

# <sup>1</sup>Information-Bioterrorism – a new form of global manipulation

An interview with Dr Alexander Kouzminov, New Zealand



Alexander Kouzminov  
(picture ma)

*zf. We call our present age the information age, IT/information technologies are a permanent topic and a self-evidence in modern everyday life and false information - fake news – are lately a big issue in the media. The latter are of course not an invention of the present, rather they are known elements of power politics and warfare. Propaganda and lies are nothing new under the sun. With internet and computers, however, opportunities, extent and rate of spread have increased massively. This is also the context of the remarks of bio-weapon expert Alexander Kouzminov (New Zealand) on the subject of information-bioterrorism.*

*Q1: You mentioned that a state can be weakened or hit, just by creating a scenario of being threatened by a dangerous infective agent, also call imminent pandemic? Could you explain this in a few words?*

Since the end of the 1990s the start of 2000, there appeared quite frightening information about dangerous viruses, dead-

ly infectious diseases and threats of global pandemics.

## Threats of pandemics – “hot” news stories ...

The key words or headlines, which the media operated in the cases of these pandemics of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) (2002-2003), Avian Influenza A (H5N1) (1997, 2006-2007), H1N1 ‘Swine flu’ (2009), and some other recent once, were: ‘swine flu will hit the country hard’, ‘virus could kill millions of people’, ‘sudden spread of disease’, ‘virus-killer’, ‘global epidemic’, ‘global catastrophe’, ‘catastrophic consequences’ and similar. The ‘hot’ news stories looked like reports from the war-zones, as if the enemy was at your door step.

Mass media especially highlighted, that these and future epidemics of ‘strange’ disease outbreaks would have ‘an enormous health and regional (and even global) development threat’, present ‘a major threat to a national interest and security’, that ‘the risk is still significant’, and that ‘the impact of the next pandemic will be devastating’.

Such information continued to circulate in mass media despite the fact that there was not one case supported by a laboratory test, in regards to the spread of SARS or Avian flu from one person to another. This was not carried out even in

one country, where such cases could be confirmed.

## ... and the consequences

Such ‘information bio-attack’ reached negative consequences – it created mass circulated panic, fear in the public, and lead to substantial influence over the economies of countries and regions of the world, destabilizing them. It also weakened the economies creating losses (e.g. loss of trade, tourism, and international travel), destabilized government and public services.

## What is information-bioterrorism?

*Q2: You called this form of mass manipulation ‘infobioterrorism’. Could you define this concept? Do you have an actual example?*

I define ‘information bioterrorism’ as a new type of global operational influence over people. I define it as influence over them and manipulation. What’s the purpose? Well, it may have some specific, pre-planned outcomes. Another name for it can be ‘information biological blackmail’.

The basis of ‘information bioterrorism’ is the use of fear over people. This fear is based on pandemics of very dangerous diseases, for example when a pandemic is a threat that arises from a viral outbreak in animals. The main components and after-effects of such new form of mass manipulation of a “threat” are:

- Time factor: practically immediate and globally-spread panic through electronic means of communication.
- Vulnerability factor: helplessness before the threat, due to lack of effective means of defence. This creates panic among the general population.
- Uncertainty factor: the lack of factual information about the source of threat and its spread; the side who initiates the threat thereby has a new opportunity for mass manipulation.
- The lack of control factor: each person who finds himself ‘out of control’ because he/she is a suspicious object, liable to have the disease, is a threat to everyone else.

## Organised by secret-services carried out as “active operation”

Information bioterrorism (or ‘information biological blackmail’) is enacted by the means of methods organised by secret services; and is implemented as an ‘active

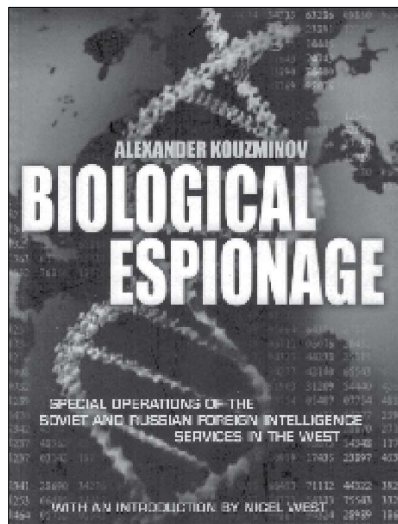
### Dr Alexander Kouzminov

Dr Alexander Kouzminov is a highly qualified and experienced biosecurity specialist. He has extensive track record of work in central government and private sector as a senior advisor, senior analyst, director, chief-executive. Dr Kouzminov has contributed to a number of environmental and biosecurity policy papers within New Zealand and internationally e.g. UNESCO policy forums, among others, and has several awards from New Zealand central government and international recognitions for his policy development work.

