

[Partial transcript of interview on Aug. 1, 2006 in Wash., D.C. Inaudible words marked as "xxx."]

Rusi Taleyarkhan: On the very same morning that we had the DARPA review meeting on the first of March, we had people from industry, academy and government, as you know, Seth Putterman from UCLA, Ken Suslick and xxx from University of Illinois, Bill Coblenz from DARPA and the Impulse Device folks, Ross Tessien and two others.

We had two kinds of experiments, one of which was the DARPA-sponsored work that we xxx were obliged to do as part of our contract. It was a separate piece that we started from scratch and we went through the day and that was what we were supposed to do, yeah?

The other one was out of our initiative to start early in the morning, 5:00 or so, got everything ready for the xxx nucleation experiment, the alpha phase nucleation nucleation which is what we published in January. So that was a bonus that we gave then. And we demonstrated that experiment in front of everybody throughout the day, to conduct experiments to see if the crucial signs of nuclear fusion were coming out in these neutrons, fast neutrons, xxx neutrons coming out and during the afternoon when we were having our PowerPoint presentations and discussion within the conference room around one o'clock, Seth Putterman, all of a sudden made his allegation saying, in front of the whole group, saying that well, our data that we published in PRL in January 2006 seemed to be coming out of a californium source. That was a, it was a very egregious allegation...

Steven Krivit: At that time, did he mention that he and Naranjo had done their analysis?

RT: He just showed the analysis, and okay, based on our analysis -- this is the first time I heard about it -- and I said look, when an analysis is run along these lines, you need to write it up so that people can give it some thoughtful careful assessment. You cannot just come over and just all of a sudden tell me.

SK: Had he done his analysis at that time?

RT: The analysis was apparently done, whatever, and he showed me the curves and just made the allegation and asked for an immediate response and I said I cannot give you an immediate response I need to see a paper written up on this, some draft report or something so that we can give a response. And we left it at that. And right around 4:00 or so that reporter from Nature all of a sudden writes to me demanding an explanation - demanding an explanation - for that allegation. That was Eugenie Reich.

SK: At 4:00?

RT: Around 4:00 or so, and all of a sudden I get that and I said, wait a second, how did she get to know about it so fast?

SK: On the same day?

RT: On the same day. So I said to her, look, the...

SK: Hold on, hold on, had you been in contact with her previous to that day?

RT: Not on this subject at all. She had written up asking other questions and they were getting technical and so my position to her has been, well if there is a deep technical question I do not ... you need to have it sent to the respective editor of a journal.

SK: She had been in contact with you before...

RT: Not on this subject at all.

SK: Clearly a different subject?

RT: Completely different subject. And this was the first I got to hear about it. So, you know, my response to her was that...

SK: I just want to make sure that this is clear because, so this is the first that you had heard from her, either through email or telephone about any part of this subject matter?

RT: About this subject. That Naranjo thing that came up in Nature, I just made my recommendation that if they submit it to the editor of PRL where my paper appeared, that's a time-honored tradition. It goes to the editor. The editor looks at it for merit and then sends it to the author for a response

SK: I don't understand how she contacted you at 4:00.

RT: All of a sudden. Unless Putterman was in touch with her already and working with her on this subject.