



Ron Unz on Neocon Recklessness & COVID Origins

Description

USA: Ron Unz, publisher of the Unz Review, has just published hard copies of two outstanding books, *Our Covid-19 Catastrophe: Was the Epidemic the Result of Biowarfare Blowback?* and *Encountering American Pravda: Essays in a Historical Counter-Narrative*. (Free ebook [HERE](#).)

Our interview begins with a roughly half-hour discussion of why the shockingly persuasive evidence that COVID emerged from a US bio-attack on China and Iran has largely been ignored (outside of a few alternative media shows like this one).

If you are already familiar with that evidence, have listened to previous COVID-related interviews with Ron Unz, watched [our video that has passed 200,000 views](#), and are familiar with Ron's COVID bio-attack thesis, you may want focus on the second half hour, during which we discuss new material focusing on the Ukraine war and the moral and strategic insanity of the neocons who provoked it.

Quick Transcript of 6/11/22 Truth Jihad Radio interview

Kevin Barrett: Welcome to Truth Jihad Radio. Kevin Barrett here, bringing on the most interesting people I can find who have something unusual, interesting or provocative to say that isn't the usual corporate mainstream media pablum. And today I'm bringing back the maybe the most important guy in the alternative media. I would probably make that argument, and other people would too. That's Ron Unz, publisher of The Unz Review. And he is now not just a cyber-author, but also a regular author with two new books that just came out. And we'll talk about those and about what's going on right now in the world. So, hey, welcome, Ron. How are you?

Ron Unz: Hey, fine. Great to be here.

Kevin Barrett: So you just published a piece explaining why you hadn't been publishing anything for a little while, and you summed up the COVID situation and mentioned your take on it, and how mystified you are that the evidence that you've uncovered that COVID was likely a U.S. neocon bio-attack on China and Iran has been lurking at the margins, racking up Rumble views, but hasn't penetrated the

mainstream yet. So maybe we could start there and quickly summarize the points you made in that article.

Ron Unz: Sure. Well, the whole situation is really quite bizarre from my perspective. The COVID outbreak, according to the most recent World Health Organization estimates, probably killed about 15 million people around the world. And actually, The Economist, based on excess deaths, thinks that the figure might even be closer to 20 million. And it's killed at least a million Americans now officially, and probably the numbers are a little bit higher than that. So we're talking about a gigantic world event. It's disrupted the lives of billions of people around the world. Most Americans spent the better part of two years in lockdowns. Our economy has been turned upside down. We ended up having a mass vaccination campaign with all these controversial vaccines, new technology vaccines. And so we're talking about a global event probably more important than anything that has happened since the Second World War. And despite the huge loss of life and tremendous impact on the world, there seems a tremendous reluctance to actually explore the underlying reasons for the outbreak—in other words, what caused it. And the two theories that really have gone back and forth since the beginning... Obviously the original theory was that it was a natural virus, simply something that crossed over from an animal species randomly and just popped up in a totally unexpected sort of way. And then for about the last year, there's been quite a lot of talk of the lab leak hypothesis, which is the notion that the virus was genetically engineered in a lab somewhere and then leaked out of the lab accidentally—probably the Wuhan lab in the city of Wuhan, which is where the virus first appeared.

So, you know, those are basically the two ideas that have been discussed. But from the very beginning, for more than two years, it's seemed to me very obvious that there was clearly a third possibility that should be considered, a much more shocking and horrifying possibility. And that's simply that the viral epidemic was caused by a deliberate biowarfare attack. In other words, if we recognize that it seems increasingly likely that the virus came from a laboratory, that it was a human produced virus, a genetically engineered virus, then it's possible that it leaked from a lab somewhere, but it's also very possible it was deliberately released. And it seems to me that the evidence that it was deliberately released, and in particular deliberately released by elements of the American national security establishment as a deliberate attack against China and against Iran seems very, very compelling. And I've been writing articles pointing to those facts and making the case for well over two years now. And it just seems very strange that there's such tremendous reluctance, both in the mainstream media and even the alternative media, to even simply consider that possibility. Now the facts are very straightforward. America was in the middle of a tremendous geopolitical confrontation with China at the time the virus appeared. In other words, China was regarded as our number one international adversary. We were in a terrible trade war with China. There were even back then noises about possibly war breaking out over Taiwan. So we have a situation where America's leading geopolitical adversary was suddenly struck down by a mysterious virus that at the time seemed that it had a very good possibility of spreading throughout the entire country of China and devastating the Chinese economy.