Dr Kouzminov is also an ex-intelligence operative of the Soviet-Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) in 1980-90s, and dealt with intelligence operations with bioweapons related activities in target countries.

He is author of ‘Biological Espionage. Special Operations of the Soviet and Russian Foreign Intelligence Services in the West’ (2005, Greenhill Books) and has over 50 published

works on biosecurity e.g. bioterrorism, bioweapons, risk control and management, policy approaches.



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operation' in target countries. Such an active operation can be determined via the following means.

'Active operation' - this is an activity of a secret service (usually of foreign intelligence), which is aimed at a 'Target audience' (an object it wants to influence), and is carried out at the request of an 'Interested party' with 'Supporters' and 'Auxiliary means' to reach required 'Planned impacts'. 'Active operation' is carried out with the support of agents, supporting persons and interested organizations. Usually, secret services conducts 'active operations' using 'false flags' – that is, it hides its main objectives under the cover of a (politically) neutral organization, or hides its goals under some kind of a falsely crafted problem.

#### "Interested parties" and their target audience

During the times of Cold War, 'interested parties' were usually the government or its special (secret) services, normally foreign intelligence. Today, the 'Interested party' could be: a big conglomerate, pharmaceuticals, bank, private and political groups, lobbyists, etc.

Objects or target audience of an 'active operation' may be – governments, high ranking military officials, secret services of the enemy, political parties, banks, companies, etc. as well as ordinary populations, where the aim is to cause some kind of an impact and effect.

'Executor': This is secret service, as a rule foreign intelligence. Usually, the 'Executor' carries out 'Active operations' using 'false flag', which means that it masquerades the true operation by covering it up with a false story or threat.

'Supporters': They might be agents of influence and neutral third parties [the latter are not with the secret service]; these can help the 'Executor' to realize the 'Active operations'.

#### Mass media to implement "active operations"

'Auxiliary means': Mass media is one of the key ways that an 'Active operation' is implemented. The 'Executor' uses mass media to achieve the maximum impact on 'Target audience/Object of influence'. For example, to raise a threat, to spread rumors and false information, etc. all of this is *really for disinformation*, in order to take away the attention from the true operation, to masquerade it.

'Planned impacts': Information sent out for a specific audience has to be 'sharp' that is it's important to influence the intended object. Information is put together purposefully, usually as a threat or a big

problem, *as if it's a real problem*. The target audience should never doubt it.

#### Main stages of the 'active operation'

The approach that is used to carry out the 'active operation' is based on a crafted strategy: first the problem, and then its solution.

The main stages of the 'active operation', through which 'information bioterrorism' can be created, are as follows:

**Phase 1:** the 'Executor' (e.g. secret service), with the help of 'Supporters' (e.g. agents) and 'Auxiliary Means' (e.g. mass media), throws out false information (in our case, - imminent pandemic) onto the 'Target Audience' (e.g. public) with a pretense that it's real.

**Phase 2:** 'Executors', 'Supporters' and 'Auxiliary Means' accelerate the problem, making it a hot topic (maximum interest needs to be created). Once the false problem is created, it grows like a 'snow ball', rolling and rolling independently as though it's becoming legitimate.

**Phase 3:** the actual task of the operation is realized (secretly) – monetary gains are already there, government stability is undermined (e.g. economic loss), and other unfortunate impacts.

For the general target (general population), they are told that the problem is being solved and risks are contained. This is done with side-line information (news stories, etc.). However, the problem is left 'hanging', so that the 'Executor' can use it again. It would be easy to resurrect it.

