

Flying Pigs and the WHO

Flying Pigs, Tamiflu and Factory Farms Part II:

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WHO takes a page from a Michael Crichton Novel

As the great American poet Yogi Berra might have put it, 'this just gets absurder and absurder.' The international agencies supposedly responsible for monitoring worldwide dangers of new pandemic threats, the WHO and CDC are acting like the directors of a Hollywood 'B' grade sci-fi movie or the author of a copycat version of Michael Crichton's Andromeda Strain novel. The global panic over outbreak of a new human-to-human Swine Flu pandemic is increasingly revealed as a likely operation in mass psychological terror whose only beneficiaries are the few global pharmaceutical giants that are in the business of peddling so-called 'antiviral' drugs—Roche, SmithKlineGlaxo and Novavax most prominently. The losers are the rest of us normal folks.

The releases of the WHO in Geneva and the US Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, the central coordinating agencies in this production, are worth careful study. On April 30 the CDC issued a detailed report with the alarming title, *Swine-Origin Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infections in a School — New York City*. The report described in detail a school in New York City where, 'As of April 28, approximately half (45) of all U.S. cases of S-OIV infection had been confirmed among students and staff members.' The CDC called these cases all 'genetically similar to viruses subsequently isolated from patients in Mexico.'¹ We are not told in scientific terms what 'genetically similar to' means, but it sure sounds ominous.

At that point, the CDC claimed 109 victims of confirmed Swine Flu in the United States. Forty five of the 109 came from this New York School. The TV news channels were flooded with panic messages of the uncontrolled spread of Swine Flu.

On April 29, the next day, the WHO Director-General, Dr Margaret Chan, upgraded their Swine Flu Pandemic alert status from a Phase 4 event to Phase 5, a step below full global Pandemic Alert.

According to WHO, Phase 5 indicates that there is evidence of the virus being spread from human-to-human in at least two countries in one WHO region. Phase 6, the pandemic phase, is characterised by increased and sustained transmission in the general population. In her announcement of the upgrade, Dr Chan made an unfortunate panic-making added comment that was predictably grabbed onto by CNN and the world media: 'After all it really is all of humanity that is under threat during a pandemic.'² Note the WHO Director-General had not declared a Pandemic Phase 6 alert, but in a speech in Geneva in an apparent side comment,

merely made the self-evident observation that ‘during a pandemic’ all humanity is under threat.’

A press release by the Atlanta-based CDC stated, ‘On May 3, CDC is scheduled to complete deployment of 25 percent of the supplies in the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to all states in the continental United States. These supplies and medicines will help states and US territories respond to the outbreak. In addition, the Federal Government and manufacturers have begun the process of developing a vaccine against the novel H1N1 flu virus.’³ The pandemic response apparatus was going into high gear.

The 45 New York City school children the CDC solemnly reported were ‘confirmed cases of swine-origin influenza A (H1N1) virus (S-OIV) infection,’ ninety-five percent of whom reported to the health authorities symptoms that included ‘fever plus cough and/or sore throat, meeting the CDC definition for influenza-like illness (ILI).’

OK. Better to be cautious when dealing with a new form of Andromeda Strain. But cough? Sore throat? Fever? Aren’t these pretty vague ordinary symptoms? Not for CDC apparently. The 45 kids were immediately added to the growing ‘confirmed cases’ statistics, fuelling emergency responses, statements by the President of the United States, economic catastrophe to the fragile Mexican economy as tourism dried up overnight, and worldwide fears of a new Black Death or at least a new version of the 1918 Spanish Flu plague.

The CDC hastened to add the note, ‘symptoms in these patients appear to be similar to those of seasonal influenza.’ For those bothering to read through three detailed pages of the CDC New York report, they found near the end that, ‘on April 27, 37 patients (84%) reported that their symptoms were stable or improving, three (7%) reported worsening symptoms (two of whom later reported improvement), and four (9%) reported complete resolution of symptoms. Only one reported having been hospitalized for syncope and released after overnight observation.’ The CDC adds, ‘To date, this school-based outbreak is the largest cluster of S-OIV cases reported in the United States.’⁴

In addition to the 109 ‘confirmed cases’ reported in the United States, including one death of a Mexican boy in Texas, the CDC reported as of April 29, ‘a total of 57 confirmed cases had been reported, including seven deaths (in Mexico). By country, the following numbers of cases had been reported: Mexico (26); Canada (13); United Kingdom (five); Spain (four); Germany and New Zealand (three each); Israel (two); and Austria (one).’⁵ Is this another case of ‘Chicken Little’ crying the sky is falling?

