The Consortium's Proximal Origin

At the time of the outbreak, we had:

- Garry’s and Andersen’s Consortium operating from Kenema Govt Hospital with a $7 mil grant from NIH to research bioweapon detection technology for hemorrhagic fevers, including Ebola.
- Tekmira (and shortly later, Wellcome) conducting RNAi (i=interference) drug trials - backed by a $140 mil US Dept of Defense grant. Share price was booming.

Everything was going great - until it wasn't. The first setback was a public tide-turning in the affected populations of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Blogger Jon Rappoport reported that on **July 23, 2014,** the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation posted a list of emergency offensive measures to tackle the Ebola outbreak. These included:

Tulane University to stop Ebola testing during *the current Ebola outbreak.*

He provided a link to the FB page - it's gone 404. I'm assuming it's true. Pity *screenshot* wasn't big in 2014. (Aside: Billy Bostickson is the master of screenshot. Can't get stronger evidence in an argument than *look - you said it.*)

Which would beg the question: Why would the Health Ministry urgently ban Garry, one of the world’s leading bioweapons countermeasure technicians from conducting tests? When you currently have the worst outbreak ever?

The inference is the Ministry of Health was aware something untoward was going on at The Consortium's Kenema Government Hospital lab in Sierra Leone. In close proximity to the original outbreak. Operating within a fabric of established governmental corruption. As usual, it takes two to tango.

A plausible alternative to the Ministry's post is it may have been reacting to public sentiment in the West African countries.

There *were* widespread rumours in Sierra Leone that the outbreak had originated from Garry's and Andersen's Kenema lab. Never comes up in the papers in Nature sponsored by Jeremy Farrar's VIZIONS, but it was a real thing. To the point of being dangerous for Garry and Andersen personally - must have been exciting - scary exciting - high adrenaline.

Adia Benton, anthropologist, Northwestern Uni: *Another origin story centered Ebola at the intersections of race, militarization, and **the political economy of scientific research**. Many West Africans and people of African descent questioned whether the American military–funded laboratory in Kenema, Sierra Leone, and its partners at **Tulane University** were to blame. They believed scientists working in the lab conducted experiments that put local populations at risk.*

Indeed, these 'rumours' about Tulane led to a resistance movement. It included incidents of violence aimed at foreign health agencies and their workers in general. Youth groups enforced a DIY quarantine zone to keep foreign aid workers out.

James Fairhead, Ebola-Anthropology, 2015 (PDF, p3): *June and July 2014, twenty six Kissi-speaking villages in Guéckedou Prefecture isolated themselves from Ebola response, cutting bridges and felling trees to prevent vehicle access, or stoning intruding vehicles. In Tekoulo, youth isolated themselves in farm camps in self-imposed quarantine, saying: "We don't want any visitors.... We don't want any contact with anyone. Wherever those people have passed (foreign Zoonati), the communities have been hit by illness (Nossiter 2014a)."*

Science: (*Peter Walsh) and his colleagues are continuing to sample bats and other wildlife in the region—most recently from Ivory Coast, close to the Guinean border. In Guinea, he says, surveys aren't possible at the moment. With the Ebola epidemic still raging there, "**people are very suspicious**," he says—**especially of anyone who wants to capture bats**.*

Garry and Andersen were *in the eye-of-the-storm* of all that. Forget about whether they were involved in a lab-origin for Ebola for a minute, the sheer fraughtness of the situation is high drama. You'd need military protection to travel around. Even with that, you'd still need balls.

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