SARS-CoV-2

Ian Lipkin was a prominent expert in the early stages of the Covid pandemic.[1][2][3][4] On January 29, 2020, to investigate the outbreak, he flew to China where he “assembled a formal written report” for the Chinese central government and helped develop a diagnostic test with scientists from China’s Central Disease Control.[5] He led the condemnation of "conspiracy theorists" that suggested a lab accident should be investigated.[6] He was a proponent of lockdowns as the best tool to control the spread of the disease,[7][8] saying "we should take a page from what the Chinese did".[9] Lipkin was also an advocate of plasma therapy as a treatment,[10] and more funding for GIDeoN, a public health organization he heads that aims to centralize world health data to aid “early detection and containment” of future pandemics.[11][12][13]Lipkin contracted Covid-19 in mid-March whilst doing media but was not hospitalized and recovered.[14]

Fact-finding mission to China

Ian Lipkin was one of the first western scientists to learn of the emergence of SARS-nCoV-2 Wuhan, saying "I first heard about this outbreak on the 15th Dec from Lu Jia-hai, a professor at Sun Yat-sen university, who runs a large one-health program (that's) been funded for about 6 months by the Chinese government. On January 29, 2020, Lipkin flew into Guangzhou China to “see for myself what the issues were” regarding the spread of SARS-nCoV-2.[15] Due to Lipkin’s long standing relationship with Chinese government officials and scientists[16] he said: “I would get more accurate information than the agencies (NIH and CDC) had about the number of cases, and what was known and not known, and who was doing what.”[17]

In Guangzhou he met with Chinese pulmonologist Zhong Nanshan, who updated him on the progress of the epidemic.[18] Lipkin then traveled to Beijing, where he met with Foreign Minister for Health Chen Zhu (□□), the Minister of Science and Technology, and the Premier, Li Keqiang,[19] who, according to the The China Straits Times, presented Lipkin with an award for his services to the PRC.[20] At these meetings Lipkin gained an understanding of the seriousness of the virus, whilst also providing input on measures to contain it.[21] In an interview with NPR, Lipkin said: “I work very closely with the people who are running these isolation areas within China. This is very, very difficult. It's stressful. I also don't like the idea of screening people with CT scans because there's a lot of radiation, which is potentially problematic as well.”[22] According to Columbia's website, Lipkin was an architect of China's bio-security system, who "helped develop the institutional infrastructure to ensure China would have the resources to detect and more rapidly respond to emerging infectious threats.”[16] Lipkin also claimed to be involved in formulating Australia's response to the virus.[23]

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