

CNBC's *Squawk Box*

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3 minutes and 16 seconds

JOE KERNEN: How about your buddy, your buddy of Fauci, that I've asked you about in the past, you've defended him quite a bit.

SCOTT GOTTLIEB: Look, I mean, I don't know what you're referring to in terms of anything.

KERNEN: I've asked about — about whether he orchestrated a cover-up of the lab origin, because of his involvement in — in making gain-of-function research possible again in China, which he did. He knew that would come back to haunt him, and then basically told his colleagues, go with the natural origin. It was obvious three years ago, Scott, to me anyway, and everybody else that he orchestrated that.

GOTTLIEB: Yeah, look, we've talked about this in a show. I think the evidence in terms of whether this was human or naturally derived, I think the side of the ledger speaks to this potentially coming out of the lab has grown over time, and we haven't had any new evidence suggesting that this came out of a natural origin in a spillover.

KERNEN: The latest stuff that came out about him —

GOTTLIEB: It was disappointing.

KERNEN: — didn't he know that it was likely it was from the lab, and go to great lengths, tell people to destroy emails?

GOTTLIEB: Well, look, and I've looked through the email some of them that've been online. I think it's disappointing to see him trying to suppress alternative opinions, and that clearly was evidence from the emails. I thought it was disappointing, the part of it that also disappointing me was how much he enjoyed the media associated with the event and his own appearances. But I think a lot of us went on, the media out of a sense of obligation. It was a hard time for all of us. I know it was a hard time for you. I think a lot of us felt the obligation to inform the public, and it wasn't particularly enjoyable. I mean, I got a lot of threats, others did, associated with that, and so to see those emails where he is evidencing some pleasure in the notoriety, that's disappointing.

KERNEN: Well, it's not just — it's just outrageous, if you read the diary. It's tough to take.

GOTTLIEB: Yeah, you didn't expect, I don't know how he was speaking to his own diary.

KERNEN: Does having a reputation, totally in the toilet, at 85 years, does that hold him to account for what he was responsible for?

GOTTLIEB: The Tony Fauci, I saw in those emails, is not the Tony Fauci I knew over the years. I mean, he was a guy who is sober, who is careful about his public appearances, and his statements was always very thoughtful.

KERNEN: Did you figure out the obsession with mainstream media and defending him and, you know, Jake Tapper, having, you know, multiple dinners and best friends, and what did that come from? And I know people around here that would call Tony Fauci a hero.

GOTTLIEB: Yeah, I can't dissect how —

KERNEN: You don't know why?

GOTTLIEB: — people perceive it. I — I think people had different emotions around it.

KERNEN: The whole vaccine, mask, shutdown, the whole liberal —

GOTTLIEB: I — IT was a difficult time, Joe, as you — as you know very well, and I think people were looking for a voice that they can cling to, maybe they took the wrong voice.

KERNEN: I am science, that's why people don't like me. I mean, that was, you're very guarded and nice.

GOTTLIEB: I was disappointed by the emails I have to admit.

KERNEN: But we'll see what happens on Wednesday. Rand Paul's been right all the while.

GOTTLIEB: Look he's — he's held these — I suspect that Senator Paul held on to these emails, and had them for a while, and — and dropped them now ahead of this hearing, and, you know, Tony's gonna have to speak to what's in those private communications.

KERNEN: Thanks for addressing all that.