A revealing name change

Now, not only are the alleged victims in New York of the worst plague since the Black Death showing signs of remarkable recovery after only days, but the WHO also announces a name change in the middle of the worldwide events. By May 1 the WHO, the CDC and the National Institutes of Health in Maryland all announced the name Swine Flu was no longer appropriate, that, despite the fact that according to Dr. Raul Rabadan, a professor of computational biology at Columbia University, six of the eight genetic segments are purely swine flu and the other two segments are bird and human, but have lived in swine for the past decade.⁶

We instead are told to call it Influenza A (H1N1). That’s a catchy name.

The name change came following a heavy lobbying campaign by the US pig industry to drop the Swine Flu label as it was apparently cutting into pork sales. The largest US and world pig producer, Smithfield Foods of Virginia, was most certainly among those lobbying CDC and the WHO for the name change. They won their wish. But name change or not, the swine production process of Smithfield Foods and other industrialized Factory Farms or as they are technically known, CAFOs—Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation—bears closer scrutiny.

As I detailed in Part I, the Mexican Swine Flu deaths and illness first were recorded in La Gloria, Perote Municipality, Veracruz State, Mexico, where local residents had for weeks prior to the official announcement been protesting the dangers of the huge Smithfield Foods pig CAFO in the village. Children and adults alike were reported having a rash of symptoms in the vicinity of the vast pig waste linked to the site. Smithfield Foods is the world's largest industrialized pig meat producer. It also has one of the most egregious health and safety records.

Pig feces and other niceties

Feces is the Latin term for what most of the world terms shit, the waste product of human or animal digestion. Pigs are world champion waste producers. An average pig produces some three times in weight the amount of fecal matter that an adult person does. As GRAIN, an agricultural organization reports, 'the rise of large-scale factory farms in North America has created the perfect breeding grounds for the emergence and spread of new highly-virulent strains of influenza.'⁷ The pig fecal waste product is at the center of the problem, something the CDC name change conveniently tends to obscure.

As the GRAIN study notes, because concentrated animal feeding operations tend to concentrate large numbers of animals close together, they are ideal breeding grounds for toxins and virulent pathogens. In 2003 *Science* magazine warned that swine flu was 'on a new evolutionary 'fast track' due to the increasing size of factory farms and the widespread use of vaccines in these operations.'⁸ It's the same story with bird flu, where huge industrial CAFO Factory Farms with tens of thousands of chickens breed toxic waste galore.

Smithfield Foods, the world's biggest hog butcher and CAFO owner has an impressive track record of violations of health and safety including water safety laws. In the USA, the world's largest pig CAFO is in Tar Heel, North Carolina. According to local reports the town could easily be renamed Pig Waste, N.C. given the scale of fecal waste and combined matter Smithfield Foods' Tar Heel CAFO emits locally.

As Jeff Tietz, in an analysis of the pig waste problem calculated, 'the best estimates put Smithfield's total waste discharge at 26 million tons a year. That would fill four Yankee Stadiums. Even when divided among the many small pig production units that surround the company's slaughterhouses, that is not a containable amount.'⁹

Tietz adds, 'So prodigious is its fecal waste, however, that if the company treated its effluvia as big-city governments do — even if it came marginally close to that standard — it would lose money. So many of its contractors allow great volumes of waste to run out of their slope-floored barns and sit blithely in the open, untreated, where the elements break it down and gravity pulls it into groundwater and river systems. Although the company proclaims a culture of environmental responsibility, ostentatious pollution is a linchpin of Smithfield's business model.'¹⁰

The problem, he and other critics of CAFO pollutants stress, is not just normal pig waste, but waste combined with staggering volumes of antibiotics and toxic chemicals used by Smithfield Foods and similar industrial CAFO operations to maximize 'efficiency.'

Tietz notes, 'A lot of pig shit is one thing; a lot of highly toxic pig shit is another. The excrement of Smithfield hogs is hardly even pig shit: On a continuum of pollutants, it is probably closer to radioactive waste than to organic manure. The reason it is so toxic is Smithfield's efficiency. The company produces 6 billion pounds of packaged pork each year. That's a remarkable achievement, a prolificacy unimagined only two decades ago, and the only way to do it is to raise pigs in astonishing, unprecedented concentrations.'¹¹



The degrees of concentration in the Smithfield Foods vertically integrated pig meat concentrations have little to do with traditional hog farming. In facilities now spread around the world, Smithfield's pigs live by the hundreds or thousands in warehouse-like barns, in rows of wall-to-wall pens. Sows are artificially inseminated and fed and delivered of their piglets in cages so small they cannot turn around.

As Tietz notes, 'Forty fully grown 250-pound male hogs often occupy a pen the size of a tiny apartment. They trample each other to death. There is no sunlight, straw, fresh air or earth. The floors are slatted to allow excrement to fall into a catchment pit under the pens, but many things besides excrement can wind up in the pits: afterbirths, piglets accidentally crushed by their mothers, old batteries, broken bottles of insecticide, antibiotic syringes, stillborn pigs — anything small enough to fit through the foot-wide pipes that drain the pits. The pipes remain closed until enough sewage accumulates in the pits to create good expulsion pressure; then the pipes are opened and everything bursts out into a large holding pond.'¹²

He continues on the toxic CAFO conditions: 'They become susceptible to infection, and in such dense quarters microbes or parasites or fungi, once established in one pig, will rush sprite-like through the whole population. Accordingly, factory pigs are infused with a huge range of antibiotics and vaccines, and are doused with insecticides. Without these compounds — oxytetracycline, draxxin, ceftiofur, tiamulin — diseases would likely kill them. Thus factory-farm pigs remain in a state of dying until they're slaughtered. When a pig

nearly ready to be slaughtered grows ill, workers sometimes shoot it up with as many drugs as necessary to get it to the slaughterhouse under its own power. As long as the pig remains ambulatory, it can be legally killed and sold as meat.’ 13

Jeff Tietz is not the only one who has noticed the gargantuan scale of the Smithfield Foods CAFO pig waste problem. The United States Government Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, has repeatedly fined Smithfield Foods for damage to local water supply with discharge of its pig waste from its CAFOs at Tar Heel and elsewhere across the USA. In Virginia, its home state, Smithfield was fined \$12.6 million in 1997 for 6,900 violations of the Clean Water Act — the third-largest civil penalty ever levied under the act by the EPA, for waste generated during the hog-slaughtering and meat processing operations.¹⁴ There was little convincing evidence the fines changed their practice of waste disposal in any significant way.

Smithfield Foods has spread its hog CAFOs to other countries where environmental regulations are presumably less strict, including Romania, Poland, and of course, rural Mexico. Several years ago the Smithfield pig CAFO in Romania was focus of major accusations by local and Government health officials. Smithfield refused to let local authorities enter its pig farms after residents complained of the stench coming from hundreds of dead corpses of pigs left rotting for days at the farms. ‘Our doctors have not had access to the American [company’s] farms to effect routine inspections,’ stated Csaba Daroczi, assistant director at the Timisoara Hygiene and Veterinary Authority in Romania. ‘Every time they tried, they were pushed away by the guards. Smithfield proposed that we sign an agreement that would oblige us to warn them three days before each inspection.’ It later emerged that Smithfield had been covering up a major outbreak of classical swine fever on its Romanian CAFO farms.¹⁵

The Drug Cartel comes in

Rather than order a full-scale independent investigation into the pathogen-generation in the toxic waste of Smithfield Foods’ Veracruz CAFO pig operations or other similar pig CAFOs around the world for production of deadly toxics and various possible pathogens, the CDC and increasingly the WHO seem to be more concerned with creating a climate for mass distribution of what have been documented to be dangerous, and in some cases deadly, influenza drugs such as Tamiflu.