And very soon after the virus originally appeared in Wuhan, it suddenly jumped 3500 miles to the holy city of Qom in Iran and ended up affecting Iran's political and religious elites. 10% of the entire Iranian parliament was affected. Some of the top Iranian leaders died of COVID. The viral epidemic among Iran's top political religious leadership occurred just a few weeks after America had assassinated General Soleimani, Iran's top military leader. So we have a situation where the two countries in the world that America was most hostile towards at that moment in time were China and Iran. And both of them were almost simultaneously struck down by a mysterious virus that many people now believe

was produced in a laboratory, a genetically engineered virus. So just on the face of it, the fact that virtually no one anywhere simply raised the possibility, merely the possibility, of the viral epidemic being a biowarfare attack seems really quite shocking to me. I'm not talking about hard proof based on what I've said so far, but simply raising the possibility. Americans may or may not be aware of it, but America has the world's oldest, longest-standing biowarfare program going back to the middle of the Second World War. It's been around for nearly 80 years now. America's probably spent about \$100 billion developing its biowarfare technology.

Kevin Barrett: So if we're not attacking China and Iran, we're not getting our money's worth.

Ron Unz: Exactly. When when a country has the world's leading biowarfare system they've invested \$100 billion in producing, and at a point of international confrontation with China and Iran, suddenly China and Iran are both almost simultaneously struck by a mysterious virus that seems to have come from a laboratory somewhere — I mean, those are obviously the possibilities that have to be explored. And when you look at some of the other evidence, as I started digging into it in February and March and April: Another, very clear example is that in 2017 (Trump appointed as biowar czar) one of America's leading biowarfare advocates, a man named Robert Kadlec, who has been writing about biowarfare since the late 1990s, arguing that biowarfare is a uniquely effective means of surreptitiously damaging or debilitating an international rival because it allows plausible deniability. In other words, there's usually no proof you launched a biological attack against your adversary while you can do your adversary tremendous damage. So Donald Trump brought Robert Kadlec into his administration at a senior level in 2017. Then in 2018, China's poultry industry was mysteriously attacked by a viral epidemic, avian flu, that devastated one of China's main food sources, poultry. Then in early 2019 another mysterious viral epidemic hit China again, this time devastating China's pork industry. 40% of all the pigs in China had to be destroyed. These were exactly the sort of food source biowarfare attacks that Kadlec had been advocating in his writings since the late 1990.

So we have a situation where basically Kadlec is brought into the administration in 2017. In 2018, a mysterious viral epidemic devastates China's poultry industry. In early 2019, another mysterious viral epidemic devastates China's pork industry. And then in late 2019, suddenly another viral epidemic, a respiratory virus that is deadly to humans, appears in the city of Wuhan, timed so that it would spread invisibly during the Chinese New Year holidays a few months later and potentially infect the entire country. And there's more than that. From January to August 2019, Robert Kadlec, our chief biowarfare advocate, ran something called the Crimson Contagion Exercise in the United States. For eight months, he worked with federal and state authorities on how America could protect itself from infection of a dangerous respiratory virus. If such a virus suddenly, hypothetically appeared in China two months after the end of that long exercise, a virus of exactly those characteristics, the COVID virus... I mean, what a coincidence.

Kevin Barrett: Coincidence theorists are having a field day. Or they would be having a field day if anybody noticed these coincidences.

Ron Unz: Exactly. And when we hear (about) something called the Crimson Contagion exercise run by America's chief biowarfare advocate, it sounds like some crazy conspiracy crackpot idea that you saw somewhere in the fringes of the Internet. The way I found out about it was a front page story in The New York Times describing the exercise and all the details about it. So all of this evidence is in plain sight. You can get it by looking at the front page of The New York Times. And yet that almost nobody in the alternative media has simply focused on this evidence is really shocking to me. It's the sort of

thing (that) it could be people are simply very nervous about. It's one thing to accuse, for example, Donald Trump, of sending out nasty tweets to insult people or making crude remarks. But we're talking about a situation where there's quite a lot of evidence that the individuals that Donald Trump hired in his administration were responsible for a biowarfare attack against China and Iran that then leak back into the United States and has killed over a million Americans. We're talking about one of the most horrific events in all of American history. And it's just unbelievable that so few people are willing to even consider the whole thing.

Kevin Barrett: It's probably because it is so horrific that it makes it harder for them to consider it. Just like with 9/11. Of course, 911 itself was obviously not nearly as horrific as all kinds of other mass slaughters, including those that our tax dollars pay for almost all the time. But the TV images, and indeed the nearly 3000 deaths all at once, in buildings being blown up like that, was so horrific in terms of its emotional effect on people that it became very, very difficult for people to face the evidence that indeed this had been a false flag operation from within the US and perhaps its partners. And COVID is far more horrific, as you say, in terms of the number killed. And I think that's precisely the reason why it can be so easily hidden in plain sight.

