



**THE SILENCING OF BARBARA LOE FISHER  
AND THE NATIONAL VACCINE INFORMATION  
CENTER IN THE DIGITAL PUBLIC SQUARE: A  
VIOLATION OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT,  
SPEECH, AND CONSCIENCE**

November 1, 2023

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Representative Jim Jordan, Chairman  
U.S. House Judiciary Committee  
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**Re: The Silencing of Barbara Loe Fisher and the National Vaccine Information Center in the Digital Public Square: A Violation of Freedom of Thought, Speech, and Conscience** (Click for Table of Contents)

Dear Representative Jordan:

My consumer advocacy work in the area of vaccine science, policy, law, and ethics spans more than 40 years,<sup>1 2</sup> and I am submitting this report on behalf of the small, highly rated U.S. charity I co-founded with parents of DPT vaccine injured children in 1982, which is known today as the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC).<sup>3</sup> Our mission has been to prevent vaccine injuries and deaths through public education and to defend the ethical principle of informed consent to medical risk taking for the purpose of [reforming public health laws involving vaccination](#) to make them more effective and humane.<sup>4</sup>

We have worked responsibly with federal, state, and local government to articulate questions and public concerns about gaps in vaccine safety science and the ethics of public health policies and laws based on utilitarian ideology that violates the informed consent principle.<sup>5</sup> Inflexible implementation of one-size-fits-all vaccine laws that fail to respect genetic and biological differences among individuals, which place some at higher risk than others for suffering harm, are “cruel and inhuman to the last degree”<sup>6</sup> and violate the fundamental human right to autonomy and protection of bodily integrity.<sup>7 8 9 10</sup>

We believe that every life has value and that the lives of those more vulnerable to suffering complications from vaccination and those more vulnerable to suffering complications from communicable diseases are equally deserving of protection.<sup>11</sup> There are long recognized **significant gaps in scientific knowledge** about vaccine-related injury and death.<sup>12</sup> Since 1982, NVIC has called for more and better quality scientific research into the biological mechanisms and genetic, epigenetic, and environmental high risk factors for increased individual susceptibility to harm from vaccination so the lives of the vaccine vulnerable are valued and not written off as unavoidable casualties of the war on communicable disease<sup>13 14</sup> but that call has been ignored or denigrated by federal health officials, medical trade and the pharmaceutical industry.

**NVIC does not make vaccine use recommendations.** We encourage everyone to take personal responsibility for becoming fully informed about the risks and complications of diseases and vaccines and, in accordance with the **natural right to autonomy** and the **informed consent principle**, we defend the right for adults to make voluntary decisions about vaccination for themselves and their minor children without being threatened, coerced or punished for the decision made.

As a 501C3 educational charity, NVIC works to inform the public about public health policy and law and does not endorse political candidates or participate in political party elections. Rather, since 1983, we have consistently engaged in and **promoted responsible citizen participation in state and federal government** to effect positive change because we know that is how meaningful reform of public policy and law occurs<sup>15</sup> There is no other organization in the U.S. that matches our long, credible, and very transparent public record of working inside and outside of government to advocate for well-informed, voluntary vaccine decision making and meaningful reform of public health policy and law.

NVIC operates four websites:

- [NVIC.org](http://NVIC.org), which was established in 1995 and is the oldest consumer-operated website in the U.S. publishing information on vaccines and diseases, which contains over 2,000 pages of well-referenced information on vaccine science, policy, law, and ethics provided for free to the public;
- [MedAlerts.org](http://MedAlerts.org), which was founded in 2003 and has been sponsored by NVIC since 2006 to provide the public with a free, user-friendly platform for searching the federal Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) database, which was created under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986;
- [NVICAdvocacy.org](http://NVICAdvocacy.org), which is a free, online communications and advocacy network launched in 2010 to keep users informed about vaccine-related bills introduced in state legislatures; and
- [TheVaccineReaction.org](http://TheVaccineReaction.org), a free journal newspaper established in print form in 1995 and re-launched in 2015 as a weekly digital publication to encourage an “enlightened conversation about vaccination, health and autonomy.”

## **An Orchestrated and Highly Publicized Attack on NVIC in 2020-2021**

When the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and then the Secretary of the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** declared a coronavirus outbreak public health emergency at the end of January 2020, followed in March by a global pandemic emergency declaration, NVIC had been publishing well-referenced information about vaccination, health, and autonomy for four decades, including in the digital public square since 1995. During that time, we have encouraged citizens to responsibly participate in the government of our representative democratic republic. By the end of

2020, when NVIC sponsored the **Fifth International Public Conference on Vaccination: Protecting Health and Autonomy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**,<sup>16</sup> online, we were in daily contact with hundreds of thousands of followers on social media and donations to our small charity were stable.

Then, my voice and NVIC's presence were eliminated from the four major social media platforms between March and September 2021 (**Facebook** Mar. 3; **Instagram** Apr. 23; **Twitter** May 23; **YouTube** Sept. 30)<sup>17 18 19</sup> and, without warning, donations to NVIC were blocked by **Pay Pal** on the evening of Dec. 23, 2021, at the request of 18 members of the **U.S. House of Representatives** from one political party.<sup>20 21</sup>

I did not fully understand what was happening at the time. However, after conducting research and reading documents and testimony gathered by the current **U.S. House Judiciary Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government**,<sup>22</sup> I now know that both before and after 2021, there was an orchestrated effort led by government and industry in collaboration with academic institutions and organizations funded by government and industry, as well as national and foreign political operatives and media outlets, to publicly discredit me and the work of the National Vaccine Information Center for the purpose of silencing my voice and persuading major search engines and social media companies to remove NVIC's information from the world wide web.

To fully understand what has been done by U.S. government agency officials working with private corporations, global intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, major media outlets, as well as foreign and domestic political operatives, to discriminate against and violate my freedom of speech and that of the small educational charity I co-founded with parents of vaccine injured children nearly a half century ago, following is a summary of NVIC's history to place this statement into perspective.

## **1986 National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act**

After Kathi Williams and Jeff Schwartz, JD watched the Emmy award-winning NBC television documentary "DPT: Vaccine Roulette" broadcast in Washington, DC, in April 1982,<sup>23 24</sup> we established the non-profit charity **Dissatisfied Parents Together (DPT)** - known today as the **National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC)**. Our first goal was to obtain a purified, less reactive pertussis vaccine for babies and young children in America to replace the old one in DPT that had harmed our children.

Between April 1982 and November 1986, we worked with and testified in Congress during the creation of the **historic National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act**, legislation Congress passed to protect the vaccine supply after vaccine manufacturers threatened to leave the U.S. with no childhood vaccines unless they were shielded from vaccine injury lawsuits.<sup>25 26 27 28 29</sup> Signed by President Reagan on Nov. 12, 1986, the Act was the **first major U.S. law to acknowledge that federally licensed and recommended and state mandated vaccines carry a risk of injury and death**, which can be greater for some individuals, and that preventing vaccine injury and death should be made a national priority in public health policymaking and scientific research.<sup>30</sup>

NVIC co-founders were responsible for securing **vaccine safety informing, recording, reporting, and research provisions** into the law, while protecting the right of parents with vaccine injured children to hold doctors and medical workers liable in a civil court of law for negligent administration of vaccines, and to hold negligent vaccine manufacturers liable in a civil court of law for fraud or product design defect. **When the law was enacted in 1982, negligent doctors and other vaccine providers were still liable for medical malpractice and drug companies were still liable for failing to make a vaccine safer.**<sup>31</sup>

As parents of DPT vaccine injured children working with Congress on the 1986 Act, the co-founders of NVIC were responsible for securing the following safety provisions in the law:

- **Vaccine Information Statement (VIS)** published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services describing disease and vaccine complications to be given by vaccine administrators to parents *before* children are vaccinated;
- **Mandatory vaccine product recordkeeping** by those administering vaccines (drug company name, vaccine product name, and lot number) for office and patient medical records;
- **Mandatory reporting by vaccine administrators** of serious health problems following receipt of federally recommended vaccines to a centralized government operated **Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)** that is transparently open to the public for both reporting and viewing reports made to the system.

**VAERS** played an important role in federal and public monitoring of the more than **1.5M adverse events reported following COVID-19 shots**,<sup>32</sup> even though one federally funded study estimated that only about one percent of vaccine adverse events are ever reported to VAERS.<sup>33</sup> (There are no legal penalties for vaccine providers failing to report hospitalizations, injuries and deaths to VAERS that occur after administration of federally recommended and state mandated vaccines.)

The 1986 Act also created a **federal Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP)** that was designed to be an expedited, more equitable, and less traumatic administrative *alternative* to a lawsuit. Legislative history demonstrates that the **VICP was never intended to be the sole remedy** for the vaccine injured or a poor imitation of a court trial, which, unfortunately, is what it has become today.<sup>34 35 36</sup>

Immediately after the 1986 Act was passed, there were a series of congressional amendments and administrative rule-making actions **severely weakening the Act** by eliminating certain safety and compensation provisions in the Act, including removing medical malpractice liability from negligent doctors and other vaccine administrators.<sup>37</sup> Then, tragically, in 2011, the **US Supreme Court** majority ignored the Act's legislative history and congressional intent<sup>38 39</sup> and sided with the federal government and the

pharmaceutical and medical trade industries in *Bruesewitz v Wyeth*, a DPT vaccine injury design defect lawsuit.<sup>40 41 42</sup> The nation's highest court declared that **federally licensed childhood vaccines are “unavoidably unsafe”** and effectively **removed all civil liability from vaccine manufacturers**— even if there is evidence a company could have made a vaccine less harmful.<sup>43</sup>

Despite what has been done over the years by damaging congressional amendments, federal agency rule-making, and the U.S. Supreme Court to compromise the spirit and intent of the legislation, the 1986 National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act still stands as the **only major law acknowledging that government licensed and recommended vaccines can and do cause the injury and death** of an unknown number of individuals, and that vaccine safety should be made a national priority.<sup>44 45 46 47</sup>

## **NVIC's Four Decades of Public Education, Advocacy, and Active Participation in Government to Make Vaccines and Public Health Policies Safer**

NVIC's co-founders worked for 14 years between 1982 and 1996 to get a purified, less reactive pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine (**DTaP**) licensed and recommended for American babies to replace the old whole cell pertussis vaccine in DPT shots that hurt our children.<sup>48 49 50 51</sup> We also publicly advocated in the 1990s for a change in polio vaccine policy to replace the live oral polio vaccine (**OPV**) that can cause vaccine strain polio paralysis in the recipient or a close contact, with an inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) that does not cause paralysis.<sup>52 53</sup> As a result of our consumer advocacy work, fewer infants and children living in America today are injured or die from pertussis and polio vaccine reactions.

NVIC has coordinated and sponsored **five international public conferences on vaccination** (in 1997, 2000, 2002, 2009, and 2020) that brought together parents, physicians, medical researchers, holistic health professionals, bioethicists, journalists, attorneys, legislators, and human rights advocates to publicly debate and discuss vaccination, health, and autonomy.<sup>54</sup> **C-Span** covered portions of NVIC's 2000 and 2002 conferences.<sup>55</sup> **NVIC's Fifth International Public Conference on Vaccination: Protecting Health and Autonomy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** was held online in October 2020 and was transparently open to the public like our previous conferences.<sup>56</sup>

On May 12, 1986, I made an invited presentation on whole cell pertussis vaccine risks and failures to the **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)**<sup>57</sup> and, between 1988 and 2010 during the administrations of five presidents (Ronald Reagan; William Clinton; George H.W. Bush, Sr., George W. Bush, and Barack Obama), I was appointed to serve as a consumer member on vaccine advisory committees and participate in public engagement projects in the:

- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC)** 1988-1992; Vaccine Policy Analysis Collaborative 2002-2005;<sup>58 59</sup> Blue

Ribbon Panel on Vaccine Safety 2004;<sup>60</sup> Public Engagement Pilot Program on Pandemic Influenza 2005;<sup>61</sup>

- **U.S. Food and Drug Administration Vaccines & Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC)** 1999-2003); and at the
- **National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine Vaccine Safety Forum** member (1995-1998);<sup>62 63 64</sup>
- and made invited presentations to IOM vaccine safety review committees in 2001,<sup>65</sup> 2004<sup>66</sup> and 2012<sup>67</sup> during deliberations at both public and invitation-only government sponsored meetings of vaccine stakeholders.<sup>68 69</sup>

I am the co-author of the seminal 1985 book ***DPT: A Shot in the Dark*** published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, which was the first major well documented critique of the U.S. mass vaccination system.<sup>70 71</sup> I testified in **Congress** in 1999 and 2003 on vaccine risks, federal vaccine injury compensation, and informed consent issues,<sup>72 73 74</sup> and have testified in state legislatures, including defending the religious and conscientious belief exemption to vaccination in the **California state legislature** in 2015<sup>75</sup> and in the **Virginia state legislature** in 2016.<sup>76</sup> Between 1985 and 2021, I was asked by many journalists working for mainstream media outlets to give a consumer perspective for **national and international print and broadcast news reports** on vaccine science, policy and law issues, including live national debates with doctors on vaccine science, policy and law issues.<sup>77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87</sup>

Since the early 1980s, NVIC has worked with families to educate state legislators about vaccine safety and informed consent issues<sup>88</sup> and, since 2010, we have monitored and reported on vaccine-related bills introduced in states through the online **NVIC Advocacy Portal** to secure and **defend informed consent protections in state vaccine laws**. NVIC publishes an annual report on state vaccine legislation and, last year, we reported that no state legislature has voted to enact a COVID vaccine mandate for children to attend school.<sup>89</sup>

Over the past four decades, NVIC staff and representatives have consistently participated in and provided public comment to federal vaccine advisory committees and federal agencies, including to the **Government Accountability Office (GAO)**, on vaccine science, policy, law, and ethics.<sup>90 91 92</sup> For example, NVIC Board member and volunteer Director of Patient Safety and Research, **Vicky Pebsworth, PhD, RN**, was appointed in 2008 to serve for four years as a consumer member of the **FDA Vaccines & Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC)**. She worked with the **Vaccine Safety Working Group** (Epidemiology and Implementation Subcommittees); the **Independent H1N1 Vaccine Safety Risk Assessment Working Group**; and reviewed research proposals for the CDC's Special Interest Panels and Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), a peer review program administered by the **Department of Defense (DoD)**.<sup>93</sup>

***No other organization in the U.S. matches NVIC's dedication and track record for participating in public engagement and providing public comment to the federal government on vaccine science, policy, and law.***

Our accomplishments as consumer advocates calling for better quality vaccine safety science and personalized, more effective, and safer public health policies were possible because we were allowed to exercise freedom of thought, speech, and conscience in America, fundamental freedoms defined as **natural rights a guaranteed to citizens under the U.S. Constitution**.<sup>94 95</sup> We could not have secured vaccine safety provisions in the 1986 Act or prevented the vaccine industry from being given a complete liability shield in that law - and we could not have played a leading role in the improvement of pertussis vaccine in 1996 and reform of polio vaccine policy in 1999 - if the information we published and made available had been censored and our voices silenced in the public square by media and industry at the request of government.

## **Federal Agencies Fast Track and Monitor Vaccines While Blaming “Anti-Vaccine” Parents for Disease Outbreaks**

In 1989-1990, there were reported increases in measles cases after evidence that one dose of MMR vaccine was failing to control measles. CDC officials told pediatricians to give a second dose of MMR vaccine to all children.<sup>96</sup> A public-private partnership mass vaccination effort was launched in 1991 led by a new non-profit organization **Every Child by Two** funded by the **CDC** and vaccine manufacturers,<sup>97 98</sup> to make sure every child got two doses of measles vaccine and all federally recommended vaccines. Co-founded by Rosalyn Carter and Betty Bumpers, Every Child by Two was re-branded as **Vaccinate Your Family** in 2018 and continues to be funded by the **CDC** and **vaccine manufacturers**.<sup>99 100</sup>

The mass vaccination campaign launched in 1991 to make sure every child got every CDC recommended vaccine by age two was positioned as requiring increased **electronic surveillance of vaccination records** by government health officials. By 1993, Congress began to pass legislation to create state and federally monitored electronic **medical records and vaccine tracking systems**,<sup>101 102 103</sup> as well as legislation to allow pharmaceutical companies to pay the FDA “user fees” to **fast track new pharmaceutical products**, including biologicals (vaccines), to licensure.<sup>104</sup> Today, more than half of the FDA’s budget is paid for by drug companies, even though the regulatory agency is legally charged with ensuring pharmaceutical product safety and effectiveness<sup>105</sup>



## Hepatitis B and Chickenpox Vaccines Added to CDC's Childhood Vaccine Schedule

1991 was also the year that CDC officials recommended that all newborns at 12 hours of age in the newborn nursery be injected with the first genetically engineered vaccine, a virus-like particle (VLP) **hepatitis B vaccine**.<sup>106 107</sup> Even though hepatitis B is primarily an adult disease transmitted by needle using drug abusers and persons with multiple sexual partners and the U.S. has historically had a very low incidence of hepatitis B disease,<sup>108 109</sup> the newborn hepatitis B vaccine recommendation followed by serious vaccine reaction reports and a push by government, medical trade, and industry to **make hepatitis B vaccine mandatory** for school attendance, provoked another debate about vaccine safety and mandates that led to **congressional hearings** in 1999.<sup>110</sup>

In 1995, the CDC recommended that all children get the new live virus **chickenpox (varicella zoster) vaccine**, even though chickenpox was a relatively mild disease for most children. Promoted as a vaccine that allowed working mothers to continue working rather than needing to stay home to care for their sick children, there was little discussion about how **naturally acquired immunity** to chickenpox in childhood, as well as asymptomatic boosting through re-exposure to the virus throughout life, helped to **protect against shingles** later in life.<sup>111</sup>

Reported chickenpox vaccine reactions and the push by pharmaceutical and medical trade lobbyists to **add chickenpox vaccine to school mandates** caused another public debate about vaccine safety and mandates.