In practice, "information bioterrorism" can be realized using these means:

#### I – Creating a problem

First, there needs to be a local outbreak of seasonal influenza or some contagious disease, which the interested party can use for its own interests. This of course is *false information*. There can also be a case, that it's a supposed 'leak' from a secret military-medical laboratory or army 'bio-defence research' centre. Such a situation can be crafted by the 'Executor' (secret service) deliberately, to create great interest, awe and fear.<sup>1</sup>

#### II – Snowballing a problem

Media ('Auxiliary means', also including 'Supporters', e.g. agents of influence) starts to 'heat' the public. Front pages of newspaper, TV channels, internet, social media, – are already there with alarming titles – 'highly pathogenic virus', 'new contagious disease', 'new flu outbreak into a pandemic', 'be ready for corpses, flu plan says' – all heightening the threat and scaring everyone! Mass-media and interested organisations issue warning signs/messages like 'the disease breaks human-to-human barrier' and "predict" that "the disease would infect up to millions people

globally". For example, "A super-flu could kill up to 1.9 million Americans, according to a draft of the government's plan to fight a worldwide epidemic".<sup>2</sup>

#### III – Problem becomes hot topic

Health authorities/senior officials/experts/agents of influence express concerns that a virus will mutate into a form that can spread from one human to another and this could lead to a world-wide pandemic, and claimed that an influenza pandemic would likely lead to high rates of morbidity (sickness) and mortality (death). For example, "...the death toll from a human pandemic of avian influenza could be anything from 5 to 150 million".<sup>3</sup> Also, "There is no time to waste. The virus [bird flu] could ignite the next human flu pandemic. I do not need to tell you of the terrible consequences that could bring to all nations and all peoples".<sup>4</sup>

#### IV – Aggravating a problem and starting to gain planned results

Soon after World Health Organisation (WHO) may announce a new influenza, a public health emergency of international concern, and soon an influenza pandemic alert is raised to five on a six-level warning scale meaning that a pandemic is considered imminent. The governments around the world have little choice, but to respond to the WHO's pandemic declaration by spending billions on drugs, and throw all available resources at fighting the disease, once the WHO has declared the pandemic is under way. This triggers a wave of "panic buying of vaccine and antivirals" by governments around the world, in many cases involving far more money than hundreds of million dollars. Authorised and interested organisations recommend national governments to use a specific antivirals and flu-fighting drug(s) and inform them that an 'effective vaccine' is being developed and will be ready to use shortly.

#### The secret WHO emergency committee

For example, the British Medical Journal (BMJ) highlighted the existence of a secret WHO emergency committee that advised the WHO Director-General on when to declare the pandemic. It was claimed that "WHO was being advised by a group of people who were deeply embedded with the pharmaceutical industry, and had a lot of gain by beating this epidemic into a pandemic".<sup>5</sup> The BMJ reported that WHO had, in February 2009 (about a month before the first cases of the 2009 'swine flu' outbreak were reported), amended the definition of the pandemic by removing that pandemic can cause "enormous numbers

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of deaths and illness", lowering the bar for pandemic announcements.<sup>6</sup>

#### V – Achieving results

What is to be achieved? Weakening of the economies and losses, bankruptcies and threatens to vulnerable businesses (e.g. loss of trade, inbound tourism, international travel, etc.), destabilisation (or even paralysis) of governments and their public services. Production of antiviral drugs and vaccines creates hundreds of millions to billions of dollars. For example, the Council of Europe's report about the '2009 swine flu outbreak' claimed national governments, the EU and the WHO for the "waste of large sums of public money"<sup>7</sup> and for fuelling "unjustified scares and fears"<sup>8</sup> over what the report's author termed a "pandemic that never really was".<sup>9</sup>

This new form of mass manipulation – "information bioterrorism" as a 'weapon of mass-manipulation' can become an instrument of big politics, if the 'pandemic' threat will be used in the future, deliberately.

#### Difference between info-bioterrorism and bioterrorism

*Q3: We think, that there may exist real threats. Not everything its hysteria? How can we distinguish info-bioterrorism from bioterrorism?*

To distinguish informational bioterrorism from bioterrorism is not easy, but possible. In practice, should a suspicious disease event occur, it would be difficult to determine quickly if it was caused by nature, an accident, sabotage, or an act of biological warfare or bio-terrorism. Consequently, the preparation and response to a biological event, whether natural, accidental or deliberate, is identical and would involve the co-ordination of organisations from many sectors (including secret services) who together possess the capability to determine the causes and attributes to a specific source, and also to the organizers of that deliberate action.

However, there are certain differences. I point out the more likely ones.

