, the head of China's counterpart of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has described Gao as an "old friend," who in fact had called a month earlier, on December 31, 2019, to tell Farrar about the initial cases in Wuhan of what turned out to be Covid-19. Farrar says in his book *Spike* that on the weekend of the teleconference, he called another highly placed Chinese official, Chen Zhu, China's minister of health from 2007 to 2013, to tell him of "rumours that the novel coronavirus could be the result of a lab accident." As for Holmes, he has published many papers both with Farrar and with Gao and has been a guest professor at Gao's CDC from 2014 until 2020.

Because of these varied connections, it seems likely that Chinese authorities knew about the conference almost from the moment it occurred and, if so, would have had the opportunity to influence deliberations that followed it.

At the conference there was a notable imbalance of power between the virologists and the officials. Fauci and Farrar together control a large portion of the funds available for virological research in the Western world. A virologist keen to continue his career would be very attentive to their wishes. Two of the conference participants had multimillion-dollar grant proposals under final review with NIAID at the time of the call.

Almost all references to what was discussed at the teleconference have been redacted

from the Fauci emails under exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act. The conference would doubtless have included explanation from Andersen and Holmes as to why they had concluded the previous evening that the virus had been altered through laboratory manipulation. "Kristen and Eddie have shared this and will talk through it on the call," Farrar writes in one of the Fauci emails.

RELATED:

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19

_A Jeremy Farrar email about the teleconference.

Whatever was said at the meeting, it was followed by a remarkable and almost immediate about-face. By at most three days later, Andersen had executed a 180 degree turn in his views about the virus. In an email of February 4, 2020 to Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance, which had directed NIAID funds to Shi, Andersen wrote, "The main crackpot theories going around at the moment relate to this virus being somehow engineered with intent and that is demonstrably not the case." The email was obtained by U.S. Right to Know, an investigatory group.

Participants have not explained what was said at the meeting or found in the days immediately following it to induce the change of mind. Media offices at the Wellcome Trust and NIAID declined to comment on this article. Andersen, Holmes and Rambaut did not

reply to emails seeking an account of the reversal.

Farrar, not Fauci, seems to have been the leader in the teleconference's deliberations. "This is not my area of expertise so I have backed off and am leaving it all to Jeremy," Fauci wrote on February 13 to a CDC official. US officials were not to take the lead in this pivotal inquiry.

Fauci's "leaving it all to Jeremy" email.

Farrar had a direct hand in the two letters that went out to the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine*. He was a signatory of the *Lancet* letter, a draft of which Daszak, the organizer of the letter, began circulating just five days after the conference. The letter sought to squelch all discussion of the possibility that the virus had escaped from a lab by deriding it as a conspiracy theory. When Daszak wrote an article in the *Guardian* elaborating on the same theme, Farrar promoted it with a tweet, saying "as always worth reading @PeterDaszak."

Farrar also recruited the five authors who drew up the *Nature Medicine* letter, his spokesman told the writer Ian Birrell. (The spokesman referred to the *Lancet* letter but evidently meant the *Nature Medicine* letter, which has five authors.) The *Nature Medicine*

letter, accepted on March 6 and published on March 17, 2020, presented a detailed and influential case that the virus had emerged naturally from animals. Its authors were Andersen, Rambaut, W. Ian Lipkin, Holmes and Garry.

In his book *Spike*, Farrar portrays the events between the February 1 conference and publication of the two medical journal letters as a judicious process in which he held an agnostic view and played no role other than asking questions. "On a spectrum if 0 is nature and 100 is release—I am honestly at 50!" Farrar says he emailed to Fauci and Collins a day after the conference. But if that were honestly so, he fails to explain his switch from 50 to 0 when signing the *Lancet* letter a few days later.

According to *Spike*, it wasn't until March, "after the addition of important new information, endless analyses, intense discussions and many sleepless nights" that Andersen and his four fellow virologists "were ready to pronounce on the origins of the novel coronavirus." Why then was Andersen, the virologists' leader, ready to pronounce just 3 days after the conference that lab release was a conspiracy theory? Farrar's account does not match with the available facts.

Nor does Andersen's. In a June interview with the *New York Times,* he painted a picture that includes a change of mind on the possible engineering of the virus "in a matter of days, while we worked around the clock," and then that quick reversal being buttressed by drawn-out research.

"This is a textbook example of the scientific method, where a preliminary hypothesis is rejected in favor of a competing hypothesis as more data become available and analyses are completed," he said in a statement released by Scripps Research after his Jan 31 email to Fauci had become public. "I cautioned in that same email that we would need to look at the question much more closely and that our opinions could change within a few days based on new data and analyses—which they did," Anderson said in the *New York Times* interview. In that same interview, he also said that "more extensive analyses, significant additional data and thorough investigations to compare genomic diversity more broadly across coronaviruses led to the peer-reviewed study published in *Nature Medicine* ."

These later data and analyses would not have been available three days after the conference, the date of Andersen's volte-face email to Daszak. And they would not have been available to Farrar as he signed the *Lancet* letter, which was published just 17 days after the teleconference.

More puzzling is Andersen's statement that in his preliminary studies "the genome of RaTG13, a SARS-related coronavirus found in bats, wasn't yet available." In fact its full sequence had been deposited by Shi in a data bank on January 24, 2020, a week before Andersen's report to Fauci, and Farrar says in *Spike* that he had seen the sequence by the time of the conference. RaTG13 is the closest known relative of SARS2, and the fact that it lacks the furin cleavage site found in SARS2 would have been a major reason for the Andersen group to suppose that this genetic element had been inserted into SARS2 in a lab.

Given his role in leading the February 1 teleconference, in presiding over the virologists' 180 degree change of views, and in arranging or influencing the *Lancet* and *Nature Medicine* letters, Farrar was evidently the driving force of the campaign to persuade the public that the SARS2 virus could not possibly have leaked from a lab. This was an

unfortunate position for any scientist to take, given that he was assuring the public of something he could not be sure was true.

Farrar now says in *Spike* that, although natural emergence is more likely, "nobody is yet in a position to rule out an alternative." But his campaign sought very vigorously to do exactly that. "We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin," Farrar and his cosignatories wrote in the *Lancet* on February 18, 2020. This lapse in scientific judgment reflects also on the other senior participants in the conference who saw what was happening but apparently took no steps to insist that scientific truth should take precedence over unjustifiable professions of certainty.

RELATED:

Caltech's David Baltimore discusses the debate over origins of SARS-CoV-2

The decision to quash any notion of lab escape seems to have brought relief all round. At least until the tide of opinion began to change a year later, Fauci and Collins didn't have to endure unpleasant questions about why they had been funding hazardous research in minimally safe conditions at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

"I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for COVID-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Daszak emailed Fauci after a White House press briefing on April 17.

In August 2020 the NIAID announced it would award $82 million over five years to 10 participants in its new network for detecting infectious diseases. Among the lucky winners: Daszak, Andersen, and his associate Robert Garry.

The perturbing lab leak theory raised by Andersen and his colleagues on January 31, 2020 had been safely laid to rest. Farrar and his colleagues had succeeded in the one goal also pursued by the autocrats in Beijing, that of suppressing discussion of whether the SARS2 virus might have escaped from the Wuhan lab.

Beijing's way of squelching inquiry about the virus was, unintentionally, somewhat more obvious than the methods used in London. Chinese authorities tried so hard to stamp out information about the virus's origin that they left a rather clumsy trail of footprints pointing to where they didn't want people to go.

One of the more informative suppressions of data was the closure of China's main database on bat and other viruses. Zhengli Shi, China's leading expert on bat coronaviruses, told the BBC that it was taken off line because of numerous hacking attempts. It's conceivable that in January 2020, after the pandemic broke out, people without authorized access might have tried to hack into the database. But in fact the database went off line on September 12, 2019. Who would have wanted to hack into a bat virus database back then? More likely, that is the date at which Chinese authorities realized they had a virus escape problem.

In February of last year, President Xi referred to the need to ensure biosafety and biosecurity, and the Chinese Communist Party followed by tightening up their biosafety

rules in October 2020, accelerating a long planned revision. "To me, the fact that the CCP enacted a major series of laboratory biosafety regulations this past year is an indication that China's political leadership believes that a lab accident is likely to have caused the pandemic," says a biosurveillance expert who has monitored China's disease outbreak reporting for the past two decades.

Major clues as to what happened are evident in Shi's various pronouncements about the virus. The omissions and untruths in these statements are specific enough to outline the very body of facts the censors have sought to conceal.

Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli spoke about SARS during a Yixi event (comparable to a TED talk) on June 23, 2018. (Yixi video)

In looking at Shi's questionable statements, it's only fair to keep in mind that they may have been compelled. Her train of deceptions began immediately after the genetic sequence of the SARS2 virus was published on January 10, 2020, by Yong-zhen Zhang of Fudan University, against the wishes of Chinese authorities who subsequently closed his lab for a time. Where did this strange new virus come from? Shi wanted or was told to establish SARS2's pedigree as a bat virus, with an ancestry analogous to that of SARS1, the bat virus that caused an epidemic in 2002. In an important paper published on February 3,

2020, Shi reported that the genome of SARS2 is 96 percent similar to that of a bat virus, RaTG13, "which was previously detected in [the bat species] *Rhinolophus affinis* from Yunnan province."

Shi neglected to mention a salient difference between the two viruses, namely that SARS2 possessed a furin cleavage site and RaTG13 did not. Alina Chan, of the Broad Institute in Cambridge, has likened the omission to describing a unicorn by reporting all its horse-like features, but neglecting to mention the horn. Evidently the Chinese authorities were highly sensitive to the furin cleavage site's presence.

Shi also failed to say when and where she had discovered the RaTG13 virus, surely important data for the closest known relative of SARS2. In fact, she had found RaTG13 in 2013, in an abandoned mine in Tongguan—the same place where six miners had fallen sick the year before. At that time, she analyzed just one of its genes and reported the virus under another name, BtCoV/4991. Daszak, the holder of her NIAID grant, told the London Times, perhaps on misinformation from Shi, that the virus was then thrown in a freezer and forgotten about until 2020. This was untrue—the virus was of much greater interest. Shi had analyzed its full genome, probably by 2018, but did not publish it. It was only when she needed a bat virus pedigree for SARS2 that Shi released information about the virus, which she now renamed RaTG13. The fact that BtCoV/4991 and RaTG13 were one and the same was discovered by Monali Rahalkar and Rahul Bahulikar, two internet-sleuthing researchers in Pune, India.

It's not acceptable practice among scientists to report something already published under a different name as if were new. Shi's February paper had the goal of portraying SARS2 as just another bat virus while concealing the true provenance of its closest known relative—a cave known to harbor lethal viruses.

When RaTG13's connection to the Tongguan mine was pointed out, Shi still tried to conceal the lethality of the mine's bat viruses, saying the miners had died of a fungus infection. This untruth was corrected when a master's thesis by a Chinese doctor, Li Xu, was unearthed by the internet sleuth who calls himself TheSeeker268. The thesis reported that the miners had died of a SARS-related virus with symptoms identical to those of Covid-19 and with CT scans similar to those of Covid patients. The only evident difference between that virus's effects and those of SARS2 is that the miners' virus was not readily transmissible from one person to another.

The specificity of what Shi's statements concealed—the furin cleavage site, RaTG13's identity with BatCoV/4991, the latter's origin in the mine where six miners were infected, the death of the three miners from infection by a virus with symptoms very similar to those of SARS2—all point to the involvement of these elements in a scenario the Chinese authorities are determined to cloak. That scenario may have been the storage or generation of the SARS2 virus in Shi's lab from one of the many viruses recovered from the Tongguan cave.

The Chinese government's persistent stonewalling and Shi's pattern of evasions do not amount to proof that the SARS2 virus escaped from her lab. But they seem less like the actions of innocent people and more like attempts to cover up a fatal accident, one that has caused the deaths of maybe 10 million people and counting.

Perhaps proof will one day emerge that the virus emerged naturally. If not, the likelihood that SARS2 escaped from a researcher's laboratory is an albatross that will hang round

China's neck in perpetuity. China's only hope of release from this terrible encumbrance lies in opening its laboratory doors and either establishing its innocence or admitting its fateful error.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2021 6:26 PM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6 ; Garry, Robert F < b6
Subject: RE: feedback on wild animals

Jason, not sure whose office politics is worse, but there is many a day I'd rather be in Australia, even if I had to drink that awful beer Fosters. (To quote Grouco Marx as he help up a glass of questionable beer: "last time I saw something like this, they had to shoot the horse")…. But I do have fond memories of Australia, and two of my closest freiends, both ex-students of mine, are out in Perth, the only large city there (if oy can call it that) I have never been, although it's high on my bucket list if this damn pandemic ever ends. He's an American public health physician and she's an Australian-Tongan PhD virologist, both wondeful smart people.

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service

Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6

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From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2021 7:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Cc: b6 ; Garry, Robert F <
b6
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Thanks, David.

I just got off a video conf call with the current editor in NY (the one asking all the latest questions). He's very nice and I feel like he gets its. He thinks it's a fascinating story.

Problem we have in journalism is that there are some people who aren't interested in actual journalism and telling stories; they want to climb to the top and manage people. I rejected the latter route 10 years ago, but am so grateful that I still get to meet so many remarkable people, visit cool places and see all aspects of humanity.

A difficulty working for a NY-based organization is that it's assumed that all the best people are in NYC, so being in Melbourne (where I need to be to be close to my kids in Adelaide), is that folks consider Australia a backwater and, by association, I mustn't be all that important/valuable. But my new role as "global biosecurity czar" is helping somewhat.

Ahhhhh... Office politics!

From: b6 At: 08/15/21 09:03:03 UTC+10:00

To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: b6
b6 b6 b6
Subject: Re: feedback on wild animals

Jason, all I can say is that it must be harder to be a journalist than a scientist…. I had no idea someone at your level would get pushed back.

Usually i get from one to 4 reviewer responses to a ms. and three of those are out to lunch. Occasionally i get a reviewer who really understands the work: half of those are helpful, the other half are trashers.

Maybe it's like being in the government where i am: there is endless push back, but the push-backers are brainless idiots who don't know what they are talking about.

Do you ever get to a point where the editors leave you alone on the science? Or do they all think they are science geniuses? d

Sent from my iPhone

David M Morens

OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Aug 14, 2021, at 16:05, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) < j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:
>
> Thanks, Bob. In journalism, getting to the truth even when it's genuinely and actively pursued, can be a tortuous process!
>
> ----- Original Message -----
> From: Robert F Garry < b6 >
> To: JASON GALE, [redacted] b6
> b6
> At: 08/15/21 01:45:11 UTC+10:00
>
> Looking forward to this important article. Truth is stronger than fiction.
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
> **Sent:** Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:41 AM
> **To:** [redacted] b6
> b6

b6; Garry, Robert F b6

Subject: Fwd:Re:feedback on wild animals

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Hi guys, in case you have nothing better to read over the weekend, this is some of the dialog I am having with editors in the U.S. Essentially, my response to questions from editor #6.

I thought I could claim victory when it looked like the story could be published this morning, but the editor of Businessweek objected and thinks he can make it better with another revision and an ETA of Tuesday. Sigh.

Jason

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/14/21 16:36:58 UTC+10:00

To: Cristina Lindblad (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) , Eric Gelman (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Cc: Joel Weber (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:feedback on wild animals

> Hi.
>
> Thanks for the feedback and the questions, which I have tried to answer in detail.
>
> It's often easier to have a conversation over Nexi or the phone to explain nuanced information, or details that are clear to me, but might not be to someone coming at this fresh, but that's tricky with the time difference.
>
> When you look back at what's happened here, it seems that in trying to deflect blame for the pandemic, which became increasingly vicious as the cataclysmic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded around March-

April 2020, China tried to conceal a very obvious, very plausible source of the pandemic: it's flourishing wildlife trade (worth about $90 billion in 2016).

It was an obvious cause of the pandemic because an almost identical scenario triggered an international outbreak caused by a very similar coronavirus (SARS) in 2003-04. But in attempting to cover up the wildlife trade, and making like there were never any wild animals being sold in Wuhan's wet markets, things began to backfire on China; questions were raised about the nearby lab studying these coronaviruses. The more geopolitical, heated and vicious the arguments and accusations became, the less cooperative China became. In response, the more intent/adamant some groups have become in their belief that China is covering up a lab-leak. It's become a vicious circle. If China isn't coming clean on the wild animals, what else is it trying to hide?? China's defensiveness means we may never get the cooperation needed to find the answers. If China had been honest and transparent about the wild animals in the wet markets, it might not be in this mess now.

Anyway, here are my response to your queries in green.

By the way, I wonder if the current headline:

Delayed Paper Gives Credence to Wuhan Market Covid Origin Story

doesn't convey much more than what we had 2 months earlier when we reported Xiao's findings: China Markets Sold Mink, Civets, Stoking Natural Origins Theory

Perhaps Obscured China Paper Scuppered Chance to Trace Covid Origins

would hits "China", "Covid" and "Origins" in a way that won't alienate people who already believe it was a lab-leak

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According to the report, minks, civets, raccoon dogs and other mammals known to harbor coronaviruses were sold in plain sight for years in shops across the city, including the now infamous Huanan wet market, to which many of the earliest Covid cases were traced. The evidence collected over 30 months by **Xiao Xiao** a I'D NAME HIM HERE [[i don't know that naming a researcher no one has ever heard of adds much]] researcher working at a lab affiliated with China's Ministry of Education was hastily drafted into a manuscript and submitted to a scientific journal [Joel, we cannot name the first journal they delivered it to because the authors decline to give us the name, saying it may affect their future chances of being published] in February 2020, just weeks before the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

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While the study received wide attention when it was eventually released by a different publisher [Publisher (Springer Nature) and publication (Scientific Reports) are different. Might add confusion DO YOU WANT TO ADD NAME HERE?], its long and torturous journey to publication gave **Chinese officials an opportunity to weave alternative narratives in which the virus may have come from abroad, even from a U.S. Army biological research facility**. [the stuff in bold is not contested and we go on to show how that happened, documenting with links when available]I TWEAKED WORDING HERE BUT THIS STILL ISN'T QUITE RIGHT. IF THE REPORT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED EARLIER CHINESE OFFICIALS COULD STILL HAVE DONE WHAT THEY DID—THEY COULD HAVE JUST SAID THE REPORT WAS SHODDY, OR WHATEVER, AND THEY ALSO COULD HAVE JUST IGNORED IT. I disagree. The evidence that Xiao et al provide was meticulously documented and supported by photographs that would have been difficult/impossible for China to dismiss (as older published photos and media reports had been). What's more, Newman understands that Xiao collected blood-

sucking ticks from the wild animals he studiously cataloged. His frozen tick samples could be tested for blood/antibodies/virus , which could be extremely helpful in identifying infected species PRIOR to December 2019. The WHO team knew nothing of this, so couldn't have asked China for this research or any results, had they actually done the research. The delay in the publication of Xiao's paper delayed the evidence that there were live animals sold in the Huanan market. The WHO researchers couldn't have asked about tests on wildlife that ostensibly were never there. Likewise, Chinese authorities couldn't have done the tests on animals that didn't exist. The problem is that in January and February 2020, it was widely assumed the animals HAD been there and that the necessary tests and tracing of animals (the sampling of animals on farms they were raised on, testing of farm workers, animal hunters, transporters and traders **had all been done** by researchers in China -- the very things that ultimately led to the discovery of the origins of SARS and of MERS viruses. **None of these things were done** (or at least, there is nothing publicly available to show that they were done) **because the animals "weren't there"**. Now that we all know they were there, China as lost considerable face. The issue has become so political than there is much less/?no willingness to cooperate and conduct the additional research that the WHO-led team recommended. Ideally, Xiao's ticks should be studied, but it's doubtful that will now happen (I wouldn't be surprised if he's been ordered to incinerate them!) Hope this is clear.

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An international team of experts convened by the WHO traveled to Wuhan earlier this year to seek answers—a trip that might have yielded different results if the scientists had known about the work of Xiao Xiao, a virologist whose roles straddled epidemiology and animal research at the government-funded Key Laboratory of Southwest China Wildlife Resources Conservation and at Hubei University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.'MIGHT HAVE YIELDED DIFFERENT RESULTS' SEEMS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. WHAT RESULTS DID IT YIELD? I'D CUT THIS GRAF

As mentioned above, the WHO-convened team of researchers was told by market authorities, vendors and regular market visitors that there were no live animals sold in the Huanan market. That undermined completely the premise that the Huanan market was the kind of place where live animals from different species are stacked in cages, with urine and fecal material drips from one cage to the one below it, where there are splatters of blood and guts from animals, and lots of potential for the spread of diseases from one species to another (including Homo sapiens). Instead, the market (and one other one known to have been selling live wild animals in 2019) was presented as selling only frozen wild animals and aquatic species and things unlikely to be the source of SARS-CoV-2. The WHO researchers were told there were frozen ferret badgers and other wildlife found in freezers. Some of the carcasses actually came from Yunnan, the province where the closest coronavirus related to SARS-CoV-2 was found in bats -- thus establishing a potential route from Yunnan to Wuhan in wildlife. That was actually important. When the researchers showed their Chinese counterparts photos of caged raccoon dogs taken in the Huanan market by Prof. Edward Holmes five or six years earlier, they were told by Chinese scientists that the photos may have been faked, and that the market had ceased selling such live animals anyway. The WHO researchers saw no evidence (empty cages, animal pelts, etc) to dispute what the Chinese scientists told them, although they did smell "animals" -- but were told they were smelling rotten meat, sewage etc. Three people associated with the WHO-led mission told me that they didn't believe the information they were given by anyone associated with the market. But since there was no evidence to the contrary, they were unable to push the Chinese scientists further on this. **The fact that the mission concluded that frozen, not live wild animals were sold in the market undermined the thesis that Covid resulted from an animal spillover**. And the absence of strong evidence pointing to a spill over from wild animals to humans made the lab-leak theory look, in relative terms, more plausible.

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Six months and two revisions later, the journal's publishers rejected the paper. "They did not think it would have widespread appeal," says Newman, who declined to name the publication [do you want us to say why he won't name it? I don't think it's necessary . There's no upside for scientists to make a publisher look bad (most journals are published by a handful of publishers)] "It caused us, especially our Chinese co-authors, concern that these data would not be taken seriously."

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The manuscript underwent a third revision to include data on China's pangolin trade networks (an earlier study, later contested, had implicated pangolins in the virus's spread to humans)WHO ASKED THAT THIS INFO BE INCLUDED? (I did, because we're trying to explain here why WHO missed the significance of Xiao's evidence. The WHO was slammed by other papers being submitted PLUS Xiao's paper had a weird title. That title seemed relevant to the authors back in January-February 2020, when pangolins were considered a possible SARS-CoV-2-spreading culprit. But in October 2020, pangolins were off the hook, so the title would have seem irrelevant/unimportant at first glance at WHO). It was then sent to the online journal *Scientific Reports*.

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The China-based researchers had reason to be cautious. In February 2020, the China Center for Disease Control (CCDC lets not use "CCDC". It's not commonly used like the U.S. "CDC" is, and it's going to force readers to go back and figure out what the "CCDC" is) prohibited scientists working on Covid-relate

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~~CCDC~~ Disease detectives arriving from Beijing (think this makes it clear that these are China's disease "feds" arriving) on the first day of 2020 ordered environmental samples to be collected from drains and other surfaces at the market. Some 585 specimens were tested, of which 33 turned out to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. “All current evidence points to wild animals sold illegally,” China CDC Director George Gao and colleagues wrote in the agency’s weekly bulletin in late January. All but two of the positive specimens came from a cavernous and poorly-ventilated section of the market’s western wing, where many shops sold animals.

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~~The information void kindled a raging political debate that’s already caused a trade war between China and Australia, as nations~~ demand to know ~~how Covid emerged.~~

Australia in April 2020 called for a global inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, including China’s handling of the initial outbreak. Days later, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo used part of his Earth Day message to call on China to close its wet markets to “reduce risks to human health inside and outside of China.”

Based on a discussion today with someone with knowledge of the WHO-led mission to Wuhan in Jan-Feb 2021, a significant catalyst for China's defensiveness is the emergence of **claims for reparations** that extended from the finger-pointing at China's wet markets. These surfaced in April 2020, and have continued as recently as June 2021 (when Trump pushed for it again at a rally in the Midwest)

SO IS THIS THE POINT AT WHICH CHINA, WHICH SEEMINGLY ACCEPTED THE WET MARKET HYPOTHESIS, BEGAN TRYING TO CREATE A DIFFERENT NARRATIVE? (I think it was incremental. I believe China was embarrassed that its citizens were still buying wild animals in wet markets to eat -- a well-known hazard for zoonotic disease transmission that China tried unsuccessfully to outlaw almost 20 years ago. But that embarrassment/humiliation morphed into rigid denial and obfuscation when governments began openly blaming the Chinese Communist Party and agitating for China to pay reparations for the pandemic. See these clips:

- USA Today: Blame the Chinese Communist Party for the coronavirus crisis: Coronavirus crisis proves communism is still a grave threat to the entire world. If Beijing had just been honest, the pandemic could be preventable. April 5, 2020
- Yahoo News: More than half of Americans think China should pay coronavirus reparations, poll shows April 9, 2020
- Voice of America: Americans Join Coronavirus Lawsuit to Make China Pay April 10, 2020
- Washington Post Opinion: China must pay reparations to Africa for its coronavirus failures April 16, 2020
- Reuters: In a first, Missouri sues China over coronavirus economic losses April 22, 2020
- Washington Post: Missouri is suing China over the coronavirus pandemic. It's the latest conservative gambit, April 22, 2020
- New York Post: Top German paper demands $165 billion coronavirus reparations from China April 22, 2020
- Attorney General Fitch Prepares to Sue China on Behalf of Mississippians April 22, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump on U.S. Seeking Compensation From China Over COVID-19: 'We Have Not Determined the Final Amount' April 28, 2020
- The Guardian: Trump says China could have stopped Covid-19 and suggests US will seek damages April 28, 2020
- Intelligencer: Trump Thinks He Can Make China Pay for the Virus Like Mexico Paid for the Wall, April 30, 2020
- Washington Post: U.S. officials crafting retaliatory actions against China over coronavirus as President Trump fumes April 30, 2020
- Lawfare: Does China Really Owe the World Trillions of Dollars? May 7, 2020

- Fortune: Trump's demand that China pay coronavirus reparations evokes an ugly history May 8, 2020
- South China Morning Post: Why China won't be paying the West coronavirus reparations any time soon May 15, 2020
- Deccan Herald, India: Abhijit Bhattacharyya | Why China needs to pay reparations to the world June 4, 2020
- Why calls for reparations from China for coronavirus are an unfeasible distraction June 9, 2020
- Newsweek: Trump Demands China 'Pay Reparations' for COVID, Says $10 Trillion Not Enough June 12, 2021

In response, Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, denied "wildlife wet markets" existed in the country. Government researchersCAN WE BE MORE SPECIFIC? Twenty-two researchers from mostly nationally-funded laboratories (I think it's the Chinese equivalent of the NIH in the U.S.) and institutes attached to the Chinese Academy of Sciences) now dismiss the market hypothesis completely. "SARS-CoV-2 could not have possibly evolved in an animal market in a big city and even less likely in a laboratory," they wrote in a paper released last month ahead of publicationWHERE/WHEN WILL IT BE PUBLISHED? It was released as a "pre-print" on a Chinese academic repository ahead of publication that appears to be managed/owned by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Papers are usually released in pre-print form before they have been accepted for publication or peer-reviewed as a way of expediting public access to the information. In this case, there is no information to suggest if, where or when the paper will be published.

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A more recent paperBY WHOM? (China CDC's Gao and eight other scientists mostly from the Chinese of Academy of Sciences' institutes) contends that the virus may have been imported from multiple locations worldwide, including parts of Europe where mink are raised in

areas inhabited also by horseshoe bats known to harbor coronaviruses. “The official narrative changed not because the evidence changed,” says Robert Garry, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Tulane University’s School of Medicine in New Orleans “A spillover from a wet market was what caused SARS, and, embarrassingly for China, those wet markets were never shut down.” Garry is the co-author of one of the earliest papers on the origins of Covid but wasn’t involved in the research on Wuhan’s markets.

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I DON’T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT POINT THIS GRAF IS TRYING TO MAKE. This is intended to demonstrate the kind of gaslighting that has occurred. Some of the WHO-led researchers are veterinarians and zoologists -- they know what animals smell like, and could smell their lingering presence a year later, but were told essentially that it was impossible that they were smelling animals because **there "were no live animals there"**.) The researchers noted a mixed smell of animals and disinfectant in some areas of the market, but they were told by the market’s manager that they were probably smelling the lingering stench of rotten meat and sewage, according to a joint WHO-China report. [should we add “according to Laing Wannian etc here? Liang Wannian was the leader of the Chinese research team collaborating jointly with the WHO-led research team. The source for the above description are in the annexes to the official joint WHO-China report released at the end of March 2021.]

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Earlier the same day, the international research team visited Wuhan’s larger Baishazhou market, where Xiao had regularly surveyed two sellers of live wild animals. Yet the group was told only frozen food, ingredients, and kitchenware were on offer there. Liang Wannian, an epidemiologist who led the Chinese experts collaborating with the WHO-convened team,

says his group had no knowledge of Xiao's data either. [if the above information on what the delegation saw all comes from this same source, maybe we should include his name higher up (The source for the description of what the origins researchers saw on Jan. 31, 2021, comes from the official 120-page joint WHO-China report and its 193-page annexes, not from Liang. Since we are essentially accusing China of concealing the information that Xiao documented, we asked Liang at a press conference in late July 2021 when the Chinese team first knew about Xiao's findings -- that the Huanan market and three others in Wuhan were selling live animals permissive to SARS-CoV-2 infection -- and what research China has done subsequently as a follow-up on this information? Liang gave a very long-winded response in Chinese in which he said essentially "we didn't have that information in January-February 2021 when the research team was in Wuhan". I think it's important we keep this to demonstrate that we have tried to ascertain what China knew/has done and have given the Chinese researchers the opportunity to respond. In addition, I have emailed China CDC Director George Gao at least twice and not received any response.]

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Among the earliest clusters of infections recorded in Wuhan, one involved three Covid cases among staff working at a stall in Huanan. One of the employees, a 32-year-old who fell ill on Dec. 19, traded goods back and forth between the Huanan and Baishazhou markets.