## Shaming and Blaming Parents of DPT Vaccine Injured Children For Wanting A Less Reactive DPT Vaccine

Although in the 1990s, corporate owners of diversified newspapers, magazines, and television networks were still publishing news reports and presenting both sides in debates about vaccination and health,<sup>112 113</sup> by 1998, **CDC** and **WHO** officials and **university professors** were **shaming and blaming** parents of DPT vaccine injured children as leaders of “anti-vaccine movements.” They alleged that parents, doctors, and journalists who had criticized the safety of the whole cell pertussis vaccine and called for replacement of the old, crude whole cell pertussis vaccine with a purified less reactive DTaP vaccine, were **causing whooping cough outbreaks**.<sup>114</sup>

Even though school vaccination rates were at an all-time high,<sup>115</sup> proponents of “no exceptions” vaccine laws in academia and government were critical of a small minority of parents filing **religious and philosophical belief vaccine exemptions**, as well as states that provided those exemptions. Professors at **Johns Hopkins University** published an article in 2001 with assistance from CDC officials suggesting that - in the name of the “public good” - state health officials should **grill parents** filing vaccine exemptions **about the sincerity of their beliefs** and require them to attend de facto re-education programs to convince them to change their beliefs.<sup>116</sup>

*“Applying the **model of conscientious objectors to conscription** suggests that if states choose to offer nonmedical exemptions, they may be able to optimally balance individual freedoms with public good by **considering the sincerity of beliefs** and requiring parents considering exemptions to **attend individual educational counseling.**”*

Even so, by the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, owners of diversified print publications and television networks continued to publish news reports presenting both sides of arguments about vaccination and allowing debates about vaccination and health.<sup>117</sup>

## **National Security Warnings After 9-11 Sparks Expansion of Executive Branch and State Government Power**

After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, on **Sept. 11, 2001**, the power of the Executive Branch of Congress was significantly expanded by Congress through legislation that included the creation of the **Office of Homeland Security** on Oct. 8, 2001, which later became the **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**. It is now the third largest department in the Cabinet.<sup>118</sup>

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Driven by fear and confusion in the wake of what happened on Sept. 11, on Oct. 26, 2001, Congress passed **The Patriot Act**,<sup>120</sup> to **give government officials of the executive branch greater authority** to investigate and respond to suspected criminal or terrorist threats to national security. The law, which remains controversial today, gave the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** and other law enforcement agencies unprecedented power and funding to remove privacy protections and conduct expanded surveillance on American citizens. This expanded surveillance includes **wiretapping** and **access of personal electronic communications** (phone, computer, email and Internet activity) so government agencies can obtain and share information, including **financial information** on individuals.<sup>121</sup>

At the same time, the **Secretary of Health and Human Services** immediately called on the pharmaceutical industry and government to fast-track production and stockpiling of 300 million doses of **vaccinia virus (smallpox) vaccine** to replace old stockpiles - enough to vaccinate every American. The argument was that the U.S. urgently needed to prepare for a potential attack on the homeland because U.S. intelligence agencies knew that terrorists from the Middle East were harboring **weapons of mass destruction (WMD)** - like **weaponized smallpox and anthrax**.<sup>122</sup>

In early October 2001, mysterious letters containing anthrax spores were received by members of Congress and journalists,<sup>123</sup> and there were suggestions that stocks of **anthrax vaccine** needed to be purchased for potential civilian use. U.S. military personnel were required to get the vaccine, which had **never been licensed as effective against weaponized (inhalation) anthrax**. Immediately after the anthrax vaccine was mandated for U.S. military personnel, many reports of severe reactions, injuries, and deaths were reported among pilots and soldiers required to get it.<sup>124</sup>

The WMD were never found, and inaccurate intelligence assessments surrounding 9-11 related events eroded public trust in U.S. intelligence and defense agencies that persists today.<sup>125 126</sup>

Within weeks of 9-11, model state legislation that the CDC had previously commissioned professors at **Johns Hopkins University** and **Georgetown University** to develop - the **Model State Emergency Health Powers Act (MSEHPA)**, - was immediately introduced and passed in multiple states to significantly expand the authority of state public health officials and governors whenever a public health emergency is declared.<sup>127</sup> **NVIC** and other organizations concerned about the lack of informed consent protections and the potential for **civil liberties violations** strongly opposed the **expansion of authority** granted to public health officials.<sup>128 129</sup>

However, the trauma of what happened on Sept. 11, 2001, and the fear about **bioterrorism** created by the highly publicized rumor that there were “weapons of mass destruction,” specifically weaponized lethal pathogens, in the hands of terrorists was enough to persuade legislators and governors in most states to enact some form of the MSEHPA.<sup>130</sup>

## **Post 9-11 Laws Expanded Executive Branch Authority in Name of Protecting National Security and Developing Pharmaceutical “Medical Countermeasures”**

The media coverage and spirited debates<sup>131</sup> about vaccine science, policy, and mandatory vaccination laws, as well as the public engagement projects sponsored by federal health officials to address public concerns about vaccine safety that took place in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, were largely replaced in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with warnings that development of “**medical countermeasures**” (**MCM**) like bioterrorism vaccines should be made a priority to protect “national security.”<sup>132</sup>

Congress quickly passed a series of bills, including **The Project Bioshield Act of 2004**,<sup>133</sup> the **Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act of 2005 (PREP Act)**,<sup>134</sup> and the **Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006 (PAHPA)**<sup>135</sup> for the purpose of developing “medical countermeasures that address the public health and medical consequences of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) accidents, incidents and attacks, pandemic influenza and emerging infectious diseases.”

These laws, which included permitting FDA officials to direct drug companies to **fast-track MCM experimental drugs and biological products** that can be approved without full licensure by the **FDA** for release to the public under an “**Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)**”, were passed by Congress despite warnings about the danger of granting expanded authority to public health officials and giving **sweeping liability protection** to drug companies for any harm caused MCM products.<sup>136 137</sup>

Through these post-911 laws, Congress continues to appropriate billions of dollars to drug companies and federal agencies joined together in **public-private vaccine**

**development business partnerships** that fast track the development of MCM products, like the **mRNA COVID vaccines**, while shielding from liability all who make and sell, promote and administer, and mandate them.<sup>138 139 140</sup>

The post 9-11 legislation creating lucrative national and global public-private business partnerships between the pharmaceutical industry and government agencies, including the **Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Defense**, paved the way for government officials to pivot from talking about “weapons of mass destruction” and “bioterrorism” to talking about “the need for developing **“counterterrorism strategies.”** This created a much larger arena within which the business of vaccination could be conducted.<sup>141 142</sup>

Post 9-11 legislation paved the way for government agencies and their industry and institutional partners to take a more militaristic approach to public health policy and mass vaccination campaigns by using language like “medical countermeasures” and positioning vaccine development and use as a matter of **“national security.”**<sup>143</sup>

## **First Decade of 21<sup>st</sup> Century: More Vaccines and Questions About the Growing Chronic Disease and Disability Epidemic Among Children**

In the late 1990s and between 2000 and 2010, there was greater recognition that more infants and children in the U.S. were developing chronic illnesses and disabilities within the first few years of life, and it was impairing their health and ability to learn.<sup>144 145</sup> In the 1990s, in public forums, including at **Institute of Medicine** public workshops, I had begun asking questions about the growing **child chronic disease and disability epidemic** marked by chronic inflammation and whether expansion of the federally recommended childhood vaccine schedule played a role in that epidemic - a question I continue to ask.<sup>146 147 148 149 150 151</sup>

By 2003, the list of CDC recommended vaccines for children had doubled - from 23 doses of seven vaccines given between two months and age six in 1983<sup>152</sup> to 45 doses of 13 vaccines starting on the day of birth and age six.<sup>153</sup> Many states had added more CDC recommended vaccines to **vaccine mandates for daycare and school attendance.**<sup>154</sup> Young parents whose children were regressing and being diagnosed with autism – a once rare developmental delay that can severely impair brain and immune function – pointed to dramatic increases in the prevalence of autism with no credible scientific explanation for those increases.<sup>155 156 157</sup>

## **CDC, University Professors Targeting Unvaccinated Children: Who Are They and Where Do They Live?**

In 2004, **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** officials published an article in the medical literature entitled *Children who have received no vaccines: who are they and where do they live?*<sup>158</sup> They singled out white, married, college-educated, upper middle-class mothers living in states allowing philosophical vaccine exemptions for having intentionally unvaccinated children compared to black, single mothers without a college degree living in poverty, whose children were unintentionally

“undervaccinated.” Pitting mother against mother, the public health officials suggested that intentionally “unvaccinated” children placed the unintentionally “undervaccinated” children at risk for catching infectious diseases.

That article was the first of a series of articles published between 2005 and 2015 in the medical literature by CDC officials and professors at **Johns Hopkins University** and **Emory University**, occasionally joined by public health officials in the U.S., United Kingdom, and Australia, as well as **Kaiser Permanente** doctors, who profiled and called into question the legal right of parents to file vaccine exemptions for their children to attend school, alleging that the minority of children attending school with vaccine exemptions posed a real danger to the public health.<sup>159 160 161 162 163 164</sup> The term “**vaccine hesitancy**” was used to describe those resisting vaccine policies and laws.<sup>165</sup>

The authors of one of the studies published in 2005 made it clear that compulsory use of vaccines is the centerpiece of public health policy and is tied to denying a school education to unvaccinated children:<sup>166</sup>

*“Compulsory vaccination has contributed to the enormous success of US immunization programs. Movements to introduce broad “philosophical/personal beliefs” exemptions administered without adequate public health oversight threaten this success. Health professionals and child welfare advocates must address these developments in order to maintain the effectiveness of the nation’s mandatory school vaccination programs.”*

The message coming from public health officials, as well as professors at universities receiving a great deal of money from both the pharmaceutical industry and the federal government<sup>167 168 169 170</sup> was clear: **exemptions to vaccination are a danger to the public health and unvaccinated children should not be allowed to receive a public or private school education.**

In 2007, Maryland public health officials **threatened to put parents in jail** if their children could not show they got chickenpox and hepatitis B shots, which had been added to the state’s vaccine mandate list for schools.<sup>171</sup> And 2007 was also the year that Merck lobbyists were trying to persuade state governments to add Merck’s new genetically engineered virus like particle HPV vaccine, Gardasil, to school mandates.<sup>172 173</sup> The **push to mandate Gardasil**, a vaccine for a sexually transmitted disease that cannot be communicated in the school setting, was a spectacular failure, especially in Texas where the governor tried to mandate by executive order.<sup>174</sup> The rejection of Gardasil vaccine mandates for school children by state legislatures in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was an indication that Americans were beginning to question the idea that every new vaccine should be mandated for school children.

In 2009, the **World Health Organization** and **CDC** declared a highly publicized **H1N1 “swine flu” pandemic**, but the American public generally viewed it as just another bad flu season, with a growing number of adults questioning potential side effects and whether the vaccine was necessary.<sup>175</sup> There was pushback by parents asking why their young children should get the new flu vaccine, especially as a requirement for

attending daycare or school, and there were concerns about the new vaccine's safety.<sup>176</sup>

## My Defamation Lawsuit Denied by Judge Using First Amendment Free Speech Defense

On Oct. 2-4, 2009, NVIC held our **Fourth International Public Conference on Vaccination: Show Us the Science and Give Us A Choice** in the Washington, D.C. area with more than 40 speakers, which was attended by nearly 800 people.<sup>177</sup> On Oct. 19, pediatrician Paul Offit, MD,<sup>178</sup> a **University of Pennsylvania** professor and Merck vaccine developer and patent holder, called me a liar in an article published in **Wired Magazine** without providing any evidence for that allegation. It was an allegation that I answered with a defamation lawsuit naming **Conde Nast** (publisher of *Wired*), the reporter, and Dr. Offit.<sup>179</sup>

Invoking the First Amendment, a Virginia federal court judge ruled that “**free speech rights**” are “at their zenith” in my defamation case because Offit and I are public figures debating an issue of “substantial public concern.” He added that if my case went forward, there would have to be a discussion about “which side of this debate has ‘truth’ on their side” and that likely would be impossible to prove based upon a “core of objective evidence.” So he refused to allow me a day in court in front of a jury of my peers to clear my name.<sup>180</sup>

On Oct. 29, 2009, **Michael Spector**, a science writer for **The New Yorker**, wrote a book about “denialism” claiming that “irrational thinking” hinders scientific progress, harms the planet, and threatens our lives. In it, he called the **National Vaccine Information Center** “the most powerful anti-vaccine organization in America,” which remains today as a highlighted description of NVIC on **Wikipedia**:<sup>181</sup>

*“NVIC is the most powerful anti-vaccine organization in America, and its relationship with the U.S. government consists almost entirely of opposing federal efforts aimed at vaccinating children.”*

2009 was the year I understood that parents of vaccine injured children and anyone defending the right to make voluntary vaccination decisions for themselves and their minor children put themselves at risk of becoming a **target for defamation, discrimination, and abuse**. We were facing formidable adversaries with more money, political influence, and power than we would ever have in our effort to prevent vaccine injuries and deaths through public education and protect the informed consent ethic.

## Second Decade of 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Vaccine War Is On

On April 27, 2010, “**The Vaccine War**” was broadcast by **PBS “Frontline.”** In the one-hour television documentary, different perspectives on what that war meant were included. In the documentary, I commented that the Internet had “changed everything”

in terms of people being able to access and communicate information and be put in direct contact with one another.<sup>182</sup> I said:

*“When I first started this work in the early ‘80s, I had an [IBM] Selectric typewriter and I had the post office. That’s it. Today, you have access to the Library of Medicine on the Internet. You can communicate with people all over the world. So, it has changed everything.”*

Between 2010 and 2012, the battleground of the war about vaccination, health, and autonomy got bigger, as public health officials and corporate owners of medical facilities used the 2009 H1N1 swine flu to order health care workers to get an annual flu shot or be fired.<sup>183</sup> Health care workers started protesting, **resisting flu shot requirements as a condition of employment** and many were fired or resigned rather than be forced to comply.<sup>184 185</sup>

Reported **whooping cough outbreaks** in Washington and other states<sup>186</sup> were blamed on parents not vaccinating their children, despite the fact that CDC officials reported in 2011 that child vaccination rates were high, that “immunization levels of students entering schools have been  $\geq 95\%$ .”<sup>187</sup> There was already evidence in the medical literature that the B. pertussis microbe had been evolving, naturally adapting to resist pressure from widespread pertussis vaccination.<sup>188</sup> Within a few years, studies would be published that revealed pertussis vaccine acquired immunity wanes over time and the **whole cell pertussis (DPT) vaccine, as well as the acellular pertussis vaccine (DtaP) do not reliably prevent infection and transmission of whooping cough.**<sup>189</sup>

The frequent accusation that infectious disease outbreaks are solely caused by the unvaccinated is a convenient one when public health officials do not want to talk about the problem of vaccine failures.

## University Professors Demonize “Anti-Vaccine” Parents and Doctors As Pushback Against Mandatory Vaccination Policies Grows Online

In 2012, establishment concerns about “anti-vaccine” activists publishing information and “video blogging, photo-sharing, video-uploading” on the Internet was published in a medical journal article entitled “Anti-Vaccine activists, Web 2.0, and the postmodern paradigm – An overview of tactics and tropes used online by the anti-vaccination movement.”<sup>190</sup> In that article, a **Canadian university researcher** working out of a department of psychiatry and behavioral neurosciences used the word “**misinformation**” to describe speech about vaccine risks and failures while mourning that “power has shifted from doctors to patients” in a new environment where “the legitimacy of science is questioned, and expertise is redefined.”

University professors, public health officials, and doctors lobbying to remove personal belief vaccine exemptions from school attendance laws began publicly reprimanding parents requesting medical vaccine exemptions for children - as well as doctors granting them,<sup>191 192</sup> just like they were expressing disapproval when doctors allowed parents to use a modified vaccine schedule so children could receive fewer vaccines on

the same day.<sup>193 194</sup> By 2019, the **CDC's contraindications to vaccination had been narrowed** so severely that, today, almost no poor health condition or vaccine reaction symptom qualifies as a reason for a doctor to grant a child or an adult a medical exemption to vaccination.<sup>195 196</sup>

As federal health officials added more vaccines to the CDC's recommended childhood schedule, more parents began communicating with each other online and talking about how their healthy children regressed into chronic poor health after vaccination, Independent movies like **"The Greater Good"** (2011); **"Bought"** (2015); **"VAXXED: From Cover-up to Catastrophe"** (2016) and multi-series videos like **"The Truth About Vaccines"** (2017) and **"Vaccines Revealed"** (2017) were posted and widely shared.

At the same time, the **holistic health movement**, which began to take shape in the 1970s and gained more traction in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, was presenting a serious challenge to the drug and vaccine dependent paternalistic medical model stubbornly resistant to change.<sup>197</sup> Offering people less expensive, less invasive, and more effective health care alternatives that carried fewer risks, **holistic health pioneers like Joseph Mercola, DO** - whose message is to "take control of your health" – attracted millions of followers in the new digital public square<sup>198</sup> The pharmaceutical and medical trade industries were not happy with the competition.

It was becoming clearer that when people have the human right to exercise autonomy in medical care decision-making, rather than be compelled to follow a doctor's orders without question, it poses a threat to the bottom line of pharmaceutical companies selling vaccines and medical doctors administering them. The right to protect bodily integrity also calls into question the wisdom and authority of public health officials aggressively promoting "no exceptions" mandatory vaccination laws.

So, the resistance to vaccine laws grew. Along with that resistance, the rhetoric of public health officials and university professors, who had been demonizing parents advocating for the legal right to make voluntary vaccine decisions for their minor children, took an increasingly ugly turn.

