

Twitter falsely labels WSWS report on natural COVID-19 origins as “misleading”

Kevin Reed
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On the morning that this article was published, Twitter sent an email to WSWS writer Evan Blake stating, “Our support team has reviewed your account and it appears we made an error. We’ve determined that the Tweet is not in violation of our Covid-19 Misleading Information Policy. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience and hope to see you back on Twitter soon.”

The censorship described below was temporarily lifted, but within hours was reimposed. We urge our readers to submit comments opposing Twitter’s censorship of our coverage on the Wuhan Lab Lie and the broader censorship of scientists and anti-COVID activists.

On August 19, Twitter began flagging posts that shared a link to the article on the *World Socialist Web Site* entitled, “Two recent papers further confirm natural origins of SARS-CoV-2,” as connecting to a website that “may” contain misleading information about the coronavirus pandemic.

While Twitter is permitting users to share the link, a label appears in their newsfeed that warns others saying, “Stay Informed. This Tweet links to a website that may contain misleading information about COVID-19.”

Responding to Twitter’s action, WSWS International Editorial Board Chairman David North wrote, “The WSWS is, once again, the target of Twitter’s censorship of the science-based exposures of the entirely discredited #WuhanLab Lie—which is the claim that SARS-CoV-2 virus was created in a Chinese laboratory.

Evan Blake, Coordinator of the Global Workers’ Inquest into the COVID-19 Pandemic initiated by the WSWS, added, “This is part of a broader campaign

against principled scientists, reporters and anti-COVID activists, which must be ended now.”

WSWS writer and editor Andre Damon added, “@Twitter and @TwitterSupport need to immediately remove the flag that has been placed on this article reporting on two recent papers pointing to the natural origins of COVID-19. The WSWS has systematically opposed and exposed COVID-19 misinformation and conspiracy theories.”

The statements by North, Blake, and Damon were shared hundreds of times, and prompted statements of opposition of WSWS readers and COVID-19 experts. Public health advocate Laura Miers posted, “This is ridiculous. It has gone too far, and Twitter needs to do something about this.”

The WSWS article flagged by Twitter is based on two authoritative papers published in the July 26 edition of the journal *Science* that confirm the zoonotic origins of SARS-CoV-2. The two science papers, one by Michael Worobey from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona, and the other by Jonathan E. Pekar from the Bioinformatics and Systems Program at the University of California San Diego, substantiate the view that the likely source of the coronavirus was wild animals caged at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan, China.

The WSWS article explains in detail that the papers show the coronavirus was present in animals and “jumped over to infect humans,” and says the scientific papers represent “a further blow against the largely discredited ‘Wuhan lab’ conspiracy theory.”

Since the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WSWS has worked with renowned doctors and scientists from all over the world to present accurate and reliable information and analysis about the impact

and measures required to eradicate the virus. Through the “Global Workers’ Inquest into the COVID-19 Pandemic,” the WSWs has assembled an unparalleled archive of interviews, reports, videos and other resources that enable the public to cut through the cover-up, falsifications, and misinformation being spread about the public health crisis by the corporate media and government officials.

This is not the first time the WSWs has been censored by a social media platform. For ten weeks in early 2021, Facebook blocked the sharing of a WSWs article entitled, “Washington Post’s ‘Wuhan Lab’ conspiracy theory stands exposed,” which reported the admission by the *Post* that the US government had presented no evidence that COVID-19 was released from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, despite the earlier promotion of the conspiracy theory by the *Post* itself.

In 2017, the WSWs noticed a steep decline in traffic that corresponded with the implementation of Project Owl by Google, that was designed to “surface more authoritative content” in its search results. The WSWs revealed that the change in Google’s algorithms caused a marked reduction in Google ranking to alternative, left-wing and socialist publishers online.

On October 28, 2020, during testimony before the Senate Commerce Committee, Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google’s parent company Alphabet, admitted that the most widely used search engine had been censoring the WSWs.

The Wuhan Lab conspiracy theory, which has been debunked scientifically from the beginning of the pandemic, is a key element of US anti-Chinese propaganda, as well as a tool for diverting attention from the catastrophic response of the American ruling establishment to the public health emergency which has resulted in more than 1 million preventable deaths in the US.

Although no credible evidence has been presented over the past 32 months to substantiate the assertion, the bogus “theory” of a laboratory origin of SARS-CoV-2 continues to be spread through major American corporate news outlets and government officials as part of the expanding economic and military aggression against Beijing by US imperialism.

Meanwhile, the WSWs has also pointed to the political correlation between the deadly “herd

immunity” policies of the ruling establishment which are responsible for mass death—officially more than 6.4 million people have died from the virus since January 2020—and the anti-Chinese campaign built up around the Wuhan Lab lie.

The false claims Twitter has made against the WSWs are part of a broader series of actions by the social media platform on those who have taken a stand against the false narrative that “COVID is over” or that the presently dominant Omicron BA.5 is “less viral” or “less deadly” than the previous iterations of the virus.

This campaign has escalated over the past week, with numerous scientists and anti-COVID activists also having tweets flagged as “misinformation” that link to articles on COVID-19 from academic journals and the mainstream media, including Medscape, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Forbes and The New Yorker.

On Sunday, the Long Covid Research Initiative posted that their account had been flagged and a tweet blocked that posted a link to “a paper from Nature on transmission of C19 between mothers and babies.” The group, which has been conducting clinical trials on the effects of Long COVID, said, “Overnight, our followers dropped from 1,117 to 83.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* demands that Twitter remove the labeling of WSWs content on the COVID-19 pandemic as “misleading” and stop censoring posts by others that provide scientific and accurate information regarding the ongoing public health crisis.



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact