

## More “Debunked Conspiracy Theories”

For some 18 months, the leftist mainstream media called any suggestion that the China virus leaked from a lab in Wuhan a “debunked conspiracy theory.” It now turns out that the lab-leak hypothesis was strong, with plenty of evidence to back it up (see article on page 23).

Yet the stubborn insistence that the theory was “debunked” invites the observation that the media called any claim with which its worthies disagreed a “debunked conspiracy theory,” even when it was neither debunked nor a conspiracy theory. As well, the media readily published and broadcast truly debunked conspiracy theories. On the one hand, we had the lab-leak hypothesis, and before that the Biden-Burisma and Biden-China influence-peddling schemes. Not debunked. On the other, we had the Russia collusion and Capitol Hill “insurrection” hoaxes. Debunked.

What they all have in common is former President Donald J. Trump. The leftist media doesn’t mind conspiracy theories, as long as the conspirators include Trump in particular and Republicans in general. If the conspirators are leftists, Democrats, or Chinese scientists, the theories are, well, “debunked.”

All on the say-so of editors and reporters who hate Trump like the Hatfields hated the McCoys.

The blood feud began because Trump defeated the media’s candidate. Hillary Clinton “deserved her turn.” She was pro-abortion. She was pro-“gay marriage.” She was perfect. And so the media relentlessly attacked Trump. Nothing he did or said was right, including, of course, his claim, based on intelligence reports, that the virus originated in a lab.

A sample of the “fact checks”:

- Associated Press: “Debunked COVID-19 myths survive online, despite facts ... MYTH: THE VIRUS WAS MAN-MADE.... It was not.... The origins of the virus are far less scandalous: It likely originated in nature.”

- Vox: “The conspiracy theories about the origins of the coronavirus, debunked.... In some right-wing news outlets and on social media, a dangerous conspiracy theory about the origin of the health crisis won’t die.”

- FactCheck.org: “Trump Spreads Distorted Claim on Wuhan Lab Funding”

The *Washington Post* averred that Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) “keeps repeating a coronavirus conspiracy theory that was already debunked.” The *New York Times* was comparatively



yalax/iStock/GettyImagesPlus

measured. It only said Cotton repeated a “fringe theory.”

They were all dead wrong. Their visceral hatred of Trump blinded them. The lab-leak theory was not a “racist” fantasy. It was not “debunked.”

But the narrative fits a pattern: If Trump asserted something, it was debunked. If the media or Democrats asserted something about Trump, it was unassailable truth.

Thus, when Trump asked his Ukrainian counterpart to help him get to the bottom of the Biden-Burisma influence-peddling scheme, the

media falsely accused Trump of retailing a “debunked conspiracy theory.” As vice president, Joe Biden told Ukraine to fire the prosecutor who was investigating Burisma, an energy company, or face losing billions in U.S. financial aid. It was an obvious *quid pro quo* to help his son, Hunter, whom Burisma employed.

When one of Hunter Biden’s former business associates proved that Joe Biden was deeply involved in his son’s business with China, that too became a “baseless conspiracy theory.”

Hunter Biden’s laptop, which contained the e-mails that proved the Biden Boys’ malfeasance, was “Russian disinformation,” the media claimed. That lie fit nicely with claims that Trump was a Russian “asset” who “colluded” with Vladimir Putin to defeat Hillary Clinton. Trump “solicited foreign interference.” Clinton’s shady button men manufactured the collusion tale with British spy Christopher Steele’s hoked-up “dossier.” The real colluder, the real solicitor of “foreign interference,” was Clinton — on two counts: With Steele, and when the Democratic National Committee hired Ukrainians to get dirt on Trump. But that truth was also a “debunked conspiracy theory.”

Aside from the “collusion” tale, the media have peddled another debunked conspiracy theory: Trump inspired an “insurrection” at the U.S. Capitol, where “armed insurrectionists” murdered a Capitol Hill cop. In fact, Trump inspired nothing, the “insurrectionists” weren’t “armed,” and Brian Sicknick, the cop, died of a stroke. One person was murdered that day. A Capitol Hill cop shot Trump supporter and Air Force veteran Ashli Babbitt.

From 2015 through 2021, the game has been this: Heads, the hate-Trump media and Democrats win; tails, Trump and his supporters lose. Or maybe that’s just a debunked conspiracy theory. ■