

closely related, whatever vaccines we develop might work on them, too. But that might not be the case with manipulated viruses from a laboratory. “Someone could have been sampling viruses from different caves for a decade and just playing mix-and-match in the lab, and those viruses could be so different from one another that none of our vaccines will work on them,” she says. Either way, “We need to find where this came from, and close it down.”

Whatever important information she finds, we can be sure Chan will share it with the world. Far from being shaken by the controversy her paper stirred, she is more committed than ever to holding a line that could all too easily be overrun. “Scientists shouldn’t be censoring themselves,” she says. “We’re obliged to put all the data out there. We shouldn’t be deciding that it’s better if the public doesn’t know about this or that. If we start doing that, we lose credibility, and eventually we lose the public’s trust. And that’s not good for science.” In fact, it would cause an epidemic of doubt, and that wouldn’t be good for any of us.

From: Biegun, Stephen E (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 8:24 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: Palladino, Robert J (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: WIV Document Declass

I brought the latest draft home and will try to complete my read through once I am done with my Korea and Japan calls tonight — or by tomorrow morning at the latest.

During the course of my work on COVID-19 since January, I have had numerous opportunities to review the intelligence and also to discuss this very question with both Dr. Fauci and Dr. Redfield, head of the CDC. Well there is much that we still do not know about this virus, our leading medical experts were quite definitive in conversations with me as late as June that they simply could not draw any solid conclusions as to the origin of this virus.

After this statement was drafted, I took calls this week expressing deep concerns from counterparts at DNI and HHS, — and I received a lengthy memcon from the former acting T with a very contrarian view.

I agree with your objective, and I think the the concerns I heard were that early drafts miscast this as if it were an intelligence assessment, called out actions that we ourselves are doing, and demanded access that we would never ourselves provide. I asked my DNI and HHS counterparts to look again at the statement today and they got back to me late today. That is what I need to review once more.

The worst outcome is that we issue a statement that is impeached by anonymous press leaks and expert analysts. I see every indication that this outcome is likely.

Sent from my iPhone