Ron Unz: Yeah. You can imagine a lot of people simply being very, very nervous or cautious about making accusations of such monumental magnitude. The daily lives of virtually all Americans have been disrupted now for two years. A million Americans have died. And when you look at, for example, the very strong evidence that it was due to an illegal American biowarfare attack, again, with Donald Trump almost certainly being unaware of what was going on... But the people he hired were probably responsible for it. And so when you're talking about something like that, it could be it's simply considered too big a story even for people in the alternative media to consider. Though as you mentioned during the introduction, back in February, I finally started doing a few video interviews, notably with you and with other people also.

"COVID-19 BIO-ATTACK SMOKING GUN: VIDEO HAS [200,000 VIEWS ON RUMBLE](#) BUT IS SHADOWBANNED BY YOUTUBE:

And it's just been very heartening that those video interviews have now gotten close to 500,000 views, despite the fact that the focus of attention has shifted so dramatically to the Russian war with Ukraine. So it's clear we're talking about hundreds of thousands of people have watched these discussions. And presumably some of them basically are starting to think, well, why aren't other people in the media talking about it? And the truth is a number of people I do know in the alternative media have privately dropped me notes commending my articles and have been very encouraging and supportive.

But they're very cautious about saying anything themselves. And so it's just a very strange situation when you have what I regard as a lot of very doubtful theories floating around (such as) the idea that Bill Gates wants to exterminate the human race using vaccines — while on the other hand, there's seems to be very clear and substantial evidence that when the two countries America's most hostile towards are both hit by mysterious virus that probably came from a laboratory, it doesn't take a lot of effort to connect the dots together and to see that the likely result is that America was devastated as a consequence. And not only that, but our European allies were devastated. Probably 4 million or 5 million Indians have died from the virus. We're talking about a gigantic geopolitical event that certainly will rank among the most important developments of the last 100 years. And then when you look at the evidence that it probably was an American biowarfare attack and the fact that almost nobody's willing to raise that question, it just quite surprising. And you know, a number of people have told me that

once they actually see the evidence for the first time, they really find it quite compelling. And they're really almost surprised that they've never seen it before anywhere. And it..the whole story is really strange to me.

Kevin Barrett: Yeah. Me too. Now, one of the areas where some of my listeners have questioned your hypothesis, which I largely would accept, is that they wonder about the blowback aspect being how this got out of control and affected the world and then especially the West so powerfully. And they often point to other signs of different kinds of agencies, and especially those in the W.H.O. and environs, having been aware that this was going to happen or was likely to happen. And it occurs to me that there are some parallels with what happened in the early days of nuclear weapons, when the US had a nuclear monopoly and a certain group of scientists and others on the US side actually realized that the US might very well use these weapons if it had the monopoly, and that it actually would be better to get the Soviets some nuclear weapons as well. And they went about doing that. And so you had two different groups at that time with this new and powerful weapon. And the one group was the patriots who just wanted to go out and use it for American power. The other group was the internationalists who saw the larger picture and were not committed to US interests so much.

I wonder if there could be a parallel now where the people who launched this attack on China and Iran, the Pompeo and Bolton style neocons, would have been the equivalent of the nationalists back then wanting to keep the nukes just for America. And then there might be a more liberal internationalist and perhaps Malthusian wing that also might have seen that if this attack were indeed contained inside China and Iran and were successful, that it would not only look very bad for the US, but China would probably retaliate. Iran might even as well. And that group might actually have thought that, number one, they can cover their tracks by spreading it worldwide. Number two, they can accomplish a lot of their other objectives, which actually do include depopulation. And I think there is some evidence that there are Malthusian individuals and groups that have been around for a long time who have perhaps been surreptitiously trying to control global population and who believe that the total global population should be much, much smaller than it is. So what do you think of that and these other hypotheses that would question your thesis that this was accidental blowback from a US attack on these other two countries?

Ron Unz: Well, I'm skeptical of some of those things. And obviously that ties in also with the whole notion of quite a lot of people have said that they think maybe all of this was simply designed to get Donald Trump out of office, in other words, to damage the American economy or American society so severely with lockdowns and economic disruption that Donald Trump would be defeated for re-election. And I'm really quite skeptical of that sort of analysis. For one thing, when you look at basically what happened in the time leading up to the release of the virus, the fact that America under Robert Kadlec had spent eight months coordinating its federal and state authorities planning on how to protect American society from spillover if a mysterious respiratory virus suddenly appeared in China — that eight months of planning didn't work. But on the other hand, it does seem to indicate that they were making an effort to protect American society. I think really the reason the virus spread in the United States the way it did was more of government incompetence rather than anything else. In other words, the CDC ended up botching the production of a testing kit. So initially, for several months, there was no way for American authorities to check whether the virus was spreading or not. It was very difficult to determine who was infected. And then when you look at the lockdowns, again, there's quite a lot of speculation going around that the lockdowns were part of some long-range planning strategy to devastate the American economy and increase the wealth of the wealthiest segment that was invested in high tech and Amazon and companies like that to destroy small business in America.