## **Mayo Clinic Professor Uses Extreme Language to Demonize People Who Disagree With His Opinion About Vaccine Safety**

In 2011, a **Mayo Clinic** professor and vaccine researcher **Gregory Poland, MD**, published an article in the medical literature criticizing journalists investigating vaccine safety issues and took aim at **"antivaccinationists,"** whom he accused of using the media – "typically television and the Internet, including its social media outlets" - to "sway public opinion and distract attention from scientific evidence." He used extreme language to articulate his anger and disdain for those who disagree with him:

*"The spectrum of antivaccinationists ranges from people who are simply ignorant about science (or "innumerate" — unable to understand and incorporate concepts of risk and probability into science-grounded decision making) to a radical fringe element who use deliberate mistruths, intimidation, falsified data, and threats of violence in*



*efforts to prevent the use of vaccines and to silence critics. Antivaccinationists tend toward complete mistrust of government and manufacturers, conspiratorial thinking, denialism, low cognitive complexity in thinking patterns, reasoning flaws, and a habit of substituting emotional anecdotes for data.”<sup>199</sup>*

In another article, Dr. Poland again demeaned those refusing to share his fervent belief in the value and safety of vaccines, suggesting that dissemination of “**misinformation**” and “**discredited unscientific beliefs**” should be a “**crime**.”

*“There is no law against being foolish, nor any vaccine against ignorance; however, in the meantime, the health of millions of children in the United States and worldwide is being placed at unnecessary and real risk through continued deliberate misinformation and discredited unscientific beliefs, and that should be a crime.”<sup>200</sup>*

## **California Disneyland Measles Outbreak Blamed on Parents Filing Personal Belief Exemptions for School Children**

When an outbreak of measles in January 2015 in California was reported to have originated at the iconic **Disneyland amusement park in California** (although patient “zero” was never identified), there was a feeding frenzy in the media, with all the blame for outbreaks being put on parents filing personal vaccine exemptions for school children. What the public was not told is that only 18 unvaccinated children were among the California measles cases reported by the end of February,<sup>201</sup> and only 2.3 percent of all children entering kindergarten in the state in 2015 were attending school with a personal belief vaccine exemption.<sup>202</sup>

Nevertheless, the rhetoric demonizing parents of unvaccinated children was used to **remove the personal belief vaccine exemption in California**, which was signed into law on June 30, 2015. A massive lobbying campaign funded by pharmaceutical companies, government agencies, and medical trade groups had overcome strong opposition by families mounting large public protests held at the Capitol building throughout the year.<sup>203 204</sup>

## **The Vaccine War Heats Up with Stronger Rhetoric Marginalizing Those Publicly Supporting Voluntary Vaccination**

On Mar. 24, 2015, **PBS** updated and rebroadcast their 2010 “**The Vaccine War**” documentary. A clip from a video commentary I had posted on YouTube was included describing the significance of the escalating vaccine culture war over mandatory vaccination laws:

*“The battle lines are clearly drawn. Now Americans have a choice to make. Will we stand up and fight to protect our freedom to make voluntary decisions about which vaccines we buy and use, or will we permit liability free drug companies and government health officials to take that freedom from us?”<sup>205</sup>*

Unlike respectful reviews that had been generated after the original 2010 broadcast of “The Vaccine War,”<sup>206</sup> five years later, the updated version generated a vitriolic review published in **Forbes** talking about “dangerous anti-vaccine activists.” PBS was chastised for providing “false balance” and “legitimizing an anti-vaccine point of view,” implying the “Frontline” journalists were being irresponsible for presenting different perspectives.

*“Perhaps the greatest mistake they make is legitimizing an anti-vaccine point of view by calling anti-vaccine advocate **Barbara Loe Fisher** a “vaccine watchdog” and her influential anti-vaccine organization, **the National Vaccine Information Center**, an “independent watchdog organization dedicated to vaccine safety issues.” No, it’s not. It’s an anti-vaccine lobbying organization that misleads parents with fear-mongering advertisements and campaigns against laws that facilitate the childhood immunization schedule found safe by the independent Institute of Medicine.”<sup>207</sup>*

2015 was the last year that I was asked to provide perspective on vaccine safety science, policy, and law on television.<sup>208 209</sup>

## University Professors Use False Information to Allege NVIC Intent to Deceive

On May 29, 2015, an article was published by professors in the department of English at **Virginia Tech** analyzing “vaccine resistance online” and academic studies using “quantitative methods to describe misinformation on vaccine-skeptical websites.” They included the NVIC’s website as a case study, comparing the content of websites operated by Sanevax, Inc., DHHS (Vaccines.gov), and the **Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania Vaccine Education Center**.<sup>210</sup>

NVIC was described as the “most established vaccine-skeptical organization which began in the early 1980s as **Dissatisfied Parents Together**.” Although the authors accurately describe my work and the content on NVIC.org in the text and note that “visitors to the NVIC website will find a great deal of governmental and scientific information on vaccines and vaccination,” they also made a fundamental factual error, whether intentional or not, in order to make a damaging accusation.

The false statement of fact is anchored with a reference to a “May 22, 2015” search by authors that the NVIC website “offered no biographical data about the organization’s founder, **Barbara Loe Fisher**.” NVIC.org has always included my bio, and here is a screenshot of it on May 20, 2015, using the Internet Archive: Wayback Machine.<sup>211</sup>

The authors go on to allege that the supposed omission of my bio may have been deliberate in order to deceive visitors to our website.

*“The majority of content on **NVIC** was dedicated to **Fisher’s advocacy work**. Omitting information about her role in the organization may appear to give NVIC an official, authoritative ethos, such as that of Vaccines.gov; however, it distances the organization from the actions and positions of its founder, a rhetorical maneuver that*

*attempts to maintain the appearance of a balanced position on vaccines and vaccination that some viewers might question.”*

## **Federal Officials Call for Public Shaming of Schools With Lower Vaccination Rates**

On Aug. 27, 2015, two months after the personal belief vaccine exemption was eliminated in California, CDC officials held a press conference and announced that national vaccination rates among young children in the U.S. continue to be very high, but more must be done to **identify and track children** that have not received every CDC recommended vaccine and **publicly identify schools** with lower vaccination rates. At the time, less than one percent of children aged 19 to 36 months were unvaccinated, while fewer than 1.7 percent of kindergarten children were attending school with medical, religious, or conscientious belief exemptions.<sup>212</sup>

Rear Admiral and **Assistant Surgeon General Anne Schuchat, MD** held a press conference and essentially called for the public shaming of schools that do not maintain a 95 percent plus vaccine coverage rate, pointing to the need for all schools to follow California’s example and **post online** the names and addresses of kindergartens and middle schools; numbers of children enrolled; personal belief exemption rate; up-to-date vaccination rate; coverage rates for recommended vaccines and whether or not the school reports vaccine coverage and exemption information to the state health department. Going the extra mile, she said state health officials should also “rate” schools from “safest” to “most vulnerable” by assigning color coded stars (red star indicating less than 79.9 percent of students fully vaccinated).<sup>213</sup>

## American Academy of Pediatrics Tells Doctors It Is OK to Deny Medical Care to Unvaccinated Children

The vaccine war battlefield was not only being waged by public health officials in schools but by pediatricians, as the **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)** officially gave its blessing to pediatricians to **deny medical care to unvaccinated children.**<sup>214</sup> Families were being thrown out of medical practices (and still are) if parents declined even one of the federally recommended vaccines or wanted their child to receive fewer vaccines on one day.<sup>215</sup>

In 2017, I wrote a commentary entitled “**Class and Race Profiling in the Vaccine Culture War.**” I said:

*“The Vaccine Culture War is heating up. Ground zero is America, Europe and other economically developed countries, where the pharmaceutical industrial complex is raising an iron fist to protect multi-billion dollar profits by disempowering the people. In America, professors and doctors in academia and government are profiling parents by class and race to shame and discredit those challenging vaccine orthodoxy. Elite members of the highest paid professions in our society are using academic journals and mainstream media to openly preach fear, hate, prejudice and discrimination against people who disagree with them about vaccination.”*<sup>216</sup>

## Baylor University Professor and Vaccine Developer Slaps “Hate Group” Label on “Anti-Vaccine Organizations”

In February 2018, a professor and vaccine developer at **Baylor University, Peter Hotez, MD**, stated in a **Duke University** newspaper article that “anti-vaccine websites exist with names such as the **National Vaccine Information Center**” and charged that “the anti-vaccine movement has cross party lines in Washington so that there are individuals on both sides of the aisle who oppose vaccination: the “peace, love, granola” political left makes the argument that “we have to be careful what we put into our kids’ bodies,” while the political right contends that “you can’t tell us what to do with our kids.”

Hotez upped the ante by slapping the “**hate group**” label on organizations and websites he judged to be “anti-vaccine.” He said:

*“**Anti-Vaccine organizations** camouflage themselves as a political group, but I call them for what they really are: a **hate group**. They are a hate group that hates [our] family and hates [our] children.”*<sup>217</sup>

A year earlier **Scientific American** magazine published an article by Hotez entitled “Will an American Led Anti-Vaccine Movement Subvert Global Health?” Hotez used violent imagery to call on the U.S. government and G20 nations to take steps to “**snuff out**” the “**American anti-vaccine movement.**”<sup>218</sup> The term “snuff out” is defined as meaning “to extinguish something;” or “to put a sudden and conclusive end to something; or “to kill someone.”<sup>219</sup>

## International Grand Committee on Disinformation and NewsGuard Technologies, Inc.

On Nov. 27, 2018, the inaugural session of the **International Grand Committee on Disinformation** (IGC) took place in London. Describing itself as “an international array of legislators, policy advisors, and other experts who share a recognition of the damage that online platforms are doing to their nations’ social fabrics and democratic systems,” their goal is “to forge international alliances that bring shared, effective strategies into the battle against online disinformation, hate speech, and electoral interference.” According to the IGC website, the idea for a committee on disinformation and “fake news” was developed at a meeting in Washington, DC with four members of the UK Parliament. Funded in part by **Luminate**, part of **The Omidyar Group of Philanthropies**, members include UK, Canadian, U.S., German, and South African legislators.<sup>220</sup>

In December of 2018, I published a referenced video commentary online entitled, “**The New Internet Police Protecting You from Freedom of Thought and Speech**,” and talked about the proliferation of “fact-checking” companies that attempt to discredit information about vaccination and health online that does not conform with government health policy.<sup>221</sup>

NVIC was among the first organizations hosting websites to be contacted by a new for-profit corporation **NewsGuard Technologies, Inc.**, after it was launched in early 2018 by two Wall Street media entrepreneurs. NewsGuard “fact-checkers” assign “nutritional labels” to rate content on websites for and “fight false news, misinformation and disinformation.”<sup>222 223</sup>

Today, **NewsGuard** rates over 8,000 websites around the world and provides that information to schools, libraries, and other institutions about websites that NewsGuard rates for “trustworthiness.”<sup>224</sup> The company has repeatedly branded NVIC with a very low “nutritional label” score since 2019 to dissuade people from visiting **TheVaccineReaction.org** and **NVIC.org**. In early 2020, NewsGuard listed NVIC as a “super-spreader of COVID-19 misinformation” on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

NewsGuard is a partner with **Microsoft**, **WHO**, **The Carter Center**, and many media outlets and has been funded by **Publicis**, a global communications and marketing company with vaccine manufacturer clients, such as **Pfizer**, **Merck**, **Astra Zeneca**, and **Novartis**, including a \$1.5 billion contract with **GlaxoSmithKline** in 2017. On March 23, 2023, testimony in hearings of the House Judiciary Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government revealed that **NewsGuard** entered into a \$749,000 contract with the **Department of Defense** in 2021 to share the company’s database information with the agency “for the purposes of tracking and monitoring disinformation and misinformation campaigns.”<sup>225</sup>

## The Rise of the Global Public Health Empire

In the two decades leading up to the coronavirus pandemic, the **extreme rhetoric** used by public health officials and university professors in the media to demonize parents of vaccine injured children and doctors publicly discussing vaccine risks and failures, is one reason why it was easy for political operatives and government agencies in the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to **target and silence** anyone disagreeing with government and WHO approved narratives about the **SARS-CoV-2 virus** and COVID vaccines.

The pharmaceutical industry, the wealthiest and most influential lobby on Capitol Hill, was instrumental in building upon the Pharma-friendly legislation that Congress passed in the 1990s, such as passing the **21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act in 2016**,<sup>226</sup> to enhance the industry's political influence and profit making. Technological advances in bioengineering developed at major universities in the U.S. and other countries funded by **public-private business partnerships** between government and industry have focused on developing genetically engineered synthetic biological products as the answer to preventing all communicable diseases in animals and humans.<sup>227 228</sup>

The vaccine industry has been given enthusiastic assistance by their business partners participating in public-private partnerships blessed by Congress involving government health agencies, the **United Nations World Health Organization**, wealthy philanthropic enterprises with political agendas like the **Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation**, and **World Economic Forum**, and global financial institutions like the **World Bank**.<sup>229</sup> But while public-private business partnerships are enabling multi-national drug companies to more quickly expand their national and global vaccine markets, who is minding the public interest when it comes to ensuring vaccine safety?

The focus on the development of liability free preventive vaccines dominated the business model, even though **chronic diseases and disabilities** – not vaccine targeted communicable diseases – has been and still is driving the **U.S. \$4 trillion dollar annual health care price tag**, eating up 90 percent of that cost.<sup>230</sup> There is no escaping the fact that the U.S. has a failing public health report card with the worst infant and maternal mortality rates and the worst life expectancy rate of all developed nations.<sup>231</sup>

Yet, billions of dollars of taxpayer money continue to be spent on developing public-private business partnerships with the pharmaceutical industry to ensure that drug companies make outsized profits like the kind that Pfizer and Moderna made in 2020-2021 on highly reactive mRNA COVID-19 shots that did not prevent infection and transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.<sup>232 233</sup>

The expansion of Executive Branch power after 9-11, including legislation that expanded authority granted to federal and state public health officials during the declaration of a public health emergency, paved the way for abuse of authority that included the active censorship of ordinary citizens by the **Department of Homeland Security, Department of Health and Human Services**, and other federal agencies after the declaration of a coronavirus public health emergency was declared in early 2020.

However, it is clear that the Censorship Industrial Complex in the U.S. could never have been created by the government alone. It took the active participation of the pharmaceutical industry and medical trade, academia and philanthropic foundations, Big Tech and media, as well as global governmental institutions, particularly the increasingly powerful **United Nations World Health Organization** (WHO).

## Parents Who Defend Exemptions in Vaccine Laws Targeted First

Our small charity did not have the resources to stop and analyze who, what, and how censorship of NVIC was accomplished; we only knew it was happening and that we had to try to find alternative ways to stay in contact with our followers and loyal supporters of our mission. I now understand that the silencing of my voice and the ghosting of NVIC on the Internet was an evolutionary process that accelerated between 2009 and 2019 and culminated in our removal in 2021 from **all four major social media platforms** and **PayPal** with the assistance of the federal government. It was part of a larger global public-private partnership effort to censor freedom of thought and speech in the digital public square on a wide range of political, social, cultural value and personal belief issues based on the idea that free speech online is a threat to national and global security and prosperity.

Testimony already has been submitted to the **House Judiciary Select Subcommittee on Weaponization of the Federal Government** identifying individuals, organizations, and government agencies working to censor free speech in America.<sup>234</sup> The following is a summary of information related to the silencing of my voice and NVIC's presence on the Internet because we represent the vaccine injured and publish information on vaccination and health that does not always conform with government and **World Health Organization** policy and because we work to secure vaccine safety and informed consent protections in public health policies and laws.

## The Political Operatives and Disinformation Industry Web

It is not possible in this report to list and describe the hundreds of websites, organizations, and businesses that are today part of what has been described as the **Censorship Industrial Complex** or **Disinformation Industrial Complex**.<sup>235 236 237 238</sup>  
<sup>239</sup> But the following provides some of the major players who have been involved in working to censor free speech in the digital public square, including conversations on social media that talk about vaccine risks and failures, criticize government or WHO vaccine policy, or support voluntary use of vaccines and oppose vaccine mandates.

### Claire Wardle (Harvard and Brown University)

**Claire Wardle, PhD** is a political science and communications specialist who, since 2015, has been advising lawmakers and public health policymakers in the U.S. and Europe about how to handle "**misinformation**" online, focusing in recent years on the coronavirus pandemic and COVID-19 vaccines.<sup>240</sup> She is a professor and co-founder and co-director of the Information Futures Lab at the **Brown University School of Public Health**.<sup>241</sup> In 2015, Wardle co-founded the non-profit **First Draft** to advise media outlets on how to identify and handle "misinformation," working out of the **Shorenstein**

**Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government** between 2017 and 2019.<sup>242</sup>

In 2017, she co-authored a report for the **Council of Europe** entitled “**Information Disorder: An Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy**,” in which she defined “mis-information,” “dis-information,” and “mal-information” and argued that if unchecked, it creates “**information disorder**,” noting that “medical misinformation has always posed a worldwide threat to health.”<sup>243</sup> In 2018, she published a handy guide to what language describing “information disorder” means entitled “**Information Disorder: The Essential Glossary**.”<sup>244</sup>

Wardle is a board member of **Vaccinate Your Family** (formerly **Every Child by Two**). In 2022, she was appointed to the **World Health Organization's Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on Infectious Hazards with Pandemic and Epidemic Potential (STAG-IH)**. At various points in her career, she has been affiliated with the **BBC, Columbia University**, and the **World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on the Future of Information and Entertainment**.

In 2020, Wardle and Renee DiResta co-authored an article entitled “**Online Information About Vaccines**” for the Sabin-Aspen Vaccine Science and Policy Group publication “**Meeting the Challenge of Vaccination Hesitancy**,” a publication based on work funded in part by the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**.<sup>245</sup>

In that article published by **The Aspen Institute and Sabin Vaccine Institute**, Wardle and DiResta give advice for how to “combat vaccine misinformation” and “**the anti-vaccine narrative**.” They expressed concern that “The U.S. anti-vaccine movement...[is] **opposing any strengthening of vaccination requirements** or immunization-level transparency and sponsoring or supporting state legislation to create new types of exemptions to school-based immunization requirements.” They pointed out that, “Grassroots activities in support of these bills appear to be coordinated by the **National Vaccine Information Center**, which runs a legislative advocacy portal and mailing lists, in addition to a regional or state sponsor.”

