

'Highly Probable' Military Developed COVID, Leaked From Lab

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › According to David Asher, former lead investigator for the U.S. State Department's task force that looked into the origins of COVID-19, the data "made us feel the Wuhan Institute was highly probably the source of the COVID pandemic"
- › Asher also admits there is evidence in the genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 suggesting it's been synthetically altered
- › An assessment report by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency states SARS-CoV-2 was likely an accidental release from an infectious diseases laboratory. Intentional release was ruled out
- › The Chinese tried to remove viral sequencing data from a European database. The sequences included adenovirus, a vaccine vector, which could indicate that SARS-CoV-2 is part of a vaccine program. Such a vaccine would likely be the antidote to a biological weapon
- › There's evidence the Wuhan Institute of Virology worked on classified military programs, and since the NIH has funded gain-of-function research on coronaviruses at the WIV, this could mean the U.S. funded research that ended up being used in a Chinese military bioweapons program

It typically takes a lot longer for truth to become public knowledge than the finely orchestrated propaganda we are all exposed to on a daily basis, but eventually, truth

tends to rise to the surface.

This appears to be the case with the origin of SARS-CoV-2 as well, as we're now starting to see more mainstream media reporting what alternative media have been saying for months, which is that the most likely origin of the virus is a laboratory.

I first mentioned that the outbreak had the hallmarks of a laboratory escape in my February 4, 2020, article, "[Novel Coronavirus – The Latest Pandemic Scare.](#)"

Currently, the mainstream narrative is that while it may indeed have been a lab creation after all, it's certainly not part of a bioweapons project.

Well, at least that brings us halfway, and this is good news. Personally, I wouldn't dismiss the bioweapon's angle just yet, though. In the end, we may well find that this pandemic was the result of a bioweapon program after all, which is precisely why I believe we need to permanently ban gain-of-function research. The risks to public health are simply too great.

As noted by investigative journalist Alison Young in a recent USA Today op-ed, in which she details a number of hair-raising near-misses involving extremely lethal pathogens that could have led to unmitigated disaster were it not for sheer luck:¹

"The risk that a laboratory-released virus – carried into the community by a worker who didn't know they were infected or through the leak of infectious waste – could cause a deadly outbreak has been a growing concern for many years.

In America, scientists and members of Congress ... and the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office have expressed concerns for years. In reports and hearings, they've worried that the proliferation of laboratories working with high-risk pathogens is increasing the aggregate threat of a deliberate or accidental lab release causing a catastrophic outbreak ...

If the COVID-19 pandemic were found to have been caused by a lab accident, it would have far-reaching implications for the fragmented and secretive

oversight of biological research in the United States and worldwide that currently relies heavily on the scientific community to police itself.”

US State Department Suspects Lab Leak

In a March 21, 2021, interview with Sky News Australia² (video above), David Asher, former lead investigator for the U.S. State Department’s task force that looked into the **origins of COVID-19**, said the data they collected “made us feel the Wuhan Institute was highly probably the source of the COVID pandemic.”

According to Asher, three workers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) who worked with the RatG13 coronavirus – the closest relative to SARS-CoV-2 identified to date – appear to have been the first cluster of cases of COVID-19. They fell ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 as early as October 2019. At least one of the workers required hospitalization.

He also points out there is evidence in the genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 suggesting it’s been synthetically altered. It has the backbone of a bat coronavirus, combined with a pangolin receptor and “some sort of humanized mice transceptor.” “These things don’t naturally make sense,” Asher says, adding that experts around the world agree that the odds of this configuration occurring naturally is “very low.”

Another troubling indicator that something was amiss at the WIV was the Chinese government’s taking down of a WIV database in September 2019. According to the Chinese, this was done because of “thousands of hacking attempts.”

However, Asher points out many other databases were taken offline around the same time as well.³ The Chinese also tried to remove data posted in a European database containing viral sequencing from patients exhibiting COVID-19-related symptoms.

SARS-CoV-2, a Suspected Bioweapon Vector

Interestingly, the sequences posted in the European database included adenovirus, which is a vaccine vector. This, Asher says, could indicate that SARS-CoV-2 is part of a vaccine program.

Now, it doesn't make sense to create a vaccine for just any virus that they happen to be working on. It is, however, consistent with a biological weapons program. Meaning, first a biological weapon is created, and then an antidote, such as a vaccine, is developed to defend your own population and your allies.

In an earlier article⁴ by The Sun, Asher is quoted saying the WIV "was operating a secret, classified program," and that "In my view ... it was a biological weapons program." He stops short of accusing China of intentional release, however, which also would not make sense from a bioweapon point of view. Instead, he said he believes it was a weapon vector that, during development, "somehow leaked."⁵

This falls in line with a March 27, 2020, assessment report by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, which stated that SARS-CoV-2 was likely an accidental release from an infectious diseases laboratory. According to Newsweek,⁶ "The classified report, titled 'China: Origins of COVID-19 Outbreak Remain Unknown,' ruled out that the disease was genetically engineered or released intentionally as a **biological weapon**."