WHERE DOES THIS FACT COME FROM? NOT THE REPORT, RIGHT? WHEN DID IT FIRST BECOME KNOWN? This information was from the joint WHO-China report released in March 2021, however, the WHO-led researchers went to the Baishazhou market more as a demonstration by the China team of what a perfectly functioning large food market looks like. The WHO-led team was oblivious to Xiao's research that showed there were at least two stalls in Baishazhou that had been selling live wild animals for human consuption. So this detail and its significance was lost on the WHO researchers at the time.)

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A confirmed case linking two markets that sold wild animals is “very intriguing,”says Stephen Goldstein, a research associate in evolutionary virology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. But tracing any contact the employee might have had with infected wildlife is impossible now that the animals are long gone.WOULD TIMELY PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT HAVE CHANGED THIS? It's unlikely that Xiao et al's paper would have been *published* soon after It was drafted in February 2020, but it could have been *released* as a pre-print ahead of publication and peer-review that same month. That would have **confirmed** what almost everyone had suspected: that there **was** a flourishing wildlife trade in Wuhan that provides a plausible pathway by which coronavirus-infected wildlife from Yunnan and beyond could have introduced the virus to the city, sparking the Covid outbreak. It's also possible that swift recognition of these potential wild-animal vectors could have allowed scientists to test them for the virus and for antibodies against the virus while they were still alive (perhaps not the ones from Huanan, but wildlife in the three other Wuhan markets). Because of the statements the Chinese authorities had been making in January and February that strongly supported the animal spill over theory, it was assumed that this research was being done. Of course, the pandemic was raging then, so it would have been challenging. But, because of the denial by Chinese researchers that wild animals were being sold in Wuhan wet markets before the pandemic, there was never that level of follow up. At least, if there was, it was never made public.)

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“It seems to me, at a minimum, that local or regional authorities kept that informationWHAT INFORMATION? (that Wuhan had a flourishing live wild animal business going on in its wet markets before the pandemic) quiet deliberately,” Goldstein says. “It’s incredible to me that people theorize about one type of cover-up, but an obvious cover-up is staring them right in the

face."

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Date: Sun, 27 Jun 2021 1:12:27 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 27 Jun 2021 1:10:38 PM -0400
Subject: Personal attack piece in the Times, UK
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6] Rich Roberts [b6] peter hotez [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]

Just mortified by this.

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the- rise-and-fall-of-british-virus-hunter-peter-daszak-05q8brpz7

The rise and fall of British virus hunter Peter Daszak

The scientist who led opposition to the claim that Covid leaked from a Wuhan lab is engulfed in controversy after it was revealed his charity had funded the institute at the centre of the row

Peter Daszak became the face of the WHO mission to find the origins of the coronavirus

On January 18, Peter Daszak, born and raised in the mill and mining town of Dukinfield, near Manchester, awoke to a winter's dawn in central China, 5,500 miles away. "Sunrise in Wuhan — my early morning view on day 4 of quarantine — beautiful," he tweeted, with a photograph of skyscrapers against a hazy orange sky.

His presence there in a delegation from the World Health Organisation (WHO) on a mission of global significance showed a remarkable rise for the 55-year-old parasitologist with a PhD from the University of East London.

Ostensibly he was visiting the city to find the truth about where the coronavirus pandemic began before it swept across the world — killing nearly four million people. Five months later, however, the trip to Wuhan has placed Daszak at the centre of a growing web of controversy. The wry Mancunian humour that singled him out from fellow scientists of international renown has dried up.

"When you see him on the television now, he's not the funny northerner," said one old friend and colleague. "There's so much nastiness and vitriol out there, this must have been a challenging time for him."

Daszak faces questions about a crucial conflict of interest in four interlocking aspects of his professional life: his role on the WHO-led mission to Wuhan; his relationship with the Wuhan virologist Shi Zhengli, known as the "bat woman"; his presidency of a federally funded American charity that gave money to her laboratory; and his chairmanship of a commission investigating the pandemic's possible origins for The Lancet medical journal.

The Lancet commission, supported by the United Nations sustainable development solutions network, is looking, among other things, at the explosive question of whether the virus escaped accidentally from Shi's Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), which Daszak — like China — has consistently denied.

Critics ask how Daszak can objectively investigate something he has such fixed views about, in a lab his charity has funded. The WIV appears to have received almost $600,000 of a $3.7 million grant awarded to Daszak's EcoHealth Alliance in 2014 by the US Department for Health and Human Services for the purposes of "understanding the risk of bat coronavirus emergence".

Last week The Lancet acknowledged the conflict of interest by announcing that Daszak had recused himself from its commission. It said that in future "technical work will be conducted by independent experts who were not themselves directly involved in US-China research activities that are under scrutiny".

It was a heavy blow, and not the first time Daszak's impartiality has been in question. He strongly attacked the lab leak theory before, during and after the WHO mission, which concluded that it was "extremely unlikely". In an episode of the US TV show *60 Minutes* in March, he faced a grilling about his "conflict of interest". And in April a US congressional committee requested evidence from EcoHealth Alliance about its funding.

SPONSORED

Yet little is known about the figure in the middle of this maelstrom. How did the boy from Manchester become the president of a charity bankrolled by the Pentagon and America's National Institutes of Health (NIH), the face of the WHO mission, the Wuhan lab's biggest cheerleader and now one of the most controversial characters in the pandemic saga?

Daszak lives in New York state's wealthy Rockland county, 30 miles northwest of Manhattan. Seven years ago he and his wife Janet bought a sprawling house in two acres for $665,000. In 2019 he was paid

$354,065 by EcoHealth Alliance, based in Manhattan.

It is a world away from Dukinfield, where Daszak's Anglo-Welsh mother and Ukrainian father Bohdan raised their family. One son, John, a year younger than Peter, became a tenor with the English National Opera. But Peter Daszak's passions lay elsewhere: his childhood dreams were of becoming a "zoologist in the Amazon", he told the podcast *This Week In Virology* in 2019. "I think that once you get hooked on research and finding new things out, there's something that plays to a fundamental need to discover in the human psyche."

Daszak started off with a BSc in zoology at the University of Bangor in Wales — a teacher recalls that he was "really bright" — before his PhD and postdoctoral research. At Kingston University one project proved to be a springboard. With a colleague, Andrew Cunningham, he discovered the cause of a mass die-off of frogs from Australia to Panama, unexplained for a decade. Daszak suggested that the fungus responsible was linked to the wildlife trade in bullfrogs, sold as pets or food. This was the first step in a career focused on the interaction between humans, nature and viruses.

He moved to America with his wife, an immunologist, when she got a job in Georgia. His frog fame followed him, and over the next few years his research on emerging infectious disease gained attention, partly due to outbreaks of several rare and deadly diseases in humans, including Nipah virus, ebola and Sars.

In 2001 he joined the Wildlife Trust, a small, privately funded charity that would later become EcoHealth Alliance. Throughout the ensuing decade, Daszak was adept at promoting his projects. In an interview on America's National Public Radio in 2004 he compared his frog research to a Monty Python sketch: "John Cleese goes into the pet shop and says, 'Yeah, this parrot's dead.' 'Well, actually, sir, it's just resting.' And they just looked like frogs that were resting, who were perfectly OK, but dead."

In an episode of the TV programme *60 Minutes* the same year, clad in head-to-toe khaki on a boat speeding towards the remote Malaysian island of Pulau Tioman, Daszak was referred to as a "virus hunter" off to search for bats suspected of harbouring the Nipah virus. He says: "Almost 75% of the emerging diseases in humans actually come from wildlife ... or domestic animals," he warns. "We are looking for the next HIV, the next Sars." This nascent area of scientific study, now known as conservation medicine, shaped the next 16 years of Daszak's career.

By 2010 Daszak was busily fund- raising for the newly reconfigured EcoHealth Alliance. Millions of

dollars worth of grants rolled in: 87.6 per cent of it from US government sources in 2019, including the NIH and the Pentagon.

According to one prominent scientist, who asked not to be named, Daszak did not have a laboratory of his own, nor was he performing his own research, as most grant recipients did. What he did have, however, was a network of partnerships with other laboratories, including Shi's WIV.

With Shi, Daszak helped to co-ordinate visits to remote mines in China to look for bat coronaviruses to study in the lab in the hope of getting ahead of natural spillovers into local populations. Then in late 2019 the pandemic erupted in Wuhan.

When President Donald Trump first suggested in January 2020 that the virus had leaked from Shi's lab, Daszak was quick to leverage connections and lobby colleagues to push the counternarrative that it came directly from animals.

In February 2020, he organised an open letter in The Lancet with 26 scientists, condemning "conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin". He also wrote an article in The Guardian in June last year under the headline: "Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn't created in a lab".

When it was suggested to him by *60 Minutes* in March that, as a member of the WHO mission, he had technically been investigating his own colleagues at the Wuhan lab, Daszak said: "I'm on the WHO team for a reason ... and if you're going to work in China on coronaviruses and try and understand their origins you should involve the people who know the most about that, and for better or for worse I do."

Last week in an update on The Lancet site, Daszak wrote that his organisation collaborated with a range of universities and governmental health and environmental science organisations in China. He said that neither the EcoHealth Alliance nor he personally received funding from the Chinese government.

Despite Daszak's best efforts, President Joe Biden lent credence to the lab-leak theory when he approved a full investigation into it last month.

Suddenly Daszak's vehement attacks on the hypothesis appeared to some to be less about the science and more about a serious conflict of interest — one that a growing number seem unwilling to ignore any longer.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Wed, 5 May 2021 6:01:59 PM -0400
Sent: Wed, 5 May 2021 6:00:22 PM -0400
Subject: Reporter from Vanity Fair, Katherine Eban - please speak with her if she reaches out.
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Roberts, Rich [b6] David Morens [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
CC: Robert Kessler [b6]>;

I spoke off-the-record with a reporter from Vanity Fair (Katherine Eban) who is a good health and investigative reporter, but just did the usual questions about the Wuhan lab. She told me she wants to do a deep dive on the origins of COVID, but didn't ask a single question about the wildlife farms of S. China (where the virus prob. came from). She told me a growing number of serious scientists are starting to speak about the lab leak – I asked who, her response David Relman (who I suspect she's interviewed). I explained he's not a virologist and approaches this from a mission of reducing biosafety labs and controlling gain-of-function work. I also explained that we don't do gain of function work in China, and that there is no evidence for it being involved in SARS-CoV-2, nor actually any evidence the virus escaped from a lab.

I have just sent her an email (below), giving her a list of people who she should talk with and I hope she'll reach out to you. Please talk with her if you can – we need a diversity of voices getting the message out there to journalists right now.

Here's what I wrote to her:

Dear Katherine,

Please consider this email off-the-record.

Apologies that I can't have a decent on-the-record conversation with you, but as I mentioned, my speaking about the lab leak hypothesis publicly doesn't help us get any closer to EHA's goal, which is to understand where COVID came from, and to prevent the next one. Every time I speak with the press on this issue, it brings more oppressive actions (e.g. bill to defund EHA) and more threats.

Here are some people that I hope are useful to you as you dig in on your story. Some of them I work with, others I don't. They are all aware of the issues, and all are bona fide researchers who have conducted significant work in their careers on viral emerging diseases:

- Members of the WHO team who were members of the Animal & Environment working group/veterinarians – Marion Koopmans [b6]; Fabian Leendertz [b6]; David Hayman [b6]; or the lead of the team, Peter Ben Embarek [b6]
- Kristian Andersen - conducted substantial research on the genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 & repeatedly spoken out about how a lab leak is 'extremely unlikely' (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) Twitter DM: @K_G_Andersen
- Trevor Bedford – as above [b6] Twitter DM: @trvrb
- In the WHO report (here: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-convened-global-study-of-origins-of-sars-cov-2-china-part) and the Annexes (here: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-convened-global-study-of-origins-of-sars-cov-2-china-part-annexes.pdf?sfvrsn=3065bcd8_5) the Joint Mission finds the most likely pathway that COVID took is from a bat via an intermediate host (e.g. those found in domestic wildlife farms) into people. In the annex (p. 191) there's a short statement from Prof. Eddie Holmes who visited the market in 2014 and found live mammals for sale of the type that carry coronaviruses. China denies that this was happening prior to the outbreak, but there is unsubstantiated evidence on the web that it was. I recommend talking with Eddie Holmes, who is very well known and gives great quotes: [b6] Twitter DM: @edwardcholmes
- A good person to talk with about biosecurity labs and the NIH action is Jerry Keusch who set up and is now Director of the Boston BSL-4 lab: [b6]
- You also mentioned the termination of EcoHealth's NIH grant. There is a wealth of information (letters, responses etc.) on what happened with that NIH grant on the following websites run by the Nobel Laureate Campaigns group: https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant.html & https://nlcampaigns.org/daszak_grant2.html .
- One of the Nobel laureates, Rich Roberts would be a good person to talk with – he's aware of the issues politically and has spoken out about them: [b6]
- Another key person might be David Morens, who works at NIAID (Dep. Director level for Tony Fauci), but would talk on background: [b6]
- Jerry Keusch (above re. biosecurity labs) incidentally was the head of an NIH center (Fogarty International Center)

for many years and would also be able to speak knowledgeably about whether the NIH action was unusual or not.

Finally, I hope you take my conversation in the way it was intended – having seen this develop over the last 15 months, I've seen clear evidence that stories focusing on the idea that the virus escaped from a Wuhan lab do nothing to help us get any closer to understanding where it came from. There is no evidence for a lab leak, including of any lab anywhere in the world having a virus that could plausibly be a progenitor for SARS-CoV-2 prior to the outbreak. There is no evidence that the Wuhan lab had sequences or isolates (cultures) of SARSr-CoVs that they were hiding from us or not reporting, and as I mentioned, we published in early 2020, sequences of >150 novel SARSr-CoVs. Finally, despite the headlines, we have not been secretly 'funneling' or 'channeling' funding to WIV or 'hiding $40 million of defense funding' – all of our funding sources are publicly registered and reported on and our DoD funding is from the Defense Threat *Reduction* Agency which is well known for its work in trying to reduce the threat of bioweapons.

I strongly hope you are able to do a balanced job of reporting this. Some of the scientists above have been publicly vilified for speaking out about the lack of evidence on the lab leak theory, and they may be reluctant to talk. If so, please tell them I suggested their name and hopefully it will help.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
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Tel.: b6
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Date: Sun, 18 Jul 2021 2:14:53 PM -0400
Subject: Jake Sullivan
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Gerald Keusch [b6] David Morens [b6]
CC: Aleksei Chmura [b6]>;

Yes - very damaging. We all know they have no further intel and that anyone with any actual understanding of the science would draw the conclusion that the lab leak is, dare I quote the WHO team, "Extremely Unlikely"....

Just ridiculous politics at the moment. Jake Sullivan's Wikipedia page shows he's a Yale law school graduate working for the NSC who made public his goals on being appointed by Biden as: "On November 22, 2020, Sullivan was announced as President-elect Joe Biden's choice to be National Security Advisor.[28] Upon his appointment, Sullivan stated that the early priorities of Biden's National Security Council (NSC) are the COVID-19 pandemic, "restructuring the NSC to make public health a permanent national security priority", and China relations.[2] He also emphasized that the Biden administration aimed to repair American relations with allies that he regarded as being damaged during the Trump administration.[2]"

In other words - here we have the National Security staff deciding what the origins of a pandemic are, not scientists, not public health staff, but National Security. That, in a nutshell, is the problem. If you ask a National Security person with a law degree from an Ivy League College where the virus came from, you're likely to get a very US-centric political opinion, and in this case, one that isn't grounded in data and facts...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and

promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Friday, July 16, 2021 6:10 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Gerald Keusch [b6]>
Subject: just reported

Senior Biden officials including Jake Sullivan have just reported to the media that they have concluded the "lab leak" theory is highly credible and must be pursued. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

Date:	Fri, 21 Jan 2022 5:33:56 PM -0500
Sent:	Fri, 21 Jan 2022 5:32:36 PM -0500
Subject:	RE: FW: Article about our correspondence with NIH on the terminated-now-suspended grant
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6]
CC:	Jeff Sturchio [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;
Attachments:	image001.jpg; image002.jpg; image003.gif; image004.gif; image005.gif; image006.jpg; image007.gif; image008.jpg; image009.gif

Good point re. naming Stemmy etc. The links include emails to Emily Erbelding, Matthew Fenton and a bunch of others at NIAID too. They'll all be FoIA'd next….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2022 5:00 PM
To: Peter Daszak < [b6]
Cc: Jeff Sturchio < [b6] Keusch, Gerald T < [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]
Subject: Re: FW: Article about our correspondence with NIH on the terminated-now-suspended grant

Yes, I think your assessment is right. I think it's also good that all these NIH folks, down to Stemmy, are being named, because it ups the number of people who are likely top feel attacked unfairly

d

David M. Morens, MD

b6

b6 b6 b6 (work)
b6 b6 b6 (cell)

IMPORTANT: My gmail frequently sends incoming messages to Trash, which is apparently not correctable. If you don't hear from me in a reasonable time, please try again, call, or use my NIH email address

IMPORTANT: For US Government-related email, please also reply to my NIAID address

On Fri, Jan 21, 2022 at 4:40 PM Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:

> These Intercept reporters foia'd our lawyer's correspondence with NIH regarding the terminated-now-suspended R01.
>
> Here's the article that came out of that. It's not that bad and in some places paints a picture of an organization doing its best to get on with science. I think the nay-sayers will continue to think we're acting disingenuously, and the supporters will continue to think we're being harassed, so in that sense, no harm done. Here's the link, and the full article pasted below. I recommend you look at the link because it provides a link to the FOIA'd documents also.
> https://theintercept.com/2022/01/20/coronavirus- research-china-ecohealth-fbi/
>
> # FBI SOUGHT DOCUMENTS RELATED TO U.S.-FUNDED CORONAVIRUS RESEARCH IN CHINA
>
> New records from the National Institutes of Health detail internal conversations involving the EcoHealth Alliance's research in Wuhan.
>
> 
>
> Mara Hvistendahl, Sharon Lerner
> January 20 2022, 5:42 p.m.
>
> **THE FBI SOUGHT** National Institutes of Health grant documents covering bat coronavirus research in Wuhan in spring 2020, according to emails obtained by The Intercept. The emails, released through ongoing litigation between The Intercept and

the NIH, detail internal NIH conversations involving the New York-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, which collaborated with the Wuhan Institute of Virology on research. The emails also contain previously unreported requests the agency made of EcoHealth Alliance as a condition for restoring a grant funding its research. While unable to provide some of the information requested by the agency, Peter Daszak, EcoHealth's besieged president, fought fiercely to save the grant.

The new information gives an unprecedented window into the high-profile tussle between EcoHealth Alliance and the NIH, and underscores the agency's tenuous grasp of the biosafety protocols in place in its research projects, even with a project that has since come under scrutiny for a possible link to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"There doesn't seem to be transparent and accessible record-keeping of incident reporting," said Filippa Lentzos, co-director of the Centre for Science and Security Studies at King's College London, after viewing some of the emails. "That is very worrying and underscores the need for an overhaul of biosafety oversight in the United States."

The correspondence contains letters going back to April 2020, when Trump administration officials were blaming the Wuhan Institute of Virology, without sufficient evidence, for causing the pandemic. On April 17, President Donald Trump was asked in a press conference about the NIH grant to EcoHealth Alliance, under which the Chinese lab was a partner. He responded, "We will end that grant very quickly." Two days later, Michael Lauer, NIH deputy director for extramural research, informed Daszak that the agency was suspending grant funds to the Wuhan Institute of Virology and instructed his group to cease providing grant money to the institute. On April 24, according to a letter included in the new communications, Lauer followed up with the news that the NIH was terminating the entire grant because it did not "align with the program goals and agency priorities." He told EcoHealth Alliance officials that nearly $370,000 needed to be remitted back to the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, with their access to the remaining grant funds restricted "effective immediately." (Politico reported the existence of the letter that same month, and Science later published an excerpt of it.)

The confrontation earned Daszak sympathy in the press and from other scientists. NIH officials, meanwhile, refuted the possibility of a lab origin, at least in public. It would later be revealed, however, that in February 2020 NIAID Director Anthony Fauci and then-NIH Director Francis Collins had privately consulted with prominent scientists who had seriously considered the possibility of a lab origin for the pandemic, and that two months later some leading researchers still believed a lab accident was possible. "Wondering if there is something the NIH can do to help put down this very destructive conspiracy," Collins wrote in an email to Fauci in late April, in reference to

a Fox News segment mentioning the lab-origin hypothesis. While a handful of biosafety experts had openly called for scrutinizing the NIH's funding of EcoHealth Alliance, their entreaties were largely drowned out by political wrangling.

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Matthew Cole

Trump officials had reportedly instructed U.S. intelligence agencies to search for evidence linking the Wuhan lab to the pandemic. Trump's interest appeared to be scapegoating China, and officials in his administration homed in on sketchy evidence from Wuhan. But the emails obtained by The Intercept indicate that the FBI looked where biosafety experts had suggested they should: at EcoHealth Alliance's NIH grant, though it's unclear what prompted the FBI's request for information. On May 22, 2020, Ashley Sanders, an officer with the NIH's Office of Management Assessment, emailed FBI agent David Miller under the subject line "FW: Grant Questions – FBI Inquiry – 1-R01AI110964-01 – 2-R01AI110964-06": the numbers the NIH had assigned to the grant and its renewal.

The correspondence suggests that NIH administrators provided Miller with detailed information about the grant. "In preparation for our call on Tuesday, Erik (cc'd) has provided responses to your initial questions below," Sanders wrote, referring to Erik Stemmy, a program officer for the grant. The several pages of text that follow are redacted, except for the title of an attachment that includes the grant number and "SF424." The SF 424 is a detailed NIH form that grant applicants must submit.

From: Sanders, Ashley (NIH/OD) [E]
To: Miller, David A. (NK) (FBI)
Cc: Stemmy, Erik (NIH/NIAID) [E]; Shannon, Mike (NIH/OD) [E]
Subject: FW: Grant Questions - FBI Inquiry - 1-R01AI110964-01 - 2-R01AI110964-06
Date: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:18:05 PM
Attachments: SF 424 AI110964.docx

Hi David,
In preparation for our call on Tuesday, Erik (cc'd) has provided responses to your initial questions below (also attached).
Hope you have a great holiday weekend!
Ashley

Ashley M. Sanders, MPS
Senior Program Investigations Officer
NIH, OMA, Division Program Integrity
6011 Executive Blvd.
Rockville, Maryland 20852
Office: (b) (6)
Cell: (b) (6)
(b) (6)w

SF 424 AI110964-06 (received date 11/05/2018)

(b) (5)

[redacted]

Grant Questions - FBI inquiry May 2020 5 pages

Last October, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released a report assessing the possible origins of the pandemic. In the document, which followed a 90-day review by the spy agencies ordered by President Joe Biden, one agency assessed with moderate confidence that the pandemic had a lab origin, "probably involving experimentation, animal handling, or sampling by the Wuhan Institute of Virology." While the DNI report did not name the agency, the New York Times reported at the time that it was the FBI. (Four other intelligence agencies and the National Intelligence Council concluded with low confidence that the pandemic had a natural origin.)

Experts have puzzled over whether the spy agencies gained access to EcoHealth Alliance's grant documents. The DNI's detailed report did not list grant documents or communications as a source of information, but the email about the inquiry now suggests that the FBI had previously obtained at least some internal information about the EcoHealth Alliance grant. The FBI declined to confirm the existence of the inquiry or otherwise comment.

Separately, in December 2020, the NIH cited a law enforcement exemption when denying a public records request from The Intercept for the EcoHealth Alliance grant documents. In a July 2021 hearing, a federal litigator explained the agency's rationale: "At the time that they asserted the exemption, they were told and were under the impression there were ongoing investigations, law enforcement investigations, into what plaintiffs are alleging is a lab-leak hypothesis, what caused COVID," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander J. Hogan, referring to the NIH's 2020 denial of The Intercept's FOIA request. "And because of the implication of those investigations, they withheld these documents in full."

The NIH released the bat coronavirus grant proposal to The Intercept in September 2021.

In a previously unpublished email sent in April 2021, Daszak told an NIH administrator that following a trip to China as part of the World Health Organization investigation, he had briefed the FBI and other intelligence agencies, as well as the National Security Council.

"Fishing for Material"

The newly released emails detail how EcoHealth Alliance fought back against the NIH's termination of its grant. On May 22, 2020, lawyer Andrew Krinsky of the New York firm Tarter Krinsky & Drogin wrote to Lauer on behalf of EcoHealth Alliance. The lawyer said that NIAID had ranked the grant as "extremely high priority" when it was considered for renewal in mid-2019 and that EcoHealth Alliance had already agreed not to pass any more funding on to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

While the NIH had said that "the decision not to award a grant, or to award a grant at a particular funding level, is at the discretion of the agency" and cited a clause that allowed it to terminate grants at will, Krinsky argued that the NIH didn't have the legal right to cut off the funding and that according to the NIH's own rules, there was "no rational basis to terminate" the grant.

The NIH, EcoHealth Alliance, and Tarter Krinsky & Drogin did not immediately respond to requests to comment.

Date: April 19, 2020

From: Michael S Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research

Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] Digitally signed by Lauer, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] Date: 2020.04.19 10:47:40 -04'00'

To: Kevin Olival, PhD
Vice-President for Research
EcoHealth Alliance
(b) (6)

Naomi Schrag, JD
Vice-President for Research Compliance, Training, and Policy
Columbia University
(b) (6)

Subject: Project Number 2R01AI110964-06

Dear Dr. Olival and Ms. Schrag:

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. is the recipient, as grantee, of an NIH grant entitled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence." It is our understanding that one of the sub-recipients of the grant funds is the Wuhan Institute of Virology ("WIV"). It is our understanding that WIV studies the interaction between corona viruses and bats. The scientific community believes that the coronavirus causing COVID-19 jumped from bats to humans likely in Wuhan where the COVID-19 pandemic began. There are now allegations that the current crisis was precipitated by the release from WIV of the coronavirus responsible for COVID-19. Given these concerns, we are pursuing suspension of WIV from participation in Federal programs.

While we review these allegations during the period of suspension, you are instructed to cease providing any funds from the above noted grant to the WIV. This temporary action is authorized by 45 C.F.R. § 75.371(d) ("Initiate suspension or debarment proceedings as authorized under 2 C.F.R. part 180"). The incorporated OMB provision provides that the funding agency may, through suspension, immediately and temporarily exclude from Federal programs persons who are not presently responsible where "immediate action is necessary to protect the public interest." 2 C.F.R. § 180.700(c). It is in the public interest that NIH ensure that a sub-recipient has taken all appropriate precautions to prevent the release of pathogens that it is studying. This suspension of the sub-recipient does not affect the remainder of your grant assuming that no grant funds are provided to WIV following receipt of this email during the period of suspension.

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MORENS_NIH_036539
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In a July 2020 letter previously published by Vanity Fair, Lauer informed Daszak that the grant could be reinstated, but only if EcoHealth Alliance could meet seven conditions. Those included providing a sample of "the actual SARS-CoV-2 virus that WIV used to determine the viral sequence" and explaining apparently unusual activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, including roadblocks and diminished cellphone traffic, as well as the deletion of the online profile of a staffer at the lab named Huang Yanling.

The next month, the newly released emails reveal, the Tarter Krinsky & Drogin lawyers sent Lauer a detailed, seven-page rebuttal, demanding that the NIH reinstate the grant and immediately release the grant funds. The rebuttal suggested that EcoHealth Alliance and the Wuhan Institute of Virology were being unfairly scrutinized. Daszak echoed that idea in an interview with Nature that same month in which he called the NIH's conditions "heinous."

In October 2020, Lauer responded, arguing that the agency was within its rights to cut off the grant. "EcoHealth's responses have not satisfied the NIH's concerns that EcoHealth had failed to adequately monitor the compliance of its subrecipient, and that the subrecipient, WIV, had failed to comply with safety requirements," Lauer wrote. Still, he offered the nonprofit one last chance to respond to its seven conditions — and added three more requests about the research in Wuhan. Among the new requests, which have not been previously reported, were descriptions of EcoHealth Alliance's efforts to monitor risk at the Wuhan Institute of Virology and copies of all WIV biosafety reports from June 2014 through May 2019.

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Andrew N. Krinsky, *Partner*
(b) (6), *Direct Dial*
(b) (6)

August 13, 2020

Via Email, Certified Mail, & FedEx
(b) (6)

Michael S. Lauer, MD
NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
1 Center Drive, Building 1, Room 144
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Re: Suspension of NIH Grant 2R01 AI 110964-6

Dear Dr. Lauer:

This firm represents EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. ("EcoHealth Alliance"), in connection with the post-award decision by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases ("NIAID"), an Institute within the National Institute of Health ("NIH"), under the Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS"), on July 8, 2020, to suspend grant 2R01 AI 110964-6 (the "Suspension:"), which funds the project *Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence* (the "Project").

This letter constitutes EcoHealth Alliance's initial response to the Suspension, which was due to purported concerns regarding the safety of unspecified research being conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology ("WIV") and for EcoHealth Alliance's alleged failure to report certain subawards in connection with grant 2R01 AI 110964-6 (the "Grant").[1] As set forth in more detail below, the Suspension is unjustified as WIV has no connection to the Project or EcoHealth Alliance's current research and EcoHealth Alliance had not issued any subawards in connection with the Grant at the time of the Suspension. Moreover, NIAID is not authorized under 45 CFR §§ 75.371, 75.205, and 75.207, entitled *Specific Award Conditions*, to impose, *inter alia*, conditions that consist of demands for information regarding entities that are neither subrecipients of grant funds nor project affiliates.[2] Accordingly, EcoHealth Alliance hereby demands that the Suspension be withdrawn and all funding in the HHS Payment Management System be released immediately.

BACKGROUND

A. EcoHealth Alliance

EcoHealth Alliance is a prolific New York-based nonprofit institution dedicated to protecting the health of people, animals, and the environment from emerging zoonotic diseases. For more than a decade, EcoHealth Alliance has been conducting cutting edge scientific research

[1] A copy of my prior letter, dated May 22, 2020, regarding NIH's termination of the Grant, is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.
[2] Notwithstanding NIH's lack of authority to impose extraneous conditions on the Grant and Project, EcoHealth Alliance has made a good faith effort to respond to NIH's questions regarding WIV.

EcoHealth - NIH letters August - October 2020 11 pages

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Six months later, in April 2021, Daszak wrote a lengthy letter to Lauer — this time signed by him and not his lawyers — addressing the 10 conditions. He offered to meet with Lauer "without legal counsel in a scientist-to-scientist conversation," adding, "I look forward to your reply and hope that these will allow NIH to lift the suspension on funding so that we can continue our work to help protect our nation, indeed the global population, against future coronavirus pandemics."

Yet, in a confiding email he sent to NIH officials and program officers later in April, he struck a less conciliatory tone. "I believe he's fishing for material to support his earlier insinuation that EHA has done a poor job of monitoring biosafety," Daszak wrote about Lauer in the email. Daszak interpreted the NIH official's oversight efforts as a possible attempt to "provide cover so that he can say that we weren't in compliance" and asked the NIH staffers to intervene.



Related

NIH Officials Worked With EcoHealth Alliance to Evade Restrictions on Coronavirus Experiments

Among the recipients of the email was Erik Stemmy, the program officer on the EcoHealth Alliance grant. The Intercept previously reported that Stemmy was one of two agency employees who had allowed Daszak to draft a rule governing his group's research. The recipient list also included several NIH section heads, including Emily Linde, the director of the NIH's grant management program; Matthew Fenton, director

of the agency's division of extramural activities; and Emily Erbelding, director of the division of microbiology and infectious diseases.

"Any nudging you could give to Dr. Lauer would be welcome," Daszak wrote to the group. He also nodded at recent developments. In the preceding weeks, dozens of scientists had signed open letters calling for a robust investigation of the origin of the pandemic. "I realize that the politics are not great right now, but this is science, not politics, and we have a job to do in trying to identify the next COVID-like disease, which is surely out there and probably already spilling over somewhere in S. China."

EcoHealth Alliance

Dr. Michael Lauer
Deputy Director for Extramural Research,
NIH, Bethesda, MD.

Response to the Reinstatement and immediate suspension of 2R01AI110964 "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"

April 11th 2021

Dear Dr. Lauer,

I am responding your letters of 7/8/2020 and 10/3/2020 regarding the reinstatement and immediate suspension of NIH grant 2R01AI110964 "*Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence*", that was terminated "for convenience" on 4/24/2020. In particular, this letter addresses the conditions you state would need to be fulfilled in order for us to have access to the funds to continue this work.

As you know, we had not set up any subcontracts to the Wuhan Institute of Virology under this renewal R01. Immediately following NIH's letter on 4/19/2020 that the WIV was being 'investigated', we suspended all plans for contractual work with WIV. This termination of a funded relationship with the institute makes it extraordinarily difficult and more likely impossible to provide the information requested about an autonomous foreign organization – as would also be the case for a domestic one - that our organization neither works with currently, nor has control over.

Additionally, our collaborative work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology prior to your grant termination letter of 4/24/2020 and that planned in the suspended grant, is wholly unrelated to many of the conditions listed below. These conditions also pertain to certain events and situations that in no way involve EcoHealth Alliance or are not under our control. Thus, most of the conditions below are either unrelated to EcoHealth Alliance's planned research in our highly rated, approved and funded grant application, and/or to the biosafety of our continued research funded by the suspended grant when it is reinstated in full.

Furthermore, in our recent correspondence with NIH regarding the latest in a series of FoIA requests, we were informed (1/26/2021 – see email correspondence at the end of this letter) by an NIH staff member Garcia-Malene Gorka that "any indication from my program that there is an ongoing investigation into WIV can now be disregarded, as we recently confirmed there are no pending investigations into that organization." Because this was the explanation in your initial letter of 4/19/2020 for the decisions from your office regarding restrictions on, termination of, then reinstatement and suspension of our grant, we believe that these decisions should now be reassessed.

EcoHealth Alliance
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212 380 4460
EcoHealthAlliance.org

MORENS_SUBPOENA_017926
MORENS_NIH_036544
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As NIH-funded research in Wuhan was thrust into the spotlight in 2020, agency communications added to the sense that staffers had a flimsy grasp of the biosafety of both that project and others. In August 2020, a ProPublica article about a biosecurity lapse at a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill lab sparked a flurry of emails at NIAID. Two days after the article was published, the communications show, staff scrambled to find information about the incident, in which a researcher was bitten by a mouse infected with a coronavirus and did not isolate afterward.

The NIAID employees appear to have had no record of it. "Was this February 2016 incident reported to NIAID and, if so, for which grant was this incident report filed?" a staffer in the NIH's Office of Extramural Research and Policy Operations wrote to Stemmy, the NIH program officer, on August 19. She said her office had been asked to determine whether researchers at UNC followed proper biosafety procedures but "was unable to locate incident report memos in the grants folders" for five grants. The office had checked folders for two grants for research on coronaviruses at UNC, as well as the folder for the grant funding EcoHealth Alliance's bat coronavirus research in Wuhan, possibly because the nonprofit worked closely with UNC. (UNC was a partner on the bat coronavirus grant, as well as on a new grant that NIH awarded to EcoHealth Alliance in August 2020.)

According to ProPublica, federal lab safety officials at the NIH had confirmed that the UNC incident involved types of "SARS-associated coronavirus" and the university had said in a statement that it had informed the proper oversight agencies. But several staffers looked for and were unable to find records of the risky episode. In one email, an administrator said that the incident had been reported to another division at the NIH but not to NIAID. He added that the program officer for the grant only knew about a more recent safety breach because a scientist had told him.

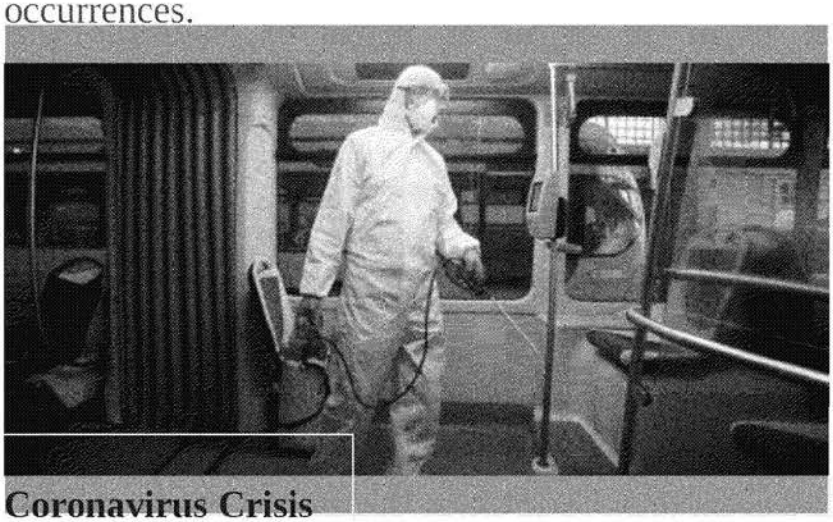
"That just seems to indicate that they do not have their house in order," said Lentzos, the biosecurity researcher. "It underscores that as a funder, NIH is not the independent oversight body that you would want for this kind of research."

"Great Personal Burden"

In his April 2021 letter to Lauer, Daszak said that he had traveled to China with a World Health Organization team in part to satisfy the NIH's demands for more information. "I have made extensive efforts to satisfy NIH's broad concerns," Daszak wrote. "This includes serving as an expert on the WHO-China joint Mission on the Animal Origins of COVID-19, which involved 1 month on the ground in China (including 2 weeks locked in quarantine), at great personal burden and risk to me, to our organization, and to my family."

While admitting that EcoHealth Alliance would not be able to meet some of the agency's conditions, Daszak nevertheless appeared hopeful that the NIH might reassess its decision to terminate the funding. He again pushed back against some of the agency's requests. Specifically, Daszak said that the questions about roadblocks near the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the deletion of Huang's online presence — both of which had been focal points of online speculation — could be easily explained without any malfeasance.

"While many conspiracy theorists have suggested that the lack of a web presence of this person suggests some nefarious activity, there are dozens of unremarkable and routine reasons why a person may be removed from a web listing of employees or students," he wrote of Huang. Similarly, Daszak noted, roadblocks and diminished cellphone traffic could be due to unremarkable road repair or other ordinary occurrences.



Read Our Complete Coverage **The Coronavirus Crisis**

Daszak also had a different read on State Department cables from January 2018 that Lauer had asked about in his letter. The cables detailed a shortage of trained technicians for the Wuhan Institute of Virology's BSL-4 laboratory, the first lab in China certified to deal with the most dangerous pathogens.

While in April 2020, Washington Post opinion columnist Josh Rogin had interpreted excerpts of the cables as evidence of safety and management weaknesses in the lab, Daszak disagreed. Indeed the full cables, which were released in July 2020, give a more complex picture, favorably describing research at the lab to which Daszak had contributed. "These do not in fact provide evidence of safety concerns at the laboratory," he wrote to Lauer. "Neither do they convincingly imply safety issues."

Lauer had also asked EcoHealth Alliance to arrange for an outside inspection of the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Daszak argued that cutting off the grant had made it virtually unthinkable that the Wuhan lab would assist with such requests. "This termination of a funded relationship with the institute makes it extraordinarily difficult and more likely impossible to provide the information requested," Daszak wrote to

Lauer. International politics made the situation worse, as he noted in an explanation of why EcoHealth Alliance was unable to procure a sample of the actual SARS-CoV-2 virus that the Wuhan Institute of Virology had used to determine its viral sequence.

"During the last 16 months, there has been a series of vitriolic attacks from the US Government accusing China of bioengineering and releasing SARS-CoV-2 or of otherwise allowing COVID to become pandemic," he wrote to Lauer. "Given these attacks, and WIV's status as a government entity, it seems to us incredulous that any request, particularly without scientific rationale, from a US non-profit to a Chinese Government laboratory for an active sample of a pathogenic human virus would likely be successful."

Daszak also cited strained international relations when explaining why he couldn't produce copies of the WIV biosafety reports, which might have provided insight into what precautions the lab had taken in its work on bat coronaviruses and whether any breaches of protocol had occurred.

"Some of [NIH's] demands were a little impractical," said Alina Chan, co-author of the book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19." "How would EcoHealth Alliance be able to obtain information about the missing staffer?" But Daszak should have been able to provide lab safety records, which are "much more significant," she said.

To Lauer, Daszak noted that the media attention and resultant public curiosity about the work EcoHealth Alliance conducted in Wuhan had cost him personally. "This type of harassment has accelerated to the point that personal security guards are now stationed at my home address, where I have also had to install invasive equipment and set up procedures to protect my family against expected violent attacks," Daszak wrote. "Additionally, I now meet regularly with FBI agents and others at my home to monitor these threats." As he did in communications The Intercept published in December, Daszak referred to a letter containing white powder that he had received at his home. Local news media reported the incident at the time.

Denying Document Requests

Meanwhile, EcoHealth Alliance was also pushing on another front. In January 2021, Matthew Torsiello, one of its lawyers, emailed Lauren Bartok, an information specialist in the NIH's Freedom of Information Act Office, to request that a FOIA request for EcoHealth Alliance's grant documents be denied. Torsiello asked that the request, which was made by a member of the public through the transparency organization MuckRock, be denied because the grant termination was under appeal and because "a law enforcement investigation concerning WIV remains ongoing." Torsiello explained that his law firm had previously asked for the the NIH to deny a

request for EcoHealth Alliance grant documents made in 2020, also by a member of the public.

The lawyer's email went on to make a tenuous argument. "As demonstrated by the recent attack on the US Capital [sic] fueled by disinformation and conspiracy theories, the need to protect the privacy of EcoHealth Alliance's employees and affiliates is more important than ever." The email did not offer further explanation, but Daszak had previously argued to the press and in the pages of the medical journal The Lancet that the notion that the pandemic could have a lab origin was a conspiracy theory.

We're really hopeful that this is the case, and everyone at EcoHealth Alliance is looking forward to continuing this critical work.

Looking forward to hearing news from you!

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: (b) (6)
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Garcia-Malene, Gorka (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 12:20:51 PM
To: Matthew R.Torsiello
Cc: Nels T. Lippert; Andrew N. Krinsky; Bartok, Lauren (NIH/NIAID) [E]; NIH FOIA
Subject: [EXT] FW: FOIA Case No. 55702 re: EcoHealth Alliance & Grant No. R01AI110964-6

Good afternoon, Mr. Torsiello –

I'd like to insert myself into the unfolding FOIA conversation in hopes of providing some helpful context. Our records show that this competing renewal has in fact been funded. In addition, any indication from my program that there is an ongoing investigation into WIV can now be disregarded, as we recently confirmed there are no pending investigations

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The day after Torsiello sent his email, another NIH FOIA officer wrote an email to an undisclosed recipient rejecting the lawyer's arguments for withholding the records. The officer noted that "there are no pending investigations" into the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Nine months later, the NIH FOIA office closed the public records request, pointing the requester to documents that the NIH had released online.

While EcoHealth Alliance's intervention in the FOIA request is not unusual, agencies are required by law to independently determine whether records should be disclosed, said Gunita Singh, an attorney for the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. "Agencies subject to FOIA are obligated to serve the public's interest in learning about government functions," she wrote in an email. "They cannot operate at the behest of private parties."

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Sat, 5 Jun 2021 2:40:57 PM -0400

Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >

To: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6] >;

Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Joel, let us consider further. Putting Peter and Shi Zhengli on might provoke a backlash that will be counter-productive, as it could be sen as a direct attack on politicians coming from Tony's friends..

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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From: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] [b6]
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 1:46 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

David, You, Tom Monath, and Peter Daszak for early drafts. Jim Leduc and Jerry Keusch for safety. Consider adding Shi Zhengli, Heinz Feldmann…First, define the questions which are probably posed in EcoHealth Alliance grant applications.

JB

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 1:09 PM
To: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] <b6
Cc: Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Karen Goraleski b6 ; Jacobson, Julie b6
b6 ; Stephen Popper <b6
b6 Dan Bausch <
b6 b6 >; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E b6 >; Peter Daszak (
b6 g >; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

Joel, and if the paper is only that, who should be authors/co-authors?

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
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Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 12:56 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Cc: Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) <b6>; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>; Karen Goraleski <b6>; Jacobson, Julie <b6>; Stephen Popper <b6>; Dan Bausch <b6>; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Peter Daszak (<b6>; Rich Roberts <b6>
Subject: Re: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

Thanks, David.
I support review and importance of last topic-continuing research essential. Define what has been accomplished, key issues for future, and touch conditions in which field and lab work should be done.

Joel

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 5, 2021, at 12:43 PM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6> wrote:

Phil here are my thoughts…..

I feel that "we" need to arrive at a consensus of what to do. We could do something, as many have suggested, or nothing at this time, as several have urged.

That Charlie Calisher (who coauthored our article last year) has had second thoughts, suggests that ASTMH members don't have consensus on at least some issues. To me that suggests it would be difficult to write something/things that take an ASTMH position, although views of individual scientists within ASTMH should be fine.

Of several related things that might be written about singly or together are:

Man-made virus origin

Lab leak origin

Grant termination issues

Gain of function issues

Importance of continuing collaborative international research on sarbeco- and merbeco-virus

Last year's two papers covered the first 3 of the items above, and my sense is that we may not have unanimity on the first two of those. If we did a one year update we might have to do some finessing.

The third issue, grant termination, is something I would personally have difficulty doing since my boss, Tony, might take the heat, and I can't throw him under the bus, especially as he is working hard behind the scenes to undo the damage.

Gain of function is something that could be written about, but it is a bit tangential and in any case related to the man-made virus issue.

The issue of the importance of continuing sarbeco research is the easiest life, and if the focus was on that it would perhaps be possible to slip in a side dish of the unlikelihood of the first 2 issues, and perhaps the others as well.

I think that if we do tackle the first two subjects it will be a problem representing the Society. In my view, it would ideally be a paper by scientists themselves, not the Society as a whole.

The one year follow up, which I and several others have raised, would have to be such a paper, but several of us on this email have advised against doing even that.

So, where are we?

I look to the leadership, you Phil, Presidents past present and future, Karen, and other leaders to help steer this forward.

<image001.gif>

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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<image002.jpg>

From: Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) b6
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 10:19 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ; Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 ; Karen Goraleski b6 ; Jacobson, Julie (b6 ; Stephen Popper < b6 b6 ; Dan Bausch b6 aubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 Peter Daszak (b6) < b6 ; Rich Roberts b6
Subject: RE: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

David, Jerry, et al,

I'm fully supportive of a follow-up article in the AJTMH on COVID origins. The sooner the better. I suggest working, despite the craziness, on a fully reasoned and rational discussion, admitting uncertainty, but not implying that uncertainty supports a possibility with no scientific support. After the long, thoughtful piece last year, we might go with a short editorial format (~1000 words) this year, but alternatively this piece could again be a longer Perspective if this seems appropriate. I'm happy to help with writing if desired, but of course I'm not an expert in this area, and we have many

experts involved.
Regards,
Phil

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:14 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 >; Karen Goraleski b6 >; Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) b6 Jacobson, Julie b6 b6 >; Stephen Popper b6 >; b6 ; Dan Bausch (b6 >; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6 >; Peter Daszak b6 Rich Roberts b6
Subject: Re: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

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This message came from outside your organization.

Jerry, i think that's a good idea. I floated the thought of something similar a few days ago

Let's hear again from Karen, Phil, Julie, Joel, Dan Christine and the others. This is doable altho the details are to be determined. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 4, 2021, at 17:08, Keusch, Gerald T b6 wrote:

I was thinking along the same lines. At least today two Washington Post journalists said some rational things about the spillover of CoV-2 to the human population.

It seems to me there should be a one year reassessment of the article published last year, with all of us continuing to support the most likely evidence supported pathways rather than the evidence free lab leak scenario, and why the heat of the debate as currently being framed (it is essentially free of any light) will prevent any non-political international science based approach to move forward.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 4:35 PM
To: Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] b6 Karen Goraleski b6
Rosenthal, Philip (Infectious Diseases) < b6 Jacobson, Julie (b6 Stephen Popper < b6 Breman, Joel (NIH/FIC) [V] < b6 ; Dan Bausch (b6

Cc: Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [redacted] Peter Daszak ([redacted]) [redacted] >; Rich Roberts ([redacted] >; Keusch, Gerald T [redacted]
Subject: FW: Daily Mail: Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

Dear ASTMH colleagues,

As of today, shockingly, our own Charlie Calisher, who has been involved in so-called GOF research, and who coauthored last year's ASTMH paper, and who has been an esteemed colleague of mine for 45+ years, told the press in two separate interviews that he now thinks the lab leak theory is possible. Peter Palese, an esteemed researcher who has done and been accused of GOF research today said the same. I am very depressed by this, as I know these men and their scientific creds and their integrity.

What is going on?

Possibility no. 1: I am totally crazy and the whole world is a conspiracy that I am blind to.

Possibility no. 2: this is a McCarthy-era witch hunt story and good people are being drawn into it from fear, moral confusion, or a weak inability to evaluate scientific evidence I (I rather hope it's not the latter)….

Before deciding on which of these two, I would recommend seeing the play, or more conveniently and quickly the movie made from it, of Arthur Miller's McCarthy-era classic "The Crucible". I went through all of this as a kid. This whole thing is to me déjà vu all over again.

I don't know what, if anything, ASTMH can or should do, but let us at least agree that this is one of the most dangerous attacks on science in memory.

Surely we should have a voice in some sphere.

<image001.gif>

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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<image002.jpg>

Now one of the original lab leak deniers calls for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origin as he admits 'a lot of

disturbing information' has surfaced since he signed Lancet letter denouncing theory

- **EXCLUSIVE: Peter Palese has U-turned after claiming virus was natural in origin**
- **New York microbiologist signed letter in Lancet denouncing all other theories**
- **'Bullying' letter has been described as ostracizing dissenting voices in science**

By Joe Davies For Mailonline
Published: 12:11 EDT, 4 June 2021 | Updated: 13:46 EDT, 4 June 2021

<image003.jpg>
Dr Peter Palese, a professor of microbiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, has U-turned after previously supporting a letter denying that COVID-19 could've leaked from a Wuhan lab
One of the 27 Covid lab leak deniers who signed a letter denouncing the theory that the virus escaped from a lab in Wuhan has now called for a 'thorough investigation' into Covid's origins, MailOnline can reveal.
Dr Peter Palese, a microbiologist at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, signed the letter in the Lancet in February last year claiming the virus could only have been natural in origin and to suggest otherwise would create 'fear, rumors, and prejudice'.
The 'bullying' letter was criticized by experts for ostracizing anyone offering different opinions on the virus' origins, dismissing them as conspiracy theorists.
It is only now, nearly 16 months after that letter was published in the world-renowned medical journal, that the theory Covid was accidentally leaked from a lab in Wuhan is being looked at seriously.
US President **Joe Biden** last week ordered intelligence agencies to launch a probe into whether Covid was man-made after all. But **China** immediately hit back and called the suggestion a 'conspiracy'.
And now Professor Palese, 77, has made a significant U-turn, admitting all theories on how Covid came about now need proper investigating.
He told MailOnline: 'I believe a thorough investigation about the origin of the Covid-19 virus is needed.
'A lot of disturbing information has surfaced since the Lancet letter I signed, so I want to see answers covering all questions.'
Asked how he was originally approached to sign the letter and what new information had come to light specifically, Professor Palese declined to comment.
Palese spoke out as America's leading pandemic expert Dr. Anthony Fauci continues to face fevered calls to resign after emails revealed that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
The emails also showed he communicated with Dr. Peter Daszak, the head of a non-profit that funneled U.S. taxpayer dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
Biden through his support behind the embattled expert on Friday, saying: 'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci.'
Dr. Daszak - a key architect of the Lancet letter - runs the New York-based, tax payer-funded non-profit EcoHealth Alliance, which has funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Guardian forced to amend article it published by Peter Daszack to reveal his ties to Wuhan lab as Lancet editor voices support for lab leak theory denouncement

The Guardian was forced to amend an article it published by Dr Peter Daszack to include a reference to his work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
The article, published in June last year, was amended three days after its publication.
In the article titled 'Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn't created in a lab', Dr Daszack said the lab-leak theory was a 'chapter in a tale of blame, misinformation and finger-pointing'.
He characterised lab-leak theorists as 'conspiracy theorists' believing in 'frankenviruses'.
The Guardian was forced to amend the original article to highlight Dr Daszack's ties to the Wuhan lab from where some suggest Covid was accidentally leaked.
The paper said: 'This article was amended on 11 June 2020 to make clear the writer's past work with researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Editor of the Lancet Richard Horton — who published the letter dismissing theories Covid may not have originated naturally in his prestigious scientific journal — Tweeted support for the piece.
He wrote: 'Peter Daszak rejects conspiracy theories about the origins of Covid-19 and he knows more than most of us about coronaviruses.'
Mr Horton has regularly criticised lab-leak theories during the pandemic.
He told the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post it was it is 'not helpful' and 'unfair' to blame China for being the source of the pandemic last year.

He worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli as they investigated and modified coronaviruses. Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves.

Dr Daszak was one four Brits to sign the letter, including SAGE advisor Sir Jeremy Farrar and two other experts working for the Welcome Trust at the time. The letters' signatories included four others who worked for EcoHealth.

Jamie Metzl, who sits on the World Health Organization's advisory committee on human genome editing and is a form Bill Clinton administration staffer, said Dr Daszak's letter was a 'form of thuggery'.

He said: 'The Lancet letter was scientific propaganda and a form of thuggery and intimidation.

'By labeling anyone with different views a conspiracy theorist, the Lancet letter was the worst form of bullying in full contravention of the scientific method.'

MailOnline has approached the letters' other signatories for comment.

A Freedom of Information Act request revealed Dr Daszak told his fellow signatories in an email that the letter would not be sent under the EcoHealth logo 'and will not be identifiable as coming from any one organization of person'.

The emails show he even considered not signing the letter himself, although in the end he did.

The idea, he said was for it to be coming from 'a community supporting our colleagues'.

The letter — titled 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting Covid-19' — praised the Chinese 'who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak'.

It went on to add: 'We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.

'Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumors and prejudices that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight against the virus.'

It ended with the words: 'We declare no competing interests.'

The letter proved so influential that it virtually ended debate on the origin of Covid for more than a year.

Anyone who suggested it could have been man-made was shot down amid accusations of anti-Chinese xenophobia.

Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control told Vanity Fair he received death threats after floating the theory that the virus could have been man-made.

He said: 'I was threatened and ostracized because I proposed another hypothesis. I expected it from politicians. I didn't expect it from science.'

Dr Peter Daszak, 55, from Manchester, orchestrated a behind-the-scenes 'bullying' campaign to ensure blame for Covid was directed away from a Chinese lab with which he had worked closely.

Dr Daszack worked with the lab's so-called 'bat woman' Shi Zhengli (pictured left) as they investigated and modified coronaviruses. Shi, 57, proved that horseshoe bats were behind a SARS virus that killed nearly 800 people in 2002 and has collected thousands of samples from bat caves

The theory the virus escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology was originally dismissed by left-leaning media outlets last year as a conspiracy theory after it was mentioned by then-President Donald Trump.

But they have now changed course with the launch of the US investigation.

Liberal US outlets, who slammed Mr Trump when he said a year ago said he had 'a high degree of confidence' that the virus escaped from a lab, have finally conceded that he may have been right — after a year ridiculing the suggestion.

Who signed the letter in The Lancet?

- Peter Daszak, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Charles Calisher, Colorado State University
- Dennis Carroll, Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, Texas
- Rita Colwell, University of Maryland
- Ronald Corley, NEIDL Institute, Boston
- Christian Drosten, Charité – Universitatsmedizin Berlin, Germany
- Luis Enjuanes, National Center of Biotechnology, Madrid
- Jeremy Farrar, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Hume Field, EcoHealth Alliance, New York
- Josie Golding, The Wellcome Trust, London
- Alexander Gorbalenya, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, Netherlands
- Bart Haagmans, Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- James Hughes, Emory University, Atlanta
- William Karesh, EcoHealth Alliance, New York

- Gerald Keusch, Boston University
- Sai Kit Lam, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Juan Lubroth, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy
- John Mackenzie, Curtin University, Perth, Australia
- Larry Madoff, Massachusetts Medical School
- Jonna Mazet, University of California at Davis
- Peter Palese, Icahn School of Medicine, New York
- Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa
- Leo Poon, The University of Hong Kong
- Bernard Roizman, University of Chicago
- Linda Saif, The Ohio State University
- Kanta Subbarao, The University of Melbourne, Australia
- Mike Turner, The Wellcome Trust, London

The lab-leak theory was bolstered last week after it was revealed three workers at the Wuhan lab were hospitalized in November, 2019, months before Covid was first discovered in China.

China claims the virus was transmitted to humans from an animal host, with bats and pangolins both named as potential sources. Many scientists agree that is the most likely theory.

Professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Cambridge Ravi Gupta, a member of Nervtag, said the theory has not yet been investigated with 'scientific rigor'.

He told **The Telegraph**: 'The possibility was not adequately explored due to lack of access to primary records by the WHO group. Lab leak has not been scientifically rejected as a cause using [the] scientific rigor that one would expect.'

A soon to be published report by a team of British and Norwegian experts suggests it is possible to trace the creation of the virus to research in China that began in 2008.

Professor David Relman, a microbiologist at Stanford University, said the theory needs to be investigated by an international consortium of scientists in collaboration with the UN.

He said: 'Ideally, an investigation would rely on an international consortium of scientists under the auspices of many national academies of science working in partnership, in collaboration with an international governance entity, the UN Secretary General's Office, or something of that sort.'

And Harvard epidemiologist Professor Marc Lipsitch said a lab escape scenario 'remains plausible enough that it should be looked into rigorously'.

He told the paper: 'This is not a fringe position, given that multiple European governments and Dr Tedros have said the same.'

He said that while scientists are not saying a lab origin is more likely than a natural one, a thorough investigation is needed to reveal the cause of the pandemic.

As Dr Daszak's links to the Wuhan lab become clearer, more questions are being asked about his influence over the WHO team that went to China in January and stayed for four weeks searching for answers.

The team was met with resistance in China. Authorities there made them quarantine for two weeks in Wuhan and barred two members completely after they tested positive for coronavirus antibodies.

But critics say the WHO researchers were too cozy with Chinese authorities, who are desperate not to shoulder the blame for a worldwide death toll now approaching 3.6 million.

They claim its members may have been influenced by a tour they took round a 'propaganda museum' which described Wuhan's fight against the virus and the leading role taken by President Xi Jinping.

While China has tried to insist the virus originated elsewhere, academics, politicians and the media have begun to contemplate the possibility it escaped from the WIV - raising suspicions that Chinese officials simply hid evidence of the early spread

The Wuhan Institute of Virology is about 20 miles from the Huanan Seafood Market where the first coronavirus cases are reported to have occurred

In recent weeks, the lab-escape theory has gained ground. Already British intelligence officials, who are helping the US search for the cause of the pandemic that has cost nearly 600,000 American lives, are said to be leaning towards the man-made scenario.

Last week MailOnline revealed two leading scientists had found 'unique fingerprints' in Covid samples that could only have come from lab manipulation.

British Professor Angus Dalgleish and Norwegian scientist Birger Sørensen, wrote that they have had 'prima facie evidence of retro-engineering in China' for a year — but were ignored by academics and major journals.

Did Covid originate in Chinese lab?

The Wuhan Institute of Virology has been collecting numerous coronaviruses from bats ever since the SARS outbreak in 2002.

They have also published papers describing how these bat viruses have interacted with human cells.

