

Racist witness complicates Democrats' efforts to promote "lab leak" conspiracy theory

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On Wednesday, the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic held its first hearing, with all participants, Democratic and Republican, seeking to promote the conspiracy theory that COVID-19 escaped from a laboratory in China as a possible explanation for the origins of the pandemic.

Every participant, from the witnesses who testified to the members of Congress asking questions, accepted the false claim that there are "two theories" about the origins of COVID-19, zoonosis, which has caused every pandemic in the past, and escape from a laboratory, for which there is no concrete evidence with regard to COVID-19.

From the standpoint of science, there is only one theory of the origins of COVID-19. "There's an overwhelming feeling in the scientific community regarding the natural origin of COVID-19," vaccinologist Dr. Peter Hotez told ABC News. "The scientific literature contains essentially nothing but original research articles that support a natural origin of this virus pandemic," evolutionary biologist Michael Worobey added to the Associated Press.

The fascist-led Republican Party has advocated the Wuhan lab conspiracy theory since 2020. The conspiracy theory was created by Steve Bannon, an architect of the January 6 coup, and his Chinese expatriate business partners. The conspiracy theory was fully embraced by former President Donald Trump, his secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, and his trade adviser, Peter Navarro.

Over the three years since Bannon created the conspiracy theory as a way to demonize China, the Democratic Party and its aligned media outlets have sought to launder Bannon's lie, washing away its fascist origins and seeking to present it as a plausible explanation for the pandemic. On May 25, 2021, the *Washington Post's* fact checker column declared the lab leak theory "credible."

The Democrats are seeking to promote a version of the

conspiracy theory stripped of its overtly racist, xenophobic and fascist characteristics, so that they can paint the US crusade to subjugate China as a struggle for freedom and equality.

The problem for this effort, however, is that the Wuhan lab theory is just that, a racist conspiracy theory, promoted by a Republican Party dominated entirely by fascists like Trump and Marjorie Taylor Greene and Jim Jordan, who sit on the select committee.

This undeniable reality threw the Democrats into a crisis on Wednesday's hearing, after Republicans invited Nicholas Wade, a notorious racist praised by former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke, to promote the lab leak theory.

The *World Socialist Web Site*, in a June 6, 2021 article broadly shared within the scientific community, made clear that Wade's promotion of the Wuhan Lab conspiracy theory was grounded in his racist views. So widely is this known that the Committee's ranking Democratic member, Representative Raul Ruiz, felt compelled to issue a statement distancing the Democrats from Wade.

Ruiz opened the hearing by declaring:

When House Republicans announced this hearing with their slate of handpicked witnesses, I was alarmed to see someone who wrote a book applauded by white supremacists.

Mr. Nicholas Wade's 2014 book, *A Troublesome Inheritance*, suggests that different racial and ethnic groups have evolved to possess genetic variations and traits and behaviors tied to whether they prosper or not. For example, Mr. Wade speculates that certain populations have evolved to develop greater innate intelligence.

He writes that "intelligence can be more highly

rewarded in modern societies because it is in far greater demand and core” and conversely, he claims that certain populations have been slower to experience an evolutionary change he has described as “the transformation of a population’s social traits from the violent short term impulsive behavior typical of many hunter gatherer and tribal societies” into “the more disciplined future oriented behavior observed in other populations.”

The notion that people of different racial or ethnic groups are more successful or intellectually superior to another because of predisposed genetic makeup is grossly inconsistent with the consensus of scientific and medical scholarship.

That is why I sent a letter to my Republican colleagues this morning strongly urging them to disinvite Mr. Wade as a witness was not to give legitimacy to a man of such discredited, unscientific and harmful views.

Ruiz’s characterization, which echoes in all points the claims made by the *World Socialist Web Site* in its June 2021 article, “Wuhan lab theory proponent Nicholas Wade pushed racist pseudo-science in 2014 book,” is correct.

But Ruiz’s statement stands as an indictment not only of Wade and the Republicans, but of the three leading US newspapers, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, all of which had cited Wade in numerous articles and editorials prior to June 2021 without explaining that he is a racist.

The WSWS’s exposure made it impossible for the *Times* and the *Post* to cite Wade any further uncritically, and, it is clear, for Democrats to accept him as a witness.

After a week of wall-to-wall media coverage claiming major new evidence that had compelled sections of the US government to accept the lab leak theory as its leading explanation of the pandemic, the House hearing received extraordinarily thin coverage in the major news outlets, simply because Ruiz’s exposure of Wade raised uncomfortable questions about the origins of the conspiracy theory.

Strikingly, however, none of the Democrats drew any conclusions from the fact that the leading “expert” advocating the lab leak “theory” is a raving racist. Far from it, they hastened to declare their faith in “two theories” with the caveat that no public health officials should be demonized.

It did not occur to anyone to ask how it is possible not to demonize public health officials under condition where all of the leading advocates of the conspiracy theory claim Dr. Anthony Fauci, the country’s leading public health official, personally authorized the experiments that created COVID-19, then covered it up.

The crown for total absurdity was taken by Democratic Representative Jamie Raskin, who claimed that Donald Trump, who pioneered the vicious anti-China policy that the Democrats are now adopting, was somehow insufficiently aggressive against China.

Raskin began by declaring, “[i]f COVID was actually the product of a lab, a leak, or the worst bio weapon of mass destruction ever invented,” it would only “deepen” Donald Trump’s “culpability” for failing to hold China to account.

Raskin said that “on more than 42 different occasions that we have identified so far, President Trump openly praised and defended the performance of Communist Party Secretary and Chinese President Xi in his handling of COVID-19 and boasted of how closely they were working together and boasted of Xi’s openness and transparency.”

He concluded, “Donald Trump was the biggest apologist in the United States of America for President Xi and the Chinese Communist Party.”

Raskin’s anti-communist rant, which rivaled the contributions of the fascists Marjorie Taylor Greene and Jim Jordan, shows the extent to which the Democratic Party has embraced Trump’s aggressive calls for “conflict” with China.

Ultimately, it is the bipartisan support for trade war and military conflict that underlies the promotion of the Wuhan lab lie within the US political establishment, and the Democrats’ political contortions to justify it.



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