#### Bioterrorism: Deliberate use of deadly-disease causing agents

Firstly, in the case of **bioterrorism**, the causes are always deliberate. They always contain the deliberate use of deadly-disease causing agents to harm or kill humans, animals or plants. Biological weapons also generally consist of two parts – a *deliberately weaponised agent* and a *delivery mechanism*.

The *biological weaponry agents* can be deliberately enhanced from their natural state to make them more suitable for

mass production, storage, and dissemination as weapons. In this case, laboratory tests can strongly determine the artificial origin of the causative agent. *Biological weapon delivery systems* can take a variety of forms, range from constructed missiles, bombs and spray-tanks on aircraft, tucks and boats to specially crafted devices for assassinations or sabotage operations, - it is hard to enumerate them in this interview.

#### Acts of bioterrorism for strategic or military purposes

Secondly, acts of bioterrorism apply in the first instance for strategic or military purposes, political assassination, acts of sabotage to disrupt local infrastructures, such as, for example, the contamination of water and food-processing supplies, the infection of livestock or agricultural produce to cause economic loss, the creation of environmental catastrophes, and the introduction of widespread illness, fear and mistrust among the public, and several other negative effects. In my book, *'Biological Espionage. Special Operations of the Soviet and Russian Foreign Intelligence Services in the West'*<sup>10</sup> and my articles I've written over the years, I write in detail how acts of bioterrorism are prepared and are carried out, and I provide a range of examples.

Thirdly, acts of bioterrorism, despite the difficulty in counteracting them, can be effectively contained, using a variety of technical measures of biological control, monitoring and containment, and are relatively easy to prevent with the help of specific measures of secret services.

Fourth, in its nature the act of bioterrorism is targeted at a specific geographical region; that is it has a localized spread and effect; and its consequences, as a rule, don't go outside state borders.

#### Info-bioterrorism as a form of global influence

Information bioterrorism – this is a form of global influence. It can be even more effective, from the view of consequences and harm, which it can cause.

Firstly, info-bioterrorism, in comparison with an act of bioterror is not and does not apply for strategic or military applications, political assassination, and acts of sabotage – to disrupt local infrastructures, to harm the health of local population, animals, or disrupt the environment of a certain country.

Secondly, its organisers and interested organizations, use the potential pandemic threat, in order to reach certain results – I've already mentioned such examples, above.

#### Propagation through mass media

Thirdly, in the case of info-bioterrorism, such 'threat' is not hidden, as in the case

of bioterrorism attack, but in contrast is widely publicized in the mass media. The wider the spread of mass media stories, the better it is for the organizers of 'information bioterrorism'. However, the organizers of bioterrorism will never tell about their plans.

#### Global economic disaster through info-bioterrorism

Fourthly, economic losses from information bioterrorism are quite higher, than the acts of bioterrorism. In the case of bioterrorism, the loss for an individual country – in monetary value – may range from a few hundreds of millions to some milliards of dollars, taking into account the loss for the economy, expenses for the affected infrastructure, loss of exports, expenses for health service, etc. However, in the case of information bioterrorism, the costs are quite different – tens to hundreds of milliards of dollars. For example, economic losses that resulted from SARS outbreaks in 2002–2003 are evaluated by the World Bank as more than \$15 billion in the Asian region alone.<sup>11,12</sup> The SARS cost for the global economy was estimated as about \$30 billion.<sup>13,14</sup> Economic losses from the Avian influenza ('bird flu') pandemic in 2006–2007 were estimated at up to 20 times higher than SARS, and it estimated that it could cost the Asian economy up to \$283 billion.<sup>15,16</sup> The expected world-wide economic disaster would cost as much as \$800 billion if a human pandemic lasts for a year.<sup>17</sup> The same amount was spent by USA in Iraq.<sup>18</sup>

#### To earn on the fear of a world catastrophe

Fifth, organisers of bioterrorism do not gain any money. This is because its goal – is first of all to ruin and harm government infrastructure, health of people, farm animals and the environment. However, the organizers of information bioterrorism – yearn to actually gain some monetary value. Their aim is to earn on the fear of a world catastrophe – this is one of the main peculiarities of info-bioterrorism. Its organizers earn huge money – tens of milliards of dollars, for example, through the manufacture and sale of antiviral drugs, vaccines and other protectives means; this is eligible, when the people are told that there's (yet another) scary virus, which they cannot stop.