US Embassy staff visited the lab in 2018 and 'had grave safety concerns' over the protocols which were being observed at the facility.
The lab is just eight miles from the Huanan wet market which is where the first cluster of infections erupted in Wuhan.
The market is just a few hundred yards from another lab called the Wuhan Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (WHCDC).
The WHCDC kept disease-ridden animals in its labs, including some 605 bats.
Those who support the theory argue that Covid-19 could have leaked from either or both of these facilities and spread to the wet market.
Most argue that this would have been a virus they were studying rather than one which was engineered.
Last year a bombshell paper from the Beijing-sponsored South China University of Technology recounted how bats once attacked a researcher at the WHCDC and 'blood of bat was on his skin.'
The report says: 'Genome sequences from patients were 96% or 89% identical to the Bat CoV ZC45 coronavirus originally found in Rhinolophus affinis (intermediate horseshoe bat).'
It describes how the only native bats are found around 600 miles away from the Wuhan seafood market and that the probability of bats flying from Yunnan and Zhejiang provinces was minimal.
In addition there is little to suggest the local populace eat the bats as evidenced by testimonies of 31 residents and 28 visitors.
Instead the authors point to research being carried out within 300 yards at the WHCDC.
One of the researchers at the WHCDC described quarantining himself for two weeks after a bat's blood got on his skin, according to the report. That same man also quarantined himself after a bat urinated on him.
And he also mentions discovering a live tick from a bat - parasites known for their ability to pass infections through a host animal's blood.
'The WHCDC was also adjacent to the Union Hospital (Figure 1, bottom) where the first group of doctors were infected during this epidemic.' The report says.
'It is plausible that the virus leaked around and some of them contaminated the initial patients in this epidemic, though solid proofs are needed in future study.'
Professor Dalgleish, 71, a vaccine researcher and professor of oncology at St George's Hospital, last year struggled to find a publisher for his paper suggesting the virus's spike protein contains artificially inserted sequences.
He said the research was shunned by the scientific community, who did not want to threaten China or be seen to be agreeing with President Donald Trump — who was a big advocate for the theory the virus was leaked from a lab at the time.
The oncologist said: 'The changes required to infect humans are extremely unlikely to have occurred naturally.'
Professor Dalgleish — who ran for Parliament as a UKIP candidate in 2015 — said the President's use of the terms 'Wuhan flu' and 'China virus' damaged scientific debate on the subject.
He told **The Times**: 'I was basically ostracized. I was fearful — really frightened by the way I was being treated. I was told I was not an expert on coronaviruses and I should just shut up.
'We couldn't believe people with whom we'd collaborated and published papers with in the past would shun us — I was warned I was out of my depth and I shouldn't get into this and I'd make a fool of myself.'
And just last week President Joe Biden ordered another look at the theory as part of a wide-ranging intelligence investigation into the pandemic's origins. He felt it so urgent that he put a 90-day deadline for a conclusion.
Emails from Dr Anthony Fauci, Mr Biden's chief medical advisor, show that leading virus experts warned Covid could be man-made even as he downplayed the possibility.
Fauci says those emails, obtained by Buzzfeed, have been taken out of context.
But he did U-turn about where the virus may have originated this week, saying 'you never know'.
One of them was from Dr Daszak, who thanked Dr Fauci for pushing back on the man-made theory.
In April, Dr Drazak wrote: 'I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural origin for Covid-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'
Even WHO's Ethiopian director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the report was not extensive enough and more work needed to be done to discover the cause of Covid.
'As far as WHO is concerned, all hypotheses remain on the table,' he said.
'This report is a very important beginning, but it is not the end.'
America is looking at the theory seriously, leading to China hitting out at the 'dark history' of the US intelligence community after President Biden's probe was announced.
Lijian Zhao, foreign ministry spokesman who has been Beijing's point-man in trying to pin blame for the pandemic outside the country's borders, accused the US of trying to shift blame away from its own high Covid case and death counts - and suggested security services may be involved in a cover-up.
Meanwhile Hu Xijin, editor of the state mouthpiece Global Times newspaper, accused Biden of trying to discredit

a WHO investigation which concluded that a lab leak is 'unlikely' — although critics have previously blasted that report as a China-centric whitewash.
China's American embassy also hit out, accusing Biden and his security services of being 'fixated on political manipulation and (the) blame game' in a statement on its website.
No10 officials have called for investigators to probe all theories as to how the Covid pandemic began.
Dominic Cummings this week revealed the PM held meetings when the crisis first began to discuss whether it had 'escaped' from a laboratory and whether the disease had been 'engineered'.

The Lancet letter in full: 'Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19'

We are public health scientists who have closely followed the emergence of 2019 novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) and are deeply concerned about its impact on global health and wellbeing.
We have watched as the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China, in particular, have worked diligently and effectively to rapidly identify the pathogen behind this outbreak, put in place significant measures to reduce its impact, and share their results transparently with the global health community. This effort has been remarkable.
We sign this statement in solidarity with all scientists and health professionals in China who continue to save lives and protect global health during the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak.
We are all in this together, with our Chinese counterparts in the forefront, against this new viral threat.
The rapid, open, and transparent sharing of data on this outbreak is now being threatened by rumours and misinformation around its origins.
We stand together to strongly condemn conspiracy theories suggesting that Covid-19 does not have a natural origin.
Scientists from multiple countries have published and analysed genomes of the causative agent, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), and they overwhelmingly conclude that this coronavirus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging pathogens.
This is further supported by a letter from the presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and by the scientific communities they represent.
Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumours, and prejudice that jeopardise our global collaboration in the fight against this virus.
We support the call from the Director-General of WHO to promote scientific evidence and unity over misinformation and conjecture.
We want you, the science and health professionals of China, to know that we stand with you in your fight against this virus.
We invite others to join us in supporting the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of Wuhan and across China. Stand with our colleagues on the frontline!
We speak in one voice. To add your support for this statement, sign our letter online. LM is editor of ProMED-mail. We declare no competing interests.

Sen. Rand Paul says Fauci's emails paint a 'disturbing picture' about what he knew about work inside the Wuhan lab

Sen. **Rand Paul** continued his blitz on Dr. **Anthony Fauci** in the wake of Fauci's email dump, telling Fox that Fauci knew the US was funding gain-of-function research in Wuhan even though he continues to deny it.
The Republican from **Kentucky** told Fox Thursday night that Fauci's emails 'tell me early on that he was very worried' before the pandemic even started.
'There's a disturbing picture. He gets an email or he gets notification of what's going on in Wuhan and immediately sends something to his assistant saying, "We must meet immediately." And in the subject line it says gain of function research in Wuhan.'
While Paul and other Republicans have come after Fauci, Biden reaffirmed his confidence in Fauci in a Friday morning press conference.
The president had actually left the room where he gave the speech when DailyMail.com shouted a question to him about the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.
President Biden stuck his head back in to answer.
'Yes I'm very confident in Dr. Fauci,' he said.
Paul's Thursday night interview on Fox - and weeks of public comments that - makes it clear that senator doesn't share have the same faith in Fauci, and he alluded to a February 1, 2020 email exchange between Fauci and Principal NIAID Director Dr. Hugh Auchincloss.
Auchincloss wrote to Fauci to discuss a paper Fauci sent him appearing to question if National Institute of Health (NIH) grants funded gain-of-function research relating to coronaviruses.
In the email to Fauci, Auchincloss said, 'The paper you sent me says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but have since been reviewed and approved by NIH.'

He also noted that a colleague would 'try to determine if we have any distant ties to this work abroad.'
This was one of the 3,200-plus emails obtained and published by Buzzfeed News on Tuesday.
The NIH awarded a $3.7 million grant to EcoHealth Alliance, which is based in the United States, to study the risk of coronaviruses emerging from bats in 2014. EcoHealth Alliance in turn distributed nearly $600,000 of that funding to its collaborator, the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
The senator also took a shot Thursday at the embattled chief medical advisor on Twitter after Amazon and Barnes & Noble pulled his book from their sites because it wasn't supposed to be released until November: 'Oh, I don't know. I think they should publish it. I love science fiction.'
Paul's interview came after Fauci dismissed the recent revelations that he was warned that COVID-19 may have been 'engineered' and said that the emails are easily misunderstood.
During a Wednesday interview on the Donlon Report, Fauci said of the emails, 'The only trouble is they are really ripe to be taken out of context where someone can snip out a sentence in an email without showing the other emails, and say "based on an email from Dr. Fauci, he said such and such" where you don't really have the full context.'
Fauci added that the Wuhan lab 'is a very large lab to the tune of hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars.'
'The grant that we're talking about was $600,000 over five years for an average of about $125,000 to $140,000 a year,' he said.
Fauci also said on Donlon that he 'can't guarantee everything that is going on in the Wuhan lab.'
Paul has been on Fox twice since a trove of Fauci's emails - dating from January to June 2020 - were obtained and published by Buzzfeed on Tuesday.
Within hours of publication, Paul tweeted '#firefauci' and other Republicans, like Majorie Greene Taylor, followed suit.
Until recently, the Wuhan lab leak was at best a fringe theory, and it has been mostly laughed off by many scientists. The general consensus on COVID-19's origin was that it jumped from a bat to a human in the Wuhan market.
Despite the recent scrutiny, Fauci continues to say that's what he believes happened.
During Senate committee hearings in early May, Paul sparred with Fauci over the two origin theories and said the lab leak is a real possibility that's not being acknowledged.
Instead of investigating the cause of COVID-19 'government authorities - self-interested in continuing gain of function research - say there's nothing to see here,' Paul said during the May 11 hearing.
'To arrive at the truth, the U.S. government should admit that the Wuhan Virology Institute was experimenting to enhance the coronavirus' ability to infect humans,' he said.
The lab leak theory is now one that President Joe Biden wants investigated.
Last week, Biden ordered a 90-day review to investigate the possibility and several high-profile public health experts have come out in recent months saying they believe that's how COVID-19 started.
British intelligence also reportedly assessed the theory recently and upgraded its likeliness from 'remote' to 'feasible'.

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Date: Fri, 7 May 2021 10:51:52 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 7 May 2021 10:51:49 PM -0400
Subject: Some advice and help needed
From: "Roberts, Rich" b6
To: Peter Daszak b6 Keusch, Gerald T b6 David Morens b6
CC: Aleksei Chmura b6 >; Robert Kessler b6
Attachments: FW: Letter ? (19.0 KB).msg

Peter et al.

I have received a number of emails like the attached from some of the NLs who signed on.
The sender, Andre Goffinet, had originally written to me on April 23rd enquiring about my relationship with scientists in China. He was obviously trying to make a case that I was somehow helping the Chinese cover up what was going with the Wuhan lab and hence discredit the NL letter that I had organized. He got nowhere with that, but has now taken a different tack as illustrated in the attached letter.

I will send out a letter to all the NLs who signed on and try to defuse the situation. However, one thing I feel I should include is Nicholas Wade's latest piece since that will probably come to the attention of most of them and is probably the best written article pushing the lab origin while trying to pretend it was unbiased.

I wonder if there is a good summary you would recommend I use (and quote) to assure the NLs that they should not regret joining the initial campaign. I'm not looking for anything long, but rather a brief summary and perhaps a link to a longer piece.

I would like to send something out tomorrow.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak b6 >
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:20 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 >; David Morens b6 Robert Kessler b6 >
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 >; Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

EXTERNAL SENDER

Really interesting to hear those comments about "Blah blah" and "Deng deng". It just saddens me because I know Zhengli's English is not the best, and I don't think she realizes that every word she says publicly, even in response to a question at a University seminar, is being manipulated and used politically. It feels like racism to me.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:01 AM
To: David Morens <b6>; Peter Daszak b6 (b) (6)
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura b6 ; Robert Kessler <
b6
Subject: RE: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

The letter to Blinken includes the following statement:

"…the release of these documents from the Department could help to refute contradictory statements that have been made regarding the possibility of a laboratory leak from the WIV." This could be taken in a positive sense, that the documents will refute the lab release hypothesis, although I don't think that's how they mean it.

Regarding what Peter previously said about Shi's use of the phrase blah blah, which will surely be characterized as dismissive and therefore put into a negative perspective. I have access to a senior endowed full professor of Chinese politics at Harvard and I asked about the meaning of blah blah when a Chinese native speaker uses it while speaking English. Here is the answer:

"In my experience many Chinese mistakenly use "blah, blah" as equivalent to the Chinese term "deng, deng" which means "and so forth" and has no negative connotation."

So Peter was right, and now we know the Chinese term it is trying to translate, however awkwardly. This might be useful in any conversation with a report about her remarks or the Republicans letter.

Jerry

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 6:58 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6 g>
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T b6 ; Roberts, Rich b6 Aleksei Chmura <
b6 g>; Robert Kessler b6
Subject: Re: Another letter - almost amusing - from House E&C Committee Republicans re. Zhengli's "Blah Blah" comment

Peter, i will reply eventually when i get some time, but until then, note yet another Josh Rogin editorial in this morning's Post, this time disclosing the Republican letter to Tony, which i have not yet seen and may or may not see. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 6, 2021, at 23:34, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Sorry for yet another email, but this one is so bizarre it's almost funny. It's a letter from the House E&C Committee Republicans to Blinken asking him to release the classified intel that people in the Wuhan lab were sick prior to COVID, and that the WIV does military research. It quotes some comments from a recent talk my collaborator Zhengli Shi from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, gave during a lecture at Rutgers. Some of the online conspiracists heard about the talk in advance and they packed the audience – some of their questions from the chat were read out. Her response included a very common "blah blah" phrase used in China when speaking English – here's the quote:

During a March 23, 2021 seminar at Rutgers University, a WHO advisory committee member asked Dr. Shi if [knew].. whether "the U.S. government claims of classified Chinese military research being carried out at the WIV [are] correct, and if so, did you have full awareness of and access to all aspects of this research?"[4]

Dr. Shi answered: From my knowledge, all our research work is open, is transparent. At the beginning of COVID-19, we heard the rumors that claimed our laboratory would have some project blah blah with army blah blah . . . but this is not correct, because I am the director and responsible for research activity. I don't know any kind of research work performed in this lab.[5]

This is ridiculous, of course, and they're obviously using that quote to suggest Dr. Shi doesn't take these questions seriously, but it's actually a racist trope – people in China use the phrase "blah blah" to simply mean "and so on, and so forth". Just unfortunate…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:06 PM
To: 'David Morens' [b6] Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; 'Roberts, Rich' [b6]
Cc: 'Aleksei Chmura' [b6]; 'Robert Kessler' (

b6

Subject: New: Letter from Republican Rep. Gallagher to Dr. Fauci re. WIV and gain of function
Importance: High

David,

A Republican representative sent a letter to Tony Fauci today asking some pretty simple questions that are clearly designed to play to their political base.

If Tony Fauci is going to respond to the attached letter that was made public today, I hope he's ready to point out that the work we did was NOT gain of function. This phrase has been bandied about now for a few months and is utterly incorrect.

If he decides to draft a response, I'd be happy to do a quick briefing with you and him to explain the work that has been done up to now with WIV, and was planned to be done on our NIAID grant.

Cheers,

Peter

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Date: Wed, 26 May 2021 7:54:03 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 26 May 2021 7:53:53 AM -0400
Subject: Re: WaPo front page headline this morning
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
CC: Gerald Keusch [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]

You're probably right. Here's an interesting story from CNN: "..the [lab leak] inquiry quickly became mired in internal discord amid concerns that it was part of a broader politicized effort by the Trump admin. to blame China & cherry-pick facts to prove a theory."

https://t.co/zbsPlCKlA3

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
(Sent from my iPhone)

President
EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street, New York, NY10001, USA

www.EcoHealthAlliance.org

> On May 26, 2021, at 6:52 AM, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] wrote:
>
> "US calls for probe of virus's origins"
>
> My speculation is that the Biden admin has little interest in the science of all this, but wants an easy way to put China on the defensive as part of a diplomatic war related to trade, tech, foreign policy and human rights. Maybe now that Tony is formally a pandemic advisor, he is being told he needs to play along
>
> Just speculating, but things i have learned internally are consistent. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date: Sun, 30 May 2021 8:51:13 PM -0400
Sent: Sun, 30 May 2021 8:47:32 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins
From: Peter Daszak <b6>
To: David Morens <b6>
CC: Gerald Keusch <b6> Rich Roberts <b6>

OK, I agree, and just to translate - getting a few single runs in, rather than waiting for the 6's or the 4's is a good move – either way you get to a Century.

Please let me know what I need to do. Obviously all published articles are better with your and colleagues names, without mine, I think…

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: David Morens <b6>
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2021 7:55 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>
Cc: Gerald Keusch <b6>; Rich Roberts <b6>
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Peter, i agree on all, and i am there to do what i can

A small thing perhaps but ASTMH wants to bang the drum , again, see the email I sent yesterday…. My feeling is that there are no home runs, but singles here and there might eventually load the bases

Trop Med is pushing me to help do another editorial. I think that might be good, not ad s slam dunk but as push back.

z as Take a look st that email and give me yet thoughts.

d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On May 30, 2021, at 19:31, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Thanks David. I understand, and we need him at the helm. I'm hoping that Biden's 90 day intel deep 'dive' will help cool things down.

In the meantime, I'm increasingly worried that EcoHealth Alliance might get thrown under the bus for political expedience. There are amendments to bills that could rapidly and easily crush scientific collaboration with China, or even defund EcoHealth completely.

I would like, if possible to talk next week sometime and start trying to get the Biotech and virology community mobilized so they can start defending against bills that could have a major impact on lab research, collaboration with China, and international collaboration.

I know others are beginning to wake up to the possibility that this could be one of the endgames some on the right are aiming for – see the article in Nature this week: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586- 021-01386-0 (also attached).

I'd like to reach out to the societies that spoke out when our grant was canceled and see what can be done to mobilize politically to defend science, and at the same time, hopefully, us here in the middle.

Cheers,

Peter

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]

Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 2:14 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6]; Rich Roberts < [b6]
Subject: Re: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Peter, I have learned fom internal sources that for entirely political reasons Tony is being asked by very high levels to stay neutral about the origin. Not sure why he is going along however.... d

On 5/25/2021 10:57 AM, Peter Daszak wrote:

> This is exactly the politics I was talking about. I'm part of weekly meetings with the WHO COVID-19 origins mission as we develop Phase 2 plans, and we're tracking the politics closely. Right now the US response is pretty mild. I've seen a copy of the HHS letter and it's just more of the same sort of comments below. What we're worried about on the origins group is that if the lab leak rhetoric pushes too strongly, China will just close the door on Phase 2 of the work. Right now, the only possible way forward to actually get into China and do more work on COVID origins is via this WHO team, so it would be disaster if this hype messes it up.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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USA

Tel.: [b6]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Gerald Keusch [b6] Rich Roberts < [b6]
Subject: Fwd: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Everybody's getting into the act, it seems….. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Date: May 25, 2021 at 07:27:31 EDT
Subject: Wpost: U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

U.S. health secretary calls for follow-up investigation into pandemic's origins

Latest: Analysis: Timeline for how the Wuhan lab-leak theory suddenly became credible

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Date: Wed, 25 Aug 2021 12:04:17 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 25 Aug 2021 12:03:01 AM -0400
Subject: Washington Post: Biden receives inconclusive intel report on covid origins
From: Peter Daszak [b6]
To: David Morens [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC: [b6] [b6] Garry, Robert F [b6] [b6]

Here's the 'nothing burger' from the US Intel Services.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/08/24/covid- origins-biden-intelligence-review/

Good quote from Bob Garry in here. Shameful disingenuous crap from David Relman, of course.

Hate to harp on about it, but we did have an active grant to work on "Understanding risk of emergence of bat-origin coronaviruses" in China that Trump/Francis Collins canceled, then suspended, and NIH is still refusing to release. We had active collaboration on the ground in the sites where the wildlife farms supplied Huanan and other markets, and I know that WIV is ready, willing and able to continue this work with us. Surely that's a better option than increasing the ranks of the CIA with people who "have significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens" that Biden is quoted as saying below.

This is beyond ironic at this point.

Cheers,

Peter

Biden receives inconclusive intelligence report on covid origins

The report falls short of concluding whether the coronavirus jumped from animal to human, or might have accidentally escaped from a lab in China

By
Ellen Nakashima
,
Yasmeen Abutaleb
and
Joel Achenbach

Today at 10:32 p.m. EDT
260
President Biden on Tuesday received a classified report from the intelligence community that was inconclusive about the origins of the novel coronavirus, including whether the pathogen jumped from an animal to a human as part of a natural process, or escaped from a lab in central China, according to two U.S. officials familiar with the matter.
The intelligence community will seek within days to declassify elements of the report for potential public

release, officials said.

The assessment is the result of a 90-day sprint after Biden tasked his intelligence agencies in May to produce a report "that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion" on the origins of a virus that has killed more than 4 million people globally and wrecked national economies. But despite analyzing a raft of existing intelligence and searching for new clues, intelligence officials fell short of a consensus, said the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the report is not yet public.

The debate over the virus's origins has become increasingly rancorous since former president Donald Trump said last year that the virus originated in a Chinese lab. Efforts to understand the virus's provenance have been complicated by Chinese authorities' steadfast refusal to allow a more intensive inquiry by international investigators.

Biden's directive came after he received a May report from the agencies saying that they had "coalesced around two likely scenarios" but had not reached a conclusion. He disclosed that two agencies leaned toward the hypothesis that the virus emerged from human contact with an infected animal, while a third leaned toward the lab accident scenario.

The leader of the intelligence community, Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, cautioned in June that the agencies might not solve the mystery. "We're hoping to find a smoking gun," she told Yahoo News in an interview. But, she said, "it's challenging to do that," adding that "it might happen, but it might not."

The review involved dozens of analysts and intelligence officials across multiple agencies, Haines told Yahoo. She said she deployed "red cells," or groups to test analysts' assumptions and ensure the intelligence is scrutinized from every angle.

Another official said the intelligence community is "not necessarily best equipped to solve this problem," which is fundamentally an issue of science. Although spy services are "positioned to collect on a range of foreign actors," the official said, they are not necessarily poised to dive into global health data sets.

Biden himself, in his first visit to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in July, voiced the need for a more robust group to track pathogens. "You're going to have to increase your ranks with people with significant scientific capacity relative to pathogens," he said at the time.

Officials in the Biden administration hammered China's lack of transparency ahead of a World Health Organization report on the origins of the coronavirus. (JM Rieger/The Washington Post)

Many scientists familiar with the origin debate have been skeptical that the 90-day review would settle it, and some have said the inquiry could require years of research.

"We should not even be thinking about closing the book or backing off, but rather ratcheting up the effort," David Relman, a Stanford University microbiologist who has pushed for a broad investigation of all origin hypotheses, said late Tuesday in an email.

The notion that the virus may have escaped from a lab got sharply increased interest this spring after 18 scientists wrote a letter to the journal Science in May saying that all possible origins needed to be investigated, including a laboratory accident.

Proponents of that theory point to classified information, first disclosed in the waning days of the Trump administration, that three unidentified workers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology — one of the world's preeminent research institutions studying coronaviruses — went to the hospital in November 2019 with flu-like symptoms. In China, people visit the hospital for routine and mild illnesses.

Throughout 2020, that hypothesis became enmeshed in election-year politics. Trump's assertion that the virus emanated from a lab came as he and other administration officials were blaming China for the global outbreak and trying to deflect attention from their botched handling of the virus at home.

Many scientists, however, noted that viruses have a long history of jumping from animals to humans. There are many plausible scenarios in which that might have occurred, including the possibility the virus spread from wild and domestically raised animals sold in crowded markets. Many early cases were clustered around a seafood market where traces of the virus were later detected on surfaces.

That zoonosis theory was bolstered by a June 7 report, published in the journal Nature, documenting 38 species of animals sold in 17 markets in Wuhan before the pandemic. The authors said many of the animals suffered from poor hygiene and were known to carry zoonotic diseases.

"We now know for sure that [coronavirus] susceptible animals were in fact sold at the markets in Wuhan, which changes the calculus tremendously," Robert Garry, a Tulane University microbiologist who strongly supports the zoonosis theory, said in an email.

Experts in viral genome evolution also determined that the novel coronavirus almost certainly was not engineered as a bioweapon because it has several naturally occurring features seen in many other coronaviruses. But even scientists favoring a natural origin have said that without definitive evidence of animal-to-human transmission, it is not possible to rule out the possibility that a laboratory accident led to the outbreak.

And many questions remain unanswered. The animal that carried this virus before it infected people has not been identified — a process that has taken years in previous disease outbreak investigations. Nor have the lab-leak advocates found any direct evidence that SARS-CoV-2 was inside a laboratory in Wuhan before the pandemic, although the lab has not released its records, which have been sought by scientists and governments around the world.

A delegation of investigators from the World Health Organization made a brief visit to the Wuhan laboratory in February and later declared that there were multiple possible origins, with a natural zoonosis most likely and a lab leak "extremely unlikely."

But the WHO director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, undercut that conclusion, saying it would be premature to rule out the lab-leak theory. The WHO effort was also criticized by some international scientists and researchers, who called for further investigation.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Monday said the public would be told the report's outcome. "I don't know what format that will take at this point in time," she said.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:36 AM
To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Cc: b6
Garry, Robert F b6
Subject: Re: Economist - Shared Article "Putting it all together"

TY, i think this is different from the article in The Economist a week or two ago? That one was interesting as i recall.,.. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Aug 23, 2021, at 03:08, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <j.gale@bloomberg.net> wrote:

In case you missed it, FYI.
Seems to lay things out well. I feel sorry for the int'l team. They didn't decide on/agree to the terms of reference, so the response from the DG on the final report (which he waited for until weighing in) seems disingenuous to me.

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:40:56 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

"The virus mystery" broadcast on August 12th, drew uncommonly wide attention for a Danish television documentary. That was because it featured Peter Ben Embarek, an expert on food security and zoonotic diseases, casting doubt on the conclusions of a "joint study" on the origins of the covid-19 pandemic carried out earlier this year under the auspices of the World Health Organisation (who). Dr Ben Embarek was the senior who figure who went to China as part of that study.
In March the joint study reported that it was "extremely unlikely" that the virus had been released in a laboratory accident. Dr Ben Embarek revealed that this conclusion did not come from a balanced assessment of all the relevant evidence but from a steadfast refusal by the Chinese members of the joint study to support anything stronger. Indeed they only allowed even that minimal assessment on the condition that the report did not call for further investigation into the question. He also pointed out that the idea that the point of spillover was someone collecting bat samples for research purposes belongs in the "likely" basket, along with other human interactions with wild bats.
Problems in the joint study had long been clear. Within the
who one source describes it as "riddled with compromises and sloppiness". Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the
who's director-general, was uneasy about the way it was carried out. He pushed back at the marginalisation of the lab-leak hypothesis, particularly when the final report was released in March. He has since called for further investigations into it, as well as into other possibilities.
The further unravelling of the joint study matters because, more than a year and a half after the covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, a city in Hubei, was first recognised as the work of a new pathogen, there has been nothing like a thorough international investigation of how that pathogen,
sars-cov-2, got into humans and spread round the world. The pandemic's death toll stands at 9m-18m, according to a model which *The Economist* has built on the basis of excess-mortality reports and other indicators. The question of how it started matters both for the relatives of the dead and for those who wish to prevent such an outbreak happening again. China's efforts to stop the world from answering it are both shabby and, to an extent, self-defeating. The more the truth seems hidden, the more it seems suspicious.

Earnest calls for an international investigation into the origins of covid-19 began in April 2020, voiced most clearly by Scott Morrison, the prime minister of Australia. The next month the World Health Assembly, the gathering of government representatives which serves as the
who's decision-making body, passed a motion calling for a study into the origins of the pandemic. But in order to be acceptable to China—which had reacted furiously to Mr Morrison's original suggestion—the work was set up as a joint research project between two teams of scientists, one Chinese, one international. And it was to be based on "scientific and collaborative field missions", rather than a targeted and forensic inquiry into all the relevant circumstances.
The terms of reference, which were subsequently negotiated behind closed doors, allowed the Chinese hosts to frame the joint study's work in the way which best suited them. The study was set up to build on pre-existing Chinese research, not to delve into unvetted data. Investigating the laboratories that had been working with coronaviruses like sars-cov-2 in Wuhan was not part of its terms of reference.
After a lot of wrangling, the international team got to China in January this year. Data about the first reported covid-19 cases, those from December 2019, were one subject of friction with their hosts. The Chinese had reported 174 such cases, but would not share the underlying data on which those reports were based. Hearing that these vital data were not being made available worried Dr Tedros enough that he lobbied the Chinese government for access. The authorities declined, citing concerns over citizens' privacy. It could have been anonymised.
Elsewhere the team appears to have been knowingly misled. Take, for example, the live-animal trade at the Huanan seafood and wildlife market, a site associated with a number of Wuhan's earliest recorded cases of covid-19. In its final report, the study group took at face value claims there was no credible evidence that live mammals were sold there in 2019. A lot of eyewitness accounts gainsay that; so does a study published in *Scientific Reports*, a journal, this summer.

One report and no more

The *Scientific Reports* paper found that 18 species of mammal had been for sale in Wuhan between May 2017 and November 2019; gunshot wounds and trapping injuries suggested that almost a third of them were taken from the wild. Although the paper was published only recently, it was submitted to the journal in October 2020. Chinese law requires that all covid-19 research be reviewed by the government before it is sent to a journal. Some Chinese authorities would have known of its contents before the team arrived.
The market is not the only way for animals and the pathogens they carry to get into Wuhan. The horseshoe bats in which the closest wild relatives to
sars-cov-2 have been found do not live anywhere near the city, but the two laboratories there that were known to have engaged in coronavirus research received samples from bat caves around the country. The joint-study team was not allowed to investigate the procedures around, or documentation of, this research; when it visited the laboratories the team was shown presentations on safety procedures but no more.

When the researchers left Wuhan the
who
's Geneva headquarters told them that their report needed to be laid out scientifically and could express dissenting opinions; the international members and the Chinese members did not have to reach a consensus. However, according to sources within the
who
, the team felt committed to producing a joint report with their Chinese counterparts. Dr Tedros was so unhappy with what finally emerged from the processes that he nobbled the report as it left the starting blocks, rejecting its contention that the possibility of a lab leak

needed no further investigation.
On May 26th President Joe Biden ordered America's intelligence services to report on the pandemic's origins in 90 days (time will be up on August 24th). When he and his fellow g7
leaders met in June they joined in calling for a timely, transparent and science-based follow-up study. On July 16th Dr Tedros laid out the next steps which the
who
wants to see taken. They include further work on the Wuhan animal markets, studies of early cases and audits of local laboratories.
The Chinese government has reacted angrily to the idea of further studies on its territory. Zeng Yixin, the vice-minister of China's National Health Commission, said he was "shocked" by the plan to investigate a lab leak, saying it was "impossible" to accept. According to the *Global Times*, a tub-thumping tabloid run by the Communist Party, 55 countries have sent written complaints about the proposal for further investigations to the
who
. Dr Tedros, elected director-general with China's support in 2017 and derided by President Donald Trump as China's puppet, may now face a Chinese-backed candidate when he looks for reappointment later this year.
In the absence of any hope that China will co-operate, sources of data beyond its control have become increasingly important. One area of interest is genetic sequence data. Another is early cases exported from China.

