

From: J. Marvin Herndon [mailto:mherndon@san.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 05, 2015 9:21 PM
To: paul.b.tchounwou@jsums.edu
Cc: lin@mdpi.com; Franck Vazquez, Ph. D. /CSO MDPI (vazquez@mdpi.com); IJERPH Editorial Office (ijerph@mdpi.com); 'J. Marvin Herndon'
Subject: Responded to published remarks as to the basis for retraction
Importance: High

Dear Professor Tchounwou,

When my IJERPH paper was published, I wrote a note of thanks to you, stating in part: *I would like to thank you for the editorial handling of my just published paper: <http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/12/8/9375/pdf>. One could not ask for efforts of any higher quality; this is what science should be....Over my professional lifetime of some forty years, I have experienced a few truly exceptional reviews that were aimed at improving the manuscript. I count Reviewer 1 as one of them. Kindly express my appreciation to him/her.* Then the assault occurred.

I can say without fear of contradiction that you have had nothing in your background experience to prepare you for the deliberate concerted attack on my paper that took place upon publication. I have experienced that kind of just once before, upon publication of my Current Science paper that provided the first evidence that the particulate matter being sprayed into the lower atmosphere for weather modification/geoengineering likely is coal combustion fly ash.

The US has an ignoble record of spraying toxins over its people for experiments since the 1950s [see the book *Clouds of Secrecy* by Leonard A. Cole]. For about fifteen years, with ever increasing frequency, the militaries/governments of many Western nations have been involve in spraying particulate matter over their citizens. There are no health warnings, but there has been a pervasive and well-funded operation to deceive people, promoting the false idea that the observers are just conspiracy theorists, and that the particulate trails are just ice crystals from aircraft exhaust.

During the some fifteen years of spraying particulates into the troposphere, which mixes with the air people breathe, the spray-composition has been a tightly held secret. Now, using forensic techniques, I have provided scientific evidence that the main substance being sprayed is likely coal combustion fly ash. What does this mean? It means that there is good evidence that militaries/governments of many Western nations have been spraying a toxic-nightmare into the air breathed by pregnant women, babies, young children, the elderly, those with compromised respiratory and/or immune systems, and the remainder of the people. The evidence in my papers on coal fly ash will certainly focus further research that may provide the much needed confirmatory evidence. Moreover, those papers may serve to awaken people to the horrific health risks to which they are likely being exposed. Further, those papers may be of benefit to those seeking remediation in courts of law. Realizing this, you may also realize that

there are strong reasons for the perpetrators to try to remove those papers by any means possible. And make no mistake: any organization that would poison the air breathed by pregnant women and other at-risk individuals would stop at nothing and would use any means cause my papers to be retracted. These are people whose major job is deception and deceit. They prey on people like you who are fair-minded, gullible, and naïve. They have an arsenal of techniques at their disposal: they will mislead or subtly cast doubt or lie or extrapolate beyond reason; whatever they think will achieve their goals. I mean no disrespect when I say that they played you like a fiddle to achieve their malevolent ends.

Let me give you an example: On Sept. 4th, you received an email that quoted me as saying “keep in mind the dust has not settled on the retraction matter” and providing you with a number of attachments that, I submit, were intended to convince you, by misleading statements and half-truths, you that aluminum is a natural component of rainwater. One attachment was about dust in ice cores, which might mislead you into thinking that the aluminum in rainwater I measured came from dust, which it did not. Another attachment showed the measured aluminum content in rainwater in 1967 (before aerosol spraying), but that was only a half-truth because it did not tell you that in 1967 that coal fly ash went up smokestacks into the air; it also did not tell you that in 1967 acid rain was a big problem because acid rain was known to extract aluminum in a chemically mobile form from substances such as mine tailings and could lead to forest die-offs. These people are masters of deception. You simply were not prepared for their assault.

You have published three bulleted “concerns” as justification for retracting my paper. It is obvious that you parroted these statements from one or more experts at deception whose aim was to have my paper retracted. In the following, I will proceed line by line to show you the distortions and misrepresentations. Red are your quotes.

The value for average leachate concentration of Aluminum mentioned in Table 1 and used by the author to normalize the data presented in Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 is incorrect.

Not true. The incorrect data was **not** for the average **leachate** concentration, but for the average **un-leached coal fly ash composition**. The incorrect data was only used to normalize the data presented in Figures 4 and 5, not in Figures 2 and 3.

The author uses 70,000 µg/kg, while the correct value resulting from the un-leached European coal fly ash samples measurements published by Moreno *et al.* [2]) is 140,000,000 µg/kg.

Wow! That looks like a huge error, and the half-truth makes it seem so. What should have been stated is that the un-leached column heading was mistyped as µg/kg, but should have read µg/g; the data were tabulated as µg/g. The error was my listing

70,000 µg/g when it should have been 140,000 µg/g, a factor of two. This is the kind of error that is usually allowed to be corrected; it should have been.

This error invalidates the conclusions of the article.

No, it does not. In the worst case, if uncorrected, it might invalidate the data shown in Figures 4 and 5, but the conclusions of the article are derived from Figures 2 and 3 which are not affected by the error.

The chemical compositions obtained for rainwater and HEPA air filter dust are only compared to chemical compositions obtained for coal-fly-ash leaching experiments [2]. The author did not attempt to compare his results to chemical compositions of other potential sources.

Not true. I stated that there were no sources of industrial pollution in the area, and provided reason why coal fly ash from China was unlikely.

Thus, at this stage, the work is preliminary since it is not clear what the source of these chemicals is.

In the absence of viable other sources, the evidence is that the coal fly ash is likely the substance being placed in the atmosphere by tanker-jets. That is consistent with the nature of the material, and its availability from existing production facilities. Yes, this needs to be proven conclusively. But it is a misrepresentation to state “is not clear what the source of these chemicals is”.

The language of the paper is often not sufficiently scientifically objective for a research article.

Not true. You may be certain that Reviewer 1 would never have approved the paper if this was the case. He/she was meticulous to make sure that every statement was precise. This criticism has no merit. A similar criticism as made in an effort to cause retraction of my Current Science paper, namely the statement “The general tone of the article is just strange, and inadequate in a scientific journal”.

As a basis for retracting my paper, you have apparently quoted statements that, I allege, are intended to deceive for the purpose of causing the retraction of my paper by an entity with a malevolent agenda. The remarks made are libelous. This is wrong scientifically and ethically.

Your published statement of retraction further states, “MDPI takes the responsibility to enforce strict ethical policies and standards very seriously”. Strict “ethical policies and standards”: (1) should NOT include retracting a paper based upon false and misleading statements, (2) should NOT include publishing said false and misleading

statements without allowing me full access to all communications and the option to respond in publication, and (3) should NOT prohibit me from making corrections to errors as is the usual practice of scientific journals. Further, to add insult to injury, you express appreciation to those who wrongfully mislead you and Drs. Lin and Vazquez.

By retracting my paper, based upon false and misleading statements by an entity that wishes unwarrantedly to discredit and hide my work from public view, you embolden said entity to do the same thing to other publishers. You demonstrate that false and misleading statements carry more weight with MDPI than science. And you prolong the period of time during which the most vulnerable among us will suffer the consequences of unrelenting particulate matter sprayed into the air we all breathe.

I sincerely believe and duly request the following: (1) That I am allowed make revisions to my paper, (2) That you request the full credentials (including position and organization) of those making complaints, and their permission to publish their remarks so that I might respond in print. I doubt that (2) will ever materialize as deceit usually cannot stand the light of day. I doubt permission will be granted.

Sincerely,

J. Marvin Herndon