## **The Aspen Institute**

The Aspen Institute is a non-profit think tank organization founded in 1949 focusing on leadership and public policy issues and states that, among other goals, it seeks “to bring together thoughtful people with diverse backgrounds and points of view.”<sup>246</sup> In 2021, it reported some \$465M in assets and received donations of \$1M or more from the **Gates Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Craig Newmark Philanthropies, Johnson & Johnson, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Ford Foundation, US Department of State and US Agency for International Development**.

Aspen also counts the **Rockefeller Foundation, US Department of Treasury, Merck, Pfizer, Genentech, Google, Meta, Microsoft, PayPal**, as well as a number of large financial institutions and health insurance companies among its major funders.<sup>247</sup> Aspen Institute has been affiliated with the **Atlantic**<sup>248</sup> and **Bloomberg Philanthropies**, which distributed \$1.7B to organizations and institutions in 2022.<sup>249</sup>



In November 2021, Aspen Institute established a Commission on Disinformation Disorder.<sup>250</sup> The stated goal of the commission is “to identify and prioritize the most critical sources and causes of information disorder and deliver a set of short-term actions and longer-term goals to help government, the private sector, and civil society respond to this modern-day crisis of faith in key institutions.”<sup>251</sup>

## The Sabin Vaccine Institute

The Sabin Vaccine Institute was founded in 1993 in honor of live oral polio vaccine developer Albert Sabin, MD. It “works to strengthen immunization in communities most affected by infectious diseases with a focus on low-and middle-income countries” through operating a global initiative “to increase vaccine acceptance and demand.”<sup>252</sup> Generating about \$27M in revenue in 2021,<sup>253</sup> the Sabin Institute states on its website that it has “partnered with the **International Vaccine Access Center at Johns Hopkins University** to investigate how social media impacts vaccine knowledge, attitudes and behaviors” and created “indicators to measure vaccine hesitancy on social media and a framework for using digital tools to increase vaccine acceptance in low- and middle-income countries.”

In 2020, the Sabin Vaccine Institute was awarded a \$10.3M grant from the **National Philanthropic Trust** to “**boost public acceptance of vaccines**” through its Vaccine Acceptance and Demand initiative in “an effort to address vaccine hesitancy.”<sup>254</sup> The Sabin Institute is funded by the **Gates Foundation**<sup>255</sup> and lists among its “partners” the Gates Foundation; **Rockefeller Foundation**; **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance** (which represents the world’s leading pharmaceutical corporations producing vaccines); **The Guardian+MediaPlanet**; **Stanford University**; **University of California-Davis**; **University of Maryland**; **Aga Khan University**; and federal agencies including the **Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA)** in DHHS and the **Vaccine Research Center/NIAID**.<sup>256</sup> The Sabin Vaccine entered into a contract with **BARDA** in January 2023 that will give the Institute up to \$214M to develop and procure Ebola Sudan and Marburg virus vaccines.<sup>257</sup>

In November 2020, Claire Wardle co-authored a report, “**Under the surface: Covid-19 vaccine narratives, misinformation & data deficits on social media.**”<sup>258</sup> She wrote about the danger of allowing “anti-vaccine content” online:

*“There is strong evidence that exposure to online anti-vaccine content leads to real-world rejection of vaccinations. It only takes a few minutes of exposure to online anti-vaccine content to reduce someone’s intent to vaccinate.”*

She labeled those who challenge official narratives about vaccines as “**bad actors**” and said, “narratives related to mistrust in the intentions of institutions and key figures surrounding vaccines are now driving as much of the online conversation and vaccine skepticism as safety concerns.”

*“Narratives challenging the safety of vaccines have been perennial players in the online vaccine debate. Yet this **research shows that narratives related to mistrust in***

*the intentions of institutions and key figures surrounding vaccines are now driving as much of the online conversation and vaccine skepticism as safety concerns. This issue is compounded by the complexities and vulnerabilities of this information ecosystem. It is full of “data deficits” - situations where demand for information about a topic is high, but the supply of credible information is low – that are being exploited by **bad actors**.”*

In documents released by “X” (formerly Twitter) in June 2023, reportedly, there is evidence that Wardle was asked to brief an advisory committee at the **Department of Homeland Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)** during the COVID pandemic.<sup>259</sup>

### **Renee DiResta (Stanford University)**

Renee DiResta is a California computer science expert who interned with the CIA in college and is the former head of policy for **Data for Democracy**<sup>260</sup> and a 2019 **Mozilla Fellow** in Media, Misinformation and Trust investigating the “spread of malign narratives across social network.” and assisting policymakers in understanding and responding to the threat. She previously worked for **New Knowledge** (now **Yonder**), a company and political group that was involved in U.S. Senate investigations into reported Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, and reportedly conducted a false-flag operation in an Alabama 2017 election.<sup>261</sup>

Today DiResta is research manager for the **Stanford Internet Observatory (SIO) Cyber Policy Center**,<sup>262 263</sup> which was established in June 2019 as “a lab housing infrastructure and human expertise for the study of the internet.” The SIO is funded by **Stanford University** and in 2019 received \$5M in funding from **Craig Newmark Philanthropies** “to detect Internet abuse in real time.” In a press release, Craig Newmark, founder of Craig’s List, said, “The Internet Observatory has a vision for a trustworthy Web, and I’m proud to support their mission-critical work to grapple with disinformation and other ways that **bad actors** use tech against the common good.”<sup>264</sup>

SIO has been served with a subpoena by the U.S House Judiciary Committee, which stated the Committee “is aware of evidence that suggests that the SIO is involved in the censorship of disfavored speech,” including about COVID-19 vaccines.<sup>265</sup>

In May 2018, **PBS** “Frontline” broadcast a two-part documentary entitled “**The Facebook Dilemma**” that producers described as an investigation “that examines the powerful social media platform’s impact on privacy and democracy in the U.S. and around the world.” In that interview, DiResta stated that her interest in the “anti-vaccine movement” began after she had her first child in 2013 and, by 2104, was “disappointed” in **low vaccination rates in California pre-schools**. She said she contacted her congressman and offered her assistance in helping California legislators “understand the dynamics and the conversations that are happening online” among “**anti-vaxxers on Twitter**.”

## Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) and Vaccinate California

DiResta is a co-founder of **Vaccinate California**,<sup>266</sup> which partnered with industry and government funded non-profits, such as the **American Academy of Pediatrics**, and the **California Immunization Coalition**,<sup>267</sup> to successfully eliminate the personal belief vaccine exemption in California in 2015 and to severely restrict the medical vaccine exemption in that state in 2019.<sup>268 269</sup>

The national **Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)**, which was rebranded as immunize.org in 2022, was established as a non-profit vaccine information website in 1994 and has been funded by the **CDC** for three decades.<sup>270</sup>

In 2001, IAC created the **National Network of Immunization Coalitions**, of which the California Immunization Coalition is a member and which “provides the website and resources and facilitates connections among national, state and local immunization coalitions and their partners.” IAC/immunize.org is funded by not only the **CDC** but also by nearly every multi-national pharmaceutical company manufacturing and marketing vaccines in the U.S. and globally (**Astra Zeneca, GSK, Janssen Pharmaceutical companies of Johnson & Johnson; Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp; Moderna; Pfizer, Inc; Sanofi Pasteur; Seqirus**), and partners with dozens of medical trade associations, universities such as **Emory University** and **Johns Hopkins University**; government agencies and non-profits promoting mandatory use of vaccines.<sup>271</sup>

In a 2015 article co-authored by DiResta for **Wired** magazine, she pointed out that, “More than any other social network, **Twitter** helps citizens connect and organize in the real world even if they aren’t part of the same physical communities – anyone can participate in a conversation simply by following and using a hashtag.” She charged that “**anti-vaxxers**” have “leveraged” **Facebook, Twitter** and **YouTube** “for some time” to “inflate their presence” and pointed to **NVIC** as one of the “small vocal groups” using **Twitter** to conduct phone, email and fax campaigns to exert a “disproportionate impact on public sentiment and legislation.”<sup>272</sup>

DiResta ended her article in **Wired** with a quote from the editor of **Vaccines Today**, who stated, “It is essential that when people go online for information, they are left with the clear impression that vaccines are safe and effective.” *Vaccines Today* describes itself as an “online platform for discussing vaccines and vaccination” and is solely funded by **Vaccines Europe**, “a specialized group of the **European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)**,” with members including **GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), Pfizer, Moderna, Sanofi** and other vaccine manufacturers.<sup>273</sup>

In November 2018, DiResta published a special report for the public policy think tank **Nautilus Institute Peace and Security (NAPSNET)**<sup>274</sup> entitled “**Of Virality and Viruses: The Anti-Vaccine Movement and Social Media.**”<sup>275</sup> She argued that online “social platforms and their gameable algorithms have provided a space for the anti-vaccine movement to thrive” and that “anti-vaccine activists have been at the forefront of leveraging all of the technological features social platforms provide.” She railed against “continued erosion of trust in authority” and “distrust of corporations, particularly

pharmaceutical companies,” and how the Internet “gave everyone the ability to write and post whatever they wanted online for free.”

Ramping up the rhetoric used to describe “**anti-vaxxers**,” DiResta described them as “**malign actors**,” stating, “*Understanding how these systemic information flows work is a prerequisite to eliminating the ability for **malign actors** to run these campaigns and reducing the impact that they have.*”

She said, “thought leaders” in the anti-vaccine movement “drive narrative development and use their influence on various media channels to disseminate messages to highly engaged, passionate rank and file.” Then she cited NVIC’s presence on Facebook, citing NVIC’s advocacy for the legal right of parents to make voluntary decisions about vaccination for their minor children:

*“The prominent **Facebook** Groups and Pages include legislative action centers such the **National Vaccine Information Center**, which actively lobbies to weaken, eliminate and block vaccination requirements for school children.”*

In July 2018, DiResta was interviewed by **Vox Media**.<sup>276</sup> She explained how, in 2013, she had downloaded preschool data sets held by **California Department of Public Health** to identify clusters of children going to schools with vaccine exemptions because she “wanted to be around people who believe in science” and shared her “values” and she started worked with **California pediatrician legislator Richard Pan** to introduce legislation, presumably, to make sure her child would not be going to school with unvaccinated children whose parents did not “believe in science” or share her values. She used her computer science expertise to describe how “there were a lot of parallels in how social media technology was being used” by anti-vaxxer “**conspiracy theorists**” and groups like **ISIS** “building a virtual caliphate.” Then she went about defining “misinformation” and “disinformation” and used the analogy of “**Russia**, because that’s probably the example that most people have readily available.”

In a few sentences, DiResta had linked parents she labeled “anti-vaxxers” with ISIS and “Russian trolls.” The way was being cleared for those who talk about vaccine risks and failures to be viewed as trolls and terrorists.

## 2019: Measles Outbreaks and Branding “Anti-Vaxxers” As “The Enemy”

In late 2018 and early 2019, there was widespread publicity about **measles outbreaks in Washington state and New York**, especially in New York City in close-knit orthodox Jewish communities, where reportedly a higher number of unvaccinated children were attending school.<sup>277</sup> There were 704 cases identified nationwide, with 474 occurring in New York and no deaths.

CDC officials put the blame for the outbreak on “**misinformation**,” stating, “Recent outbreaks have been driven by misinformation about measles and MMR vaccine, which has led to under vaccination in vulnerable communities.”<sup>278</sup>

On Jan. 17, 2019, the **WHO** declared “**vaccine hesitancy**” to be one of the top 10 threats to global public health, citing measles outbreaks.<sup>279</sup> Ignoring the other nine threats on the list (like non-communicable diseases, pollution, and anti-microbial resistance), a highly orchestrated global publicity campaign targeting “anti-vaxxers” was rolled out by international communications corporations operating online and broadcast and print media networks.

The *New York Times* published an editorial entitled “**How to Inoculate Against Anti-Vaxxers,**” and alleged that there are too many unvaccinated infants and toddlers in America, while simultaneously admitting that “overall utilization of most vaccines remains high.”<sup>280</sup> “It’s no mystery how we got here,” said the newspaper’s editors. “On the internet, **anti-vaccine propaganda** has outpaced pro-vaccine public health information,” adding that, “Thwarting this danger will require a campaign as bold and aggressive as the one being waged by the anti-vaccination contingent. In suggesting strategies to convince parents that “Vaccines are not toxic, and they do not cause autism. Full stop.”

The *New York Times* editors urged readers to “**know the enemy.**”

## Calls to Punish Parents of Unvaccinated Children with “Isolation, Fines, Arrests”

There were calls in the U.S. to track down and punish parents with unvaccinated children. Newspaper headlines included “Anti-vaxxers are dangerous. Make them face isolation, fines, arrests.” (*Washington Post*), an Opinion written by a **Harvard University** professor and former assistant secretary of the **Department of Homeland Security**,<sup>281</sup> and “Opting Out of Vaccines Should Opt You Out of American Society.” (*Scientific American*).<sup>282</sup>

On Jan. 27, 2019 I published a referenced commentary entitled “**WHO, Pharma, Gates & Government: Who’s Calling the Shots?**” describing the business of vaccination, the global mass vaccination infrastructure, and the growing crisis of trust in vaccine safety and public health laws that fail to acknowledge the casualties of one-size-fits-all vaccine policies. I concluded:<sup>283</sup>

*“Today, everybody knows somebody who was healthy, got vaccinated and was never healthy again. The people, whose lives are being impacted by business deals between governments, Big Pharma and Big Philanthropy, increasingly are being marginalized in the top-down public policymaking process by wealthy and powerful institutions in society financing the global multi-billion dollar vaccine industry. This is evident when the people raise their voices to ask for better vaccine science and more humane public health policies and are demonized, discriminated against and punished by those in control of those wealthy and powerful institutions.*”

*“A system that will not bend will break. The responsibility for the crisis of trust in the global vaccination system lies squarely at the feet of those who operate the system and refuse to acknowledge the suffering of the people harmed by vaccines.”*

## **Congressional Hearings and Warnings Sent to Owners of Social Media Platforms to Remove “anti-vaccine content”**

Hearings were held in the U.S. House of Representatives on Feb. 27, 2019,<sup>284 285</sup> and in the U.S. Senate on Mar. 5, 2019,<sup>286</sup> where there was a lot of discussion about measles outbreaks and the influence of social media in spreading vaccine “disinformation.” In the House hearing, NIAID director **Anthony Fauci, MD** was less than completely honest about the ability of MMR vaccine to cause brain inflammation during his testimony under oath.<sup>287</sup> In the Senate hearings, a pediatrician called childhood vaccine programs “the most powerful public health initiative in the history of this country,” and a teenager said his Mom failed to vaccinate him because she believed “anti-vaccine information” on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.<sup>288</sup>

Several days before the House and Senate hearings, a Feb. 21, 2019 article in **The Guardian** (UK) reported that **Rep. Adam Schiff, Chairman of U.S. House Select Committee on Intelligence** had joined journalists around the world to search for the word “vaccine” on Facebook and got autofill suggestions that pointed to, among other groups, the **National Vaccine Information Center**, which was described as “an official sounding organization that promotes anti-vaccine propaganda,”<sup>289</sup> The article talked about how **Pinterest** had already banned NVIC’s Pinterest board (which was done in September 2018) after the social media platform had been criticized in the medical literature for posting “negative” vaccine content.

On Mar. 1, 2019, **Rep. Schiff** sent a letter to the **CEO of Google** referring to the recent measles outbreaks and stated that, “there is strong evidence to suggest that at least part of the source of this trend is the degree to which medically inaccurate information about vaccines surface on websites where many Americans get their information, among them **YouTube** and **Google search**.” He said, “Exposure to anti-vaccine content via social media may negatively shape user attitudes toward vaccination.” He asked Google’s CEO to answer a series of questions about what steps he is taking to “provide medically accurate information on vaccination to your users, and to encourage you to consider additional steps you can take to address this growing problem.”<sup>290</sup>

In a thinly veiled warning, Rep. Schiff told **Google**: “As more Americans rely on your

services as their primary source of information, it is vital that you take that responsibility with the seriousness it requires and nowhere more so than in matters of public health and children's health." A similar letter was also sent by Rep. Schiff to the **CEO of Amazon**.

## **University Professor and Vaccine Patent Holder Blames Measles Outbreaks on NVIC and Other Organizations Representing Vaccine Injured Children**

On Mar. 4, 2019, **Paul Offit, MD**, the Merck rotavirus vaccine patent holder and professor of pediatrics at the **University of Pennsylvania**, who I sued for defamation in 2009, wrote an Opinion for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. He listed **NVIC** as among the "anti-vaccine" organizations founded by parents of vaccine injured children that should be blamed for causing measles outbreaks.<sup>291</sup>

Under the headline "**Facebook, Twitter are blocking dangerous anti-vaccine posts. It's about time,**" he called for **NVIC** to be silenced by the media and blocked on Facebook and Twitter - three days before **Facebook** issued a public statement on Mar. 7 pledging to combat "vaccine misinformation."<sup>292</sup> Pointing to widespread publicity in the first part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century about a potential association between MMR, a mercury vaccine preservative (thimerosal) and autism, he singled out small non-profit organizations and "media outlets interested in airing parents' concerns about vaccines" as entirely responsible for measles outbreaks. He said:

*"During the following 15 years, organizations like the **National Vaccine Information Center (formerly Dissatisfied Parents Together)**, Generation Rescue, Moms Against Mercury, and Safe Minds became the one-stop shop for mainstream media outlets interested in airing parents' concerns about vaccines. The results were predictable. Influenced by thousands of television shows, radio programs, and newspaper articles, a critical number of parents stopped vaccinating their children. As a consequence, measles infections, which were eliminated from the United States by 2000, came roaring back.*

Offit congratulated **Pinterest, YouTube, Facebook, and Amazon** for beginning to take steps to restrict or remove "anti-vaccine" information from their online platforms.