See what you did there

An online open-source-intelligence group which calls itself
drastic
has been scouring sequencing data to get insight into activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (wiv). When researchers publish sequences they typically post the raw data from which those sequences are assembled to public databases such as the sequence-read archive at America's National Centre for Biotechnology Information. Contamination events in the laboratory, or within sequencing machines themselves, mean these data sometimes contain sequences not meant to be there. In theory such evidence could reveal nefarious goings-on.
Such work, while promising, takes a lot of resources. If you have the sort of supercomputers available to America's national labs it gets easier. Gilles Demaneuf, a data scientist who works with
drastic
, says he has a hunch the American intelligence community's 90-day study is working the same angle. It is conceivable that the intelligence services might have been able to filch raw sequence reads directly from Chinese sequencing machines, thus picking up even more data.
Sequencing data only offers a way forward if the virus did indeed leak out of a lab, something which remains a possibility but which is far from proven. The study of early cases should be useful whatever route it took; the closer you get to understanding the when and where of the crossing-over from animal to human, the easier it should be to learn something of the how.
On the basis of information provided by China the joint study concluded it was unlikely for there to have been any substantial transmission in Wuhan before December 2019. That is unlikely to be true. For one thing the *South China Morning Post*, a newspaper based in Hong Kong, obtained government documents in 2020 which showed one to five new cases a day in Wuhan from November 17th 2019 onwards. Further evidence has strengthened the possibility that the virus could have been in circulation much earlier than the official story allows.

That circulation need not have been limited to China. There is increasing evidence

suggesting early infections elsewhere. These cases would have been exported from China; no virologists doubt that Hubei was where the virus got going within humans. But if circulation in Hubei goes back further than thought and cannot be directly assessed through studies there, the presence of cases elsewhere offers an alternative way to get an idea of the timing. If a specific travel link were identified, that might help identify a group in Hubei which was infected early on.

A recent study of blood samples from 9,144 adults in 12 different regions of France found seven which contained antibodies against sars-cov-2, all of them taken in November 2019. An Italian lung-cancer screening trial has found samples taken in September 2019 which seem to contain anti-sars-cov-2 antibodies. Another antibody study suggests the virus was circulating at a low level in northern Italy at the same time, notably in Lombardy, a region which has close connections to Wuhan through the garment trade, and saw Europe's first major outbreak of covid-19 in March 2020.

Antibody tests can give false positives. In a preprint published on August 6th by the *Lancet*, researchers in Lombardy reported on looking instead for sars-cov-2 gene sequences. Examining 289 swabs and urine tests taken from people who had presented with a rash as far back as the second half of 2019, they found sars-cov-2 sequences in 13, the earliest of which was taken on September 12th.

Sudhir Kumar of Temple University in Philadelphia says the *Lancet* preprint is likely to inspire other investigators to go back and look at retrospective hospital samples. That should help his own research into the origins of the virus. A family tree Dr Kumar and his colleagues have built from vast numbers of published sars-cov-2 genomes allows them to predict the sequence of the progenitor virus from which they are all descended. This sequence differs in three places from that found in the earliest samples taken from patients in Wuhan, meaning there had been enough spread for a certain amount of viral mutation to take place before December. Dr Kumar says that an analysis of the Lombardy sequences suggests that the timeline for the origin of the virus in China might now extend back to the late summer.

More systematic international research into these early infections and their circumstances is needed. Maria Van Kerkhove, head of emerging diseases and zoonoses at the who, suggests it may be possible to prioritise work in areas which saw the earliest outbreaks in America, France, Italy and Spain. "I think the floodgates will open one day," says Dr Kumar.

A last line of light

An early origin would fit with the timeline that lab-leak proponents tend to favour. Early this August, the minority Republican staff on the House foreign-affairs committee released an 84-page report arguing this case. It makes much of a small but deadly disease outbreak which took place at an abandoned copper mine in Yunnan in 2012. As drastic showed last year, a virus studied at WIV which had been taken from that mine is the closest known relative to sars-cov-2.

The report sees importance in the removal, on September 12th 2019, of a database containing details of sequences and samples from the wiv. This is read as the beginning of a cover-up, and thus as the point when the authorities first knew something had gone amiss, arguing for a leak in late August or early September. The wiv says it was a response to cyber-attacks.

A leak is not the only research-related possibility. The first person infected could have been someone employed by the wiv or another lab to collect bats and samples—the prospect to which Dr Ben Embarek pointed in his television interview. And it is important to remember that some other form of

spillover outside the lab, either directly from a bat or by way of some other species, may well be to blame.
China clearly does not want lab-leaks investigated; but that does not mean it knows one happened. It is also being misleading about Huanan market, denying access to early-case data and obfuscating in various other non-lab-leak-specific ways. The most obvious explanation is that it does not really want any definitive answer to the question. An unsanitary market, a reckless bat-catcher or a hapless spelunker would not be as bad in terms of blame as a source in a government laboratory. But any definite answer to the origin question probably leaves China looking bad, unless it can find a way to blame someone else. To that end China has called for an investigation of Fort Detrick in Maryland, historically the home of American bioweapons research; state media regularly publish speculations about its involvement.
The possibility of spillover from wild bats does not have to be studied in China. Yunnan abuts onto Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, and bats are not sticklers in matters of territory. Samples taken outside China could provide a good idea of viral diversity the other side of the border. A thorough evaluation of the existing farm-animal and wildlife trade in the region would also be useful.
Yet there is an inherent risk in such work that needs to be considered. Efforts to uncover the roots of covid-19 by seeking out a natural reservoir of something very like sars-cov-2 would, by definition, expose people to the sort of risks that can seed pandemics. Ironically, the very possibility of a lab leak raises questions about how most safely to pursue investigations into other possibilities.

When he called for further inquiries in July, Dr Tedros also announced the formation of a new permanent group of pathogen hunters, the International Scientific Advisory Group for Origins of Novel Pathogens (sago). He wants it to organise further studies of sars-cov-2. But it will also need to look at more general questions for the future—such as how to be sure that, come what may, studies of pathogens involved in past disease outbreaks never create further outbreaks of their own.

From: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 14:34:52 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re:Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

I saw. But it's behind a paywall. U have full access?

From: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) At: 08/23/21 16:23:52 UTC+10:00
To: Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Fwd:Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

icymi

From: [b6] At: 08/22/21 15:23:17 UTC+8:00
To: Paul Geitner (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Economist - Shared Article 'Putting it all together'

The Economist | Putting it all together

https://www.economist.com/international/2021/08/19/the-world-needs-a-proper-investigation-into-how-covid-19-started?frsc=dg%7Ce

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Date: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 10:28:18 PM -0400
Sent: Fri, 4 Jun 2021 10:26:07 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Thanks
From: Peter Daszak <b6
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6 David Morens b6

It might not be true, but the person on twitter thinks it's a person at the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government called Jason Chapman. The link to his bio has now been removed.

The truth is that with these twitter "trolls" and hate-email senders, they tend to be male, mid 20s on, just larking around, or 50+ white guy trump supporters who are down on their luck..

Neither is good. Both deserve a serious "Shoe-ing" as some would say in northern England….

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 9:39 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6 g>; David Morens b6
Subject: RE: Thanks

Harvard Kennedy School is the Kennedy School of Government. The Business School is separate. Which is one is linked to jcg323? Not sure what to do with that but it would be interesting to know.

From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 7:13 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T <b6 David Morens b6
Subject: RE: Thanks

The Twitter link suggests it's a program manager at Harvard Kennedy School of business.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Peter Daszak b6 g>
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 7:05 PM
To: 'Keusch, Gerald T' b6 ; 'David Morens b6
Subject: RE: Thanks

The problem is that this is the way now with social media – this person will be just some random ne'er-do-well.

I looked up the name and he's harassing trans women as well on Twitter:

https://twitter.com/thaumatropia/status/1256669048340914178?s=20

Like the journalists who came round my house this afternoon, they're just after a reaction, so if you respond, they will use that in some nefarious way.

Best just block and move on.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; David Morens [b6]
Subject: FW: Thanks

You probably got this too. It's nice to know that Jason is sincere. I am contemplating a three word response because trinities are holy. Fuck you Jason.

OK, not really.

From: Jason Chapman [b6]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:34 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: Thanks

In that letter you signed, you said people spread prejudice (i.e. were racists) for questioning the origin of the virus....absolutely disgusting. I am throughly enjoying watching your credibility and the credibility of Democrat biased academia evaporate in real time.

Sincerely,
Jason

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9652589/amp/One-original-lab-leak-deniers-calls-thorough-investigation-Covids-origin.html

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

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Date: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 7:08:50 PM -0500
Sent: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 7:08:48 PM -0500
Subject: Re: ACAV webinar on COVID-19 variants
From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]
CC: Aguilar, Patricia V. [b6]

I didn't know about the call tomorrow. It may be just you, Cliff, and Tony. But that is fine. No need for me to be there. Keep everything brief, just succinct bullet points on the most important take home messages, and then be prepared to follow up in depth if he asks questions.

Remember that he is not so much interested in the geeky science but in communication points for when he goes on tv. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Feb 25, 2021, at 19:02, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

Please accept my apologies for dysfunction email replying!

Please also count me in for the panel you're organizing on viral surveillance during the COVID-19 pandemic, and one of COVID origins if you go ahead with that.

I'll look for Katherine Laycock's email and respond now.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Aguilar, Patricia V. b6
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 5:52 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6
Cc: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: ACAV webinar on COVID-19 variants

Hello Dr. Daszak:
Thank you for accepting our invitation to an ACAV event on COVID-19. We finalized the panelists for the COVID-19 variants webinar weeks ago, but we can certainly schedule another event focusing on COVID-19 origins.
Additionally, ACAV is organizing a scientific symposium, "Viral surveillance during the COVID-19 pandemic." The event is scheduled as part of the ASTMH annual meeting. It would be fantastic to count on your participation as a panelist for this event. You might have received an invitation from one of our trainee leaders (Dr. Katherine Laycock).
Please let us know whether or not you can participate in this panel.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Patty

Patricia V. Aguilar, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Pathology
Associate Director, Center for Tropical Diseases
University of Texas Medical Branch
301 University Blvd
Galveston, Texas77550
b6
Ph b6

From: Peter Daszak b6
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 9:34 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 ov>; Aguilar, Patricia V. <b6
Subject: RE: ACAV webinar on COVID-19 variants

WARNING: This email originated from outside of UTMB's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Answering this email now (late of course) – I'd be delighted to join an ACAV webinar – I'm not an authority on variants, but can talk on COVID origins and disease emergence in general if that fits

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Tel.: [redacted]
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
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Date:	Wed, 15 Sep 2021 2:56:58 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 15 Sep 2021 2:56:45 PM -0400
Subject:	FW: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists/ W. Ian Lipkin: The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19 https://bit.ly/3xZBrZ0
From:	"Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6]
To:	David Morens [b6] [b6];
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
[b6] (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
[b6]

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 6:08 PM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]rg >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Subject: RE: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists/ W. Ian Lipkin: The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19 https://bit.ly/3xZBrZ0

Yes, I too have known Ian for years, and he can be at times prickly (i.e., when he is off his medicines - and I won't explain any further) and at other times sweet. I remember one late night conversation with him over a few drinks, when he was going on and on about how sad he was that his wife divorced him, and he was really quite forlorn. It was sad and he was like a puppy dog.... But also, as you remember, he got involved in an ugly harrassment situation a few years back, of which I know some of the details, and I concluded he probably didn't do anything wrong. Indeed, it was all settled hush hush, as I recall. He seems to not have many close friends but he has always been very nice to me, Jeff T, Tony, and all of our colleagues here. In fact, we (NIAID) gave him his first grant when he was just starting out, and he seemed like he wanted all of us to adopt him, more about the acceptance than the money. Human beings are complex. Ian has been wrong, but he is always able to change if new facts appear.

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
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Building 31, Room 7A-03
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Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
b6 b6 b6
b6

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From: Peter Daszak (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 5:04 PM

To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Subject: RE: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists/ W. Ian Lipkin: The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19 https://bit.ly/3xZBrZ0

I agree, at least he's not on the attack like Jeff Sachs. I've known Ian for years, and he really can be a particularly pompous guy at times, but quite charming at others.

I see this as Ian lipkin trying to thread the needle between him previously saying that a lab leak is plausible and they had unsafe biocontainment, but at the same time him knowing that's a disingenuous argument because he uses the same level of biocontainment in his own lab. He's criticized GoF during the original arguments a decade + ago, and now is supporting it…. and then there's the usual bit where he tries to look good by banging on about his appearance in the movie *Contagion* and that he's been involved in every investigation of every outbreak ever…

Maybe, like David Relman, we should view these articles and appearances as submissions of their resume's for the WHO next phase, a future US Govt Covid Commission panel, or the NASEM consensus study (or all 3). I know Ian applied to be on the original WHO mission to Wuhan, but was declined for reasons that I was told were something along the lines of whether he would fit in with a team…(read into that what you may)…

Cheers,

Peter

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 4:02 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6] [b6]
Subject: RE: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists/ W. Ian Lipkin: The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19 https://bit.ly/3xZBrZ0

Thanks David,

At least he takes the stance that pathogenesis studies are important and he disagrees with the anti-GOF'ers that it all needs to be shut down. But then he implies unsafe work at BSL-2 at WIV. Baric has said the same thing. That's where he opens the door for the others to stick their foot in the door

and to try to kick it wide open.

But, I'll take even this piece from Ian in a positive way.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 3:36 PM
To: Peter Daszak <b6>(b) ; Keusch, Gerald T <b6>
Subject: FW: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists/ W. Ian Lipkin: The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19 https://bit.ly/3xZBrZ0

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
● <b6> (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
● <b6>
● <b6>

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>

Sent: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 11:02 AM
Subject: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists/ W. Ian Lipkin: The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19 https://bit.ly/3xZBrZ0

The known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns of COVID-19

By W. Ian Lipkin | July 21, 2021



A nurse cares for a patient on a US Navy hospital ship during the COVID-19 pandemic. Credit: US Navy.

In 2002, while making the case for the US invasion of Iraq to those who asked for evidence of what we now know to be nonexistent weapons of mass destruction, Donald Rumsfeld referred to known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns. Nearly two decades later, we are in similar territory in discussing the origin of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Then, as now, we should be wary that incomplete data and strong opinions not determine high-impact decisions.

The known knowns are that SARS-CoV-2 is a new, highly transmissible virus that has the capacity to evolve rapidly. Genetic analyses indicate that closely related viruses existed in wildlife before human disease was detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan in 2019. We also know that despite promises to shut down wild animal markets in the aftermath of the first SARS outbreak in 2003, thousands of animals were sold in such markets in Wuhan. Many of these species are known to be infected and/or infectable with SARS-like coronaviruses. These animals could have been vectors for carrying SARS-CoV-2 to humans and for adaptation to growth in humans.

We also know that the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention collected specimens from wildlife that typically carry coronaviruses and pursued gain-of-function experiments. The level of biocontainment for these experiments may have been inappropriate. Nonetheless, there is no evidence that SARS-CoV-2 was deliberately created. Indeed, the features of SARS-CoV-2 that have resulted in at least four million deaths, lingering disease in millions more, and an estimated $22 trillion loss in output through 2025, could not have been predicted even had someone wanted to engineer a highly transmissible and pathogenic coronavirus and had the tools to do so.

There are many known unknowns. Unlike smallpox, Ebola, or other potentially lethal infectious diseases that announce themselves with a distinctive clinical syndrome, SARS-CoV-2 has the capacity to infect people and cause no or only mild disease. Furthermore, even people who ultimately develop severe disease may be infectious before they have symptoms. This insidious aspect of SARS-CoV-2 biology makes it difficult to track its spread and to determine when, where, and how it first emerged. One clue to the advent of SARS-CoV-2 might have been a spike in the number of cases of respiratory disease or in the use of prescription or over-the-counter medications to treat them. However, there is no evidence of

either in Wuhan in the weeks prior to the first documented cases of COVID-19 in November 2019. Wuhan is also a major transportation hub. The first cases may have been imported from other regions in China or throughout the Asian continent where related viruses were reported.

A resource that epidemiologists frequently use for determining the origin and timing of the introduction of a new infectious agent is serially collected samples that can be tested for the presence of viral proteins or genetic material (in this case, RNA), or for antibodies that are produced in response to infection. While investigating the origin of MERS-CoV in 2012, a team of expert researchers of which I was a member found large amounts of viral RNA in young dromedary camels. Additionally, we found high levels of antibodies in blood of more than 75 percent of contemporary adult camels and in blood from camels that had been collected annually and stored for a period of more than 10 years. These findings—plus the presence of viral RNA in camel meat in abattoirs—were helpful in implicating camels as important sources of human infection and in dating the incursion of MERS-CoV into the Arabian Peninsula.

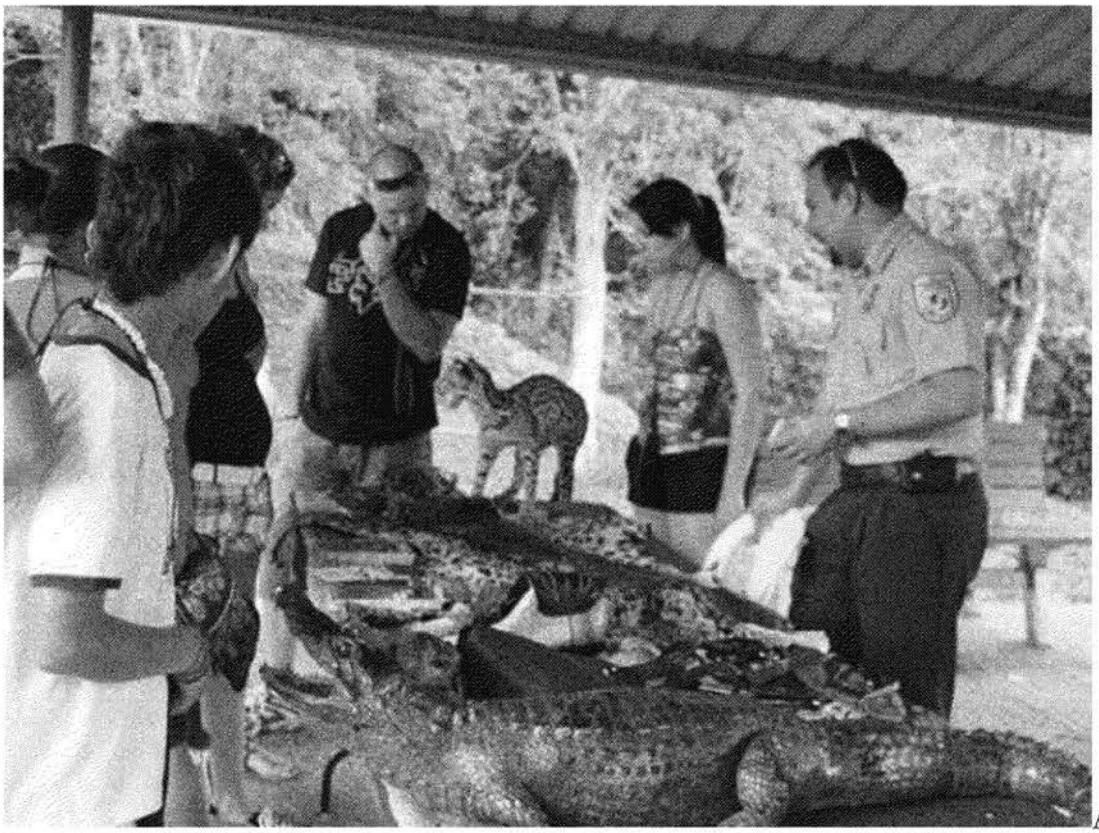
RELATED:
Essential reading on lab leaks and gain-of-function research

To date, we have not succeeded in similar studies in searching for the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. The presence of SARS-CoV-2 RNA would be considered unequivocal evidence of the presence of the causative agent. We are rapidly closing in on two years since the beginning of the Wuhan outbreak. The challenge in looking for RNA in archived materials is that it rapidly degrades unless samples are stored at ultralow temperatures. Proteins and antibodies are less labile but are also less specific. Through a mechanism known as cross reactivity, infection with a different, but related coronavirus (like SARS-CoV-1, the causative agent of the 2002-2003 SARS outbreak) can yield results that are mistaken to represent COVID-19. This was not a problem in Saudi Arabia, because no similar MERS-like viruses were circulating in camels or people. However, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must have assays that distinguish between SARS-CoV-2, SARS-CoV-1, and other coronaviruses.

There is considerable uncertainty about when SARS-CoV-2 first appeared both inside and outside of China. The *South China Morning Post* has reported the retrospective diagnosis of infection in a 55-year-old man in Hubei province on November 17, 2019. A US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study of more than 7,000 routine blood donations collected from December 13, 2019 through January 17, 2020 revealed the presence of antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 in at least 84 people in nine US states. Given that an antibody response cannot be detected until two to three weeks after infection, we can only conclude the virus was circulating in the United States for several weeks before the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed on January 19, 2020. Even more compelling evidence of early infection outside of China was found in a skin biopsy obtained in November 2019 from a woman in Milan, Italy with an inflammatory rash that was found to contain both SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA and proteins. Mathematical models based on studies of viral sequences and evolutionary rates suggest that SARS-CoV-2 emerged in China in early October to mid-November. We do not have the samples needed to search for evidence of infection in humans, wildlife, or domestic animals in China prior to November 2019. We also do not know whether such samples exist or whether the problem is lack of access.

Let us return to what we do know. Three quarters of emerging infectious diseases originate in wildlife. Over the past 40 years, I have personally been involved in addressing several: HIV/AIDS, West Nile encephalitis, SARS, MERS, Lujo, Lassa, Nipah, Dandenong, Ebola, Marburg, dengue, monkeypox, Zika, influenza, and COVID-19. Estimates of numbers of unknown viruses lurking in mammals range from 320,000 to 1,000,000. If even 1 percent of them can infect humans or domestic animals, we may be ignorant of thousands of potential threats to human health and food security. In an increasingly interconnected world, diseases that might once have been contained to a region are now global. Accordingly, the international community can have zero tolerance for wildlife markets and wildlife

trafficking for food, medicinal, or pet trade purposes. Our current focus in on China. However, trafficking in wildlife is a global threat and should be banned everywhere. It may have contributed to the emergence of HIV/AIDS and to outbreaks of Ebola and Marburg. France plays a central role in wildlife trafficking, with more than 28 million specimens imported between 2008 and 2017, including 4,000 seizures of illegal transport during that time period totaling two million specimens. Confiscated items included live mammals, birds, and reptiles along with bodies, parts, and products. In 2012, we received and analyzed tissues from primates smuggled into JFK airport in the United States. These contained sequences of human pathogens, including four strains of simian foamy virus (an agent closely related to HIV) and two herpes viruses.



A law enforcement officer in Puerto Rico displays illegally trafficked wildlife. Such trade can increase the risk of a disease spilling over from animals to people. Credit: US Fish and Wildlife Service.

This brings us to discussion of the lab-leak speculation. Some of my colleagues believe that research with infectious agents—particularly gain-of-function research, where a virus or other microbe is genetically manipulated to alter its ability to infect cells or cause disease—should also be banned. I disagree. This type of research is needed to understand how viruses infect us and thwart our immunological defenses. It is also essential to identifying and validating effective countermeasures. However, it should only be pursued in accordance with an internationally approved standard for biocontainment, project review that considers risk/benefit analysis, rigorous training, and continuous monitoring of personnel that includes antibody testing for evidence of laboratory-acquired infections.

After 9/11 and the anthrax attacks that followed, President George W. Bush established a National Biosurveillance Advisory Subcommittee to review infectious threats. A second subcommittee was established by President Barack Obama. Both committees issued reports (see the first report and the second report) that recommended investments in new technologies and personnel for national and global surveillance of and response to emerging infectious diseases. The committees endorsed the WHO International Health Regulations of 2005 that mandated building infrastructure for detecting microbial

threats in the developing world.

Neither report gathered much traction until the film "Contagion" was released in 2011. "Contagion" was developed to call attention to pandemic risks originating in wildlife. It introduced audiences worldwide to epidemiology, biosafety laboratories, the process of vaccine development, false panaceas, and the term "R naught"—which describes how many people on average someone with an infectious disease will infect. It also led *The New York Times* to invite me to write an editorial that laid out what was needed to prevent a pandemic. There is much that the film got right; however, we did not predict the potential for asymptomatic transmission, promiscuous infection of multiple organ systems, or the impact of poor leadership.

What would good leadership entail now? The common elements in the several roadmaps proposed since the COVID-19 pandemic began (see *Foreign Affairs*, The Independent Panel, and the G20 Action Plan) include a stronger World Health Organization and global investment in the research and public health resources needed for effective surveillance, along with drug and vaccine development, production, and distribution. As understood in the context of the current pandemic, it is impossible to overstate the importance of surveillance and vaccines. We would not have been caught flat-footed if we knew that a novel coronavirus was circulating in the autumn of 2019. Early access to accurate diagnostic assays and track tracing would have enabled early containment. Similarly, if effective vaccines had been distributed globally, we might never have allowed SARS-CoV-2 the opportunity to evolve into the delta variant. The virus is still adapting and new variants will continue to emerge that will challenge us. At an estimated cost of $25 billion, vaccinating the world is a bargain and an ethical imperative.

SARS-CoV-2 is now endemic worldwide in people, wildlife, and domestic animals; it is unlikely that we can eradicate it. I am nonetheless optimistic that we will ultimately bring it under control. The question is the durability of what we learn from this experience. As damaging as COVID-19 has been to humankind, there are other pathogens lurking worldwide—antibiotic-resistant bacteria, fungi, and threats to food security. Our commitment to a shared vision for global health must therefore continue even after the current pandemic recedes.

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Date:	Mon, 29 Mar 2021 2:15:13 AM -0400
Sent:	Mon, 29 Mar 2021 2:10:06 AM -0400
Subject:	Response to Michael Lauer letters
From:	Peter Daszak [b6]
To:	Keusch, Jerry [b6] David Morens [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6]
CC:	Aleksei Chmura [b6] >;
Attachments:	State Dept Cables re. WIV highlighted.pdf; NIH Response to EcoHealth Response to Suspension_10_23_20 Three further demands.pdf; Daszak 7 8 20 Reactivation & Suspension with seven demands.pdf; Response to NIH April 2021 re. reactivation and suspension of 2R01AI110964.docx

Hi Jerry, David, and Rich

I can't remember which of you offered to review our draft response to Michael Lauer at NIH, but it would be very helpful if one of you could. I'm sending it to my pro bono lawyers as well, and they'll rip into it, but your advice and edits (using track changes) would be most helpful…

By the way, the WHO report comes out Tuesday morning our time (I think).

I'll have a final draft version tomorrow that I'll try to get out to you early.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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Date: Mon, 7 Jun 2021 12:02:58 AM -0400
Sent: Mon, 7 Jun 2021 12:02:50 AM -0400
Subject: RE: ASF and all this may come up in interviews
From: Roberts, Rich [b6]>
To: Peter Daszak [(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)]>; Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg

Peter:

My wife and I watched the 60 Minutes coverage, which was better than I had remembered. My wife thought you were very good!

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412-9910
email: b6

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Sunday, June 6, 2021 11:54 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Keusch, Jerry [b6] Roberts, Rich [b6] Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Subject: RE: ASF and all this may come up in interviews

EXTERNAL SENDER

Wonderful that you're able to get information up the chain and I'm really relieved and hope that it will be useful and that this won't be weaponized politically.

The quote came out in the Financial Times on Saturday (attached PDF). The relevant quote is here:

'But he [Fauci] also admits that some of the work undertaken at the Wuhan lab using NIH money could have violated safety standards — even if he says responsibility for that lies with EcoHealth Alliance, the non-governmental group that performed the work. "We will have to go back and look at that," he said of accusations that some of the coronavirus work was undertaken at biosafety level two, roughly equivalent to that in a dentist's office. "But that is something that should have been monitored by EcoHealth Alliance." EcoHealth Alliance said: "As with all research organisations, EcoHealth Alliance must follow the local laws of the countries in which we work."'

Of course, for EHA this is very concerning because even though we've followed the appropriate rules, their complexity means that the public may not understand, and when you add comments like the journalists have above: "work…could have violated safety standards", it's just used to cast doubt and try and besmirch our name as usual.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 11:43 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6; Rich Roberts b6; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: FW: ASF and all this may come up in interviews

Peter, the below CONFIDENTIAL email went to Tony and to our OD staff, so that Tony will be prepared to speak to the subject of BSL…

This was what I was typing up when we spoke last night. I am sure he will "get" this and be able to respond to the crazies if necessary….

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 9:36 PM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>; Billet, Courtney (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Routh, Jennifer (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>; Stover, Kathy (NIH/NIAID) [E] <b6>
Subject: ASF and all this may come up in interviews

In the recent Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists article, we have this quote

"It is clear that some or all of this work was being performed using a biosafety standard—biosafety level 2, the biosafety level of a standard US dentist's office—that would pose an unacceptably high risk of infection of laboratory staff upon contact with a virus having the transmission properties of SARS-CoV-2…."

My understanding is that human coronaviruses including sarbecoviruses are routinely worked at in BSL-2 around the world as are many other viruses that can cause problems for people. The BSL level designation is decided by each country and is not related to perceived pandemic potential but largely to risk to the BSL workers.

For example, BSL-4 designation generally means deadly virus, infectious by aerosol, no vaccine against it, and no treatment for it. So, although rabies is 100% fatal in humans, it can be prevented by a vaccine and prevented by a post exposure serum, and (probably if not totally) not infectious by aerosol, thus it is BSL-2 even though among the deadliest of human viruses. Working with non-human coronaviruses at BSL-2 is widespread since these viruses are not known to infect humans.

David, Alan and others may have additional thoughts.