The lockdowns actually began in my part of the country. Basically, there's one woman, a woman named Sara Cody, who's the public health officer of Santa Clara County. And as the virus was spreading in January and February and the beginning of March in parts of the United States, including here in Silicon Valley, she actually got together with the other public health officers from the Bay Area, the five of them. Nobody really ever heard of her before. I mean, who's ever heard of a public health officer? She wasn't a prominent figure, but she and the other public health officers in the region decided that since the government, since Donald Trump and the people around him, were just ignoring the spread of the virus, they desperately needed to take some action to control it. And since lockdowns had worked in China and since the Chinese had seemed to be fairly successful in stamping out the virus in Wuhan and Hubei province and other parts of China through massive lockdowns, they decided that the only approach they could take would be to implement lockdowns here in the Silicon Valley area. So those were the first lockdowns in the United States. And then after a few days, they were then copied in Los Angeles. And a few days later, they actually were copied throughout the rest of California and then in New York City. But if not for Sara Cody and a few of these local public health officers, it's not at all clear whether America would have actually implemented lockdowns.

Kevin Barrett: Do you still think those lockdowns saved huge numbers of lives? Because I know you published a piece early on suggesting that Sara Cody might have saved I forget the number of lives.

Ron Unz: One million.

Kevin Barrett: So we would have over 2 million deaths if it weren't for her?

Ron Unz: The lockdowns were potentially effective. But the problem is, the reason the Chinese lockdown succeeded is that they were extremely strict and harsh lockdowns. Everybody was locked down. Hundreds of millions, I believe 700 million Chinese were locked down for a period of a few weeks, and that was sufficient to stamp out the virus, after which life went back to normal in China. And it's been pretty much normal since then, except the last few months there have been some additional lockdowns. The problem with the California lockdowns and the American lockdowns is they were much

more leaky. In other words, they weren't nearly as strict as the Chinese lockdowns. So we had the lockdowns, but the virus still continued to spread. And the problem is, in hindsight, you can say the lockdowns really weren't very effective at all, because basically what happened was, I think by now the estimates are that probably 50, 60, 65% of the entire American population has been infected by the virus. So that's pretty much what would have happened if we hadn't had the lockdowns. Now, it's possible that the lockdowns were successful in causing the infections to sort of be spread out over time without overwhelming the health care system. So it's possible that they saved some lives. But probably over a million Americans have died regardless of the lockdowns.

Kevin Barrett: So this raises the issue of the people doing eight months planning Crimson Contagion, Kadlec and his friends. Certainly if they thought they were preparing the US biodefense sector for this, it's hard for me to imagine how they they thought they were doing that effectively, given that apparently they didn't stop to think about how in a society like China, it's much easier to actually conduct these really strict lockdowns and contain this type of virus, whereas in the US it obviously wouldn't be so easy. And you mentioned the lack of testing kits. For goodness sake, if they're spending eight months drilling this bio-attack that they're about to launch against China and Iran, and they're concerned about the blowback, they're spending eight months drilling it for it, why in the world wouldn't they set up to have testing kits available? See, this is where your your thesis starts to make these people look even stupider than even I can imagine them possibly being.

Ron Unz: Well, one thing to keep in mind is I personally doubt that the people involved in the Crimson Contagion exercise were aware that there was going to be a bio-warfare attack against China or Iran. In other words, under my scenario, the number of people involved in actually planning the attack was probably a very small handful of people, probably four or five people, something like that.

Kevin Barrett: Right. Those people should have made sure that there were going to be testing kits.

Ron Unz: Right. But they probably didn't expect it to really come back and hit the United States much anyway (like) the SARS-1 epidemic that had come up in China in 2002 to 2003. People in the rest of the world had been very frightened. There had been concerns that it might spread to the United States. But it never spread here. Not a single American died. It ended up being confined to China. And the MERS epidemic (2012) in the Middle East, again, killed large numbers (hundreds) of people in the Middle East. It never spread to Europe. It never spread to the United States. So, since those two previous coronavirus epidemics had never reached the United States, there probably was a belief that the same thing would happen with this one. In other words, it would end up being confined to China and possibly a few other countries bordering China. And obviously, if we hit Iran, it would be confined to Iran. But there probably was a tremendous amount of overconfidence that since those previous epidemics had never reached the United States, this one wouldn't either. And so what I think probably would have happened is that the conspirators said, well, you know, let's play it doubly safe, and let's sort of suggest to various people in the administration that there's always the risk of a virus suddenly appearing in China or somewhere else. And so we should have some planning exercises. But I really doubt that, for example, there's really no certainty in my mind that someone like Robert Kadlec was actually among the conspirators involved in planning the biowarfare attack.