On Mar. 13, 2019, I published a referenced commentary "**Taking No Prisoners in the Vaccine Culture War,**" which was posted on the NVICStandUp channel on **YouTube**.<sup>293</sup> I said:

*"The demonization of parents and enlightened doctors, who criticize vaccine science and government policy, is the tip of the spear in a larger culture war going on in this and other countries where economically stable, well-educated populations are beginning to understand they are being exploited by corporations that have made business deals with governments. The culture wars in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are about whether the first human right, individual autonomy, will survive or an authoritarian State will own our children and have the power to eliminate civil liberties and sacrifice the lives of certain people for what those in control of the State consider the greater good of society."*

On Apr. 10, 2019, there was a second article published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* attacking “anti-vaxxers.” In this one, the reporter played the class and race card to profile “anti-vaxxers” with a misogynistic snarl added for extra punch: “if you’re against vaccinating your child, there’s a good chance you’re a **college educated white woman making decent money.**” He added that, “the so-called anti-vaxxers are often described as **middle and upper class women who breast feed their children,** shop at Whole Foods, endlessly scour the web for vaccine-related conversation, and **believe that their thinking supersedes that of doctors.**”<sup>294</sup>

To make sure everyone knew exactly who he was targeting for discrimination and abuse, Dr. Paul Offit piled on, sneering, “Frankly, these **Caucasian, suburban, educated parents** believe they can Google the word *vaccine* and get as much information as anybody. These people are educated just well enough to make terrible decisions for their children.”

An epidemiologist at another Philadelphia university backed up Offit’s disdain for parents who had the audacity to do their own research and disagree with doctors about vaccination. He talked about “wrong information” on the Internet and, like Offit, suggested he had superior intelligence that warranted deference to his opinion about vaccine safety science. He said, “I can spot credible data online, but the general public doesn’t have my training.”

## Mainstream Media Blames Social Media for Spreading “Misinformation” About Vaccines

On May 20, 2019, the *Washington Post* ran an article that attempted to summarize what reporters Lena H. Sun and Ben Guarino described as “**the modern anti-vaccine movement.**” They stated:<sup>295</sup>

*“The modern anti-vaccine movement began about 40 years ago in response to legitimate concerns about the side effects of a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine. But it has metastasized into something far darker in the echo chamber of Facebook chat rooms, **WhatsApp** and **YouTube** – especially against a backdrop of rising suspicion of elites, including drugmakers, doctors and public health officials.”*

They go on to describe my son’s DPT vaccine reaction and say that “**Fisher** became a national advocate warning parents about possible risks and working with Congress to craft legislation creating a vaccine compensation program and an improved vaccine monitoring system – one of several safety systems still in use.” They referred to the **National Vaccine Information Center** as “one of the most effective lobbyists for parental choice,” but the article’s main message was that “misinformation surrounding the safety of vaccines is not new, but social media helps it spread more widely than ever, which can lead to **dangerous consequences.**”

The next day, *Reuters* ran a story with the headline “Vaccine doubts spread like disease, must be taken offline: vaccine chief,” in which Seth Berkeley, CEO of **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, was quoted as saying that measles outbreaks are occurring because



of “misinformation” on social media platforms, that it is “**not a free speech issue,**” and the content should be taken down.<sup>296</sup> Berkeley said, “I remind people that this [misinformation] kills people.” He said that social media algorithms favored sensational content over scientific facts and “we have to think about it [misinformation] as a disease. This is a disease. This spreads at the speed of light, literally.”

## Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

The **WHO** and the **U.S. government** are founding partners of **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**. Gavi is headquartered in Geneva with an office in Washington, D.C. that carries out day-to-day operations and one of Gavi’s core goals is to “shape markets for vaccines and other immunization products.”

In 2000, the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** provided \$750M in seed money to spearhead the creation of Gavi, a public-private partnership and multilateral funding mechanism involving the **WHO, governments, the vaccine industry, the World Bank, philanthropic foundations,** and civil society groups to “improve access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world’s poorest countries.”<sup>297</sup>

Of the more than \$23B raised by Gavi since 2000 to vaccinate the world’s children, **U.S. government** funding totaled \$3.1B or about 13 percent of all contributions received by Gavi by 2022, with the **United Kingdom** providing 13.8 percent of all funding (highest country contribution). The single biggest funding source for Gavi is the **Gates Foundation**, which, by 2022, had donated about \$4.6B or 19.4 percent of Gavi’s total income.<sup>298</sup>

Between 2000 and 2013, only about 10 percent of the total funding provided by Gavi (\$862M) was used to strengthen health systems in developing countries, such as improving sanitation and nutrition, while nearly 80 percent was used to purchase, deliver and promote vaccines.<sup>299</sup>

## The Science and Politics of Eradicating Measles

To respond to inaccurate information circulating about measles outbreaks in the U.S., on May 25, 2019 I published a special report and posted a video commentary on YouTube entitled “**What is Going on With Measles? The Science & Politics of Eradicating Measles.**” I reviewed the history of measles and measles vaccine science, policy and law in the U.S. and argued that the evidence shows it is **unscientific and illogical** to blame measles outbreaks on a small minority of children attending school without measles shots. I offered this perspective:<sup>300</sup>

*“As the 72 million adults of the baby boomer generation come to the end of their lives, the last generation with robust natural measles immunity from childhood, which has greatly contributed to herd immunity in this population - **it is long past time for public health officials to reevaluate what they are doing.** Because, for more than 55 years, they have stubbornly ignored persistent signs that the hypothesis of the medical experiment they have been conducting was fundamentally flawed. Instead, their answer*

*to measles outbreaks, always, has been to simplistically order children to get more MMR vaccine and to scapegoat parents of unvaccinated children for a problem that parents did not create and do not own.”*

## **FBI Weighs in on “Anti-Vaxxers” and “National Security”**

In June 2019, **The InfraGard Journal**, which is affiliated with the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** published an article entitled, “The Anti-Vaxxers Movement and National Security,” which reviewed “the national security implications of the anti-vaccine movement (“Anti-Vaxxers”) in the United States.” The authors maintained that the rejection of vaccines is a national security issue. They warned about future pandemics, especially ones involving “weaponized infectious agents” and said:<sup>301</sup>

*“Reduction in mortality and morbidity by halting the spread of the organism will require both **social isolation and mass vaccination**.... Clearly, social isolation will be one component of preventing the spread of a potential pandemic. A critical strategy will be the use of a vaccine, if available, to control outbreaks. Historically, the complexities of manufacturing vaccines, and distributing them to entire populations were the main difficulties in managing outbreaks, but this has changed. Today, the biggest threat in controlling an outbreak comes from those who categorically reject vaccination.”*

The authors said that one of the causes for increased opposition to vaccination is “**social media misinformation and propaganda campaigns** by many foreign and domestic actors.” They stated that “social media companies play a significant role in propagating false and misleading information about vaccines.”

According to its website, **InfraGard** is an FBI program, a “partnership with the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** and members of the private sector for the protection of U.S. Critical Infrastructure.”<sup>302</sup>

*“Through seamless collaboration, InfraGard connects owners and operators within critical infrastructure to the FBI, to provide education, information sharing, networking, and workshops on emerging technologies and threats. InfraGard’s membership includes business executives, entrepreneurs, lawyers, security personnel, military and government officials, IT professionals, academic and state and local law enforcement – all dedicated to contributing industry specific insight and advancing national security.”*

On Dec. 13, 2022, it was reported that InfraGard’s database of contact information for its 80,000 members was hacked and put up for sale on an English language cybercrime forum.<sup>303</sup>

On July 1, 2019, I released a video commentary entitled “**Freedom to Dissent and the New Blacklist in America.**” I said:<sup>304</sup>

*“The legal right to dissent has been a hallmark of freedom in America. Unlike in authoritarian governments, in our country, citizens have the right and responsibility to participate in the law-making process. **We have – or should have - the freedom to openly debate government policy, law and ethics in public forums and dissent***

*from the majority without fear of intimidation or punishment. But two and a half centuries after the Declaration of Independence, that is changing. An unprecedented attack on civil liberties and the right to dissent is being led by a new privileged ruling class whose power is not derived from aristocratic titles, wealth and political influence linked to genetic heritage and ownership of land. The power of the new ruling class in America is derived from academic titles, wealth and political influence linked to corporatized government that seeks ownership of our physical bodies.”*

## **Department of Homeland Security, FBI and Big Business Point to “Threat Actors” on Social Media Spreading “Disinformation”**

In October 2019, a paper entitled “**Combatting Targeted Disinformation Campaigns: A Whole of Society Issue**” was published by eleven individuals identified as the “Combatting Targeted Disinformation Campaigns team, operating under the auspices of the **Department of Homeland Security** Analyst Exchange Program.” The affiliation of participating individuals appears in the paper, which included the **FBI** (3 individuals), **Fannie Mae**, **The MITRE Corporation**, **National Oilwell Varco**, **Booz Allen Hamilton**, **NC4**, **Proofpoint, Inc**, **University of Florida Levin College of Law**, and **Northern California Regional Intelligence Center**.

However, in some cases, only the first name and last initial of the team member is provided. **The Director of National Intelligence** and the **Department of Homeland Security**, as well as “private industry experts from technology and social media companies, university and think tank scholars and researchers, and state and federal agencies” were acknowledged in the paper as providing “support throughout the duration of the program.”<sup>305</sup>

In the paper’s executive summary and throughout the report, **military terms and imagery** is used, such as referring to “threat actors” on social media who “spread disinformation” and are “posing a significant threat to democratic societies:”

*“The shift from print sources of information to online sources and the rise of social media have made a profound impact on how consumers access, process and share information. These changes have made it easier for **threat actors** to spread disinformation and exploit the modern information environment, posing a significant threat to democratic societies. Accordingly, disinformation campaigns should be viewed as a whole-of-society problem requiring action by government stakeholders, commercial entities, media organizations and other segments of civil society.”*

They talk about the need to “combat” targeted disinformation campaigns by “**neutralizing threat actors**” and “building public resilience in the face of disinformation.” They talk about using a “**disinformation kill chain**,” or “cyber kill chain model,” which was developed from a military model originally created to identify, attack, engage and destroy a target.<sup>306</sup> The cyber kill chain model, they said, can be used to counter the actions of “threat actors.”

The paper’s authors frankly acknowledge the power of government to combat “disinformation campaigns” online by employing coercion, threats and punitive

sanctions, appearing to reluctantly admit there are “constitutional and other legal guarantees of free speech that constrain government efforts to regulate the content of online information.”

*“In many respects, government entities have a far more powerful and extensive arsenal with which to combat targeted disinformation campaigns than social media companies. **Governments can impose economic sanctions and civil fines, arrest and prosecute, limit international travel, seize websites, and withdraw tax exempt status. Governments can also pressure social media companies to modify their practices by exposing these practices to public scrutiny.** However, constitutional and other legal guarantees of free speech constrain government efforts to regulate the content of online information.”*

In a clear warning to the owners of social media platforms, the paper’s authors point to the fact that “there is growing support for amending **Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act**, which could potentially make social media companies civilly liable for content that users post on these platforms.” Finally, they talk about “the importance of understanding targeted disinformation campaigns in the interest of hardening public defense against them” and used militaristic imagery to recommend that “we must focus on building resilience, **hitting the actor**, and undermining their technical advantage.”

This 2019 paper published under the auspices of the **Department of Homeland Security** and **Director of National Intelligence** is chilling. It takes on special significance in retrospect, considering the fact that Americans, who government officials and media labeled “anti-vaxxers” – and that would include me and the National Vaccine Information Center - were considered to be “threat actors” and denied free speech on social media platforms within three months of the release of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) granted by FDA officials to **Pfizer** and **Moderna** in December 2020.

## Johns Hopkins University, World Economic Forum & Gates Foundation Hold Coronavirus Pandemic Tabletop Exercise

On October 18, 2019, **Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security** at the **Bloomberg School of Public Health** held an “Event 201 Tabletop Exercise” in partnership with the **World Economic Forum** and **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**. A fictional scenario of a future pandemic was created in order to illustrate “areas where **public/private partnerships** will be necessary during the response to a severe pandemic in order to diminish large-scale economic and societal consequences.” Fifteen global business, government, and public health leaders from the **World Economic Forum, United Nations, CDC** and the **intelligence, academic, banking, airline, global communications and pharmaceutical industries** were chosen as players in the dramatic, scenario-based simulation exercise that was viewed by an audience of about 130 people in New York City.<sup>307</sup>

The pathogen chosen for the fictional exercise was “**a novel zoonotic coronavirus** transmitted from bats to pigs to people that eventually becomes efficiently transmissible from person to person.”

After the event, in their recommendations for “public-private cooperation for pandemic preparedness and response,” a united public call to action to “**counter misinformation**,” which included asking media companies to ensure that “authoritative messages are prioritized” and “false messages are suppressed.”

*“Governments and the private sector should assign a greater priority to developing methods to combat mis- and disinformation prior to the next pandemic response... Governments will need to partner with traditional and social media companies to research and develop nimble approaches to countering misinformation... National public health agencies should work in close collaboration with WHO to create the capability to rapidly develop and release consistent health messages. For their part, media companies should commit to ensuring that **authoritative messages are prioritized** and that **false messages are suppressed** including though the use of technology.”*

In 2022, an independent journalist published evidence that Event 201 was planned at the **World Economic Forum’s Davos 2019** meeting, which had as its theme “Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.”<sup>308</sup> **The Fourth Industrial Revolution** is described by WEF founder **Klaus Schwab** as “a technological revolution” that will transform society and “is blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological spheres.” It includes technologies like artificial intelligence, self-driving cars, and the Internet merging with humans’ physical lives, technologies such as voice-activated assistants, facial ID recognition and digital health-care sensors.<sup>309</sup>

In November and December 2019, the **World Economic Forum** announced a partnership with the **World Federation of Advertisers (WFA)** led by the **WFA Global Alliance for Responsible Media (GARM)** effort “to improve the safety of digital environments, addressing harmful and misleading media while protecting consumers and brands.”<sup>310</sup> **RAND Corporation** also updated and expanded its “Countering Truth

Decay” initiative that it began in 2018, <sup>311</sup> to respond to “disinformation – false or intentionally misleading information that aims to achieve an economic or political goal.”<sup>312</sup>

## Witnessing the Vaccine Injury Epidemic

On Nov. 12, 2019, the **Vaccine Injury Epidemic (VIE) event** was held on the National Mall in Washington, DC attended by thousands of parents and their children, many vaccine injured, and by Americans who support voluntary vaccine decision making. The rally highlighted the failure of government to make the prevention of vaccine injuries and deaths a national priority, a promise made when Congress passed the **National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986**, a promise that, tragically, was broken.

At that event I said:<sup>313</sup>

*“The right of the state to tell us what to do to our bodies or the bodies of our children ends where our right to protect our lives and our children’s lives begins. It is time to reject the cruel pseudo-ethic of utilitarianism propping up mandatory vaccination laws that justify child sacrifice by reducing what is moral to a mathematical equation. When the State considers one of us to be expendable, then we are all considered expendable.*

*And if the State can tag, track down and force individuals to be injected with biologicals of known and unknown toxicity today, then there will be no limit on which individual freedoms the state can take away in the name of the greater good tomorrow.*

*We can throw off the chemical chains making us sick if we act to instill truth, transparency, integrity and compassion in government. We must elect lawmakers who believe in and will act to protect freedom of thought, speech, and conscience and reform public health laws. There is no greater calling for Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than to defend those civil and human rights that protect against tyranny.”*

## Holistic Health Pioneer and Philanthropist Who Supports NVIC’s Mission Attacked for Supporting NVIC

Seven days later, on Dec. 20, 2019, the **Washington Post** published an article entitled “A major funder of the anti-vaccine movement has made millions selling natural health products,” and questioned why **holistic health pioneer Dr. Joseph Mercola** had donated \$2.9 million over the span of a decade to the **National Vaccine Information Center** through his Natural Health Research Foundation.<sup>314</sup> Dr. Mercola, who urges everyone to “take control of your health,” operates the largest natural health website in the world. He publishes information about eating organically, exercising, improving vitamin levels, and offers products that help people move away from exclusive reliance on the current pharmaceutical product-dependent medical model.

**The Washington Post** reporters described NVIC as “the nation’s oldest anti-vaccine advocacy group.” They said that **NVIC** and had “claimed credit this year [2019] for

helping to defeat legislation in a dozen states that would have made it harder for parents to opt out of vaccinating their children.”

Noting that NVIC’s website [at NVIC.org] was “visited more than 1.2 million times last year [2018]” and that Dr. Mercola is publicly acknowledged as a partner on the homepage, the authors suggested Dr. Mercola reaped “benefit from his donations to the anti-vaccine group.”

Dr. Mercola replied, “being an adversary to powerful industries is not a positive for a business like mine.”

## 2020: The COVID Pandemic Arrives with Global Warnings to Social Media Companies to Combat “Misinformation” About SARS-CoV-2

Several weeks before the WHO declared an outbreak disease in China involving a novel coronavirus to be a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern,”<sup>315</sup> presidential candidate **Joe Biden** called for removal of liability protections for social media companies, particularly **Facebook**, for “propagating falsehoods they know to be false.” He said that social media companies should no longer be protected from liability under **Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act**, which shields companies providing digital services from lawsuits for content of user posts.<sup>316</sup>

On Feb. 5, 2020, my commentary entitled “Coronavirus Vaccines on Fast Track as WHO Declares Global Public Health Emergency” was published on NVIC.org,<sup>317</sup> the first in a series of referenced articles and video commentaries I wrote and posted online that contemporaneously reported on pandemic-related events as they unfolded. <sup>318</sup> A special multi-series report on “The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic,” my report analyzes events that occurred between February 2020 and November 2022, when I published a commentary entitled “Weaponizing COVID to Promote Collectivism.”<sup>319</sup>

On Feb. 15, 2020, the **WHO Director-General** gave a speech at the **Munich Security Conference** and expressed concern about “the levels of rumours and misinformation that are hampering the response to “the outbreak of COVID-19.” He stated, “We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic. Fake news spreads faster and more easily than this virus, and it is just as dangerous.” He added: <sup>320</sup>

*“That’s why we’re also working with search and media companies like **Facebook, Google, Pinterest, Tencent, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube** and others to counter the spread of rumours and misinformation. We call on all governments, companies and news organizations to work with us to sound the appropriate level of alarm, without fanning the flames of hysteria....it takes a whole of government approach...now more than ever is the time for us to let science and evidence lead policy. “*

## United Nations: “The Vaccine Is Trust. First, Trust in Science”

By April 2020, more cases of SARS-CoV-2 were being reported, and the U.S. and other governments had ordered lockdowns that told people to isolate and “shelter in place” in

homes and wear masks in public spaces.<sup>321</sup> Legitimate questions continued to be asked about the origin of the sudden appearance of a mutated coronavirus.<sup>322</sup>

On Apr. 13, 2020, a **United Nations (UNESCO)** press release alleged that “During this coronavirus pandemic, “fake news” is putting lives at risk.” The release said:<sup>323</sup>

*“Unreliable and false information is spreading around the world to such an extent that some commentators are now referring to the new avalanche of misinformation that’s accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic as a “disinfodemic.”*

On its website, the WHO basically defines an “infodemic” as “**too much information**” with a need for health authorities to “manage the infodemic” and manage “health behaviours.”<sup>324</sup>

*“An **infodemic is too much information** including false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during a disease outbreak. It causes confusion and risk-taking behaviours that can harm health. It also leads to mistrust in health authorities and undermines the public health response.... Infodemic management is the systematic use of risk- and evidence-based analysis and approaches to manage the infodemic and reduce its impact on health behaviours during health emergencies.”*

On Apr. 14, 2020 the United Nations Secretary General issued a written and video statement in New York City using alarming language to announce a “United Nations Communications Response initiative to flood the Internet with facts and science while countering the growing scourge of misinformation -- a poison that is putting even more lives at risk.” He dramatically referred to the “deadly COVID-19 pandemic” as “the most challenging crisis we have faced since the Second World War.” Even though there was no COVID-19 vaccine on the market yet in any country, he defensively referred to it: “The vaccine is trust.”<sup>325</sup>

*“As the world fights **the deadly COVID-19 pandemic – the most challenging crisis we have faced since the Second World War** – we are also seeing another epidemic -- a dangerous epidemic of misinformation. Around the world, people are scared. They want to know what to do and where to turn for advice. This is a time for science and solidarity. Yet the global ‘misinfo-demic’ is spreading. Harmful health advice and snake-oil solutions are proliferating. Falsehoods are filling the airwaves. Wild conspiracy theories are infecting the Internet. Hatred is going viral, stigmatizing and vilifying people and groups. **The world must unite against this disease, too. The vaccine is trust. First, trust in science.** I salute the journalists and others fact-checking the mountain of misleading stories and social media posts. Social media companies must do more to root out hate and harmful assertions about COVID-19.”*

## **The Informed Consent Principle DOES Apply in “the Therapeutic As Well as the Research Setting”**

On Apr. 27, 2020, the *Financial Times* published an article entitled “**The coronavirus pandemic is moment of truth for anti-vaccine movement.**”<sup>326</sup> **NVIC** was described



as “one of the most prominent US groups campaigning against mandatory vaccination.” and included a quote from me opposing public health policy that uses coercion and force. I said:

***Our organization is very concerned about fast-tracking the vaccine without proper study. We are worried that corners will be cut and the proper human and animal trials won't be carried out.***

In reference to what the reporter described as “state-led action that researchers say will be needed when a vaccine becomes available,” I added:

***“We are against the use of coercion and force in public health policy altogether.”***

On June 9, 2020, **FactCheck**, founded in 2003 and owned by the **Annenberg Public Policy Center** at the **University of Pennsylvania**, published an article “**Nuremberg Code Addresses Experimentation, Not Vaccines**,” and attempted to refute my argument that it is a human right to exercise voluntary, informed consent to vaccination because vaccines are pharmaceutical products that carry a risk of injury or death.<sup>327</sup> I have maintained that the informed consent principle articulated in **the Nuremberg Code** at the end of **The Doctor's Trial** after World War II to protect the right to autonomy and protection of bodily integrity of human subjects in scientific experiments, subsequently **became a central ethical principle in the practice of medicine** affirming the right of patients to protect autonomy and bodily integrity through voluntary exercise of informed consent to medical risk taking.<sup>328 329</sup>

FactCheck said, “A bogus claim that “[v]accines are in direct violation of *The Nuremberg Code*” has been circulating on social media...In the 1990s, a prominent vaccine critic, **Barbara Loe Fisher**, cited one of the core principles stated in the **Nuremberg Code** — informed consent — to support her argument that parents should have more freedom to choose whether or not to vaccinate their children.”

*FactCheck* alleged that I “mixed up two different lineages of informed consent,” and used comments made by distinguished bioethicist George Annas, JD, MPH, a professor at **Boston University**, in which he appears to agree with another bioethicist that the informed consent principle does not apply to vaccination.

The *FactCheck* reporter wrote: “The Nuremberg Code has “only been used by courts in the human experimentation context,” Annas told us. And the principle of informed consent in the regular doctor-patient relationship, outside of medical experimentation, doesn't come from the Nuremberg Code, he said. That developed separately.”

Whether or not the *FactCheck* reporter accurately reflected the position of Annas in 2020 on the significance of the Nuremberg Code when applied to the practice of medicine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Annas is on record as stating that “the doctrine of informed consent” *does* apply in “the therapeutic as well as the research setting.” In a 2003 article entitled “**Bodily Integrity and Informed Choice in Times of War and Terror**” posted on the **American Bar Association (ABA)** website, Annas wrote:<sup>330</sup>

*“The question of when the law assumed the dominant role in defining ethical medical practice can be debated, but my nomination is at the **"Doctors' Trial" at Nuremberg**. The end of World War II was marked by the birth of the international human rights movement, the formation of the United Nations, and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights... In the United States, **our courts later adopted and applied the doctrine of informed consent to the therapeutic as well as the research setting**, reversing the Hippocratic ethic by placing choice in the hands of patients rather than physicians...*

*“It should go without saying (but, of course, it doesn't) that **civilians retain all of their rights to bodily integrity, even during war and times of domestic emergencies, and that under no circumstances should civilians be subjected to forced vaccination or other bodily invasions - even those deemed "necessary" by military, medical, or public health officials**. Human rights lawyers should resist current proposals to grant public health officials the power over the bodies of civilians during a bioterrorist attack or other public emergency.”*

## Grand Committee on Disinformation Meets in Washington, DC

In June 2020, **The International Grand Committee on Disinformation (IGC)** co-sponsored several virtual meetings with **The George Washington University Institute for Data, Democracy & Politics** to focus on “the damage that **platform-hosted hate speech and disinformation** is doing to political systems and vulnerable communities.”<sup>331</sup> A June 16 IGC virtual meeting was entitled “**Harms of COVID-19 Misinformation**,” and **House Speaker California Rep. Nancy Pelosi** spoke at that meeting, along with **U.S. Rep. David Celline, Rep. Patty Murray, Rep. Jan Schakowsky, and Sen. Richard Blumenthal**.

**ABC News** reported that **Rep. Pelosi** said, “social media platforms are profiting from COVID-19 misinformation.” She suggested there was strong bi-partisan support to “**get tough** on [social media] platforms” for “misinformation” about coronavirus and that “we need to send a message to social media executives that **you will be held accountable**.”

She added that “**fact-checking is not censorship and labeling a call to violence is not authoritarian**.”<sup>332</sup>

In another **ABC News** article entitled “Adam Schiff accuses social media companies of misinformation negligence,” **Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee California Rep. Adam Schiff** was quoted from remarks he made at a June 29 IGC meeting as accusing **Google and YouTube** of **deliberately not disclosing “misinformation”** on their platforms so they would not be scrutinized like other social media companies. Schiff reportedly “hinted” at removing “immunity” granted to social media platforms under **Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act**.<sup>333</sup>

## Center for Countering Digital Hate Launches the Big Hate Fest

On July 1, 2020, the **Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH)** published a report entitled “**The Anti-Vaxx Industry: How Big Tech powers and profits from vaccine misinformation.**”<sup>334</sup> In it, CCDH’s founder and CEO, **Imran Ahmed**, said “lies cost lives” and castigated social media companies for failing to remove “anti-vaxx content despite accepting the scientific consensus that vaccines are safe.”

Ahmed described NVIC as “one of the oldest and most influential anti-vaccination campaign organisations.” He called on social media companies to “do their bit” and urged legislators and businesses to start “listening to campaigns like the Center for Countering Digital Hate’s Stop Funding Fake News and Stop Hate for Profit, and make sure that Big Tech pays an economic cost for spreading misinformation.”

Founded in 2018 in the United Kingdom, CCDH is a London based “non-governmental organization,” which reportedly opened an office in the Washington, DC area around 2021, and has lobbied Google to **demonetize conservative U.S. media outlets** like *The Federalist* through its “**Stop Funding Fake News**” program.<sup>335</sup> **Influence Watch**, which monitors individuals and groups that influence public policy, describes CCDH as an advocacy group “with ties to the **left-wing British Labour Party**” that targets accused ‘hate groups’ and individuals for de-platforming campaigns to remove them from major social media outlets.<sup>336</sup>

CCDH founder, Imran Ahmed, is a **foreign political operative** who has served as a political advisor in the **UK Parliament** and to the British Labour Party,<sup>337</sup> and was a member of the **UK government’s Pilot Task Force Steering Committee of the Commission for Countering Extremism.**<sup>338</sup> Former CCDH board members also had ties to British government political parties.<sup>339</sup> Another former board member is a senior fellow at the **Center for American Progress**, a DC think tank funded by the **Gates Foundation, Google, and George Soros** with ties to the U.S. Democratic political party,<sup>340 341 342 343</sup> and is a Visiting Research Fellow at the **Center for Security and Policy Studies at the Schar School of George Mason University.**<sup>344</sup>

It is unclear exactly who funds CCDH.<sup>345 346</sup>

On July 9, 2020, **Media Matters for America** published an article alleging that “The three most prominent U.S. anti-vaccination organizations -- **National Vaccine Information Center, Children’s Health Defense, and Informed Consent Action Network**” are “using Facebook and other major social media platforms to lay the groundwork for widespread coronavirus vaccine rejection.”<sup>347</sup> The reporter said, “The most prominent public spokespeople for those organizations are **NVIC co-founder Barbara Loe Fisher**, ICAN founder Del Bigtree, and CHD chair Robert F. Kennedy Jr.,” and that “**Fisher, Kennedy, and Bigtree** are now organizing against the coronavirus vaccine development and pushing other coronavirus misinformation with a major boost from the largest social media platforms.” Citing my special report on the COVID-19 pandemic, which was described as including “a mix of information from legitimate sources, such as the CDC, as well as right-wing sources such as **The Washington Times**,” the reporter complained about NVIC’s reach on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. **Media Matters for America**, a non-profit organization founded in 2004, states that its purpose is to “systematically monitor a cross section of print, broadcast, cable, radio, and

Internet media outlets for conservative misinformation - news or commentary that is not accurate, reliable, or credible and that forwards the conservative agenda - every day in real time.<sup>348</sup> According to ***Influence Watch***, the organization was founded by a “conservative-turned-liberal activist,” who “received help and guidance from the **Center for American Progress**, which at the time was also recently formed by former officials from the Clinton White House.”<sup>349</sup>

## **World Health Organization: “Misinformation Costs Lives”**

On Sept. 23, 2020, the **United Nations World Health Organization** issued a joint statement with other UN agencies, including **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**, **United Nations General Trust Fund (UNDP)**, **United Nations Education, Scientific and Culture Organization (UNESCO)**, **United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)**, **International Telecommunications Union (ITU)**, **UN Global Pulse**, and **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** entitled “Managing the COVID-19 infodemic: Promoting health behaviours and mitigating the harm from misinformation and disinformation.”<sup>350</sup>

WHO officials called on “the media and social media platforms” and “researchers and technologists” and “civil society leaders and influencers” to “collaborate with the UN system,” because spread of “misinformation and disinformation” related to COVID-19 poses a **threat to “human rights and social cohesion”** and “**democracy**” and “**immunization campaign**” targets.

*“**Misinformation costs lives.** Without the appropriate trust and correct information, diagnostic tests go unused, immunization campaigns (or campaigns to promote effective vaccines) will not meet their targets, and the virus will continue to thrive. Furthermore, disinformation is polarizing public debate on topics related to COVID-19; amplifying hate speech; heightening the risk of conflict, violence and human rights violations; and **threatening** long-term prospects for advancing **democracy, human rights and social cohesion.**”*

## The United Nations World Health Organization (WHO): A Multi-Billion Dollar Operation

Immediately after World War II in 1945, the United Nations (UN) voted to establish a new international health organization. In 1948, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** was founded by the UN after ratification by 26 member states and given a budget of \$5M.<sup>351</sup> WHO is a specialized agency of the UN headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland and is composed of six regional offices operating in different parts of the world, including the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) located in Washington, D.C. Today, 193 member states belonging to the United Nations are impacted by the activities of the WHO, which has a broad mandate to “act as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work.”

The WHO Constitution, revised in 2006, states that its objective “is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health” and health is defined as “**a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.**” The WHO Constitution also states that, “Informed opinion and active co-operation on the part of the public are of the utmost importance in the improvement of the health of the people.”<sup>352</sup>

The top priorities of the WHO when it was founded 75 years ago were malaria, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, maternal and child health; sanitary engineering and nutrition. During the first 30 years of WHO’s operation, the UN agency spearheaded a global smallpox eradication campaign (1958-1980); prevention and control of yaws, endemic syphilis, leprosy, trachoma, cholera and yellow fever (1960s); fertility regulation and birth control (1970s) childhood vaccination programs (initiated in 1974) and the institution of primary health care of all national health systems (initiated in 1978).<sup>353</sup>

The **United Nations budget** for 2023 is **\$14.8B** (US) dollars.<sup>354</sup> The 2022/2023 **World Health Organization budget** is **\$6.72B** (US) dollars.<sup>355</sup> It appears that in 2021, about 13 percent of the WHO budget was funded by assessments on United Nations member states and about 83 percent was funded by “voluntary contributions.”<sup>356</sup>

**Germany**, the **U.S.** and **United Kingdom** are the largest UN member state contributors to the WHO. The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** is the biggest non-government donor and the **European Commission** and **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance** are among the top five biggest contributors to funding of WHO programs.

As WHO’s largest non-state funder, the **Gates Foundation** earmarks grant money for specific programs, such as vaccine purchase, delivery and promotion, and is in a position to significantly influence the setting of WHO’s program priorities.<sup>357</sup> It is unclear from the program budget information released by the WHO as to exactly how much of the WHO’s total \$6.72B annual budget is spent on vaccine purchase, delivery, promotion and operation of global vaccination campaigns.

In 2010, after a joint investigation by the **British Medical Journal** (BMJ) in collaboration with the London-based **Bureau of Investigative Journalism**, an article was published

in the BMJ revealing that three key scientists, who influenced the WHO's decision to declare a **swine flu (H1N1) influenza pandemic** in 2009 and recommend that all countries use and stockpile vaccines and pandemic flu drugs, had financial ties to pharmaceutical companies profiting from the WHO recommendations (**GlaxoSmithKline** and **Roche**). WHO was also criticized for lack of transparency for refusing to release the identities of the 16 members of an Emergency Committee formed in 2009 to guide pandemic policy.<sup>358</sup>

The 2009 pandemic H1N1 vaccine, which was rushed to market to address a WHO declared pandemic, a pandemic that did not really happen, triggered an autoimmune reaction in more than 1,300 people in Europe who got GSK's Pandemrix vaccine. The swine flu vaccine left them with narcolepsy, a serious immune mediated neurological disorder.<sup>359</sup>

Today, the United Nations World Health Organization is the world's largest and most politically influential public health agency, especially since the WHO's 2020 COVID pandemic declaration. Recently, there have been **reports that the United Nations and WHO seek the power to exercise legal authority over all government health agencies of member states when the WHO declares a global public health emergency.**<sup>360 361</sup>

## NVIC's Conference Held Online

On Oct. 2-4, 2020, NVIC held our **Fifth International Public Conference on Vaccination: Protecting Health & Autonomy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** online, featuring presentations by 50 physicians, scientists, bioethicists, lawmakers, attorneys, religious scholars, journalists, and informed consent advocates.<sup>362</sup> Due to continuing attacks in the media on NVIC and our work, we had to build a special website protected by a secure firewall to prepare for potential sabotage during the live broadcast of the conference.

## Department of Homeland Security Says Online “Political Commentary” Could Motivate “Domestic Violent Extremists (DVM)”

On Oct. 6, 2020, the **Department of Homeland Security** published a report, “Homeland Threat Assessment. The Terrorist Threat to the Homeland,” which contained disturbing language pointing to online content about COVID-19, including “political commentary” as potentially motivating individuals they label “domestic violent extremists (DVM)” to commit unlawful acts.<sup>363</sup>

*“We also remain particularly concerned about the impacts from COVID-19 where anti-government and anti-authority violent extremists could be motivated to conduct attacks in response to **perceived infringement of liberties and government overreach** as all levels of government seek to limit the spread of the coronavirus that has caused a worldwide pandemic.*

*“Ideologies driven by such DVE’s often are reinforced by a variety of **online content**, including conspiracy theories and **political commentary** they view as controversial. Current events that DVEs perceive as infringing on their worldviews often contribute to periods of increased ideologically motivated violence, including recently during the COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide lawful protests.”*

## **“The Anti-Vaxxers Think This Is Their Moment”**

On Dec. 20, 2020, an article was published in *The Atlantic* written by Renee DiResta entitled “Anti-Vaxxers Think This is Their Moment,”<sup>364</sup> in which DiResta predicted that the same very same concerns that 19<sup>th</sup> century critics of the notoriously reactive smallpox vaccine articulated would be similar to public concerns talked about when the new COVID-19 vaccines were released:

*“The ingredients are toxic and unnatural; the vaccines are insufficiently tested; the scientists who produce them are quacks and profiteers; the cell cultures involved in some shots are an affront to the religious; the authorities working to protect public health are guilty of tyrannical overreach.”*

She said, “Bottom-up networked activism is driving the spread of **anti-vaccine COVID-19 propaganda**” and cited the **National Vaccine Information Center** as an example of how in the 21<sup>st</sup> century social media had allowed parents sharing similar values and beliefs about vaccination, parenting and wellness to by-pass “media gatekeepers” and speak directly with each other and to the public. She said:

*“Social media offered an opportunity to evade the media gatekeepers and take ideas directly to the public, so anti-vaccine organizations such as the **National Vaccine Information Center** prioritized establishing a strong social presence on the most important platforms. They grew audiences on their own **Facebook** pages, and cross-promoted their content within **wellness communities, natural-parenting circles, and groups opposed to genetically modified food ingredients.**”*

Then she accused people like me of deliberately “spreading” misinformation and “false narratives” about COVID-19 and concluded that “countering this misinformation requires a whole-of-society effort.”