In a March 8, 2021, Politico article,⁷ columnist Josh Rogin also pointed out that "just months into the pandemic, a large swath of the government already believed the virus had escaped from the WIV lab, rather than having leaped from an animal to a human ..."

Hallmarks of Guilt

Asher also told Sky News⁸ he's never seen a more systematic cover-up, and The Sun⁹ quotes him as saying that "Motive, cover-up, conspiracy, all the hallmarks of guilt are associated with this."

Regardless of how the virus came about, Asher is unequivocal about China's behavior resulting in a global pandemic, as they delayed border closings and even claimed the virus didn't appear to spread from human to human, even though there were clear indications that it did. Indeed, people were secretly complaining about China's lack of transparency from the earliest days of the pandemic. As reported by RTE:¹⁰

"China insists that it was transparent during the early outbreak, delivering 'timely' information to the WHO. Indeed, the WHO publicly praised China for its openness and cooperation. Yet behind the scenes, the Irishman leading the emergency response complained they weren't getting the information or access they needed.

In leaked recordings obtained by Prime Time, Dr. Michael Ryan is heard comparing it to China's cover-up during the SARS outbreak in 2003. 'This is exactly the same scenario, endlessly trying to get updates from China about what was going on in Guangdong and then, bang,' he said.

'The WHO barely got out of that one with its neck intact given the issues that arose around transparency in southern China ... We do need to shift gears here.

'There's been no evidence of human-to-human transmission' is not good enough,' Dr. Ryan is heard saying in the recordings ... 'We need to see the data, we need to be able to determine for ourselves the geographic distribution, the timeline, the epicurve and all of that,' he said."

Chinese Researchers Sought to Distance China From the Virus

In a March 22, 2021, article,¹¹ The Sun also reported that emails from Dr. Shi Zhengli at WIV, obtained by U.S. Right to Know (USRTK) via freedom of information act requests, "shows how Chinese scientists fought to shift blame" for the pandemic away from China and Wuhan.

To distance themselves from the virus, they initially tried to get it renamed, as SARS-CoV-2 links it to the Chinese SARS outbreak of 2003. Shi suggested the virus be called TARS-CoV or HARS-CoV, to clearly differentiate it from the Chinese SARS outbreak.

They also feared the virus might become known as the “Wuhan coronavirus” or “Wuhan pneumonia.” The scientists’ effort to change the scientific name “shows their conscription into political processes,” Gary Ruskin, executive director of USRTK said, adding that “The power to name is the power to define.”

Congress Demands Information From the NIH

Other good news includes a March 18, 2021, letter¹² from the U.S. Congressional Committee on Energy and Commerce to the director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Francis Collins, requesting “information, assistance and needed leadership” from the agency “to advance an independent scientific investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

In the letter, they quote Stanford professor David Relman, who in a November 2020 commentary in the journal PNAS stated that:

“A more complete understanding of the origins of COVID-19 clearly serves the interests of every person in every country on this planet. It will limit further recriminations and diminish the likelihood of conflict; it will lead to more effective responses to this pandemic, as well as efforts to anticipate and prevent the next one.

It will also advance our discussions about risky science. And it will do something else: Delineating COVID-19’s origin story will help elucidate the nature of our very precarious coexistence within the biosphere.”

The Committee also stresses that while the WHO attempted to investigate the origins of the virus and had vowed to be guided by science and not exclude any hypothesis,

they failed to live up to this promise, as China “did not provide complete access or independence” for the team.

Without conducting a thorough investigation, but rather relying on information provided by the Chinese, the team roundly dismissed the lab-origin theory and announced it would no longer be part of their investigation.

Within days, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus walked back the team’s outright dismissal saying “I want to clarify that all hypotheses remain open and require further study.”¹³ Perhaps he realized the WHO was about to make a public relations mistake so severe it would never recover.

China Cites ‘Privacy Laws’ to Avoid Crucial Data Sharing

In response to questions as to why China refused to share original patient data with the WHO’s investigative team, the Chinese head of the WHO joint team claims such data cannot be copied and shared due to patient privacy and data protection laws.¹⁴

As noted by OneShared.World founder Jamie Metzl in a Tweet,¹⁵ this sounds like a dubious justification considering the Chinese government is “forcibly extracting genetic samples from Uighurs [and] Tibetans,” a practice reported by The New York Times in June 2020.¹⁶ Besides, Metzl notes, “If anonymized data can be shared safely in democracies, it can be shared safely everywhere.”

WHO Investigation Was Tainted From the Start

Lastly, while not discussed in the Congressional Committee on Energy and Commerce’s letter, the WHO’s investigative team was also severely biased from the start, thanks to the inclusion of Peter Daszak, Ph.D., president of EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit organization focused on pandemic prevention that worked closely with bat coronavirus researchers at the WIV, including Shi.