So it's perfectly possible that neither he nor any of the other officials in the Crimson Contagion exercise were aware that they were actually working on something that might have real world consequences in the very near future, and it was just one of these planning exercises. Now, bureaucracies go through a lot of planning exercises all the time, and it's very rare that any of them directly impact the world in the

near future. So it could be they didn't really take it that seriously. But it's more the fact that we did have eight months of planning exercises aimed at protecting the United States, wargaming how we would protect the United States, from leakage with a dangerous Chinese respiratory virus if it appeared. And that something like that appeared so immediately afterwards, just a couple of months later, raises all sorts of extreme suspicions regarding timing. And my reasoning also applies to these various other things. Like there's the Event 201 scenario that people have talked about a lot, organized by the World Economic Forum, and various other international planning events aimed at potentially coping with dangerous viral outbreaks in the rest of the world and how the individuals involved would protect their countries from those outbreaks. My speculation would be that the individual conspirators involved in planning this biowarfare attack probably would have decided to take the people in their orbit and suggest to them that "there's always the danger of a virus breaking out somewhere. Don't forget the SARS epidemic" (that occurred in China a dozen years earlier). And so for those reasons, they simply encouraged these international bodies to consider planning for dangerous viral outbreaks without any of the people involved being aware that some of the people that they knew might actually be planning to launch a biowarfare attack of that type. So there's a tremendous difference between these sort of general plans that are taking place with these international organizations or, for example, somebody like the head of the World Health Organization saying that there's a high likelihood of a dangerous virus sometime appearing in the future, and something where the timing is so extremely coincidental that it really raises a strong likelihood of foreknowledge on somebody's part. The Crimson Contagion exercise, which was eight months of planning for a dangerous Chinese respiratory virus, followed just a couple of months later by exactly that sort of virus appearing in China and the real world, seems much more suspicious to me than these more general plans by the World Health Organization or other international bodies or the World Economic Forum, which are perfectly reasonable things for these organizations to have done over the previous few years.

Part 2: The COVID Bio-Attack, the Ukraine War, and Other Neocon Debacles

Kevin Barrett: Well, I largely agree. And one of the reasons that your scenario makes even more sense with a bioattack like this than it might with other kinds of military action, is that biological attacks can be launched by such small numbers of people with plausible deniability to the point that maybe they're even invisible to the chain of command. As you suggested, it looks like Trump probably wouldn't have known about this. And that also applies to any kind of thesis about deliberate blowback. When I mentioned earlier that there might have been some individual or group that actually wanted the blowback, it wouldn't have to be any substantial bureaucracy or large number of people, because these biological attacks theoretically can come from very few people, and it becomes very difficult to identify who did them — as we know from the anthrax attack, which clearly came from the US bioweapons sector, almost certainly Battelle Memorial Laboratories in Ohio. And yet the two people that the US government pointed the finger at very likely are innocent, and we probably still don't know precisely who was behind that 2001 Anthrax Deception, as Graham McQueen's book title has it. So I think your scenario makes good sense. And the general suspects here all come out of the neoconservative school of thought, which is a very hard line, militaristic school, with links to Zionism, but is also on the record wanting to maintain the new American century and prevent the rise of any potential challenger to US power, as in the Wolfowitz doctrine. The 9/11 and the anthrax suspected perpetrators, and likewise the likely COVID perpetrators under your scenario, are coming from that

ideological camp.

And now we're in a war in Ukraine where the same school of thought seems to be trying to weaken and ultimately break up Russia by way of setting a bear trap like Afghanistan was in the eighties, and then deal with China, in order to maintain US supremacy under the Wolfowitz doctrine. I'm wondering about your thoughts on this continuity between the 9/11 and anthrax deceptions, the apparent COVID bioattack, and the war in Ukraine.

Ron Unz: Oh, I think there's very clear connection there. And in fact, one of the probably the strongest argument anyone has raised against my hypothetical scenario is that they say they can't believe that even rogue elements of the American national security establishment and the Trump administration would have been so incredibly reckless and foolhardy as to launch biowarfare attacks against China and Iran in these ways. That's the only argument they really make on the other side — that they can't believe anybody could have been that reckless.

Kevin Barrett: You know, that's exactly what Pat Buchanan said to me when I mentioned Cheney and 9/11. "I can't believe my friend Dick Cheney would do such a thing."