#### Who earns?

The idea of a pandemic and its trade, is actively pushed and continues to develop with surprising persistence in mass media, and even on government websites – for example, on USA websites such as *pandemicflu.gov* or *avianflu.gov*. For ex-

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ample, the USA government puts in millions of dollars to support the idea of a global pandemic, that it may happen, putting hundreds of millions of dollars for the creation of vaccines against these 'mass' horrors. For example, Novartis Vaccines & Diagnostics has been awarded a \$487 million contract by the US Department of Health and Human Services, a joint venture totalling nearly \$1 billion US in investment, to produce 50 million doses of seasonal trivalent flu vaccine, and up to 150 million doses of monovalent vaccine in preparation for a potential pandemic.<sup>19</sup> For example, as a result of H1N1 'swine flu pandemic' in 2009-2010, the U.S. Government initiated the most expensive national vaccination campaign in American history and purchased at least 160 million doses of vaccine against swine flu, costing \$18 billion.<sup>20</sup> According to the WHO Director-General Dr *Margaret Chan*, vaccine makers could produce nearly 5 billion pandemic flu shots per year in the best-case scenario.<sup>21</sup> The main vaccine produces (e.g. GlaxoSmithKline) stands to earn about \$50 billion per year from these vaccine recommendations.<sup>22</sup> In a case of another 'pandemic' – the H5N1 avian influenza ('bird flu') in 2006-2007, UN officials (i.e. Dr *David Nabarro*, the UN coordinator on avian and human influenza) claimed that about \$1.5 billion was needed as "a beginning to cope with bird flu and prepare for any possible pandemic."<sup>23</sup>

**New infection agents come and go – inconsistencies regarding swine flu outbreak**

*Q4: Very often there a new infection agent 'pops up' in the media. Suddenly, it disappears into the 'off'. This has happened with SARS, bird flu, swine flu, Ebola, Zika. Sometimes one asks himself: "is it man-made or really from nature?" Given your professional experience, what do you think about that?*

Let's look, for example, at examples of outbreaks of H1N1 'swine flu' in USA in 2009.

In mid of April 2009, the US Government had reported 47 confirmed human cases of swine influenza H1N1 virus in the USA and 9 suspect cases. Officially, it was then claimed, that the source of the infection – were the pig farms in Mexico. However, according to data from US Centres of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most of these cases of infection were not tied to Mexico, neither with the pigs, nor with the infected people. It was actually found, that only 3 people out of the 47 of those infected visited Mexico, and that 40 people were never in contact with those infected. In regards to the two cases of the

2 infected people with 'swine flu' in California, CDC reported: "not one child had contacted the pigs, the source of infection is unknown".<sup>24</sup> Earlier, (15 января 2009), the US Department of Health and Human Services signed a contract to the value of 487 million dollars with a company Novartis Vaccines & Diagnostics in order to create vaccines against bird flu. And another company *Novavax* (Rockville-based, Maryland), produces experimental recombinant virus-like particle vaccines, including the H1N1 swine flu vaccine, which in 2009 were distributed for a clinical trial, on the territory of USA.<sup>25</sup>

**... questions and possible explanations**

One question arises: could it be that the 'swine flu' can be caused when different vaccines have been accidentally swapped? The only explanation for this, is that the contaminated vaccine with the 'swine flu' DNA, was spread for use in USA for clinical trials. The manufactured recombinant vaccine, more likely, was already contaminated with the H1N1 virus, which was similar to the 'swine flu' virus. This way, it is plausible to assume, that the new recombinant H1N1 virus was 'accidentally' slipped into a vaccine batch to use against seasonal influenza.

The other possible explanation, is that the laboratory tests were not accurate. There was a mix-up. Perhaps, H1N1 virus strain which contains a vaccine against seasonal influenza - was mixed-up with the 2009-H1N1 'swine flu' viral strain. Perhaps, USA government in this case was too hasty to declare a 'dangerous threat', but in fact – deliberately or not deliberately, they announced an epidemic and started to trade with it. Or maybe this 'accidental leak' was actually necessary as a trigger mechanism to put into some action an 'active operation' to test possible future acts of 'information bioterrorism'?

**SARS 2002-2003, for example**

Another example – SARS disease outbreak, 2002–2003. Like the former 'global epidemics', there appeared numerous "horror stories" in mass media as if from the war zones. Mass media, senior government officials and international organizations, quickly rushed to inform society, that a worldwide pandemic is coming and will cause hundreds of millions of deaths. There have been no laboratory-confirmed cases of mutation of a causative virus into a form that can spread from person to person and its mutation to a dangerous form that could lead to a world-wide pandemic.