Attached is a fact sheet that I think comes from Ec~Health

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Date:	Fri, 28 May 2021 2:52:26 PM -0400
Sent:	Fri, 28 May 2021 2:52:24 PM -0400
Subject:	FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
From:	"Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" [b6] >
To:	David Morens [b6] [b6] >;
Attachments:	image001.png; image002.gif; image003.jpg

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- [b6] (assistants: Kimberly Barasch; Whitney Robinson)
- [b6] [b6] [b6]
- [b6]

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6] >
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:39 AM
To: NIAID OD AM <NIAIDODAM@niaid.nih.gov>
Subject: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Importance: High

From: Moore, Marg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:38 AM
To: NIAID COGCORE <COGCORE@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: FW: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Importance: High

FYI

From: Lampe, Karen (NIH/OD) [E] <[b6]
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:33 AM
To: NIH FOIA [b6] Manheim, Marianne (NIH/NHLBI) [E] <[b6] Schofield, Robin (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Moore, Marg (NIH/NIAID) [E] [b6]>; Milliard, Suzanne (NIH/NCI) [E] [b6] Peterson, Trevor (NIH/NEI) [E] [b6]>; Blansfield, Earl (NIH/NICHD) [E] [b6] Webb, Ginger (NIH/NIDCD) [E [b6]>; Stabile, Regina (NIH/NIEHS) [E] <[b6] Alberts, Lisa (NIH/NIMH) [E] [b6]; Glasford-Clarke, Margaret (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]; Woodson, Holly (NIH/OD/ORS) [E] [b6]>; Thomas, Gina (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]>
Cc: Garcia-Malene, Gorka (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]>; Bartok, Lauren (NIH/NIAID) [E] <[b6]>; Yan, Hawyee (NIH/OD) [E] [b6]
Subject: OGC has placed a temporary hold on all releases having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/Wuhan Institute of Virology
Importance: High

Good morning all,

We have just received word from HHS Oversight via OGC that we should not release anything having to do with EcoHealth Alliance/WIV. We don't have any more information at the moment but hope to know more by Tuesday. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Karen E. R. Lampe, Ph.D.
Freedom of Information Office
National Institutes of Health
karen.lampe@nih.gov



Date: Wed, 3 Aug 2022 11:37:29 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 3 Aug 2022 11:36:43 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
From: "Keusch, Gerald T" [b6]
To: [b6]; Peter Daszak [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
CC: David Morens [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]

You are right, but I doubt Columbia can do anything to stop a faculty member speaking on his own behalf from saying stupid things. What needs to happen is that the faculty at Columbia with the expertise also speak out against his stupidity.

For what it is worth I will follow up with Ian Lipkin (who probably won't be sympathetic) and Wafaa El-Sadr (who will be).

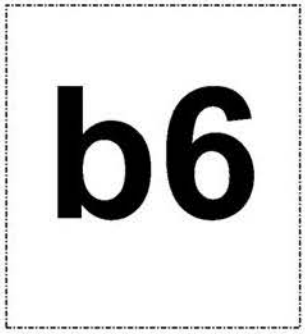
Jerry

From: [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:24 AM
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Keusch, Gerald T [b6] Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6]; Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Subject: RE: Jeff Sachs is at it again!

Peter:

"Inaccuracies" is a very mild word for the statements he makes.

This just gets more disturbing by the day. I wonder how the administration at Columbia view this? Are they aware of the damage he is doing?



From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, August 3, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; [b6]; Hotez, Peter Jay [b6]
Cc: David Morens [b6] Aleksei Chmura [b6]; Jeff Sturchio [b6]
Subject: Jeff Sachs is at it again!
Importance: High

EXTERNAL SENDER

I just saw this in *Current Affairs*. At least this is not a major daily broadsheet, but it's filled with inaccuracies again (some of them

highlighted in the text below, in order of appearance).

- He responds to the two papers in *Science* this week by dismissing the scientists (all 20+ of them) as having already stated their opinions prior to the paper, so what they're doing is simply creating a narrative.

  He states that the work in our rejected DARPA proposal was underway and being promoted very actively – again simply not true as I've stated publicly – the grant was not funded and the work not done.

  He goes into details of our unfortunate conversations as he tried to remove me from the Lancet Commission. He implies I didn't share the details of my work in China with him prior to joining. This is not true – it's why he invited me to lead the taskforce.

  He accuses me of 'misdirection' re. the work I've done in China. Not sure how publishing it in dozens of papers and speaking about it daily at the beginning of the pandemic is somehow misdirecting.

  He follows a common theme from the lab leakers that we had 180 viral 'strains' in the lab. Not true – we had hundreds of short RdRp sequences (few hundred base pairs) PCR'd from bat samples – only 3 viral strains in culture. All of this publicly released, all of it repeatedly stated.

  He makes a demand for 'lab notebooks' again. This amplifies the aggressive FoIAs and congressional attacks against us. I already told him EHA doesn't have a lab and doesn't keep 'lab notebooks'. Good luck asking for these from China with this aggressive narrative.

  He outright accuses scientists arguing that the virus did not come from a lab as 'lying'.

  He follows another lab leak narrative of dismissing EcoHealth's work as simply being a 'marriage-maker' between US and China labs to shunt NIH money to China. I'm very proud of the fact that EHA's work over the last two decades has led to multiple papers in *Nature*, *Science*, and all other leading journals. You just don't end up being senior author on these papers by acting as a 'marriage maker', but dismissing our scientific status is part of the lab leak agenda to undermine science.

  He accuses me of 'not telling the truth'. No details of course!

  Accuses all the other Task Force members of hiding some alleged conflict of interest - that they are 'part of this thing', whatever that is

  Accuses the task force of trying to avoid looking into the lab leak even though he knew full well we had interviewed people like Relman, Ebright, Quay as part of our work and had stated publicly that we would look at all hypotheses re. COVID origins.

  He dodges the question on my alleged 'hiding pretty serious conflicts of interest' by saying he asked for my research proposals and I wouldn't hand them over on legal advice. What he failed to mention is the reason I gave him for this in an email – NIH had refused to make those proposals public under FoIA and had then been sued. If I then went against their direction I would run the risk of further grant terminations. That's what my lawyers advised and I have an organization to run, rather than undermine our funding base just because Jeff Sachs is inquisitive…

  Damagingly, he states that our rationale for hiding the truth is because we don't want to be guilty for millions of deaths. That is exactly the comment I get when people send me death threats (more every week now that these stories are in the news). It's a pretty straightforward incitement to violence for these people.

  He states that he doesn't trust scientists because we hide our work, when in fact we've published it in papers, and our proposals (even those that are not funded) are now public.

  He equates this work with nuclear weapons research

  He criticizes NIH for redacting 290 pages of attachments. Anyone who's bothered to look at that will see that NIH was circulating a DRAFT version of their COVID-19 research strategy that was released a few days later having been corrected and edited. It was simply an attachment to an email. There's no way that a govt agency should be circulating uncorrected versions of a strategic plan – that's just commonsense.

https://www.currentaffairs.org/2022/08/why- the-chair-of-the-lancets-covid-19-commission-thinks-the-us-government-is-preventing-a-real-investigation-into-the-pandemic

Why the Chair of the Lancet's COVID-19

Commission Thinks The US Government Is Preventing a Real Investigation Into the Pandemic

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs says he is "pretty convinced [COVID-19] came out of US lab biotechnology" and warns that there is dangerous virus research taking place without public oversight.

Current Affairs

filed 02 August 2022 in THE VIRUS

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs is the Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University and the President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. He has also served as the chair of the COVID-19 commission for leading medical journal the *Lancet*. Through his investigations as the head of the COVID-19 commission, Prof. Sachs has come to the conclusion that there is extremely dangerous biotechnology research being kept from public view, that the United States was supporting much of this research, and that it is very possible that SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19, originated through dangerous virus research gone awry.

Prof. Sachs recently co-authored a paper in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences calling for an independent inquiry into the virus's origins. He believes that there is clear proof that the National Institutes of Health and many members of the scientific community have been impeding a serious investigation of the origins of COVID-19 and deflecting attention away from the hypothesis that risky U.S.-supported research may have led to millions of deaths. If that hypothesis is true, the implications would be earth-shaking, because it might mean that esteemed members of the scientific community bore responsibility for a global calamity. In this interview, Prof. Sachs explains how he, as the head of the COVID-19 commission for a leading medical journal, came to the conclusion that powerful actors were preventing a real investigation from taking place. He also explains why it is so important to get to the bottom of the origins of COVID: because, he says, there is extremely dangerous research taking place with little accountability, and the public has a right to know since we are the ones whose lives are being put at risk without our consent.

NATHAN ROBINSON:

I want to quote something that you said recently:

"I chaired the commission for the Lancet for two years on COVID. I'm pretty convinced it came out of U.S. lab biotechnology, not out of nature, just to mention. After two years of intensive work on this. So it's a blunder in my view of biotech, not an accident of a natural spillover. We don't know for sure, I should be absolutely clear. But there's enough evidence that it should be looked into. And it's not being investigated, not in the United States, not anywhere. And I think for real reasons that they don't want to look underneath the rug, the statement."

The statement that you made there is a controversial one. Just to read a couple of quotes from the *New York Times* in the last year:

"In a review of recent studies and comparisons to other outbreaks, a group of virologists contends that there is more evidence to support a natural spillover from animals to humans."

"Scientists released a pair of extensive studies over the weekend that point to a large food and live animal market in Wuhan, China, as the origin of the coronavirus pandemic."

So I want to start by asking you just to tell us a little bit about the investigation that you were part of and what led you to think that what I just quoted is a misleading statement of the state of the evidence.

JEFFREY SACHS:

Well, the funny thing is those scientists who are saying that said the same thing on February 4, 2020, before they had done any research at all. And they published the same statement in March 2020, before they had any facts at all. So they're creating a narrative. And they're denying the alternative hypothesis without looking closely at it. That's the basic point.

Now, what is the alternative hypothesis? The alternative hypothesis is quite straightforward. And that is that there was a lot of research underway in the United States and China on taking SARS-like viruses, manipulating them in the laboratory, and creating potentially far more dangerous viruses. And the particular virus that causes COVID-19, called SARS-Cov-2, is notable because it has a piece of its genetic makeup that makes the virus more dangerous. And that piece of the genome is called the "furin cleavage site." Now, what's interesting, and

concerning if I may say so, is that the research that was underway very actively and being promoted, was to insert furin cleavage sites into SARS-like viruses to see what would happen. Oops!

Well, that is what *may* have happened. And what has been true from the start is that that very real possibility, which a lot of scientists know, has not been looked at closely, even though it's absolutely clear that it could have happened that way. They're not looking. They just keep telling us, "Look at the market, look at the market, look at the market!" But they don't address this alternative. They don't even look at the data. They don't even ask questions. And the truth is from the beginning, they haven't asked the real questions.

But not *quite* the beginning. Because at the beginning, which we could date from the first phone call of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with a group of virologists on February 1, 2020, the virologists said "Oh my god, that is strange, that could well be a laboratory creation. What is that furin cleavage site doing in there?" Because scientists knew that was part of an active ongoing research program. And yet, by February 3, the same group is saying "No, no, it's natural, it's natural." By February 4, they start to draft the papers that are telling the public, "Don't worry, it's natural." By March, they write a paper—totally spurious, in my view—called the proximal origins paper that is the most cited bio paper in 2020. It said: it is absolutely natural. [Note: the paper's conclusion is "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."] But they didn't have any of the data that you read about in the *New York Times*. They didn't have any of this. They just said the labs weren't working on this alternative. But you know what, they don't know what the labs were working on, because they never asked, and NIH hasn't told us.

ROBINSON:

Let me ask you if we can distinguish between what we know for certain and what is speculative because we just haven't got the data. So we *do* know that there was—correct me if I'm wrong—research proposed that would have dealt with this category of viruses and would have modified them in ways that would have made them potentially more lethal. Do we know whether that kind of research was in fact actually ongoing somewhere?

SACHS:

We have enormous reason to believe that it was. And clearly, we haven't even asked that question. But we have a lot of reason to believe that it was, because the scientists that were doing that research loved that research. And they explained to us publicly why it's so important. And they wrote editorials about why this research must continue. And they made grant proposals saying that it should continue. And for those of us in the business of writing grant proposals, the fact that a particular grant proposal that's deeply troubling was turned down *doesn't* mean that it wasn't carried out afterwards. But where is NIH saying, "Yeah, that's an interesting question. Why don't we get the evidence?" It doesn't even ask that question.

And the scientists like those that talk about the Huanan market, they don't even discuss that research that was underway. That is just misdirection, to my mind. It's like sleight of hand art. Don't look over there. Look over here. But we know that there was a tremendous amount of this research underway. We have interviews by the lead scientists. We have these research proposals. I know the intention of doing this research from discussions. I've read so many studies of the importance of this research claimed by the scientists. And yet I see NIH with its head in the ground. "Oh, no, nothing here to look at." And then I see the scientists. "Oh, nothing here to look at. We know it's the market. Did we find an animal? No. Do we have an explanation of where that furin cleavage site came in? No. We don't have an explanation of the timing, which doesn't quite look right. Oh, but *don't look over there*, because there's nothing there, they keep telling us. Well, that's a little silly.

So my point is, there is a huge amount of reason to believe that that research was underway. Because there are published papers on this. There are interviews on this. There are research proposals. But NIH isn't talking. It's not asking. And these scientists have never asked either. From the very first day, they have kept hidden from view the alternative. And when they discuss the alternative, they don't discuss the research program. They discuss complete straw men about the lab, not the actual kind of research that was underway, which was to stick furin cleavage sites into SARS-like viruses in a way that could have created SARS-Cov-2.

What I'm calling for is not the *conclusion.* I'm calling for the *investigation.* Finally, after two and a half years of this, it's time to fess up that it might have come out of a lab and here's the data that we need to know to find out whether it did.

ROBINSON:

One of the things that struck me that I didn't know when I started writing about this and actually doing some some research is realizing that in the years leading up to the pandemic, there was a huge controversy about whether it was wise to modify viruses in the course of research in ways that could make a virus more infectious

or more lethal. And some people were arguing that this kind of research was insane. And some people were warning that in the case of a lab accident—an accident, mind you, not as an intentional "bioweapon"—a simple human error could cause a real catastrophe.

SACHS:

That is exactly right. There were several kinds of experiments of manipulation of the genes of dangerous viruses. And this raised a lot of alarm. And there was actually a moratorium in 2014. But the champions of this kind of research pushed on, they applied for waivers, which they got, and finally the moratorium came off in 2017. And they said how important it is to do this dangerous kind of research, because they claimed, "Well, there are lots of viruses out there. And we don't know when they're going to become highly pathogenic, and we need to develop drugs and vaccines against a wide spectrum of them. So we have to test all these viruses that we can find, to see whether they have high spillover potential." But they weren't actually aiming to just test viruses that they were collecting in nature. They were aiming to *modify* those viruses. Because the scientists knew that a SARS-like virus without a furin cleavage site wouldn't be that dangerous. But they wanted to test their drugs and vaccines and theories against dangerous viruses. Their proposal was to take hundreds, by the way—or least they talked about in one proposal more than 180 previously unreported strains—and test them for their so-called "spillover potential." How effective would they be? And to look: do they have a furin cleavage site, or technically what's called a proteolytic cleavage site? And if not, *put them in.* For heaven's sake. My God! Are you kidding?

Okay, but we didn't even ask the question from the first day: did you guys *do* that? Tell us what you did. Could you give us your lab notebooks? We're kind of curious. Instead, these people who are writing these *New York Times* articles right now and publishing these pieces about the market, from the first day—without asking about the experiments—they said, "Nope, it's natural." That's why I don't trust them. Because they've never looked at the alternative hypothesis. And their hypothesis has so many gaps, so many holes in it. But they don't even try to look at the alternative hypothesis.

ROBINSON:

I think it's very important to make clear that the "alternative hypothesis" is mainly a hypothesis about an accident, and scientific hubris. It's important to distinguish the kooky theories from the incredibly plausible theories. Because what you're talking about is people who did not appreciate the dangers of what they were doing.

SACHS:

In fact, it's very interesting. The alternative that is the *right* one to look at is part of a very extensive research program that was underway from 2015 onward, funded by the NIH, by Tony Fauci, in particular NIAID [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases], and it was to examine the spillover potential of SARS-like viruses. The champions of this research explained in detail their proposals. But after the event, we'd never asked them, "So what were you actually doing? What experiments did you do? What do you know?" We somehow never asked. It was better just to sweep it under the rug, which is what Fauci and the NIH have done up until this point. Maybe they could tell us, "Oh, full exoneration," but they haven't told us that at all. They haven't shown us anything.

So there's nothing "kooky" about it, because it's precisely what the scientists were doing. And then you can listen to the scientists on tape describing why they think the research program is so important, because they say these are dangerous viruses, and therefore we have to prepare broad spectrum vaccines and drugs. They explain it's not good enough to test one or two viruses. We have to test all of them. And then they came to realize, as I said earlier, that just having a SARS-like virus, if it doesn't have this piece of the gene, it's almost surely not going to be that effective. So they got around to the idea. "Well, let's put these in," if you can imagine that. To my mind, it's mind-boggling.

But they were proud of this, because it's actually genius at a technological level. Can you imagine: you can take a sequence of letters, which defines the genome, you can recreate the virus just from the letters. You don't even have to have the biological virus in hand, you just need the sequence. Then you can say "I'm going to add these four letters RRAR, the furin cleavage site, or maybe it's eight, RRARSVAS, this is a sequence of eight amino acids—I'm going to stick it in there right at the S1 S2 junction of the spike protein, because I know from my research program that will make it more pathogenic, that is more disease-causing. And then I can see whether my drug candidates like remdesivir, or some other candidate works against it. That is their idea. There's nothing

kooky about our claim: Hey, what were you doing? Because *they told us that they wanted to do these projects.* And they told us that they were wanting to do these projects in the months leading up to this outbreak. And then what is absolutely strange is that even though scientists knew right from the start, that is very weird to have that RRAR furin cleavage site in there—never saw that before in a SARS-like virus, and that that could well have come from a lab—hush, hush. Don't talk about it. Don't even discuss it. Just say right from the beginning: *This is natural. Of course, it's natural. Everything else is kooky.*

So you saw a narrative being created. And the scientists are not acting like scientists. Because when you're acting like a scientist, you're pursuing alternative hypotheses. And the scientists just wrote recently an op-ed saying the only evidence that this came out of a lab that's been put forward is that it came in a city, Wuhan, where an institute was located. Well, that's a lie. That is not the only coincidence that leads to this theory. What leads to this alternative hypothesis is the *detailed research program the NIH funded* that was underway in the years leading up to the outbreak. So I see the scientists absolutely trying to create a narrative and take our eyes off of another issue.

Now, again, let me emphasize, we don't have definitive evidence of either hypothesis. But what we do have is definitive evidence that officialdom has tried to keep our eyes away from the lab creation hypothesis.

ROBINSON:

You mentioned the lab in Wuhan. It's not just that there was a lab in Wuhan doing research on viruses. But there were ties between the lab and those pursuing this program. What do we know about the research that was actually occurring there?

SACHS:

We know that at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the scientists there had been trained by American scientists to use advanced bioengineering methodologies. And in particular, we have scientists in North Carolina, Texas, and so forth who do this kind of research, believe in it, argue for it, and say that they don't want any regulations on it and so on. And they were in close contact with Wuhan Institute of Virology, and they were part of a joint research group that was stitched together by something called EcoHealth Alliance. And EcoHealth Alliance was the kind of marriage maker between the American scientists and the Chinese scientists. That was the vehicle for funding from the U.S. government, especially from the National Institutes of Health, and especially from Tony Fauci's unit, the NIAID. There were years of grants, there were grant proposals. We don't know exactly what was done. But we have enough reason to know that we should be *asking* exactly what was done. And we know definitively that from the beginning, NIH has been running from telling us what has been done. They're not telling us the truth, that they had reason to fear from the start that this came out of a lab. And that to this day, they have reason to suspect it, but they're not talking.

ROBINSON:

A shocking thing to me was that the head of the EcoHealth Alliance was on the World Health Organization team that actually investigated the origins of COVID and concluded that it wasn't the lab.

SACHS:

Well, more than that: I appointed him—this was Peter Daszak—I appointed him to chair the task force of the pandemic commission that I was running for the *Lancet.* And he headed a task force on the origins. I thought, naively at th[b6]ginning, "Well, here's a guy who is so connected, he would know." And then I realized he was not telling me the truth. And it took me some months, but the more I saw it, the more I resented it.

And so I told him, "Look, you have to leave." And then the other scientists in that task force attacked me for being anti-scientific. And I asked them: "What are your connections with all of this?" They didn't tell me. Then when the Freedom of Information Act released some of these documents that NIH had been hiding from the public, I saw that people that were attacking me were also part of this thing. So I disbanded that whole task force. So my own experience was to witness close up how they're not talking. And they're trying to keep our eyes on something else. And away from even asking the questions that we're talking about. We don't have the answers. But we have good reasons to ask. And we have good reasons to know that NIH is not doing its job properly right now.

ROBINSON:

So you're saying that Daszak and others did not disclose to you pretty serious conflicts of interest? Since, on the hypothesis that it had something to do with this kind of research, that would have implicated Daszak himself in the origins of the crisis?

SACHS:

Well, he could have explained to me right from the beginning that there was a big research program and that they were manipulating the viruses, and here's how. He could have given me the research proposals. And when I asked him for one of the research proposals, he said, "No, my lawyer says I can't give it to you." I said, "What? You're heading a commission. We're a transparent commission. You're telling me your *lawyer* says you can't give me your project proposal." I said, "Well, then you can't be on this commission. This is not even a close call."

But there were so many other things. He was just filled with misdirection. I don't know whether he understands or not, maybe he doesn't understand. But the things he said just were absolutely not right.

ROBINSON:

When people hear you say, "They're sweeping it under the rug, they don't want to look," one question that may come to their minds is "Well, why? Why would people not be interested in getting to the truth?" But the alternate hypothesis from the natural spillover that you're talking about could have serious repercussions. It would implicate a lot of people in potentially millions of deaths. So there's a lot at stake here for the scientific community. Which explains why there would be an interest in directing people away from this possibility.

SACHS:

There are at least two reasons why they might be doing what they're doing. One is, as you say, the implications are huge. Imagine if this came out of a lab. And we have, by some estimates, about 18 million dead worldwide from this. That's not the official count. But that's the estimated excess mortality from COVID. Well, the implications of that—the ethical, the moral, the geopolitical—everything is enormous.

But there's a second matter that is really important, too. One thing that is rather clear to me is that there is so much dangerous research underway right now under the umbrella of biodefense or other things that we don't know about, that is not being properly controlled. This is for sure. And that's happening around the world. And governments say "don't poke your nose into that." That's our business, not your business. But it's actually our business. It's our business to understand what is going on with this. This is not to be kept secret. We don't trust you.

Let me put it this way: I don't trust them right now. I want to know. Because even what we know of the dangerous research is enough to raise a lot of questions of responsibility for the future. And to pose the question: "Hey, what other viruses are you guys working on? What should we know?" Because no matter what the truth is on SARS-Cov-2, what is pretty clear is we've got so much technological capacity to engineer dangerous pathogens right now. And a lot of that is being done. And it's classified. It's secret, and we don't know what it is. And I don't like that feeling at all. I don't recommend it for us and for the world.

ROBINSON:

Well, you've rather answered the question of why it's important to get to the bottom of this. Because one of the excuses you hear is, "Well, who really cares? Does it matter? It was an animal, it was a lab, whatever it is, it's here." But what you're saying is, "No, we actually need to know where this started." Because this isn't going to be the only one, whatever the origins are. And we don't want people to die from future viruses. This is critically important. If we're going to save millions of lives, we have to find out the answer.

SACHS:

I can tell you one thing that I've learned from talking to a lot of scientists in the last couple of years: the technological capacity to do dangerous things using this biotechnology is extraordinary right now. So I want to know what's being done. I want to know what other governments are doing, too, not just ours. I want some global control over this stuff.

We've kind of understood the nuclear risk—even that, of course, is in a lot of ways hidden from view. But this is a clear and present risk. And there's reason to believe we're actually in the midst of it, not just hypothetically. So come on: it's time to open the books everywhere. It's time to find out. Maybe it was the marketplace. Maybe it wasn't a lab. But we need to get real answers, now. Not the kind of misdirection that's been going in since February 2020. Enough nonsense! Enough *New York Times* stories saying, "Oh, it's this, it's that," without looking closely at the very plausible laboratory hypothesis.

ROBINSON:

It seems from what you're saying that as the head of the *Lancet*'s COVID-19 commission, you didn't feel you were able to get satisfactory answers or see the data you wanted. What kind of investigation do we need and who ought to do it?

SACHS:

The most interesting things that I got as chair of the *Lancet* commission came from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits and whistleblower leaks from inside the U.S. government. Isn't that terrible? NIH was actually asked at one point: give us your research program on SARS-like viruses. And you know what they did? They released the cover page and redacted 290 pages. They gave us a cover page and 290 blank pages! That's NIH, for heaven's sake. That's not some corporation. That is the U.S. government charged with keeping us healthy. What I found is that we have a lot of data which we're not finding right now. And I don't want to have to rely on FOIA and leaks, though those can be incredibly informative. I want clear, independent scientific investigation and transparency. One way to do this would be a bipartisan congressional oversight investigation that had subpoena power. Give us your lab records, your notebooks, your data files of virus strains, and so forth. There are many questions that we need independent scientists to define, to tell us exactly the kinds of information. But we know right now we're operating in an environment in which the government is working to hide the data that we need to make a real assessment.
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Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

Date: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 7:45:12 AM -0400
Sent: Fri, 10 Sep 2021 7:45:05 AM -0400
Subject: Re: Intercept piece is now out.
From: "Garry, Robert F" [b6]
To: Peter Daszak [b6]; Kristian G. Andersen [b6]; David Morens [b6]
CC: Rasmussen, Angie [b6]; Edward Holmes [b6]; Jason Gale [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]; Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Attachments: image006.jpg; image007.jpg; image008.jpg; image009.jpg; image010.jpg; image011.png

Just asking questions, but how are the exp described in Peter's grants somehow GoF and experiments here aren't? https://www.mdpi.com/1999- 4915/12/9/987/htm

"We incorporated a membrane-anchored form of the SARS-CoV-2 spike receptor binding domain (RBD) in place of the neuraminidase (NA) coding sequence in an influenza virus also possessing a mutation that reduces the affinity of hemagglutinin for its sialic acid receptor."
"The viral supernatant from reverse genetics was blind passaged twice in MDCK-SIAT1-TMPRSS2 cells at three-day intervals. Upon the final passage, the cytopathic effect was evident in the well containing ΔNA(RBD)-Flu, suggesting the presence of a replicating virus."

Glass house-stones?
""As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19, by an airborne coronavirus."

From: Peter Daszak [b6]>
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 5:20 AM
To: Kristian G. Andersen [b6]>; David Morens [b6]>
Cc: Rasmussen, Angie [b6]; Garry, Robert F [b6]>; Edward Holmes [b6]>; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Robert Kessler [b6]; Stephen Goldstein [b6]
Subject: RE: Intercept piece is now out.

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Here's the last part of the story, with a really irritating quote from Alina Chan, who wants even more data to be released. At some point, there is no more private stuff for them to demand, unless they bring out the thought police to see if we were thinking of possibly doing GoF!:

Shifting Definitions, Growing Viral Load

The humanized mouse experiment fits with the overall goal of the $3.1 million grant, which was titled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence" and aimed at preventing a pandemic by predicting the circumstances under which a bat coronavirus could evolve to infect humans. The researchers took an ambitious three-pronged approach: screening people with high exposure to wildlife, mathematical modeling, and

lab experiments on viruses. Peter Daszak, the EcoHealth Alliance president, has worked closely with scientists in China for years, and roughly $750,000 of the grant was allocated for the Wuhan Institute of Virology. An additional nearly $300,000 went to East China Normal University, where researchers did field sampling.

In a 2005 paper, Daszak's team showed that the first SARS virus originated in bats. Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, is caused by a coronavirus that emerged in 2012 and also believed to come from bats, which are now a prime target for virologists trying to understand and combat emerging diseases. Daszak has long maintained that his research is critical to preventing outbreaks.

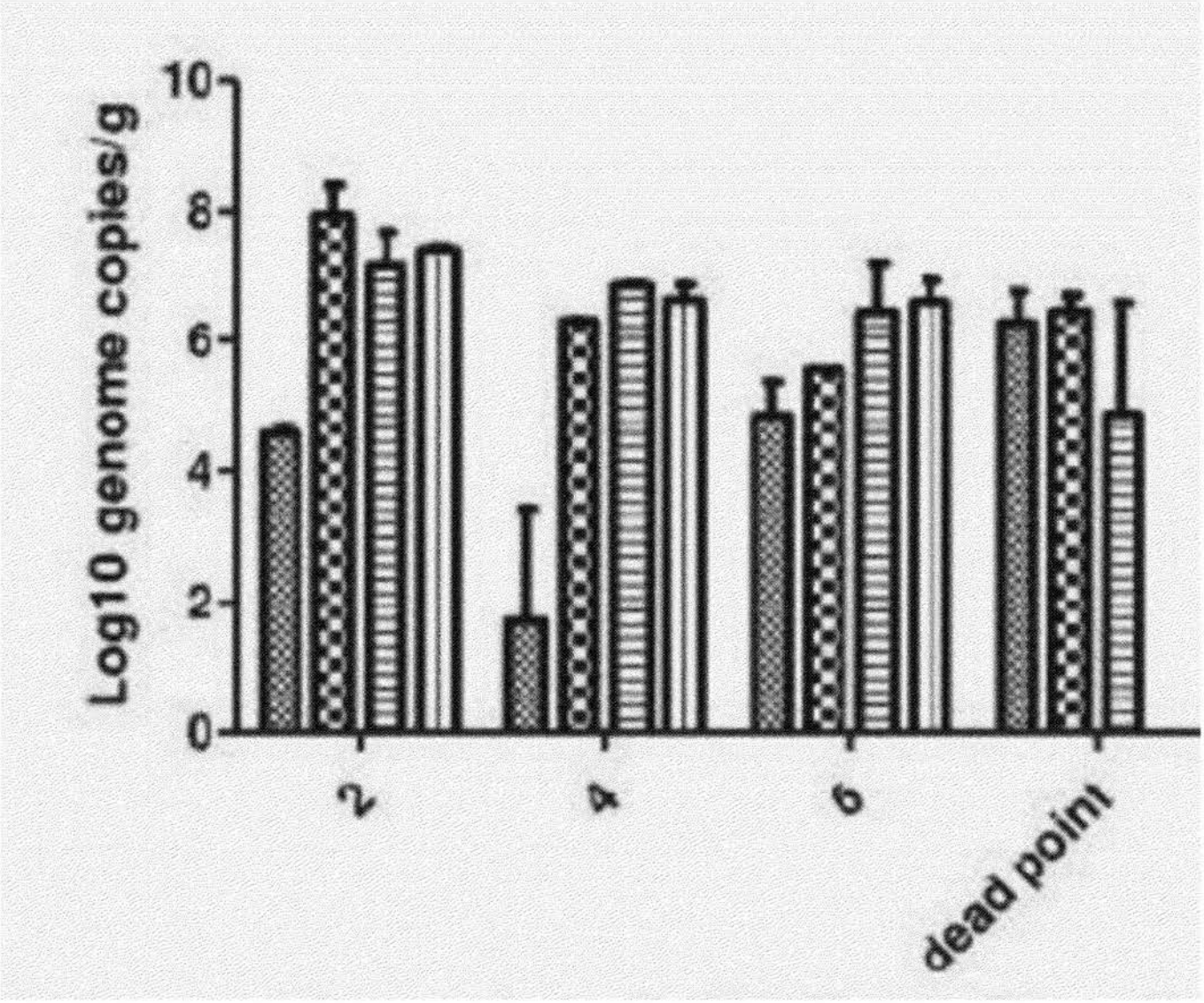
But the research on the bat viruses in Wuhan showed that infecting live animals with altered viruses can have unpredictable consequences. A report to NIH on the project's progress in the year ending in May 2018 described scientists creating new coronaviruses by changing parts of WIV1 and exposing genetically engineered mice to the new chimeric viruses. Research published in 2017 in the journal PLOS Pathogen showed that, in cells in a laboratory, similar chimeric viruses reproduced less effectively than the original. NIH cited that research as one of the reasons the moratorium on gain-of-function research of concern didn't apply to this experiment. "It was a loss of function, not a gain of function," the email from NIH explained. (NIH also pointed out that the changes to the chimeric viruses "would not be anticipated to increase virulence or transmissibility in humans.")

Inside the lungs of the humanized mice, however, the novel viruses appear to have reproduced far more quickly than the original virus that was used to create them, according to a bar graph shown in the documents. The viral load in the lung tissue of the mice was, at certain points, up to 10,000 times higher in the mice infected with the altered viruses than in those infected with WIV1. According to Deatrick, the NIH spokesperson, the difference in the rates of viral reproduction — which were particularly pronounced two and four days after the mice were infected with the virus — didn't amount to gain of function because, by the end of the experiment, the amount of virus produced by the parent and chimeric strains evened out. "Viral titers were equivalent by the end of the experimental time-course," Deatrick wrote. The email also said, "NIH supports this type of research to better understand the characteristics of animal viruses that have the potential to spill over to humans and cause widespread disease."

Scientists The Intercept consulted expressed differing views on whether the increase in viral load could be translated to an increase in transmissibility, which relies on the virus's ability to replicate. To some, the jump in viral load indicated that the modified RNA virus could replicate far more rapidly than the original in the lungs of the mice, likely leading to increased pathogenicity and spread. Rasmussen, of the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, pointed out that viral load is not identical to

reproduction rate, noting: "This shows the chimeric viruses replicated a little faster, but that tells us exactly nothing about transmissibility. Furthermore, WIV1 caught up by the end of the experiment. We see differences in the rate of viral replication all the time, but it is often not directly correlated with pathogenicity."

Another figure in the documents suggests that at least one of the altered viruses not only enhanced viral reproduction, but also caused the humanized mice to lose more weight than those exposed to the original virus — a measure of the severity of illness.



A graph from a report on NIH-funded research in Wuhan shows viral load in lung tissues of humanized mice.

Screenshot: FOIA Document

NIH requires the increase in viral reproduction to be immediately reported, according to a note in the Notice of Award the agency issued in July 2016. "No funds are provided and no funds can be used to support gain-of-function research covered under the October 17, 2014 White House Announcement," the note said. If any new MERS-like or SARS-

like chimeras show "enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log over the parental backbone strain," the note continued, the researchers were instructed to stop all experiments with the viruses and send the data to NIAID grant specialists, as well as to the Wuhan Institute of Virology biosafety committee. The enhanced growth of the chimeric coronaviruses in the humanized mice was, at one point, up to 4 log greater — or 10,000 times — the rate of the original virus. But there are no indications the research was stopped.

In fact, the bat coronavirus grant was renewed for a five-year period in 2019, although the Trump administration suspended funding in April 2020 amid the Covid-19 pandemic and spiraling concerns about its origins. (Funding was later reinstated but under strict conditions that Daszak said were impossible for his group to meet.)

Kessler, EcoHealth Alliance's communications manager, also pointed to the fact that the grant was renewed in 2019 — after EcoHealth Alliance had twice submitted documents detailing the experiment — as evidence that the organization did nothing wrong. "If there had been any violations, they would not have done so," he said.

Long History of Controversy

The practice of making chimeric viruses in order to study how they might become more contagious was under scrutiny long before the pandemic. Proponents of such gain-of-function research argued that it can help virologists better understand and defend against natural outbreaks. But critics said that they were unreasonably dangerous.

In October 2014, the federal government put a moratorium on funding gain-of-function research on potential pandemic pathogens that could be "reasonably anticipated" to lead to spread in humans, as outlined in a 2017 guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services. In December 2017, the moratorium was lifted and replaced with new guidelines for oversight of research using potential pandemic pathogens. The grantees reported that the humanized mouse experiment was done between June 2017 and May 2018. Gain-of-function research was thrust into the spotlight again in 2020, amid speculation that the Wuhan Institute of Virology had conducted such research and that it was somehow linked to the pandemic.

While the new information about the research on humanized mice does not provide the "smoking gun" for proponents of what has become known as the "lab leak theory," it lends the hypothesis credence, according to Stuart Newman, a professor of cell biology who directs the developmental biology laboratory at New York Medical College. "Making chimeric coronaviruses, mixing and matching RBDs [a part of the virus that allows it to attach to receptors] and spike proteins is exactly the scenario imagined by many lab-leak scenario proponents," said Newman. "The fact that this was an established research paradigm in the Wuhan lab … definitely makes the laboratory origin more

plausible."

The documents about the research were released by NIH after The Intercept submitted a Freedom of Information Act request in September 2020, later suing to have it fulfilled. The request sought copies of these and other grant proposals that Daszak submitted to the agency, as well as the agency's communications about the proposals. NIH originally denied The Intercept's request on the grounds that releasing Daszak's proposals would undermine an ongoing investigation. Counsel for the agency later admitted that NIH had not reviewed many of the records before making that assertion.

"The contents of the grants raise serious questions about the review processes and oversight relating to risky pathogen research," said Alina Chan, a Boston-based scientist and co-author of the upcoming book "Viral: The Search for the Origin of Covid-19." The new information in the documents warrants further inquiry into whether researchers may have omitted information about other concerning experiments, she said. "The question is: What else did they do in more recent years that we're not aware of?"

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Peter Daszak [b6 g>
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2021 1:09 AM
To: 'Kristian G. Andersen' <b6 'David Morens' <b6
Cc: 'Rasmussen, Angie' <b6; 'Garry, Robert F' <b6; 'Edward Holmes' <

b6 'Jason Gale' <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Robert Kessler <b6
'Stephen Goldstein' b6
Subject: Intercept piece is now out.

Really appreciate you speaking out Angie. I just read the piece in the Intercept and it's very upsetting: https://theintercept.com/2021/09/09/covid- origins-gain-of-function-research/

What you said is correct – without evidence of ability to infect people, or transmit even from one animal to another, it can't possibly meet the NIH definition of GoF, which is now officially the P3CO definition as follows (from https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf):

Section II. Scope and Definitions For the purposes of this HHS P3CO Framework:

A. A potential pandemic pathogen (PPP) is a pathogen that satisfies both of the following:

1. It is likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations; and

2. It is likely highly virulent and likely to cause significant morbidity and/or mortality in humans.

B. An enhanced PPP is defined as a PPP resulting from the enhancement of the transmissibility and/or virulence of a pathogen. Enhanced PPPs do not include naturally occurring pathogens that are circulating in or have been recovered from nature, regardless of their pandemic potential

How on any planet is a bat-CoV that's never been seen in people, "likely highly transmissible and likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations"? It seems the 8 scientists that believed this to be GoF base it on one of the chimeras growing faster than the parental strain early on, while forgetting that 1) these are bat viruses have never been shown to infect people, or that, as you say Angie – the growth rates of the parental strain caught up with it by the end of the expt. I'm v. disappointed that Vincent Racaniello is one of these scientists – he should know better.

I'm hoping that more will speak out and point to the differences between their version of what GoF is, and the actual definition that we're all supposed to adhere to, and by the way that NIH uses as the agency of note to decide!

NIH DOCUMENTS PROVIDE NEW EVIDENCE U.S. FUNDED GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH IN WUHAN

U.S.-funded experiments in China posed biosafety risks but did not cause Covid-19 pandemic, scientists say.



Sharon Lerner, Mara Hvistendahl, Maia Hibbett
September 9 2021, 9:03 p.m.

DOCUMENTS OBTAINED BY The Intercept contain new evidence that the Wuhan

Institute of Virology and the nearby Wuhan University Center for Animal Experiment, along with their collaborator, the U.S.-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance, have engaged in what the U.S. government defines as "gain-of-function research of concern," intentionally making viruses more pathogenic or transmissible in order to study them, despite stipulations from a U.S. funding agency that the money not be used for that purpose.

Grant money for the controversial experiment came from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is headed by Anthony Fauci. The award to EcoHealth Alliance, a research organization which studies the spread of viruses from animals to humans, included subawards to Wuhan Institute of Virology and East China Normal University. The principal investigator on the grant is EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak, who has been a key voice in the search for Covid-19's origins.

Scientists unanimously told The Intercept that the experiment, which involved infecting genetically engineered mice with "chimeric" hybrid viruses, could not have directly sparked the pandemic. None of the viruses listed in the write-ups of the experiment are related to the virus that causes Covid-19, SARS-CoV-2, closely enough to have evolved into it. Still, several scientists said the new information, which the NIH released after it was sued by The Intercept, points to biosafety concerns, highlighting a general lack of oversight for research on pathogens and raising questions about what other information has not been publicly disclosed.

"As a virologist, I personally think creating chimeras of SARS-related bat coronaviruses that are thought to pose high risk to humans entails unacceptable risks," said Jesse Bloom, who studies the evolution of viruses at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, is a disease caused, like Covid-19, by an airborne coronavirus.



National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci listens during a briefing on the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on March 26, 2020 in Washington, DC.

Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The experiment also raises questions about assertions from Fauci and NIH Director Francis Collins that NIH-funded projects at the Wuhan Institute of Virology did not involve gain-of-function research. In May, Fauci testified before Congress: "The NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." The documents do not establish whether Fauci was directly aware of the work.

Scientists working under a 2014 NIH grant to the EcoHealth Alliance to study bat coronaviruses combined the genetic material from a "parent" coronavirus known as

WIV1 with other viruses. They twice submitted summaries of their work that showed that, when in the lungs of genetically engineered mice, three altered bat coronaviruses at times reproduced far more quickly than the original virus on which they were based. The altered viruses were also somewhat more pathogenic, with one causing the mice to lose significant weight. The researchers reported, "These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice."

But the terms of the grant clearly stipulated that the funding could not be used for gain-of-function experiments. The grant conditions also required the researchers to immediately report potentially dangerous results and stop their experiments pending further NIH review. According to both the EcoHealth Alliance and NIH, the results were reported to the agency, but NIH determined that rules designed to restrict gain-of-function research did not apply.

The Intercept consulted 11 scientists who are virologists or work in adjacent fields and hold a range of views on both the ethics of gain-of-function research and the Covid-19 origins search. Seven said that the work appears to meet NIH's criteria for gain-of-function research.

One said that the experiment "absolutely does not meet the bar" for gain-of-function research. "You can't predict that these viruses would be more pathogenic, or even pathogenic at all in people," said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist with the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization at the University of Saskatchewan. "They also did not study transmissibility at all in these experiments," meaning that the scientists did not look at whether the viruses could spread across a population.

Three experts said that, while they did not have enough knowledge of U.S. policies to comment on whether the research met NIH criteria, the experiment involving humanized mice was unnecessarily risky.

One virologist, Vincent Racaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Columbia University, said while he considered the mouse experiment described in the document to clearly fall into the gain-of-function category, he didn't see it as problematic. "You can do some kinds of gain-of-function research that then has unforeseen consequences and may be a problem, but that's not the case here," said Racaniello.

Robert Kessler, communications manager for EcoHealth Alliance, denied that the work on the humanized mice met the definition of gain-of-function research. Kessler insisted that bat viruses are not potential pandemic pathogens because, he said, "a bat virus is not known to be able to infect humans." The proposal justified the work on WIV1 by explaining that it is "not a select agent" — referring to a list of closely monitored toxins

and biological agents that have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health — and "has not been shown to cause human infections, and has not been shown to be transmissible between humans."

But the group's bat coronavirus research was focused on the very threat that bat viruses pose to people. Kessler did acknowledge that, while the original bat coronavirus in the experiment did not spread among humans, the research was designed to gauge how bat coronaviruses could evolve to infect humans.

All but two of the scientists consulted agreed that, whatever title it is given, the newly public experiment raised serious concerns about the safety and oversight of federally funded research. "In my point of view, the debate about the definition of 'gain-of-function' has been too much focused on technical aspects," said Jacques van Helden, a professor of bioinformatics at Aix-Marseille Université. "The real question is whether or not research has the potential to create or facilitate the selection of viruses that might infect humans." The experiments described in the proposal clearly do have that potential, he said.

NIH spokesperson Elizabeth Deatrick said that the agency had considered the research — and decided not to restrict it under its own rules. "In 2016, NIAID determined that the work was not subject to the Gain-of-Function (GoF) research funding pause and the subsequent HHS P3CO Framework," Deatrick wrote, referring to criteria put in place in 2017 to guide the agency's funding decisions about research that involves, or is reasonably anticipated to involve, potential pandemic pathogens.

Republican members of Congress have alleged, without sufficient evidence, that gain-of-function research in Wuhan sparked the coronavirus pandemic. As part of an inquiry into the origins of the pandemic, they have twice grilled Fauci in Congress on his role as NIAID director.

In a heated exchange in July, Republican Sen. Rand Paul accused Fauci of lying when he claimed that NIH did not fund gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Experts now say that the documents support the contention that NIH funded gain-of-function work, though not in the specific instance where Paul alleged it. "There's no question," said Racaniello, of Columbia University, who pointed to the decreased weight of the mice infected with the chimeric viruses that was described in the research summaries sent to NIH. "From the weight loss, it's gain of function. Tony Fauci is wrong saying it's not."

But the documents do not prove Paul's claim that Fauci was lying, as they do not make clear whether Fauci read them. Nor do they in any way support Paul's allegation that

Fauci was "responsible for 4 million people around the world dying of a pandemic" — or that anyone intentionally caused Covid-19. What is clear is that program officers at NIAID, the agency that Fauci oversees, did know about the research.

A paragraph describing the research, as well as two figures illustrating its results, were included in both a 2018 progress report on the bat coronavirus grant and an application for its 2019 renewal. And NIH confirmed that it reviewed them.

"NIH has never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans," the agency said in a statement, echoing remarks by Collins, the NIH director, posted to its website in May. "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease." Similar research funded by NIH had aided in the development of vaccines against the coronavirus, the statement continued.

The White House did not respond to questions about the research.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen <b6
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 8:13 PM
To: David Morens <b6
Cc: Rasmussen, Angie >; Peter Daszak <b6 g >; Garry, Robert F < b6 >; Edward Holmes <b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net >; Robert Kessler b6 >; Stephen Goldstein < b6
Subject: Re: here's the latest line of attack today...

"she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up".

If she had in fact done that, she'd realize there'd be no news and no need for a second article - except to say "nothing to see here, move along".

Sigh.

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:28 PM David Morens [b6] > wrote:

> Amen and good for you! You are right that Ebright and his ilk are not only NOT experts but are harmful demogogues. They need to be called out. Because i am in government i can only fo this off the record, but i have done do again and again. Some of them are knowingly promoting false equivalences. If they interviewed a Holocaust survivor, they would say they have to give equal time and space to a Nazi murderer. They have no shame. d
>
> Sent from my iPhone
> David M Morens
> OD, NIAID, NIH
>
> > On Sep 9, 2021, at 18:40, Rasmussen, Angi[b6] wrote:
> >
> > Peter and all,
> >
> > I am so sorry you are still going through all of this. For what it's worth, I broke my rule of talking to disingenuous journalists and sent Mara Hvistendahl a long email telling her exactly what I think of the "experts" she's talked to and setting the record straight about what these FOIAd reports supposedly show. From what I can see, they show that you were reporting your work appropriately to NIH as required, the work itself was done in appropriate biocontainment, and, importantly, you didn't have SARS-CoV-2 or a progenitor. I also explained that previous work was published with WIV1 chimeras and that this type of study precludes doing more dangerous (and technically very difficult) virus isolation.
> >
> > She wanted to know whether I agreed with her two sources (likely Alina Chan or Richard Ebright, based on her prior story) that this fits the definition of GoF by NIH and I told her no and explained at length why not and the assertions that it was should disqualify any supposed "expert". Took every opportunity to dunk on their amateurish, disingenuous bullshit, while also emphasizing the importance of this work. Mara wrote back defensively, claiming she's talked to 10 virologists or "people in adjacent fields" for her follow-up. I am not optimistic that the follow-up will be more balanced, but I did try to provide some juicy quotes about how her "experts" actually have no expertise, and emphasized the profound damage these people have done to this essential research. They make all of us less safe.
> >
> > Hang in there. Ultimately the truth will come out and it's not going to be from the likes of the Daily Caller's inability to interpret virology data or from Jesse Bloom and all the grifters and conspiracy theorists populating the rabbit hole that he's crawled down.
> >
> > Angela L. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
> > Research Scientist
> > Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)
> > University of Saskatchewan
> > Office: [b6] [b6]
> > She/her
> > www.vido.org

VIDO

On Sep 9, 2021, at 3:07 PM, Peter Daszak [b6] > wrote:

CAUTION: External to USask. Verify sender and use caution with links and attachments. Forward suspicious emails to phishing@usask.ca

Here's a report in the Daily Caller that goes after the GoF argument that the chimeric bat viruses yielded more virus in humanized mice than the parental bat virus strain. https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth-alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/

There's a good response from NIH: 'An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans." "The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."'

This story is particularly irritating because if you look at the P3CO rules, it's clear they are meant for pathogens that occur in humans and might be made more dangerous. These were bat viruses that have never been shown to occur in humans. Let's also not forget that the virus with a higher viral load in mice was actually because it had the spike protein of a bat virus being flown around every night by tens of thousands of bats in rural china – not something new created by us to enhance virulence - In fact, the opposite: the fact that we could do this work with a chimera means that we don't have to isolate and culture every single new bat cov we find. It reduces risk!

INVESTIGATIVE GROUP
Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain, Documents Show
<image003.jpg>
<image007.jpg>

-
-
-
-

ANDREW KERRINVESTIGATIVE REPORTER
September 09, 20213:25 PM ET

- **U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice, records released by the agency show.**
- **Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Dr. Anthony Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.**
- **Fauci testified before the Senate in June that his agency never funded gain-of-function research at**

the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

U.S. and Chinese researchers funded by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) created viruses in a Wuhan lab that exhibited over 10,000 times higher viral load in humanized mice than the natural virus they were based on, according to an infectious disease professor citing documents recently released by the agency.

The U.S. nonprofit group EcoHealth Alliance notified the NIAID in two reports that between June 2017 and May 2018 it had created three lab-generated chimeric SARS-related coronaviruses in China that exhibited "significantly higher" viral loads, documents first reported by The Intercept show, but the agency continued to fund the project with taxpayer dollars without flagging it for review by an independent federal committee created in late 2017 to oversee gain-of-function research.

Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright, a vocal opponent of gain-of-function research, said the data was a "bona fide bombshell" that proves the NIAID, under Fauci's leadership, violated federal policies, endangered the public and lied to the public.

"Three EcoHealth/[Wuhan Institute of Virology] lab-generated viruses exhibited >10x to >10,000x higher viral load than the starting bat virus in humanized mice," Ebright tweeted. "One EcoHealth/WIV lab-generated virus exhibited higher pathogenicity than the starting bat virus in infection studies with humanized mice."

"The results demonstrate–unequivocally–a gain in function," he said.

In comparison, the viral load for people infected with the delta variant is roughly 1,000 times higher than those infected with the original strain of the virus, according to Nature science journal.

Ebright added on Twitter that the gain-of-function research activity that NIAID allowed EcoHealth Alliance to conduct in China could have yielded the virus that causes COVID-19 or a progenitor of that virus.

EcoHealth Alliance first notified the NIAID it created the three lab-generated SARS-related coronaviruses in a progress report detailing its research activities between June 2017 and May 2018.

"Using the reverse genetic methods we previously developed, infectious clones with the WIV1 backbone and the spike protein of SHC014, WIV16 and Rs4231, respectively, were constructed and recombinant viruses were successfully rescued," the group said in its progress report. "2 and 4 days post infection, the viral load in lung tissues of mice challenged with rWIV1-SHC014S, rWIV1-WIV16S and rWIV1-Rs4231S … were significantly higher than that in rWIV1-infected mice."

"These results demonstrate varying pathogenicity of SARSr-CoVs with different spike proteins in humanized mice," the report added.

EcoHealth Alliance included a chart visualizing the increased viral load of their lab-created viruses. The chart is presented in a Log scale, meaning each tick of the chart represents a 100-fold increase in viral load in mice with humanized cells, Ebright explained to the Daily Caller News Foundation.

<image005.jpg>

Charts submitted by EcoHealth Alliance to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases showing loss of body weight (right) and viral load (left) of mice with humanized cells infected with the natural WIV1 viral strain and three EcoHealth lab-created virus strains. The viral load chart is presented in Log scale, meaning each tick of the graph represents a 100-fold increase in viral load, Rutgers University professor Richard Ebright explained to the DCNF. (Screenshot)

"Each tick in the chart on the right represents an increment of 100x," Ebright told the DCNF. "The day 4 data show greater-than-10,000x higher viral loads for the lab-generated viruses."

The viral load for humanized mice infected with the natural virus caught up with the lab-created strains by the end of the experiment, the chart shows, but Ebright said that viral loads in the early stages of an infection are important figures to consider when assessing a pathogen's transmissibility.

"In terms of assessing potential for transmissibility, the viral load at all time points, particularly at early time points, is relevant. (See Delta variant)," Ebright told the DCNF.

EcoHealth Alliance provided another chart in its progress report showing that humanized mice infected with EcoHealth's lab-created viruses lost more bodyweight than humanized mice infected with the natural WIV1 strain.

EcoHealth Alliance included the same two charts in a 2018 request to the NIAID requesting additional funding for its research in China, the document trove released by The Intercept shows.

Federal funding for gain-of-function experiments that increase the transmissibility or pathogenicity of potential pandemic pathogens was temporarily suspended in 2014 due to widespread scientific concerns it risked leaking

supercharged viruses into the human population.

Funding for gain-of-function research was resumed in late 2017, but only for projects that went through the new Potential Pandemic Pathogens Control and Oversight (P3CO) Framework, which includes a review by an HHS review board tasked with critically evaluating whether grants that involve enhancing dangerous pathogens, such as coronaviruses, are worth the risks and that proper safeguards are in place.

The NIAID opted not to flag the EcoHealth Alliance grant for P3CO after determining on its own accord that the project "did not involve the enhancement of the pathogenicity or transmissibility of the viruses studied," a National Institutes of Health spokesperson previously told the DCNF. **(RELATED: US Grant To Wuhan Lab To Enhance Bat-Based Coronaviruses Was Never Scrutinized By HHS Review Board, NIH Says)**

Fauci said during a congressional hearing in May that the NIH and NIAID "categorically has not funded gain-of-function research to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," a claim that led Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky in July to send a criminal referral to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Fauci lied before Congress.

The P3CO framework defines an "enhanced" potential pandemic pathogen as any lab-created virus that exhibits any level of boosted transmissibility and/or virulence. Funding agencies such as the NIAID are required to flag any research grant that is "reasonably anticipated to create, transfer, or use enhanced PPPs" for P3CO review. Despite this, documents released by The Intercept suggest that the NIAID authorized EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function experiments on bat coronaviruses up to a certain threshold.

The NIAID informed EcoHealth Alliance in a June 2018 award notice that it must notify the agency only if it creates a virus "with enhanced growth by more than [10 times] compared to wild type strains," according to documents released by The Intercept. The NIAID linked to the P3CO review process, which contains no such mention of a 10 times allowance, in the very next sentence, the document shows.

<image006.jpg>

NIAID notice to EcoHealth Alliance in June 2018 saying it must notify the agency only if it produces a lab virus that exhibits more than 10 times enhancement over wild-type strains. (Screenshot)

An NIH spokesperson told the DCNF the agency "never approved any research that would make a coronavirus more dangerous to humans."

"The research we supported in China, where coronaviruses are prevalent, sought to understand the behavior of coronaviruses circulating in bats that have the potential to cause widespread disease," the spokesperson said. "The body of science produced by this research demonstrates that the bat coronavirus sequences published from that work NIH supported were not SARS-CoV-2. More importantly, because of similar research to understand coronaviruses, we were able to move swiftly to develop vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 and save lives."

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Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Peter Daszak <b6
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 8:29 PM
To: 'Garry, Robert F' b6 'Kristian G. Andersen' <b6
Cc: 'David Morens' <b6>; 'Edward Holmes' <b6; 'Jason Gale' <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; 'Rasmussen, Angie' <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>; 'Stephen Goldstein' <b6
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

That's interesting about Jesse Bloom – I wasn't aware of that work and hadn't really heard of him before this year to be honest. I suspect that like many people his view of his own research is that it's highly professionally managed and carefully controlled re. biosafety. He clearly has a different view of the work at WIV & by other leading Chinese scientists and seems suspicious of their motives in many of his public comments. This can't be based on their published work – it's often excellent. It just seems like a difficulty people have teasing apart their viewpoint about the Chinese Govt from their opinion about individual scientists. Anyone who's been on the ground in China rapidly realizes that the two are not the same.

Cheers,

Peter

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Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Garry, Robert F <b6>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 4:12 PM

To: Peter Daszak <b6>; Kristian G. Andersen <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>; Edward Holmes <b6>; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie <b6>; Robert Kessler <b6>; Stephen Goldstein <b6>
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Sorry this is happening. The anti-science attacks are just getting more and more extreme.

Unfortunately, there exists a small vocal group of scientists that see virtually every experiment done by virologists as risky and potentially GoF. Many of those ppl are quoted in the Intercept article.

WRT Jesse Bloom it is rather ironic I must say. One need not look too hard at his influenza virus publications to identify quite a number that could be considered "risky" at least by a Relman/Ebright definition. Selecting drug resistant influenza virus mutants, and creating influenza virus SARS-CoV-2 recombinants to name two. Just saying…

From: Peter Daszak <b6>
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:49 PM
To: Kristian Andersen <b6>
Cc: David Morens <b6>, Robert Garry <b6>, Edward Holmes <b6>, Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>, "Rasmussen, Angie" <b6>, Robert Kessler <b6>, Stephen Goldstein <b6>
Subject: RE: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

> External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Great to see your email Kristian – right on every point. The isolate vs. sequence vs. sample misnomer is something that really has plagued me with this stuff – Zhengli's group repeatedly used 'isolate' for 'sample' on Genbank and I've made that mistake here also.

Re. the MERS work, you're dead right – we proposed it, explained that it would likely need review by the P3CO committee equivalent, and then pushed it to Yr4. In the end we didn't do this work – there was already a ton of other more interesting work directly on SARSr-CoVs to do.

The latest line of attack that will be coming out in a follow-up article in the *Intercept* tonight is that in the Y4 report, we show one of the chimeras having more than a log virus output than the parent strain (WIV-1). The NoA was updated in Y3 to say that if this happened we had to report to NIH and cease expts. Ironically, the way *Intercept* found this out is because they now have a copy of our "report to NIH" in which we show this, but of course that's not going to stop them saying we broke the rules on GoF.

The other line of attack is the one Jesse Bloom's pursuing – that we didn't publish sequence data within 6 months of the "final version being received" as per our proposal. Jesse sneakily suggested this in an email to me last night in which he asked for the sequences so he can do SARS-CoV-2 origin analyses, while at the same time tweeting an accusation that we broke the rules in a chain with Alina Chan and the "Seeker". I'm not sure whether to respond at all, but I might just let him know that all SARSr-CoV sequences we had are already published in our 2020 paper in Nat. Comm. Again – the problem with these accusations is that just being accused of this by the press causes us seven levels of hell, and arguing back is even worse.

Cheers,

Peter

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EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:30 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: David Morens < b6 >; Garry, Robert F b6 Edward Holmes < b6 >; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; Rasmussen, Angie < b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 >; Stephen Goldstein <
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

It's harassment, plain and simple - it has absolutely nothing to do with trying to find the truth of how SARS-CoV-2 emerged in the human population.

The way I see it though, we now have (a) the entire US IC having completed their investigation, (b) unredacted grants and annual reports from EcoHealth, and (c) old theses from the WIV.

This is *exactly* the type of information that Ebright, Metzl, Relman, Bloom, Chan, and the rest of the lot have been requesting. Now this work has been completed, what was unearthed? Nothing. Nada. Zilch. No evidence of the virus (or sequence) at the WIV (or anywhere else) prior to the pandemic. No gain-of-function work (despite what Ebright says). The same cloning system used again and again (WIV1). Vero cells used for virus isolation (SARS-CoV-2 loses the FCS in those cells), and no previously unreported viruses isolated (although I note the repeated use of "isolates " in one of the annual reports to describe 11 samples - I myself have made that mistake before). So again, there's nothing.

This absence of evidence is *in fact* evidence of absence in this particular case - there would have been *some* evidence for SARS-CoV-2 in *some* of these documents had it been at the WIV. Yet, nothing.

As for GOF work, again nothing. I note the mention of work with recombinant MERS in the year 3 report for work proposed in year 4 - depending on the nature of work, that could be considered GOF/DURC. However, when reading the year 4 report, I don't see any of that work mentioned - just work with pseudotyped viruses, which is clearly not GOF (or DURC).