Ron Unz: Yeah. But look at the situation in Ukraine right now. The Russians have been claiming for several months now that they have direct, solid evidence that America had been funding the creation of biowarfare laboratories close to the Russian border, developing systems for launching biowarfare attacks against Russia. Now, Russia has the world's largest nuclear arsenal. It's even bigger than the American nuclear arsenal. Russia can incinerate the American population. And when you look at, for example, Victoria Nuland's testimony before Congress, she pretty much admitted the existence of those biowarfare labs. And more and more people know: Tucker Carlson on his show, Glenn Greenwald wrote a column... there seems to be fairly strong evidence that the Russians are telling the truth and that America was funding the creation of biowarfare facilities aimed against Russia in Ukraine close to the Russian border. Now, that's an extraordinarily reckless and foolhardy action for America to take against the world's leading nuclear power. And countries or groups that take extremely reckless and foolhardy action in one area of biowarfare are certainly much more reasonably suspected of doing something similar in other cases. We're talking about biowarfare facilities being developed to attack Russia, and strong evidence that biowarfare attacks were also launched against Iran and against China in the year or two prior to that.

So, overall, all of this really fits together very effectively. We're talking about a group of these deepstate neocons or whatever you want to call them — people who are extraordinarily reckless in their behavior. And now we're still on the brink of a military confrontation with Russia in Ukraine. When you take, for example, someone like the late Stephen Cohen, a leading Russia scholar — as of four or five years ago, he was arguing that America was closer to nuclear war with Russia than we'd been even during the Cuban missile crisis. And that was four or five years ago. Think of where we are right now. America's intelligence operatives in the front page of The New York Times stories are bragging that we are supporting the Ukrainians in assassinating Russian generals. Can you imagine? The American intelligence apparatus is bragging to The New York Times that we are assassinating Russian generals in a war on the Russian border! That was something that would have been unimaginable during the old Cold War against the Soviet Union, because we had leadership at the time that realized that it's very unwise to take actions that could risk a nuclear war. Well, that's exactly what we're doing right now in the Ukraine.

Kevin Barrett: Why do you think we've somehow gotten this incredibly reckless leadership now, post-Cold War? During the Cold War, there was a real threat and an ideology that with good reason the majority of Americans did not appreciate and that was, in fact, dedicated to spreading around the world. And we faced adversaries who really were a threat to U.S. interests. Today it seems that the threat from countries like Russia, China and Iran is much lower. And yet the aggression and sheer reckless depravity of the people running our foreign policy is so much higher. What explains that?

Ron Unz: Well, I think it's the old phrase "power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." After the collapse of the Soviet Union, America in a sense became the world's supreme power with no peer competitor, with no rival. And that led to the sort of arrogance of power, the sort of feeling that America could do anything anywhere in the world without taking into account the logical consequences. When you look at, for example, the way America has behaved in the last 20 years, starting endless wars, attacking other countries, taking extremely reckless actions. And not only in foreign countries, (but also) domestically. The fact that we've inflated our currency — we're really wrecking the American economy right now. We have a generation of leaders who came of age when they believed that America could do anything anywhere in the world to any other country, and no one could dare challenge us. And while they were sort of wrapped up in their arrogance, other countries — I mean, China basically — suddenly became a power that is certainly the rival of the United States. Under Putin, Russia rebuilt its technologies and actually Russia in many ways superior militarily to the United States with their hypersonic missiles and weapons. The problem is, though, the fact that we are not the uniquely all-powerful country in the world is something these individuals have a very hard time recognizing and accepting. And that's obviously the reason that we basically provoked the Ukraine war against Russia, hoping to damage or debilitate Russia and regain our supremacy and then possibly encircle China. But it clearly hasn't worked.

It's been a disastrous geopolitical mistake. Look at, for example, someone like John Mearsheimer, who's very hostile towards China and regards China as being our primary international adversary. From that perspective, a very logical thing to do is for America to basically become much more friendly towards Russia, to enlist Russia as an ally. And instead we have done the exact opposite. We have basically made Russia our sworn enemy. And now we've pushed Russia and China into an alliance together, with Iran as well. So what we have done because of our incredible arrogance and incredible recklessness is to push the major countries in the world that are not controlled by the United States

into an anti-American alliance, including Russia, including China, including to some extent, Iran now, even including India, because of our arrogance. And so with these large and powerful other countries all forming a coalition against the United States, our power has very clearly been checked. And it's just a very bizarre sort of thing that we've done. We've behaved in such an irrational way in the last 20 years since 9/11, but especially the last few years, that I think future historians, assuming the world doesn't get blown up, will point to this as one of the most disastrous strategic mistakes any major country has ever taken. To push Russia and China together where they complement each other so effectively! Russia basically has massive natural resources and China has massive industry. And together they really are a very, very formidable power. We have created the Russia-China bloc.