*“**The anti-vaccine activism around COVID-19 is more than just misinformation.** This word doesn’t adequately convey the deliberateness of the messaging strategies that movement leaders consciously began to adopt in January 2020. **The leaders of the anti-vaccine movement are not accidentally spreading this material. It’s intentional.**...\_False narratives will move from anti-vaccine echo chambers to mass audiences via social-media sharing, as well as coverage in local and mainstream media. **Countering this misinformation requires a whole-of-society effort.**”*

## **CCDH Promotes More Hate and Lies About NVIC**

On Dec. 23, 2020, CCDH published a report entitled the “**Anti-Vaxx Playbook.**”<sup>365</sup> Ahmed claimed the report “exposed how the global scientific consensus on vaccines is

being undermined by a small but determined and sophisticated network of individuals and groups spreading misinformation online. He added, “They have improved their reach and sustainability through **skillful exploitation of social media to proselytize and normalize their fringe beliefs.**”

However, in the “Anti-Vaxx Playbook,” CCDH **intentionally** spread disinformation propaganda about NVIC’s conference, making provably false statements that the conference was “held in private over three days,” when the conference – like the four previous NVIC international public conferences on vaccination in 1997, 2000, 2002 and 2009<sup>366</sup> – was transparently open to the public and publicized for months in advance informing people it was our first conference held online because of pandemic response lockdown restrictions that prevented us from holding it in a hotel. Implying that our conference was conspiratorial and held in secret, I was listed first among what he characterized as “influential anti-vaxxers,” who he labeled “**malignant actors,**” alleging that, “**NVIC sits at the core of the established anti-vaccine movement.**”

One of Ahmed’s main complaints in the report was that “anti-vaxxers” have mostly “been denied a platform to voice their conspiracy theories and falsehoods by traditional media [but] social media gave them access to hundreds of millions of potential new converts.” He called for the removal of “prominent anti-vaxxers from their platforms.”

Three weeks later, the *Washington Post* published an Opinion piece by Ahmed entitled “**Social media platforms should deny service to superspreaders of disinformation.**” In it, he again falsely described our conference as “private” and says that social media companies must “do more to stop the spread of **anti-vaxxers malicious agenda,**” so that “far fewer members of the public will be exposed to life-threatening lies.”<sup>367</sup>

Clearly, in the CCDH “Anti-Vaxx Playbook” report, Ahmed deliberately created false information about NVIC and our conference speakers for the purpose of having it spread by influential media outlets, which is exactly what happened.<sup>368 369</sup>

## **UNITED Nations (UNICEF): “Inoculate People Against Misinformation”**

On Dec. 31, 2020, the **United Nations (UNICEF)** released the *Vaccine Misinformation Field Guide* created by UNICEF officials “in collaboration with **The Public Good Projects, First Draft, and Yale Institute of Global Health.** The field guide told health professionals, “behaviour and social change specialists,” and “external and digital” communications professions how to “**inoculate people against vaccine misinformation.**”<sup>370</sup>

In the Guide, authors defined **misinformation** as “accidental falsehoods. Wrong or misleading information with the power to dilute, distract, distort.” They define **disinformation** as “deliberate engineered falsehoods circulated with malicious intent or for the purpose of serving a personal, political or economic agenda.” Readers are told that:



*“The infodemic of vaccine misinformation is a **public health threat.**”*

*“Lower trust in science and scientists, in journalists and the mainstream media, or in authorities has been linked to increased susceptibility to misinformation.”*

*“The good news is that it is possible to ‘inoculate’ people against misinformation, much as we can vaccinate against infectious diseases.”*

At the end of the UNICEF document, the authors give “special thanks” to a doctor “for his guidance through **the emerging practice of psychological inoculation against misinformation.**”

## **2021: Vaccination and Censorship**

On Jan. 26, 2021, I published a commentary entitled “**Vaccination and Censorship: The Truth Will Set Us Free**”<sup>371</sup> and posted it on YouTube. I said Ahmed and CCDH had published “false and misleading information” about NVIC’s conference and pointed to one British tabloid reporter, who read the report and sensationally described it as a “private conference call” where “**secret plans**” were plotted to “launch the largest ever misinformation campaign about vaccines.”<sup>372</sup>

On Feb. 28, the *Washington Post* published an Opinion by pediatrician Richard Pan, who led the pharmaceutical and medical trade funded lobbying campaign in the California legislature in 2015 to remove the personal belief vaccine exemption for school children.<sup>373</sup> Entitled “**Anti-vaccine extremism is akin to domestic terrorism,**”<sup>374</sup> he said, “A major weapon of anti-vaccine extremists is the ability to organize disinformation campaigns on **Facebook** and other social media. Corporate owners of these platforms can moderate and **close down groups** that promote disinformation and endanger lives.”

## **Facebook First De-platforms NVIC, Then CCDH Publishes the Blacklist**

**On Mar. 3, 2021, NVIC’s Facebook page was de-platformed** and we lost contact with more than 225,000 fans, a fan base we had grown and served since 2008. They were immediately blocked from being in touch with us or sharing our information with their friends and family. I issued a statement on behalf of NVIC that said in part:<sup>375</sup>

*“The U.S Congress has encouraged the creation of public-private business between vaccine manufacturers and federal agencies for the past three decades. In order to be part of those lucrative partnerships, Silicon Valley companies like Facebook are clearly happy to engage in censorship. If NVIC had not done such a good job educating the public about vaccination and health for four decades, our Facebook page would still be up.”*

Two months later, on Mar. 24, 2021, CCDH published the first “anti-vaxxer” blacklist in a report entitled “**The Disinformation Dozen: Why Platforms Must Act on Twelve**

**Leading Online Anti-Vaxxers.**<sup>376</sup> My name was not among the 12 individuals listed, although Ahmed did call for social media companies to “Deplatform key anti-vaxxer organisations,” and the “**National Vaccine Information Center (Barbara Loe Fisher/Joseph Mercola)**” were included on that list.

The “Disinformation Dozen” blacklist became infamous because it was used as a stalking horse for governmental agencies, institutions and media outlets in the U.S. and other countries to shame, blame and eliminate any individual or organization from the digital public square for failing to conform to narratives about vaccination approved by government health agencies and the **World Health Organization**.

Ten weeks later, on June 1, 2021, CCDH published another report - “**Pandemic Profiteers: The business of anti-vaxx**,”<sup>377</sup> and I was back on the blacklist list of “twelve leading anti-vaxxers [who] use social media to generate funding.” Again, extreme language was used to describe “a **subversive established industry of anti-vaxxers**” referred to by Ahmed as a “fifth column,” which has operated “in plain sight, publicly undermining our collective confidence in doctors, governments and medical science.”

My image was placed at the top of the now infamous photo on the front cover of that “Pandemic Profiteers” report. Ahmed included that photo and references to that report as part of his June 1, 2021 testimony for the **U.S. House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**.<sup>378</sup>

That photo was also featured in a document entitled “**Combatting Targeted Disinformation Campaigns: A whole of society issue (Part Two)**” published in August 2021 by the **Public-Private Analytic Exchange Program** with the participation of the **FBI** and **Department of State** and the assistance of the **Department of Homeland Security** and **Director of National Intelligence**.<sup>379</sup>

In the following weeks and for the rest of the year, the three CCDH reports blacklisting me and NVIC were referenced in multiple national and global news reports and medical journal articles, such as *Nature Medicine*,<sup>380</sup> *Genetic Literacy Project*,<sup>381</sup> and *AI Jazeera*<sup>382</sup>

## **Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security Targets NVIC**

On Mar. 23, 2021, **The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Health Security** published a report “**National Strategies to Combat Misinformation and Disinformation for COVID-19 and Future Public Health Threats**.”<sup>383</sup> In the Introduction of that report, the authors state that “A crucial lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic is the **dangerous influence** of health-related misinformation and disinformation.”

The following pejorative statement was made anchored with a reference to **CCDH’s “The Anti-Vaxx Playbook”** featuring NVIC’s October 2020 conference:

***“Both domestic and international actors have used false information during this public health emergency to further their own political and societal goals. The threat of COVID-19 disinformation is noted in the Worldwide Threat Assessment by the Director of National Intelligence and the Homeland Threat Assessment by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).”***

In a section entitled “The Problem,” the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security report authors state that “The **US Department of Defense (DOD)** and **US Department of State (DOS)** have increased efforts to combat foreign propaganda and disinformation campaigns.” And then go on to say that “Importantly, public health misinformation and disinformation is also an area of interest for **domestic actors**” and again reference **CDDH’s “Anti-Vaxx Playbook”** report featuring NVIC’s October 2020 conference.

**The Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security** called for “coordination across the range of government stakeholders” for “managing health-related misinformation and Disinformation,” that includes “the **Department of Defense, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Homeland Security**, as well as intelligence agencies such as the **Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Agency, and the Central Intelligence Agency.**”

**Johns Hopkins University** received a staggering **\$3B** in federal funding in 2021,<sup>384</sup> including from the **Departments of Health and Human Services, Department of Defense** and major pharmaceutical companies, such as **Pfizer, Inc.**<sup>385</sup>

## Congress Grills Digital Media Company CEOs

On Mar. 25, 2021 the CEOs of **Facebook, Twitter** and **Google** were grilled by members of two subcommittees of the **U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee.**<sup>386</sup> The focus of the discussion was often aimed at questioning the 25-year old liability shield that protects online platforms from being liable for content of their user’s posts, a liability shield given to the companies under **Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996.**

It was a contentious hearing that did not appear to resolve the question of whether digital media companies, including those operating social media platforms, should be held legally liable for content posted on their platforms.<sup>387</sup>

## Instagram De-Platforms NVIC

On Apr. 23, **Instagram**, which is owned by **Facebook**, eliminated NVIC’s account, leaving 58,000 followers without a way to be in contact with NVIC and share our information.

## Spinning the Big Lie About DPT Vaccine Injury and Death to Discredit Parents of Vaccine Injured Children Calling for Safer Vaccines

Writing in **Science News** and failing to get her scientific facts straight, former **Forbes** reporter **Tara Haelle** targeted me, as well as parents of vaccine injured children throughout history who warned about vaccine risks and opposed mandatory vaccination laws. In a May 11, 2021 article entitled “**Vaccine Hesitancy is Nothing New. Here’s the Damage Its Done Across the Centuries**,”<sup>388</sup> she applauded the “goal” to “encourage every state to require children attending public school to receive most vaccines recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.” Then she complained:

*“A nationally aired 1982 news documentary called “**DPT: Vaccine Roulette**” changed everything. Lea Thompson, a reporter with WRC-TV in Washington, D.C., shared emotional stories of parents claiming their children had suffered seizures and brain damage from the diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus, or DPT, shot. Interviews with doctors lent the stories credence. Fever-caused seizures were a known side effect of DPT, and a 1974 study had reported neurological complications developing in 36 children within 24 hours of DPT vaccination.*

*But the study did not follow the children long-term. **Later research revealed neither the seizures nor the vaccine caused long-term brain damage.***

*But the damage to public trust was done. Coopting the DPT acronym, one parent, **Barbara Loe Fisher**, cofounded **Dissatisfied Parents Together**, which became the **National Vaccine Information Center**, the most influential anti-vaccine organization in the United States.”*

Was Haelle unaware or did she deliberately ignore or lie about the fact that the National Academy of Sciences **Institute of Medicine** acknowledged in the 1994 report “**DPT Vaccine and Chronic Nervous System Dysfunction**” that:

*“The committee concludes that the balance of evidence is consistent with a **causal relation between DPT and the forms of chronic nervous system dysfunction** described in the NCES [National Childhood Encephalopathy Study] in those children who experience a serious acute neurologic illness within 7 days after receiving DPT vaccine.”*

Was Haelle unaware or did she deliberately ignore the fact that the federal **Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) Vaccine Injury Table** states that “**encephalitis and encephalopathy**” following receipt of whole cell or acellular pertussis vaccine in DPT and DTaP are “illness, injury, disability or conditions covered” and that awards for DPT/DTaP vaccine brain injury and death have been made by the government?

False information is frequently used by mainstream media outlets to deny the reality of vaccine injuries and deaths. It fuels the disintegration of public trust in public health officials, who make one-size-fits-all vaccine use recommendations, and in doctors and medical workers administering vaccines, solidifying opposition to mandatory vaccination laws that fail to acknowledge the genetic and biological

differences among individuals that make some more susceptible to harm from vaccination.

## Twitter De-Platforms NVIC

**On May 23, 2021, Twitter suspended the @NVICLoeDown account**, which NVIC had maintained since 2010. When we appealed, we were informed that our account had been “lifetime” banned.

Following the acquisition of Twitter by **Elon Musk**, who has since renamed the platform “**X**,” after an appeal we were informed on Feb. 10, 2023, that our @NVICLoeDown account had been re-established. I sent the following tweet:

*“Thank you, Elon Musk, for liberating @NVICLoeDown Twitter account established in 2010 by the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC), a charity founded in 1982 to prevent vaccine injuries and deaths through public education. **The right to autonomy is the first human right. Break every chain!** - Barbara Loe Fisher.*

## Surgeon General Issues Report on “Confronting Health Misinformation”

On July 15, 2021, the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** published a report “Confronting Health Misinformation: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory on Building a Health Information Environment.”<sup>389</sup>

In the report, the US Surgeon General said:

*“Misinformation has caused confusion and **led people to decline COVID-19 vaccines**, reject public health measures such as masking and physical distancing and use unproven treatments.”*

*“Because **it pollutes our information environment**, misinformation is harmful to individual and public health.”*

On page six of the report, the Surgeon General made this statement and anchored it with a reference to the infamous “Disinformation Dozen” **blacklist** created by the **Center for Countering Digital Hate**:

*“**Researchers have identified leading sources of COVID-19 misinformation, including misinformation “super-spreaders.”***

The Surgeon General called on “technology platforms” to “**redesign recommendation algorithms** to avoid amplifying misinformation” and to “prioritize **early detection of “super-spreaders”** and repeat offenders” and “**impose clear consequences** for accounts that repeatedly violate platform policies.”

Concluding with the sentiment that “misinformation is an **urgent threat**” that has “**hindered efforts to get Americans vaccinated,**” the Surgeon General called on “institutions to recognize that this issue is their **moral and civic responsibility,** too, and that they are accountable.”

### **“The Anti-Vaxxers Must Be Stopped...They’re Killing people”**

On July 18, 2021, a former professor at **Johns Hopkins University** and **University of Maryland Steven Salzberg** used the CCDH blacklist to write an Opinion for *Forbes* entitled “**De-platform The Disinformation Dozen.**”<sup>390</sup> He said:

*“The anti-vax movement constantly spreads lies, rumors, and misinformation in an effort to scare people away from vaccination. I won’t repeat the lies here, because merely stating them gives them more credibility than they deserve. But the anti-vaxxers and the social media platforms that spread their messages must be stopped. As President Biden said this past Friday, **“they’re killing people.”**”*

He demanded that social media companies shut down the accounts of “anti-vaxxers,” including the **National Vaccine Information Center**:

*“This in turn means that if the social media platforms will simply shut down their accounts (and other sites that they control, such as the misleadingly-named Children’s Health Defense and **National Vaccine Information Center**), we will see a dramatic reduction in false vaccine information, virtually overnight.”*

### **Over 40 Medical Trade Groups Use CCDH Blacklist to Pressure Google, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube CEOs to De-Platform NVIC**

On Aug. 11, 2021, the **Alliance for Aging Research**, a Washington, DC based non-profit funded by the **Pharmaceutical Researchers and Manufacturers Association (PRMA)**, **Pfizer**, **Merck**, **Novartis** and other drug companies,<sup>391</sup> sent a letter to the CEOs of **Google**, **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **YouTube** urging the companies to “**completely remove the accounts of prominent anti-vaxxers** and their organizing pages from your platforms and to **immediately begin issuing corrective posts** to counter the misinformation and disinformation in your platform feeds.”<sup>392</sup>

In the letter, the Pharma-funded AAR claimed to represent “millions of Americans” and used the **CCDH blacklist** and July 2021 **U.S. Surgeon General’s report** on “Confronting Health Misinformation,” a report which also used the CCDH blacklist as an authoritative source of information. In the letter, AAR specifically listed **National Vaccine Information Center (Barbara Loe Fisher, Joseph Mercola)** as being among the accounts that should be removed.

### **Report Published On Combatting Disinformation with FBI, CIA, State Department, Department of Homeland Security Involvement**

On Aug. 24, 2021, the 2021 Public-Private Analytic Exchange Program published Part Two of the “Combatting Targeted Disinformation Campaigns: A whole of society issue” report.<sup>393</sup> This time, in addition to team member representatives from the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)**, there were team members from the **Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)** and **US State Department**, who were involved in authoring the report described as “an initiative of the **Office of Director of National Intelligence** and managed by the **Department of Homeland Security**.”

In the report under the subhead “**Identifying Domestic Actors**,” the cover photo from the **CCDH’s “Pandemic Profiteers: the business of anti-vaxx”** with me at the top is prominently displayed on page 19. Another reference from the CCDH report on “The Disinformation Dozen” is also included as a reference on that page.