**WHO and CDC – contradictions regarding the death rate**

Nevertheless, WHO informs, that "total number of those affected across the world is 8,422, and of those 916 people have

died, which comes to 10% of the death rate."<sup>26</sup> The WHO info contradicts info coming from CDC, in its SARS' report: "Since 2003, there have not been known cases of SARS reported anywhere in the world".<sup>27</sup>

**Was SARS artificially created...**

I do not exclude a possibility that SARS virus may have been created as a biological weapon in a military laboratory somewhere, and was accidentally or intentionally released from an ultra-secure and/or biodefence lab in Asia. The fact that SARS may have been artificially created, was also reported by authoritative academics and medical doctors.<sup>28,29</sup> Let's look at some facts which may reinforce these plausibility. The SARS virus is not closely related to any of three known classes of coronavirus<sup>30</sup>. Only a computer model, of the 'could be virus' was given to the science community. Not one single photograph of the virus from laboratory exists; there's only a published sequence of a mutated / ordinary coronavirus, which does cause a seasonal flu illness.<sup>31</sup>

**...and released accidentally?**

The genetic makeup of the new virus is a combination of two well-known viruses, of which the natural, but not man-made (artificial), combination in the natural environment is impossible. This may be engineered only in a laboratory, and was likely that SARS was an accidental release from a bio-medical military laboratory.<sup>32</sup> More detailed analysis of samples, which were screened in the CDC, using a very powerful analytical molecular tool – polymerase chain reaction (PCR), indicated that the new virus is not closely related to any known virus at all, human, mouse, bovine, cat, pig, bird, notwithstanding.<sup>33</sup>

**Other strange peculiarities**

There have also been other strange unexplainable peculiarities that were found. "Scientists still do not fully understand exactly where or how SARS emerged 18 months ago..." commented Washington Post.<sup>34</sup> Some scientists in the West even offered to decipher SARS '*Systematic and Ribald Scare-mongering*'.

I would like to also note, that even the apparently innocent conventional research experiments with non-harmful micro-organisms may end in the creation of pathogenic or even deliberately creation of extremely deadly form of pathogens. For example, in Australia in 2001 scientists accidentally created a deadly virus that, instead of sterilising mice as intended, killed all its victims in the course of genetic manipulating a harmless virus.<sup>35</sup> The virus, a modified mousepox, which

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does not affect humans, has raised fears that the technology could be used for the development of bio-warfare agents.<sup>36</sup> The virus, that causes polio has been built from scratch in the US conventional lab, using nothing more than genetic sequence information from public databases and readily available technology.<sup>37,38</sup> Another example, – a scientist funded by the US government has deliberately created an extremely deadly form of mousepox, a relative of the smallpox virus, through genetic engineering.<sup>39</sup>

**Mysterious outbreaks of accidentally created deadly agents**

There have been also several incidents since the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention has been signed off in 1972.

- The anthrax outbreak in Sverdlovsk city of the Soviet Union in 1979, – caused by an accidental release of deadly weaponised anthrax spores through a ventilation system of the Sverdlovsk secret biological arms production facility.
- The smallpox virus escaped from a laboratory at the University of Birmingham in England, 1978.
- A mysterious outbreak in Oblivskaya village, the Volgograd-Rostov region, Russia, July-August 1999, – affected about 700 people (36 died) in total in the region. It was suspected that in the village there was an accidental release of a synthesized virus which was originated in a laboratory.<sup>40,41</sup>
- There were 14 bio-containment breaches in the USA between 1994 and 2004 of dangerous disease agents, according to information from the non-profit, non-governmental organisation, the Council for Responsible Genetics, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.<sup>42</sup> The agents included AIDS, Ebola virus, West Nile virus, plague, anthrax and tularaemia.
- Three laboratory workers from Boston University, Biosafety Level 4 Laboratory (BSL4), USA, – the laboratory with the highest level of biosafety/security, – were infected with tularaemia between May and September 2004.<sup>43</sup>
- And I could also count three laboratory acquired SARS outbreaks in Singapore (September 2003), Taiwan (December 2003), and Mainland China (March 2004).