Kevin Barrett: Right. If I were a professional paranoid conspiracy theorist, as I've been accused of being, I might wonder whether somebody working against the United States had created the neoconservative movement. I remember back in the in the day when James Angleton was running the counterintelligence division of the CIA, he was supposedly becoming paranoid and believing that there were there was a mole, a high level mole, who had infiltrated U.S. intelligence and was working against us. And this posed a grave threat to national security. And he embarked on a mole hunt that greatly weakened the CIA and the country. And at the end of the day, it looks like if there was a mole, it would have been him. And so today, one always has to wonder whether these neocons who blew up the Twin Towers on 9/11 and launched the anthrax attack, all of this weakening the United States in so many ways, leading to wars against countries that we had absolutely no interest in going to war against, and spending \$7 trillion plus for these wars, squandering our soft power and reputation... And then moving on to the COVID debacle that you've described, and this Ukraine debacle that you've described. If there were an enemy to the United States that could somehow infiltrate the policymaking apparatus, how could they do a better job than these neocons have done?

Ron Unz: I agree with you there. And the really bizarre and ironic thing is these crazy policies, which are so counterproductive to American strategic interests, now control both the Democratic and the Republican parties. The one thing the two parties agree on is that China and Russia are both our enemies, and we have to push them together into an anti-American coalition. It's utterly bizarre. You really have to look long and hard for any major country in history, in modern history, to have taken such incredibly counterproductive actions as to push Russia and China together the way America has. And it makes absolutely no sense. And we've also devastated our own economy. Right now we have the highest inflation by most estimates we've had in 40 years — some people claim it's the highest inflation we've ever had — because of our reckless spending, because of all these supply chain problems. We've really almost wrecked the American economy right now. And we have a stock market bubble. But once the stock market bubble collapses...you have all the crazy cryptocurrency nonsense and everything like that...once we finally have a collapse of the stock market bubble, I think America will be in a very, very difficult financial position internally. And again, we've brought it on ourselves. When you look at, for example, gasoline prices being so high, the reason they're high is we're preventing the Russians from exporting their gasoline.

Kevin Barrett: It's price supports for Russian oil and Russian gas exports.

Ron Unz: It's just crazy what we're doing. When you look at, for example, what happened after the 1973 war, because of America's support for Israel, you had the Arab countries, Saudi Arabia and the other Arab countries, basically embargo oil to the United States. Imagine what would have happened if in 1973 it had not been the Saudis that embargoed oil shipments to the United States, but if America

had embargoed Saudi oil. That's what we've done.

Kevin Barrett: Some think Kissinger actually did that on purpose in order to create the petrodollar.

Ron Unz: Right, there are various theories about what happened. But clearly what we've done right now is bolster the Russian economy by raising oil prices. The ruble is now stronger than it was before we implemented all these sanctions against Russia. Also because of these crazy sanction policies, we've basically destroyed the segment of the Russian elites who are most in our influence. In other words, all of these billionaires, the oligarchs, were the elements of the Russian elite that were most under Western influence. And that gave us some influence in Russian society. And we've basically devastated them. We've cut off our own potential supporters in Russia. I mean, in a sense. Quite a lot of people more aligned with other elements of the Russian camp have said that Putin probably is very happy with what we've done, because we have finally destroyed the power of the Russian oligarchs that he himself would not have been able to destroy. We've confiscated their yachts, we've confiscated their bank accounts. We've basically destroyed them. And those were the only Russians that we had influence over.

So it is really just utterly bizarre what America has done. And in the same way, for example, we have made it very clear to the Chinese that they have to develop replacement technologies and that they can't count on the West — (that) at some point in the future we could cut them off from all of these technologies. So the Chinese are now making a tremendous effort to develop a domestic microchip industry that will be completely self-sufficient and insulated from Western pressure. It's just unbelievably counterproductive, all of these things we've done. But we're living in the West right now, so we'll have to see the consequences of it.

Kevin Barrett: Right. And so in terms of pushing back against this, a few years ago, you published a very interesting article arguing that everybody who is concerned with these issues, especially the ones that are too big for the mainstream to talk about, should recognize that our primary enemy is the mainstream media itself. And so we should join together and overlook the differences of opinion amongst those of us who are pushing back against the mainstream on these issues and unite to beat up on the mainstream media. And I think you're absolutely right. I think I was pretty much doing that even before you formulated it in that article. And today, I wonder if that strategy still has promise, or will we have to scramble and improvise something if and when the economic collapse changes the game board? What do you think we should be doing strategically now in terms of trying to push back against these completely insane forces that you've described?

