Do not sign this statement

Working late into the night, Daszak & Karesh (EHA) finish their draft of the Lancet Statement and send it around the cohort:

From: Daszak Feb 6, 2020, 12:43 am

To: ***Ralph Baric*** *CC:* (redacted - we can assume): Hume Field, Linfa Wang, Billy Karesh, Linda Saif, Jim Hughes (Rita Colwell was added later) (all EHA accredited *Bat Packers*)

Please review the letter and let me know if you are willing to join Billy Karesh and myself as co-signatories. Also please confirm your title and affiliation that will be shown in the letter.

Linfa has gone this far, he's likely the one who requested, verbally framed the letter with Daszak, but he's not stupid. He knows *my work is done* - it's time to quietly step off the ship. He's a designer - not a signer.

The email arrives at 12:43 am - so late at night. Linfa reads it - it's got the right points but in Pete's florid style. Then he reads the last line:

We declare ***no competing interests***

Linfa calls Daszak immediately on the Bat Phone - advises Daszak & Baric **not** to sign either.

He's smart enough not to record his input in writing*, but unfortunately Pete isn't:

From: Peter Daszak Sent:Thurs, Feb 6, 2020, 3:16 pm

To: Baric, Ralph CC: (as above)

Subject: *No need for you to sign the "Statement" Ralph!!*

I spoke with ***Linfa*** *last night about the statement we sent round.* ***He thinks****, and* ***I agree with him****, that you, me and him* ***should not sign this statement****, so it has some distance from us and therefore doesn't work in a counterproductive way.*

Jim Hughes, Linda Saif, Hume Field, and I believe Rita Colwell will sign it, then ***I'll send it round some other key people tonight.*** *We'll then put it out in a way that doesn't link it back to our collaboration so we maximize an independent voice.*

Cheers,

Peter

So this is Linfa trying to talk sense into Daszak on the phone the night before. Don't sign it - we'll get busted. We have huge COI's. We're too close. It will *link back* to us.

Baric gets it straight away. Fires back an email within the hour:

From: Baric, Ralph Sent: Thurs, Feb 6, 2020, 4:01 pm

To: ***Peter Daszak***

Subject: *Re: No need for you to sign the "Statement" Ralph!!*

I also think this is a ***good decision****. Otherwise it looks self-serving and we lose impact.* ***ralph***

It will look self-serving - which it totally is - *it's counter productive.* What we need to do is: cover our tracks lest it *links back* to us. Everyone's agreed.

So imagine Linfa's horror when Daszak goes ahead and signs it anyways!

That's gotta be vanity from our man Pete - didn't want to miss out on the Celebrity Scientist publicity ride.

Daszak (along with Lipkin representing Prox-O) then went on to become the *voice* of the no-lab-leak cohort, tirelessly working the media to promote the Lancet Statement and vilify the conspiracy theorists.

The Guardian came to the party by publishing one Pete's peak-weird diatribes at the height of his fame. (critiqued on Formosahut, Dec 2020)

It was this addiction to the limelight - vanity - that would largely contribute to the unraveling of the *No-lab-leak offensive* - exactly as Linfa had tried to warn it would.

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