Daszak was also found to have **played a central role in the early plot to obscure the lab origin** of SARS-CoV-2 by crafting a scientific statement condemning such inquiries as “conspiracy theory.”^{17,18} Mainstream media have been referring to and relying on this manufactured “consensus” statement ever since to “debunk” counternarratives.

Was US-Funded Research Used in Chinese Bioweapons Program?

The Committee on Energy and Commerce does raise the issue of the U.S. having potentially funded the research that resulted in SARS-CoV-2, and that the Chinese military may have been involved as well. According to the letter,¹⁹ the U.S. government has “determined that the WIV has collaborated on projects with China’s military,” and “engaged in classified research ... on behalf of the Chinese military since at least 2017.”

“ It is imperative to determine not only where SARS-CoV-2 originated, but also how and if NIH’s funding and research to projects at the WIV could have contributed to SARS CoV-2. ~ U.S. Congressional Committee on Energy and Commerce”

Disturbingly, since the NIH has funded gain-of-function research on coronaviruses at the WIV through grants to the EcoHealth Alliance, this could mean the U.S. actually funded research that ended up being used in a Chinese military bioweapons program.

“Accordingly, it is imperative to determine not only where SARS-CoV-2 originated, but also how and if NIH’s funding and research to projects at the WIV could have contributed to SARS CoV-2,” the letter states.²⁰

The letter includes a long list of information requests, including:

- All information the NIH has about laboratory accidents at the WIV since January 2015.
- Any communication between NIH staff, grantees, subgrantees, contractors and subcontractors with the China-based NIH, the Chinese National Science Foundation, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Chinese CDC, regarding events at the WIV between August 2019 and the present.
- Whether the WIV invited researchers from the University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston (UTMBG), as indicated in an April 2018 State Department cable, whether any UTMBG researchers ended up conducting research there, and any documents relating to that research.
- All correspondence between the NIH and EcoHealth Alliance since January 1, 2020, related to funding involving the WIV.
- The sources for its April 2020 communication with EcoHealth Alliance, in which the NIH stated it had “received reports” that the WIV “has been conducting research ... that pose serious biosafety concerns.”

Scientists Also Call for Independent Investigation

Two dozen scientists and policy experts have also signed an open letter²¹ calling for an independent investigation into the virus' origin,²² listing a number of flaws in the joint WHO-China inquiry, including the universal absence of evidence demonstrating a wholly natural origin of SARS-CoV-2. If the virus was truly natural, surely, we'd have some evidence of its evolution at this point, yet we have nothing.

In addition to the shortcomings of the WHO's investigative commission, the letter also details what a full and independent investigation “should look like,” starting with the creation of a multidisciplinary team, whose members have “no unresolved conflicts of interest and no full or partial control by any specific agenda or country.”

They also recommend “considering all possible scenarios for each pathway,” and then

following standard forensic approaches, which include securing full access to all relevant sites, records, logs, databases and samples.

Gain-of-Function Research Must Be Banned

I firmly believe we need to ban [gain-of-function research](#) across the world. As noted by Marc Lipsitch in his 2018 review, "Why Do Exceptionally Dangerous Gain-of-Function Experiments in Influenza?":²³

"This is a question of intense debate ... Experiments to create potential pandemic pathogens (PPPs) are nearly unique in that they present biosafety risks that extend well beyond the experimenter or laboratory performing them; an accidental release could, as the name suggests, lead to global spread of a virulent virus, a biosafety incident on a scale never before seen ...

While there are indisputably certain questions that can be answered only by gain-of-function experiments in highly pathogenic strains, these questions are narrow and unlikely to meaningfully advance public health goals such as vaccine production and pandemic prediction.

Alternative approaches to experimental influenza virology and characterization of existing strains are in general completely safe, higher throughput, more generalizable, and less costly than creation of PPP in the laboratory and can thereby better inform public health. Indeed, virtually every finding of recent PPP experiments that has been cited for its public health value was predated by similar findings using safe methodologies."

While the origin of SARS-CoV-2 remains to be conclusively proven, a paper²⁴ published in Nature in 2015 discussed how a "lab-made coronavirus related to SARS" capable of infecting human cells had stirred up debate as to whether or not this kind of research is worth the risks:

"Although the extent of any risk is difficult to assess, Simon Wain-Hobson, a

virologist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, points out that the researchers have created a novel virus that 'grows remarkably well' in human cells. 'If the virus escaped, nobody could predict the trajectory,' he says."

With 20/20 hindsight, we now have a much clearer idea of what the release of such a virus can do. We may chalk it up to luck that SARS-CoV-2 turned out to be orders of magnitude less lethal than initially suspected, although government containment measures have turned out to be devastating and deadly as well. If this kind of research is allowed to continue, the next time there's a leak, we may not be nearly as lucky.