On April 14, almost two weeks before the panic over Mexico’s cases of Swine Flu or as CDC now prefers, Influenza A H1N1, the US pharmaceutical company, Novavax announced a pre-clinical study allegedly showing, ‘an investigational H1N1 virus-like particle (VLP) vaccine based on the 1918 Spanish influenza strain protected against both the Spanish flu and a highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza strain.’ The genetically-manipulated vaccine of Novavax, the company claimed, ‘protected Mice and Ferrets Against the Spanish Flu and Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Bird Flu,’ and also conveniently ‘provided protection against highly pathogenic H1N1 and H5N1 Influenza strains.’¹⁶

On April 24, the WHO issued a press release stating that ‘The Swine Influenza A/H1N1 viruses characterized in this outbreak have not been previously detected in pigs or humans. The viruses so far characterized have been sensitive to oseltamivir...’ Oseltamivir is the technical name for Tamiflu, the drug invented by Donald Rumsfeld’s Gilead Sciences and licensed to Roche Inc. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a convenient Emergency Authorization on April 27 that allows US health officials and others to administer

Tamiflu even to infants under one year of age. The FDA statement added it had decided, 'to authorize the use of unapproved or uncleared medical products or unapproved or uncleared uses of approved or cleared medical products following a determination and declaration of emergency.'¹⁷

That suggests that the US Government has or is about to release experimental drugs on a panicked population such as the VLP-based Influenza vaccine of Novavax, as well as the vast stockpiles of Tamiflu and influenza drugs sold by giants like GlaxoSmithKline's *Relenza* (zanamivir).

With the evidence to date of the scale of the 'confirmed' cases of Swine Flu H1N1 variety worldwide, 985 cases of influenza A (H1N1) or Swine Flu infection, there is hardly grounds to subject the human population to drugs whose side effects have included death or severe complications and typically flu-like symptoms and, as in the case of Tamiflu, never even claim to 'prevent or cure' the influenza. The entire drama of the past weeks is reading more and more like a bad remake of Crichton's *Andromeda Strain*.

Adding a note of the bizarre to the entire drama, in November 2004, amid the early days of the then-world panic over alleged Avian Flu, when Tamiflu was first promoted as a wonder drug by Donald Rumsfeld and others, the WHO published an extraordinary fantasy scenario. In a UN agency normally given to issuing dull scientific notices to world health professionals, the 2004 report was extraordinarily 'prescient' of the current scenario with Swine Flu panic. In a fantasy section titled '**Sometime in the future...**' the WHO wrote four years ago,

Rumours of an outbreak of unusually severe respiratory illness in two villages in a remote province reach the ministry of health in one of the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Member States. A team is dispatched to the province and learns that the outbreak started about a month earlier. The team is able to identify at least 50 cases over the previous month. All age groups have been affected. Twenty patients are currently in the provincial hospital. Five people have already died of pneumonia and acute respiratory failure. Surveillance in surrounding areas is increased, and new cases are identified throughout the province. Respiratory specimens collected from several patients are tested at the national laboratory and are found to be positive for type A influenza virus, but they cannot be further subtyped. The isolates are sent to the WHO Reference Centre for Influenza for further characterization, where they are characterized as influenza A(H6N1), a subtype never isolated from humans before. Gene sequencing studies further indicate that most of the viral genes are from a

*bird influenza virus, with the remaining genes derived from a human strain.*¹⁸

If one changed the name from Influenza A (H6N1) to Influenza A (H1N1) we could be talking about the current situation.

That 2004 WHO fictional scenario reads as if it were the handbook for what has unfolded since late April in the US Mexico and beyond. It leads to serious question whether the world is being submitted to a giant psychological warfare game aimed at inducing them to take massive doses of dangerous drugs to counter a danger that does not actually exist as claimed.

With the reported cases in Mexico clearly dropping off at present and little sign of the feared repeat of the 1918 Spanish Flu or worse as officials were warning only days earlier, it is well beyond time to launch a full-scale worldwide health inquiry into the toxic conditions of CAFO pig and other animal Factory Farm concentrations, and to end the official coverup of what has become a colossal health danger.

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