Ron Unz: Well, I still probably would hold with my view that the mainstream media, the establishment media, must be the primary target of all individuals and all groups that are opposed to the status quo. The media is what has to be defeated before any of these other ideas can come out. And so even (among) individuals who may strongly disagree with each other about what direction the country should go or what the problems are, even which areas the media is most wrong in, I think effort has to be made to completely discredit the media. And once the media has been weakened, that obviously allows all of these other ideas to gain traction. And I think probably the most effective way of striking blows against the media is to focus on issues or facts that can be brought to the attention of people, and it can be pointed out to them that the media completely ignores them. To give the most extreme example: To the extent that my biowarfare hypothesis were more widely known and more widely believed, and if people started really thinking it probably was true or possibly true, or even a 20% to

30% chance it's true, they really would have to begin asking themselves, why has the media ignored all these facts? And once you can point to a sufficient number of issues where the media simply ignores the reality of the situation and have covered something up, I think the end result is that the media becomes sufficiently discredited that people are willing to accept other hypotheses that the media ignores.

And as we mentioned right at the beginning of the conversation, I've just come out with hard copy editions of collections of some of my articles in my American Pravda series. And the first collection I came out with is a really slim volume containing the first articles in my American Pravda series, which really was primarily started after I came across the work of Sydney Schanberg, a very prominent journalist. He'd been a top editor at the New York Times, a Pulitzer Prize winner, a winner of two George Polk Awards. He'd written the classic Vietnam War story, The Killing Fields, which they then made into an Oscar-winning movie. It made him one of the most famous journalists in the United States. (He was) a very, very prominent, mainstream, respectable, highly regarded journalist. And he ended up, in the early 1990s, discovering the reality of the Vietnam P.O.W.s: the fact that North Vietnam after the end of the Vietnam War did very likely keep back hundreds of American POWs and demand that America pay the money that we'd promised them during the Vietnam peace talks. He ended up shocking me when I read those articles by him. The fact that nobody in the media was able to even refer to all the evidence he had on that shocking story, really one of the biggest scandals of the second half of the 20th century, with John McCain having been one of the key figures involved in the cover-up — the fact that somebody of that standing, that media credibility, had assembled an enormous mountain of evidence in favor of this gigantic scandal, and nobody in the media was willing to cover it — that really was one of the things that made me think that if something like that could be hidden by the media, many other things might be hidden as well. And that's really what persuaded me to start writing my American Pravda series. So to the extent that I've been able to come up with a lot of these articles — certainly lots of other people have as well — major stories ignored by the media — if individuals then start seeing those stories could be ignored, they naturally should start thinking that quite possibly other stories could be ignored as well. And the combination of all those things, I think, makes the media much more vulnerable and much weaker. And people start to think that there might be many other things going on right now that the media simply ignores, including all of these controversial issues having to do with Russia and China and the Ukraine war and other things like that.

Kevin Barrett: Yeah, I think that's true. I think that to some extent many of us had already been following your strategy for quite some time, especially in the wake of 9/11, and by weakening the credibility of the mainstream media to a certain extent, we open the door for Trump to win the presidency by beating up on the media in ways that were sometimes even crazier than the media's position on things. And now the left-liberal dominant intellectual milieu has been herded into support for insane US policies against Russia and China, and silence on the COVID attack. They've been herded into extreme conformity and lapping up the mainstream narrative by the demonization of Trump, who was elected by those of us, or perhaps to some extent thanks to those of us, who bashed the mainstream media enough that a lot of people didn't believe it anymore. So I think it's a very complex and volatile situation. It's not something that's easily predictable how things are going to play out. But I think overall, your strategy makes a lot of sense in the long term as it's really the the only available one. So that book is Encountering American Pravda: Essays in a Historical Counter-Narrative. It's available on Amazon and I will link it at the radio blog, which people can find by going to truth jihad dot com and clicking on the radio link. And then also your other book is Our COVID 19 Catastrophe: Was the Epidemic the Result of Biowarfare Blowback? Both of these are now available in paperback, very

reasonably priced, especially considering the explosive and very well-reasoned and condensed information in in these books. So congratulations, Ron. I appreciate your terrific work and I've already ordered both of these books, and I hope a lot of other people will, too.

Ron Unz: Hey, thanks a lot. And it seems to me one advantage of putting them in book form is if somebody, for example, orders a copy for a friend of his, it's unlikely that the person would just toss it in the trash without at least taking a look at it. And once you start taking a look at it, one thing might lead to another. It could be somebody's perception will really be changed on these historical events. So that's one reason I wanted to price them very reasonably so that people could buy them for friends of theirs and that sort of thing.

Kevin Barrett: Okay! If you have any open-minded or halfway intelligent friends, consider sending them copies of the book. Well, thanks so much, Ron. It was great talking with you and catching up with you. I appreciate your fantastic work and I hope it staves off doomsday and/or the next neocon act of insane recklessness. All we can do is pray and say Inshallah.

By Kevin Barrett, Veterans Today Editor

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