Of course, people will take stuff out of context to make *anything* fit a particular narrative.

However, there's an expiration date on bullshit and I suspect we're well past due.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 6:28 PM Peter Daszak [redacted] b6 g > wrote:

> Here's one of the "journalists" who got the "Scoop". Basically they just FoIA'd NIH, then sued when NIH refused to release, then dumped the documents online and asked for "people with relevant expertise to get in touch". Cue Drs. Ebright, Relman, Chan, Bloom and others to start their attempt at a character assassination…
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h
> NEW: We obtained hundreds of pages from NIH detailing EcoHealth Alliance's work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We are publishing them in full. With
> @fastlerner and @theintercept legal team, which filed a FOIA lawsuit for the documents' release
> <image001.jpg>
>
> New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab
> More than 900 pages of materials related to US.-funded coronavirus research in China were released following a FOIA lawsuit by The Intercept.
> theintercept.com
>
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 15h The full documents are here: "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence"
> https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055989- understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice…
> "Understanding Risk of Zoonotic Virus Emergence in Emerging Infectious Disease Hotspots of Southeast Asia"https://documentcloud.org/documents/21055988- risk-zoonotic-virus-hotspots-grant-notice…
> <image002.jpg>
>
> **Mara Hvistendahl**
> @MaraHvistendahl
>
> .
> 7h
> There is a lot here. @fastlerner and I are interested in hearing feedback from people with relevant expertise.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: David Morens <b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:07 PM
To: Peter Daszak b6
Cc: Garry, Robert F <b6; Kristian G. Andersen b6>; Edward Holmes b6>; Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>; b6
Robert Kessler <b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Do not rule out suing these assholes for slander. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

> On Sep 7, 2021, at 20:39, Peter Daszak <b6> wrote:
>
> To be honest, this whole process is beyond a joke. We're spending a huge amount of staff time dealing with the BS from these FoIA requests even though the grant's been terminated, suspended and funds are still unavailable.
>
> The lab leakers are already stirring up bullshit lines of attack that will bring more negative publicity our way – which is what this is about – a way to line up the GoF attack on Fauci, or the 'risky research' attack on all of us.
>
> Jesse Bloom's now trying to claim we weren't following our proposed rules for data release (not true – all SARSr-CoV RdRp sequences on Genbank in summer 2020, despite the grant being terminated) – he's tagging Alina Chan and 'The Seeker' on Twitter. Ebright's trying to claim we were working on MERS as a 'shadow' line of work. There'll be more to come – just a free-for-all effort to find a few sentences that they can take out of context.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
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Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

---

From: Garry, Robert F b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Kristian G. Andersen b6 >; Edward Holmes < b6
Cc: Jason Gale b6 (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) b6 b6 b6 ; b6
Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

Totally - that the real story of the FOIAed grants - no SC2 or anything close that could have been converted to it.

Metzl, Chan and others wanted a "forensic investigation.' The grants that they thought would be private and written before the pandemic do not mention a new SARS-like virus. YOu can be sure that a new virus 76% similar to SC1 would have been front and center in the applications and progress reports.

My guess this is part of the info the IC used to conclude no bioweapon, likely no engineering - NO SC2 before the pandemic. This Gof debate now very clearly has nothing to do with the origin of SC2.

From: Kristian G. Andersen b6
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:56 PM
To: Edward Holmes < b6
Cc: Jason Gale b6

b6

b6 b6 g >; Garry, Robert F <

b6

Subject: Re: The Intercept report on coronavirus research at Chinese labs

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Going through it carefully as we speak (already wasted a few hours) - because that's how idiotic this has become.

Nicely detailed annual reports - makes it easy to show that there's in fact no SARS-CoV-2 in there...

People have lost their minds with this s***.

K

On Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 4:50 PM Edward Holmes b6 wrote:

> Yes, just more like evidence that they never had SC2 in the lab.
>
> Professor Edward C. Holmes FAA FRS
> The University of Sydney
>
> > On 8 Sep 2021, at 9:43 am, Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) < j.gale@bloomberg.net > wrote:
> >
> > Just FYI
> > https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new- details-emerge-about-coronavirus- research-at-chinese- lab/

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Date: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 3:24:11 PM -0400
Sent: Thu, 22 Apr 2021 3:24:07 PM -0400
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
From: "Roberts, Rich" b6
To: David Morens b6

David:

Can you call me if you have not spoken to Peter D? b6

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: David Morens b6 >
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 3:06 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Cc: Roberts, Rich b6 >; Peter Daszak b6 >; Robert Kessler b6 Aleksei Chmura b6
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

EXTERNAL SENDER

Hi Jerry and colleagues, just spent 40 minutes on Zoom with Tony and one of two possibilities: either we are all unnecessarily alarmed, or else he is not taking the threats seriously

He said repeatedly, in a low key jocular way, that no one could mess with him or niaid since we haven't done anything wrong, apparently not counting as "messing with us" the fact that we had an important research project terminated in an unprecedented manner for political reasons.

He also repeated alot of macho comments about how there is always a guy with an AR-15 right outside his door (true, and sometimes two other armed secret service guys) and everywhere he goes outside the office he has at least two bodyguards, also true...9

I hope he is right that the wackos won't gain any further traction, but i am not so sure. For one thing, there was huge collateral damage a few years back with the H5N1 gain of function mess. It is true that neither Tony nor other NIH staff got into any trouble, but thousands of professional hours were wasted over several years time and, far more importantly, the research moratorium, which went in for years, caused labs across the country to close, or move into other areas, caused lab people on grants to lose their jobs, and grad students to lose their dissertation work and postdocs to lose their projects. It was a mess that ought not to be forgotten

If i had to bet, i would guess that beneath Tony's macho I-am-not-worried reaction he really is concerned. And whatever the case he should be very concerned about what happened to Peter, to our research portfolio in an extremely important area, and to scientific independence

He did not know about either the Miller Commission or the letter from Rep Rogers which i emailed to him on gmail later

I also commented that Lauer's letters to you Peter, and the Rogers letter to you, had alot of overlap and seemed to reflect input of at least one scientist, whether or not one of our grantees. In other words, i feel that regarding those letters someone or someones are working in cahoots with the politicians who wish to do harm to NIH He didn't seem particularly troubled by that.

In the end he said thanks for filling me in and asked me to call him on his private cell phone (which is what i normally do anyway) if i hear anything that might be important

So, i am not sure where things stand. I absolutely DO feel that it would be a good thing if one of you luminaries were to approach him and try to make sure he understood what is going on out there, and perhaps discuss what the larger community of scientists can do to lock arms in unity and push back. David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:24, David Morens [b6] > wrote:

Thanks, Jerry, i will let you know how it goes, although he may not indicate to me his next steps. The way it works with us is that he tries to never ask me things directly, like ask for my advice on what to do, but rather does alot of homework ahead of time, figures out what i am likely to say, then HE tells ME what he thinks so that i can confirm it. Yes, we all have our peculiarities, but as long as the machine runs smoothly its ok

I DO know that he has great respect for Harold, and i think also admires Harold's charge-ahead no-BS style, which is the opposite of Tony's extreme caution. So i have little doubt that he would welcome that kind of help. D

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 16:09, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

David,
Thanks for the note, and I recognize what you say is what I know about Tony. He is a remarkable person, but like all of us he isn't perfect. I think your strategy to lay out the issues and let him run with it to decide what can be effectively addressed and with what strategy.

Rich's suggestion to talk to Harold is on track, and it would be great Rich if you were to do that. I know that they have a very close and positive history of working together, that Harold is very strategic in his thinking, he prefers to work in the background (something I have confirmed multiple times this past year as I have asked for his advice on things I could take on), and that he will be really frank in talking to Rich. Harold has very recently told me that he has worked closely with Rich on a number of issues related to the concerns we all have.

Let us know how the chat goes tomorrow. I think you have the right perspective heading in to it, and lots of good information at your fingertips.
Jerry

From: Roberts, Rich [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:33 PM
To: David Morens [b6] >; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6] >; Robert Kessler [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Hi:

If I am to do something I would talk to Harold first. I'll see what he has to say as a possible path forward.

Rich

Richard J. Roberts
New England Biolabs
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
USA
Tel: b6
Fax: (978) 412 9910
email: b6

From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T < b6
Cc: Peter Daszak b6 >; Roberts, Rich b6 Robert Kessler < b6 >; Aleksei Chmura < b6
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

EXTERNAL SENDER

Jerry, The way it works with Tony, at least at my level, is you can't suggest he do anything. If you do, he won't do it on principle. The trick is to make him think of doing something himself, and then he will ask you to help him do it

My strategy tomorrow is to tell him that alarming things are at work, to the point that many scientists (our grantees and others) have become increasingly worried and are looking for the way forward. In that context i will share with him verbally Peter's information, and offer to get to him any of the materials he wants to see, or connect him directly with Peter, who he very much respects

I have not heard that he has engaged Harold, or the National Academies, or the professional societies, although i might not know if he did. He is very much a loner about things like this. He prides himself on being like teflon, but I am worried that he may not be as invulnerable as he may think

Our Chief of Staff, Greg Folkers (who has Masters degrees in both journalism and PH), is among the only folks here, partly excepting Cliff Lane, in whom Tony confides when the subject is difficult or personal, only rarely to me.... and Greg told me today that he thinks Tony is getting worried that the brown stuff is about to hit the fan, and that he may have become a major target

There is very little i can do to help because i am a mere scientist, not a NL, or member of the NAM, or head of a prestigious society (the only kinds of people Tony will usually engage with, as he is very proud).

So if he doesn't become more proactive, what remains is for scientists and science orgs at the very highest level to come together forcefully to push back against the craziness

Who would be willing to approach him directly and "talk turkey"? Harold? Rich? You? Victor? A couple of you?

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 15:01, Keusch, Gerald T b6 > wrote:

Tony will be well aware of this kind of push back. That's not the issue for you

tomorrow. Its really how to get the scientific societies engaged once again in the campaign for clarity and resolution of the breech in integrity and the grants management beginning a year ago.

Maybe there would be a moment to suggest that he talk to Harold Varmus about strategy?

Jerry

From: David Morens [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 2:57 PM
To: Keusch, Gerald T [b6]
Cc: Peter Daszak [b6]>; Rich Roberts [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6]>; Aleksei Chmura [b6]
Subject: Re: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Jerry, i am traveling without much news access, but this is really depressing. My concern has grown to alarm and i am afraid to think what comes next

We seem to have arrived at that Orwellian point where all investigations of important matters have to exclude participation of the subject experts, since being a subject expert is disqualifying on the grounds that all expertise is inherently biasing.

Before George Orwell, we had Lewis Carroll telling us this. We are in grave danger of going down-the-rabbit-hole-with-Alice.....
D
Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Apr 21, 2021, at 14:36, Keusch, Gerald T [b6] wrote:

The COVID Commission Planning Group includes people like Mike Osterholm. I don't put him into the category of Lipsitch, but am I missing something here? He was one of the people on the Biden COVID task force I talked to in December-January about the shattered integrity at the level of NIH/OD. He didn't say much to me, and I didn't take that as a signal that he was on the darker side of the divide.

I saw the results of a focus group of Trump supporters reported on today: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/04/20/vaccine- hesitant-republicans/ A bit of text in this report is about Tony.

"Every participant said they preferred hearing from politicians over the medical expert, who has been pilloried by conservative media for months over his coronavirus warnings. The data have shown that unfortunately Dr. Fauci has been politicized, and we need different messengers, because even the right messages coming from the wrong messengers aren't always helpful," Castrucci said, noting his foundation's polling [de Beaumont

Foundation] found Americans trust their personal doctors more than the government's top infectious-disease doctor".

This is the fundamental problem we have, as the politicians will only use this as an echo chamber to amplify their support from their public supporters and constituents. It does point back to the scientific societies which have weighed in previously, but no more impact than we have had as individuals. It doesn't stop this approach, its just that we need some deus ex machina to help us. Is that going to be Eric Lander? What's happening with his approval? I haven't heard much of late.

Jerry

From: Peter Daszak [b6]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 12:41 PM
To: David Morens <[b6]>; Keusch, Gerald T [b6]; Rich Roberts [b6]; Robert Kessler [b6] >; Aleksei Chmura < [b6]
Subject: RE: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow
Importance: High

Thanks for the email David - comments below. Also please see the attached word doc with links to some of the political actions that I'm concerned about. Tell Tony that this is very early days, with most of these coming from the Right, and many that can be headed off at the pass by positive outreach to Democrats, which I believe people will be doing.

I've also put in a link to the new " Covid Commission Planning Group (Covid CPG)" that has no official role from USG, but boldly states as its core mission "to prepare the way for a National Covid Commission". Members include David Relman & Marc Lipsitch and I have heard from many on the conspiracy theory chatter networks online that this will focus partly on advocating for reduction in biosafety labs, viral work in wildlife, and gain-of-function.

Please feel free to share any docs that I've sent to you, with Tony. Hopefully you can do that in a way that avoids FoIA, and if not possible, just show him stuff on screen share on Zoom.

Please also see comments below...

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

-----Original Message-----
From: David Morens b6
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Gerald Keusch b6 >; Rich Roberts b6 Robert Kessler b6 ; Aleksei Chmura
Subject: Zoom meeting with Tony tomorrow

Peter, i am on leave in Florida for my granddaughters graduation from Florida State

Tomorrow at 130 i will be having a zoom call with Tony to tip him off on some of the info you sent in your recent email

I want to be sure about what info or docs you would or would not want me to share
[Peter Daszak:] Any and all

Other than what i see on tv, the jousting with Rand Paul and Jim Jordan, for example, i do not know how much of this Tony is aware of. To my knowledge he doesn't share it with anyone up here

I think issues he will be most concerned about are not your grant, although i add i am sure he would do anything he could to restore the funds and get the hellhounds of your back, but rather 1) the possibility that people like Rep Rodgers and her committee are about to turn up the heat and put Tony, personally, in their crosshairs, and 2) the possibility the NIH funded scientists or other esteemed scientists, are in cahoots with politicians wanting to attack him or niaid
[Peter Daszak:] agreed

As background, we all went through the original version of this crap about 10 years ago with the original GOF attacks surrounding H5N1. As Tony's scientific advisor, i spent much of the year, along with Jeff T, helping brief him and get him up to speed, which he did. At the time, David Relman, who had been one of Tony's favorites, was leading the charge, and we all wondered why a young guy with so much promise would choose demagoguery over science. Lipsitch was only a minor player at that time, but relished his attack role and seem to become more alarmist as time went on. Now these guys are in the NAM. How did that happen???? Ebright has always been a crackpot, in the mold of Peter Duseberg, remember him?, and no one took him seriously except some of the press who didn't know any better
[Peter Daszak:] I had the unfortunate issue of voting on Marc Lipsitch's

membership of NAM. He's an accomplished scientist. He's also very opinionated, arrogant and pushy on whatever issue he believes in. I voted on his science acumen.

I was unclear from your email on a couple points you might clarify. Obviously the Rodgers letter asking you to produce all those dox not only overlaps with the Lauer letter to you, but could not have been written without the help of a virologist.
[Peter Daszak:] I have it on good authority (Ebright's Twitter account) that he was involved. They are also getting pressured from Jamie Metzl who's working with the internet conspiracy networks actively to promote their "Research"

Actually, given that there are a few points in the letter that someone knowledgable about coronavirus virology would have corrected, my suspicion is that the letter was put together with the help of a legitimate scientist who needs to do more homework on coronaviruses.
[Peter Daszak:] you're right..! Metzl isn't a virologist, neither's Ebright. The internet 'researchers' are led by a banker and some junior scientists, many from human genetics, mol boil world.

Do you agree, and do you think that person was Ebright? Do you think Relman, Lipsitch, Imperiale, or other current or former grantees might have been involved?

I am not sure we ever funded Ebright, but we did fund the others. I would like to think that Relman et all are only mouthing off to the press, but do you think there is more to it than that, eg, that any of them are working with the politicians?
[Peter Daszak:] David Relman is talking with reporters a lot about this, including casting aspersions on my motives for speaking out about this virus emerging via wildlife-to-human spillover (he's quoted as saying my motives are to protect the research I've been doing and reputations of our collaborators). Ebright is very actively (and obnoxiously) critical on social media calling me a 'Grifter' on a weekly basis and promoting unsubstantiated arguments for a lab leak. I had to look up what 'grifter' meant at first...

Your earlier comments about this proposed investigative committee, and the possible role of these folks in it, are alarming. Can you be more specific about where this stands and what is being done to forward it and to squelch it?
[Peter Daszak:] Nothing's being done to squelch it, and neither should it be - there will be other committees that also pop up. My concern is their bold claim that they're laying the groundwork for a 9/11 type commission (and have a 9/11 commission person involved). It may be that just by saying that a lot, and having well known people involved, they end up forming one. They're clearly politically connected and are advocating for this politically. Jerry and I also proposed this in our paper published in Health Affairs, but we assumed this would be led by NAM or some other well-respected institution.

When i speak with Tony i do not want to step into the politics of all this, as that's not my job and he wouldn't want me to. If he needs further info it might be best to connect you two, in an off the record manner. Would that be OK? We are getting FOIA'd non stop, so it's most important that Tony not have anything on the record that could come back to bite
[Peter Daszak:] Totally agree. Tell him I'm happy to speak with him at any time and will do so in a way that's not FoIA-ble. One thing I could do is

either on a zoom call or by sending you a document, is lay out responses to the Mendendez questions so that the arguments are known and well-supported. For example, everyone's saying that this is a 'gain-of-function' issue, but actually that's not the case - we worked on bat viruses, not human pathogens. The expts produced loss of function, not gain of function, all appropriate conditions and approvals were demonstrably checked and correctly answered.

Finally, i didn't read all of the Menendez bill-in-committee, which is longer than Les misérables, but what's the gist? Do you think that in their zeal to take a hard stance against the PRC, these Democrats are purposely, or accidentally, getting sucked into the evil-WIV scenario? Is there real danger here?
[Peter Daszak:] The Menendez bill is the only one that stands a chance so far of becoming law because it's bipartisan. The WIV, gain-of-function stuff is thrown in as a very small part of it. The draft wording only calls for a report from NIH after 180 days on these issues, and they are easily addressed. However, if it does pass and the anti-China mood hardens in the US, it may end up with calls to testify and the Republicans may use that to undermine NIH, and in particular Tony, given the rabid GoF myth they've been building.

Anything you think might be helpful, I'd appreciate

TY, david

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

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Date:	Wed, 16 Jun 2021 2:04:29 PM -0400
Sent:	Wed, 16 Jun 2021 2:03:22 PM -0400
Subject:	FW: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH
From:	"Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6 >
To:	David Morens b6 b6 >;
Attachments:	image001.gif; image002.jpg; image003.jpg; image004.jpg; COVID Exploring natural origins of CoV-2 in light of recombination bioRxiv May 2021.pdf

b6

David M. Morens, M.D.
CAPT, United States Public Health Service
Senior Advisor to the Director
Office of the Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 7A-03
31 Center Drive, MSC 2520
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
- b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- b6 b6 b6
- b6

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From: Keusch, Gerald T b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 12:42 PM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 >; Peter Daszak b6 >
Cc: Rich Roberts b6 Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: RE: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

I just read the attached recent pre-print paper, and it is really interesting and will, I am sure be reviewed and published rapidly in a highly respected journal. What is rather unique in their ruminations on the pathway to humans is the following excerpt from the conclusions.

"One possible recent disruption that caused widespread and unusual movements of animals in China and may have increased the permeability of this barrier, was the dramatic shortage of pork products in 201937 attributable to an African swine fever virus (ASFV) outbreak impacting 100s of millions of pigs in China38. Such a major disruption in the food supply chain will have potentially brought humans into increased contact with Sarbecovirus infected animals as i) exotic meats replaced pork, ii) animals from rural locations were brought to city markets and/or iii) by meat from infected animals being transported in cold chain processes."

Can science actually counter propaganda? David, this is a good new piece of work for a follow up for ASTMH.

Jerry

From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 12:26 PM
To: Peter Daszak < b6
Cc: Keusch, Gerald T < b6 ; Rich Roberts b6 ; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6
Subject: Re: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

Definition of "shameless acts of political theatre": The Republican Party….. d

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH

On Jun 15, 2021, at 12:23, Peter Daszak b6 wrote:

This letter had me worried because I thought it was FROM the HHS secretary, but then I saw Rand Paul's name at the bottom and swiftly realized that this is a shameless act of political theater from disingenuous politicians who aren't actually interested at all in where the real origins of COVID began.

I will file it and then continue with the hard work of trying to use every bit of scientific skill and energy we have left to work on identifying the origins of COVID so that hopefully these horrific attacks will end, and we can then start to focus on preventing the next pandemic, perhaps by reducing the horrific exploitation of wildlife around the world in a wildlife farm/market system that employed 14 million people in China alone.

Of course, my task would be made a lot easier if I had access to the NIH funding we had in place to do exactly that, and if I didn't have to spend most of each day trying to prevent our other funders leaving our organization (I was literally just on an awful call with a nervous funder who's wavering).

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak
President

EcoHealth Alliance
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-6507
USA

Tel.: b6
Website: www.ecohealthalliance.org
Twitter: @PeterDaszak

EcoHealth Alliance develops science-based solutions to prevent pandemics and promote conservation

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From: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 11:31 AM
To: Peter Daszak b6; Keusch, Jerry b6 b6 Rich Roberts b6; Taubenberger, Jeffery (NIH/NIAID) [E] < b6
Subject: FW: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
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- b6 assistant: Whitney Robinson)
- (b) (6)(b) (6)
- b6

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From: Folkers, Greg (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 11:21 AM
Subject: Fox News: GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

Published 42 mins ago

GOP senators demand COVID-19, Wuhan documents from HHS, NIH

Group demands unredacted copies of Fauci emails



By **Tyler Olson | Fox News**

A group of Republican senators is demanding a trove of documents on behind-the-scenes deliberation within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) about the origin of the coronavirus and the possibility it escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Sens. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., Rick Scott, R-Fla., Josh Hawley, R-Mo., James Lankford, R-Okla., and Rand Paul., R-Ky., authored the letter asking for the documents. The letter says the "release of approximately 4,000 pages of NIH email communications and other documents from early 2020 has raised serious questions about NIH's handling of COVID-19."

The emails the senators are referring to were released by outlets like the Washington Post and Buzzfeed via Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Among the questions raised by the materials, according to the senators, are how seriously officials, including National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, took the lab leak theory before later dismissing it.

"These documents, though heavily redacted, have shed new light on NIH's awareness of the virus' origins in the early stages of the COVID19 pandemic," the senators said in a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and NIH Director Francis Collins.

2021-06-11 Letter From Five... by Fox News

"It is unclear the extent to which NIH officials, including Dr. Fauci, considered the possibility that the virus originated in a laboratory and what, if any, actions they took to seriously investigate this possibility," they continued. "It is also unclear why NIAID officials eventually decided to downplay the likelihood that the virus originated in a laboratory and, instead, promote that it originated naturally."

The letter, sent last week but released Monday, notes a handful of highly publicized exchanges, including one email Fauci sent to his deputy, Hugh Auchincloss.

"Hugh: It is essential that we speak this AM. Keep your cell phone on," Fauci wrote in an email with a subject line that referenced gain of function research. This email was among those obtained by Buzzfeed. "Read this paper as well as the email that I will forward you now. You will have tasks today that must be done."

"The paper you sent me says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but

have since been reviewed and approved by NIH," Auchincloss said in an email to Fauci, which was also published by Buzzfeed. "Not sure what that means since Emily is sure that no Coronavirus work has gone through the P3 framework. She will try to determine if we have any distant ties to this work abroad."

Scott said Tuesday that Americans "deserve answers" about the origins of the pandemic that shut down the economy, killed hundreds of thousands and had rippling consequences through society, from increased drug abuse to children falling behind in school due to remote learning.

"The American people deserve the truth and transparency that Senator Scott has been calling for since this pandemic started. We know the Communist Chinese government is responsible for the coronavirus pandemic, and they lied to cover it up with the help of the World Health Organization (WHO)," a spokesperson for Scott said. "It's been over a year since Senator Scott called for a congressional hearing into the WHO and its role in covering up the pandemic. Now, the American people deserve answers about how this pandemic got started and who is responsible. It's time for accountability."

The senators, all members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, are requesting unredacted copies of the recently released FOIA troves from the Washington Post, Buzzfeed and Judicial Watch.



Security personnel gather near the entrance of the Wuhan Institute of Virology during a visit by the World Health Organization team in Wuhan in China's Hubei province on Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan) (AP)

They're also requesting very broadly "[a]ll records" from Fauci, Auchincloss, Collins and several other officials "referring or relating to the Wuhan Institute of Virology, COVID-19, coronavirus, EcoHealth Alliance, or Dr. Baric's 2015 coronavirus study."

HHS did not respond to a request for comment.

The possibility that the coronavirus escaped from a Chinese lab was largely panned last year by the media and experts. But Fox News reported in April 2020 that some in the intelligence community were taking the lab leak possibility seriously. And emerging facts led many, especially Republicans, to put more stock in the theory in recent months.
House and Senate Republicans have pushed the Biden administration to release more information on the possibility that China was at fault for allowing the coronavirus to escape from a lab. This has been done through other document requests, a bill that would force the president to declassify intelligence related to the lab leak theory and more.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki and President Biden have also indicated in recent months that the administration takes the possibility of a lab leak seriously. But the White House has stood behind Fauci even as his recently released emails show he was concerned with the Wuhan Institute of Virology early in the pandemic only to dismiss the lab leak theory later.

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Date: Wed, 23 Jun 2021 7:30:40 AM -0400
Sent: Wed, 23 Jun 2021 7:30:35 AM -0400
Subject: FW: Hi David
From: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
To: David Morens b6 b6 >;
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.jpg; image004.png

David

David M. Morens, M.D.
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b6 (assistant: Whitney Robinson)
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From: Edward Holmes b6 >
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 3:49 AM
To: Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6
Subject: Re: Hi David

Hi David,

Yes, it's a hugely difficult situation. Horrendous. I had to leave Twitter in early April as I was getting too much hate.

The stuff about Tony's emails was very disturbing: seeing so many lies told and facts twisted. I know what happened because I was there! Tony was textbook correct and just interested in what the science said. End of story.

My plan now is just to try and focus on the science. Clean and dry. We are currently preparing a review of the key data that we hope put online soon. Hopefully this will help.

The Bloom preprint marks another miserable low point. Pointing out key features in early data is one thing, but this goes way, way beyond. Cover-ups and lies. Science has been lost.

A few points:

1. The data were actually deleted from the SRA before the paper was published. It would be good to hear why the authors did this, but I bet it had nothing to do with hiding data.

2. Indeed, the key mutations are actually described in a table in the paper.

3. I'm totally disgusted that Bloom includes as a figure an email collected via the freedom of information act on a different topic (pangolins) for which the Chinese authors had no right to reply. I just wrote to them to ask why they deleted the SRA data and they told me this:

Hi Eddie,

These two data are from lung samples of Chinese pangolins. At first,we sequenced several Chinese and malaysian pangolins including these two samples, and these data were submitted to the NCBI. You known, after the pandemic, we had to finish the manuscript in a very short time, therefore, we only focus on β-CoV. After that, we found these two data contained some α-CoV sequences. Considered that the Nature papaper was focus on the β-CoV of malaysian pangolins, and we had not ideal whether these α-CoV sequences of Chinese pangolins were from contaminates (these sequences had close relationship with dog α-CoV, and had limited reads), to avoid any potential errors, we decided to give up these two samples in the Nature paper, and asked the NCBI to deleted these two data before the released of the SRA.

Sincerely,

b6

,

So, nothing nefarious whatsoever.

4. I think the 'intermediate' haplotypes in the Bloom paper are likely sequencing miscalls.

5. It is very hard to root the tree because the closest outgroup (RaTG13) is way too distant and there are lots of reversions.

In short, I don't think the data presented in this paper has told us anything new at all. But, the inflammatory comments are likely to do real harm. In my mind, the more people accuse China of these sorts of cover-ups, the less likely they will be forthcoming with the data that we actually need.

Personally, I think the Chinese strategy is to do anything to say 'it's not our fault'. They are pushing a strong 'it's not China' narrative. It's my strong opinion that this outbreak is all to do with the billions of dollar trade in wildlife that fuels these markets including animals like civets and raccoon dog that were implicated in SARS1. I think showing that this culturally important industry is to blame will be a far, far bigger blow to national pride than some shitty safety protocols at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The problem is that this has now become so politicised that I don't think any Chinese authors with key data will be allowed to publish them. I will bet good money that researchers in China have already found closely related viruses - it seems untenable to me that the China CDC have published so little on this - but they are not allowed to because of the politics.

Total mess.

Cheers,

Eddie

PROFESSOR EDWARD C. HOLMES FAA FRS
ARC Australian Laureate Fellow

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School of Life & Environmental Sciences and School of Medical Sciences,
The University of Sydney | Sydney | NSW | 2006 | Australia
T b6
E b6

On 23 Jun 2021, at 12:25 pm, Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E] b6 wrote:

Hi Eddie, i am sorry to bother you about this but just got the attached email from Melbourne-based Jason Gale, a smart journalist who conveys this SARS-CoV-2 paper, which i find confusingly explained and even suspicious

I must say i am always a bit suspicious of works by this author

Do you know this work and can you elucidate?

Also, FYI, I was just on a long Zoom call a couple hours ago with Peter Daszak and several very eminent National Academy members, plus one Nobel laureate, trying to figure out what can be done to stand up for science and against attacks on science. It was good to see that you felt comfortable to speak to reporters a few weeks ago. Here in the States, many are increasingly afraid to speak up. I keep believing that one day this will pass if we can survive it

Cheers, David

Sent from my iPhone
David M Morens
OD, NIAID, NIH
Begin forwarded message:

From: "Jason Gale (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)" <j.gale@bloomberg.net>
Date: June 22, 2021 at 18:28:24 EDT
To: "Morens, David (NIH/NIAID) [E]" b6
Subject: Hi David
Reply-To: Jason Gale <j.gale@bloomberg.net>

Hi David,

I hope you're well.

I'm guessing y'all saw the Jesse Bloom pre-print paper.
b6

Interested to know what you make of it, even off the record.

Kindest regards,

Jason

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