The authors state:

*“Since the 2016 US presidential election and the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus on disinformation campaigns has shifted from foreign **threat actors** to domestic ones. **On balance, disinformation campaigns originating from domestic actors are more enduring and damaging** than those originating from foreign actors.”*

## **President Orders Employees of Federal Government and Big Corporations to Get the COVID Shot**

On Sept. 9, 2021, President Biden issued an Executive Order **mandating that all federal executive branch workers get COVID-19 vaccinations.**<sup>394</sup> That order also extended to employees of **private contractors** that do business with the federal government.

In addition, the EO required **all private-sector employers** with 100 or more employees to make sure all their workers are vaccinated or get a COVID-19 test every week. The EO also applied to **all health workers at hospitals** which receive Medicare and Medicaid funding.

## **YouTube Suspends NVICStandUp Channel**

**On Sept. 30, 2021, YouTube suspended the NVICStandUp channel**, which NVIC had sponsored since 2007 and contained hundreds of video commentaries, public presentations, interviews, and historical archived television news reports and debates on vaccine science, policy, law and informed consent issues dating back to 1985.

NVIC’s YouTube channel had acquired **nearly two million lifetime views** of NVIC videos before it was suddenly removed.

Since 2019 and continuing to the present, all of my video commentaries I post online are preceded by this visual message:

*“This referenced commentary, which can be read on NVIC.org, provides information and perspective on a topic related to vaccine science, policy, law and ethics being discussed in public forums and by U.S. lawmakers. The website of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) at Vaccines.gov provides information and perspective of federal agencies responsible for vaccine research, development, regulation and policymaking.”*

**Google**, which owns YouTube, is the biggest search engine in the world and is owned by **Alphabet**, one of the world’s largest technology conglomerates.<sup>395</sup> In the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Google began applying suppressive algorithms to individuals and organizations posting online when the corporation’s administrators target them for censorship.<sup>396 397</sup>

In 2020, the **Google News Initiative (GNI)** provided \$6.5M in funding to “fact checkers and non-profits fighting misinformation around the world, with an immediate focus on coronavirus.” Among the many organizations and companies “fact checking” coronavirus “misinformation” that have been funded by GNI are **First Draft; Politifact and International Fact-Checking Network (The Poynter Institute); Kaiser Health News (Kaiser Family Foundation)** and **Full Fact**.<sup>398</sup>

## **The Rockefeller Foundation Commits \$7.5M to “Combat the Growing Mis- and Disinformation Crisis in Public Health”**

On Nov. 16, 2021, the **Rockefeller Foundation** joined with the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)** and **Craig Newmark Philanthropies** to launch a three-year \$10M investment “to combat the growing threat of mis- and disinformation on public health in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.” In a press release, The Rockefeller Foundation said it was committing \$7.5M “in an effort to respond to “calls from the **World Health Organization, the U.S. Office of the Surgeon General, and the Aspen Institute’s Commission on Information Disorder**” to develop “cost effective interventions that may be able to counter the effects of mis- and disinformation” about the COVID pandemic.<sup>399</sup>

The press release said that **The Mercury Project**, operated by the **Social Science Research Council**,<sup>400</sup> would be the recipient of the funding and lead the effort to financially support “projects based in the United States, Africa, Asia, and Latin America...and will, for the first time, connect organizations fighting public health misinformation on five continents.” **Dr. Bruce Gellin, Rockefeller Foundation Chief of Global Public Health Strategy**, said that building “solutions” to combatting health misinformation and disinformation will be used to address “future pandemic threats.” Gellin said:

*“We need to stop thinking about misinformation and disinformation as just a technology problem. This requires **swift, strategic, and synergized efforts** embodied in the vision of The Mercury Project, a landmark effort to tackle these problems and build solutions we can use long after this pandemic is over to help protect us from any **future pandemic threats.**”*



Five months later a press release announced, “**The Rockefeller Foundation Injects USD55 Million to Get COVID Shots from Airports to Arms.**”<sup>401</sup> And in November, in a press release headlined “**Mercury Project to Boost Covid-19 Vaccination Rates and Counter Public Health Mis- and Disinformation in 17 Countries Worldwide,**” Gellin made it clear that The Mercury Project is all about finding ways to counter “misinformation and disinformation” that interferes with “vaccine demand” by the public. He said:<sup>402</sup>

*“We hope that more, better, and science-based knowledge about what we need to do will lead to increased uptake of reliable information—and serve as a powerful counter to the effects of misinformation and disinformation on **vaccine demand.**”*

**Bruce Gellin, MD, MPH** has not only been a Rockefeller Foundation executive, but has been the President of Global Immunization at the **Sabin Vaccine Institute**, and held positions at or been a consultant for the **CDC, NIAID, WHO, Johns Hopkins University, Vanderbilt University** and **Georgetown University**, and is the former **Assistant Secretary for Health** and Director of the federal **National Vaccine Program Office (NVPO)**, where he facilitated the development of public-private business partnerships with vaccine manufacturers.<sup>403</sup>

The Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913 with a \$100M investment by Standard Oil founder **John D. Rockefeller**. It has since distributed **\$22B** in program initiatives around the world and today maintains a \$6B endowment.<sup>404</sup>

## University of Pennsylvania Professor Calls For Federal Government Vaccine Mandates

On Nov. 27, 2021, **NBC News** published an article entitled ‘Covid vaccine resistance is nothing new. Anti-vaxxers are as old as vaxxing itself’ and added the subtitle: <sup>405</sup>

***“That means the country almost certainly can’t rely on soft tools such as education and incentives alone to get sufficient numbers of people vaccinated.”***

In that article, a **Rutgers University** professor stated, “Social media is the single greatest contributor to anti-science attitudes and the anti-vaccine movement.” The article ends with **University of Pennsylvania** professor and **Merck** rotavirus vaccine patent holder **Paul Offit** opining that the “only option” for vaccine refusers should be **federal government vaccine mandates** or **requiring proof of vaccination** to enter a business or other public space. He said:

***“When logic and reason don’t matter to someone, you have to find something they do care about.”***

In 2015, while aggressively lobbying for elimination of the religious belief exemption to vaccination, Offit had the bad taste to ask, **“What Would Jesus Do About Measles?”** in an Opinion published in the ***New York Times***. <sup>406</sup> Eight days later, he self-identified as an atheist in a Q&A article in which he said, “I’m not a religious person. I’m from a deeply religious family, but it’s not me. There’s much that I like about it, but I think my problem is I don’t believe in the existence of a supreme being, which sort of cuts back on the whole prayer thing...”<sup>407</sup>

Dr. Offit, like all Americans, is protected under the U.S. Constitution regarding his personal beliefs about the existence of a supreme being, even if he wants to remove that protection for those who disagree with him about that and about public health policy and vaccine laws.

## US Representatives Asks PayPal to Cancel NVIC’s Account to Block Charitable Donations

On Dec. 9, 2021, **CCDH** head Imran Ahmed gave testimony to the **U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee** hearing entitled “Holding Big Tech Accountable: Legislation to Build a Safer Internet.”<sup>408</sup>

**On the evening of Dec 23, 2021, PayPal closed NVIC’s account without warning and with no explanation** while we were conducting our end-of-the-year donation campaign. This action by PayPal<sup>409</sup> immediately blocked NVIC supporters from making a donation to NVIC through Network for Good, which had processed donations from the public to NVIC through PayPal without interruption since 2013. Literally overnight, we had to search for an alternative payment processing platform committed to freedom of speech. <sup>410 411</sup>

I later learned that a week earlier **Massachusetts Rep. Jake Auchincloss** had sent a letter on Dec. 15, 2021 to the CEO/Owner of PayPal signed by 17 Democrat members of the House of Representatives, including **California Representative Adam Schiff**, then chair of the **U.S. House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence**.<sup>412</sup> In the letter, the lawmakers alleged that PayPal had “played a role in financing vaccine disinformation spreaders” and listed NVIC as a “leading” contributor of “COVID-19 disinformation,” citing a recent report by the **Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH)**.

*“President Biden has called upon social media platforms to take responsibility for any role they play in the spread of disinformation. **The Center for Countering Digital Hate** published its **Disinformation Dozen** report that cites the websites of the **National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC)**(**Barbara Loe Fisher/**Joseph Mercola).”*

The letter goes on to make the defamatory and untrue allegation that NVIC has “claimed the virus is a hoax and that the vaccines are deadlier than the disease itself.”

The representatives allege:<sup>413</sup>

*“Throughout this pandemic, it is our opinion that your company has played a role in financing vaccine disinformation spreaders. **We believe PayPal should consider banning the use of its online payments system on websites that perpetuate dangerous lies about COVID-19 treatment and immunization.**” Specifically, the letter calls on PayPal to deactivate the accounts of the “Disinformation Dozen.”*

During my research for this report, I learned that on July 26, 2021, PayPal had issued a press release announcing a partnership with the **Anti-Defamation League (ADL)** stating:<sup>414</sup>

***PayPal** and **ADL** will focus on further uncovering and disrupting the financial pipelines that support extremist and hate movements. In addition to extremist and anti-government organizations, the initiative will focus on actors and networks spreading and profiting from all forms of hate and bigotry against any community.*

(On Dec. 5, 2022, on behalf of NVIC I submitted a public comment to the **Consumer Finance Protection Bureau** for their Inquiry into Big Tech Payment. <sup>415</sup> On Dec. 10, 2022, the **Washington Post** reported that “PayPal faces backlash after floating fines for sharing misinformation,” with a suggestion that PayPal rules propose to impose a \$2,500 fine on those the company finds guilty of spreading misinformation,<sup>416</sup> rules which PayPal later said were released “in error.”)

## **2022: The Censorship and Disinformation Campaign Marches On**

By January 2022, NVIC had been removed from all four major social media platforms and **PayPal** and our voice had been effectively silenced in terms of reach online. However, the censorship campaign to silence those criticizing failed pandemic response lockdown policies, as well as mandatory adult COVID vaccination policies,<sup>417 418</sup> that

caused economic ruin for families and took a toll on the mental and emotional health of school children,<sup>419 420</sup> marched on.

On Feb. 18, 2022, “The Virality Project: Memes, Magnets and Microchips: Narrative dynamics around COVID-19 vaccines” report was published by the **Stanford Internet Observatory, NCoC Algorithmic Transparency Institute, NYU Tandon School of Engineering, NYU Center for Social Media and Politics, University of Washington Center for an Informed Public, Digital Forensic Research Lab** and **Graphika**.<sup>421</sup>

**The Virality Project** report is posted on the **Department of Homeland Security** website.<sup>422</sup>

The report was basically a roadmap of how to take “anti-vaccine activists” out of the digital public square. At the outset, the statement was made DiResta and her co-authors that “the preexisting anti-vaccine movement began to insert itself into the national conversation” in 2020. They suggested that anti-vaccine “**actors within the US**” are to blame for “undermining” COVID-19 vaccine uptake, which they said included:

*“...long standing anti-vaccine influencers and activists, wellness and lifestyle influencers, pseudomedical influencers, and medical freedom influencers.”*

**The Virality Report** authors anchored multiple statements with references to the **CCDH “Disinformation Dozen”** report, including in the report’s Conclusion section, to make sure that readers understood exactly who the “archetypes” and individuals “committed to undermining COVID-19 vaccine uptake” were.

On page 51, they complained about NVIC’s **MedAlerts.org** website that makes it easy for the public to search the federal **Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)**, a vaccine safety provision included in the 1986 National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act:

*“**Anti-vaccine activists** also developed wrapper sites, which repackaged **VAERS data** to make it cleaner and more readable for the casual observer than the original **VAERS site**. This strategy was not new for COVID-19; one such wrapper site, **MedAlerts.org**, run by the anti-vaccine advocacy group **National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC)**, has existed since at least 2007.”*

On Feb. 28, 2022, **Politifact** also attacked **MedAlerts.org** in an article attempting to discredit the user-friendly VAERS search engine, which was established in 2003 and has been sponsored by NVIC since 2006. In that *Politico* article entitled “**How an alternative gateway to VAERS data helps fuel vaccine misinformation,**”<sup>423</sup> the reporter makes both accurate and inaccurate statements about the history of MedAlerts.org and NVIC. However, she primarily complains that the “disclaimer,” which is included on the MedAlerts.org website, is not the right color or big or bold enough to discourage readers from believing in the significance of the VAERS reports of injuries and deaths following vaccinations.

Bolstering the idea that vaccine adverse event reports made to VAERS have little value, **University of Pennsylvania** professor and **Merck** rotavirus vaccine patent holder Paul Offit<sup>424 425</sup> said:

*“What (VAERS) gives you is one piece of information: You had a vaccine, had a side effect,” he told PolitiFact in a 2021 interview. “That in no sense tells you whether or not the side effect was caused by the vaccine. So it’s a noisy system that frankly is more frightening than helpful.”*

## **The Department of Homeland Security’s Disinformation Governance Board**

On Apr. 27, 2021, it was revealed at a **U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee** hearing that a **Disinformation Governance Board** had recently been created by the **Department of Homeland Security** to fight the spread of disinformation on the Internet, particularly about **COVID-19** as well as elections, which was confirmed the next day by the White House. According to multiple news reports, that reveal was followed by a firestorm of conversations on social media platforms likening the new Board to the fictional **Ministry of Truth** in George Orwell’s **dystopian novel “1984.”**<sup>426</sup>

A CNBC report said:<sup>427</sup>

*“The Orwellian comparisons caused the hashtag “**Ministry of Truth**” to trend high Thursday on Twitter, as nonpoliticians also linked it to the new bureau.”*

One member of the House of Representatives, who likened the Disinformation Governance Board to the Ministry of Truth in Orwell’s famous book warning about totalitarianism, tweeted:

*“The Federal Government has no business creating a Ministry of Truth. The Department of Homeland Security’s ‘Disinformation Board’ is **unconstitutional** and **unAmerican**, and I’ll be introducing a bill to defund it.”*

In August 2022, the **Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security** issued a statement that he had “terminated the Disinformation Governance Board and rescinded its charter effective today, August 24, 2022.”

After the Disinformation Governance Board was terminated, the Homeland Security Council subcommittee issued recommendations re-emphasizing that, “**DHS must be able to address the disinformation threat streams that can undermine the security of our homeland.**”

## **FDA: You Can Report People Who Spread “rumors, misinformation and disinformation about science, medicine, and the FDA”**

Is it an appropriate function of government to tell Americans to “report” fellow citizens they believe are spreading “rumors, misinformation and disinformation about science, medicine, and the FDA” to social media platforms so they can be silenced?

On the website of the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**, under the heading **Rumor Control**, the following instructions are given:<sup>428</sup>

*“The growing spread of rumors, misinformation and disinformation about science, medicine, and the FDA, is putting patients and consumers at risk. We’re here to provide the facts. **How to Report Misinformation Online:** We face the challenge of an overabundance of information related to our public health. Some of this information may be false and potentially harmful. **Inaccurate information** spreads widely and at speed, making it more difficult for the public to identify verified facts and advice from trusted sources, such as the FDA. However, everyone can **help to stop the spread**. If you see **content online that you believe to be false or misleading, you can report it to the applicable platform.**”*

Live links are provided to **Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube**, and other digital platforms to make it easy to facilitate the potential removal of freedom of speech from people who may not think and believe what FDA officials think and believe.

## **CONCLUSION**

[The history of how the voice of a small U.S. charity founded in 1982 by parents of vaccine injured children and its leader have been silenced in the digital public square](#) for working to prevent vaccine injuries and deaths through public education is a cautionary tale.<sup>429</sup> If Americans cannot responsibly participate in federal and state government policy and lawmaking, as expected and provided for under the U.S. Constitution – which includes the First Amendment right to freedom of thought, speech, conscience and the right to dissent – then America has truly lost its way and is in the process of becoming an authoritarian state.

I and the staff and volunteers and supporters of the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC) have a long transparent public record of tirelessly working with federal and state governments consistently and with integrity and civility, to defend the natural right to autonomy and protection of bodily integrity. These natural rights include the human right to exercise voluntary informed consent to medical risk taking, which necessarily must include the legal right to make voluntary decisions about use of pharmaceutical products like vaccines.

A person should not be discriminated against and disqualified from exercising freedom of speech in the digital public square simply for holding an opinion about vaccine science, public policy and mandatory vaccination laws that differs from the opinion of government and World Health Organization officials. Differences of opinion should not be used as an excuse for employees of government agencies to target and dehumanize citizens working responsibly to reform public health policy by branding them “domestic threat actors,” or used as an excuse by professors at universities funded by government

and industry to label an organization disagreeing with them about vaccination as “a hate group.”

The blacklisting of me and NVIC by government agencies and officials for the purpose of violating our freedom of speech in the name of protecting the public health and national security is shocking and shameful. It sets a dangerous precedent and stifles participation in government by ordinary citizens who seek to reform and make public health policy and law more informed and humane.

A great deal of taxpayer money is being spent to fund public-private business partnerships through provision of billions of dollars in congressional appropriations to universities, whose professors use the media to demonize and call for the censorship of free speech of citizens with whom they disagree, and to federal agencies whose employees and industry business partners do the same. This is not a wise use of taxpayer dollars. It is dangerous.

It is also dangerous for federal agencies to utilize the propaganda published by foreign political operatives to influence US public health policy that includes putting pressure on private corporations, the media, and other institutions to blacklist and silence freedom of speech of US citizens in the new digital public square. It sets a precedent that does not bode well for the future of civil liberties in America.

The outsized influence of multi-national pharmaceutical companies, medical trade, big philanthropy and other wealthy institutions on the operation of both global and national government agencies responsible for ensuring the public health and safety is a major reason why a growing number of Americans are losing faith in the integrity of public health policy and law, especially vaccine policy and law. Remaining in denial about that fact will not make it go away.

A system that will not bend will break. And as many recent polls show, a system that has failed to respond to the legitimate concerns of the American public about vaccine science knowledge gaps and conflicts of interest in federal vaccine development, licensing, policymaking, and lawmaking has been breaking down for a long time. It is at the tipping point and there is no going back.

But no matter what Congress chooses to do - or not do - to fix the broken public health system in this country, at the heart of this cautionary tale involving the silencing of my voice and NVIC's presence in the public square is the threat to liberty. There is no greater calling for Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than to defend those civil and natural rights that protect against tyranny.

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