This list may be extended. Fortunately these accidentally created deadly agents did not result in any disease outbreaks (excerpt the Sverdlovsk's and Oblivskaya's cases of cause). But how many similar deadly pathogens may be accidentally and/or deliberately created in conventional and/or biodefence laboratories in a fu-

ture? This also raises the worrying possibility that similar approaches may be used by a skilled research-scientist to create dangerous pathogens or resurrect infectious diseases without having to gain access to protected viral stocks.

**Propaganda effects especially people who are not well informed**

*Q5: Many people consider themselves as well informed about each and everything and what is beyond this information is labelled conspiracy theory. How to deal with this and explain them they are wrong?*

Propaganda is the main weapon to influence people, especially if they are not well informed. An ordinary human being it appears only has a 'surface' knowledge about how real these kinds of threats are, and is used to rely on the opinions of mass media.

**What was formerly considered a conspiracy theory, is now a fact**

What was formerly considered a conspiracy theory, is now a fact. For example, the theory of *Giordano Bruno*, that the Earth is not flat but round, and *Galileo Galilei's* theory that it spins and rotates around the sun, and not the other way around. Bruno was burnt at the stake for his 'devilish theory', and Galilei was pushed to publicly denounce his theory.

It is necessary to hear another view, however strange or paradoxical it may seem, to talk about the problem and search for truth. It is necessary to bring scientists to the discussion – they are the one who are less influenced by the public opinion, as the nature of academia is the search for truth. It's important to bring philosophers and philanthropists, people from the sphere of education, and not to use propaganda about how to prepare food and how to survive on Treasure Island.

**Good education and parenting – best protection against propaganda and manipulation**

It all starts from school and children's upbringing. Eastern wisdom says "today's children, tomorrow's generation". You have to raise a person to be a creator, not a dumbed-down consumer.

In today's education system, kids are given tests with a 'yes' or a 'no' answer. They are not taught how to be creators and to think and solve complex puzzles; they are not given written exercises, not given essays on certain philosophical themes. We are to be used to press the button *Yahoo* or *Google*, and there's the answer! And this is a big dependency, as if we are drug-addicts. Such is the way that people are raised, without one's own opinion, because one's

thoughts are formulated by the means of the mass media.

**Manipulation through internet and social media**

Maybe, for someone it is not profitable that people become smarter? This can also be considered as a conspiracy theory. But don't we see, how the education programmes in various countries become somehow diminished, suppressed, weakened? The modern information space is a very comfortable way for a spurt of conspiracy theories. But this is half the problem. Internet and social networks, – are very powerful way to influence a person. These means should be used for good purposes. Otherwise, in the public mind, there will be formed false themes, which would lead people away from the reality. The problem is also that through some 'false idea', people would be misled from the source of the problem to some made-up artificial story. This can be made up by an effective operation – through 'the Overton window',<sup>44</sup> which also known as the window of discourse, which is the range of ideas the public will accept. It is used by media pundits.

During the past 20 years, the world has become virtual, that is full of information. Let's not be naïve and close our eyes on the fact that the world is in a state of influence with information. Perhaps, there's even information wars, because influence over people with information – is a powerful weapon for mass manipulation. The first victim of such influence is – the truth.

**Only educated persons are able to differentiate between conspiracy and truth**

Today there are in use new technologies in order to manipulate mass consciousness, which were not here previously. Due to them, which are used for total disorientation, people are not even aware of what goes on in the world. And all of this are long-standing operations of secret services, who take part in raising the new generation. Only an educated person is in the position to differentiate between a conspiracy, as such, from the truth.

Lies become political weapon. That is why we need to bring up people with a conscious, alert view on today's world events; a view with a wish to act. In today's world, we simply cannot sit and not do anything. It's not good to be on the side-lines, simply a spectator. Conspiracy theories may become a real threat, if their purpose is to deliberately brainwash people.

We must know what we are fighting for – this will allow us to protect ourselves and the affected populations, to maintain our humanity.

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### Real and honest information exchange offers true protection

How can a person escape untruthful information and how is it possible to tell people that they are misled? I think that here the main role can play conferences and forums, like the one which recently happened – 'Mut zur Ethik'. Real and honest, direct information exchange is very important. The latter can be done via honest and objective means of mass information, for example, like your publication – newspapers *Zeit Fragen* and *Current Concerns*. Maybe, we can even think about creating an electronic website, where can be published analytical overviews on current affairs, translated into other languages.

Thank you for the interview,  
Dr Kouzminov

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