



Speak Out Now

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A New Year, a New Surge, the Same Bankrupt System

The Omicron variant is raging across the world. And despite the already unthinkable number of deaths since the start of the pandemic — over 5.47 million worldwide and 836,000 in the U.S. — politicians and so-called leaders continue their callous disregard for life as they put the profits of their system first.

The Omicron variant has proven to be far more transmissible than all previous variants of Covid. Global coronavirus infections have reached an all-time high, with 9.5 million new global cases reported last week. As of now, the U.S. is averaging about 600,000 new cases per day, which could reach as many as one million daily cases. Outbreaks are happening everywhere, at airports, workplaces, schools — we are seeing a surge of infections like never before.

Meanwhile, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recklessly decided to reduce the isolation period of those infected with Covid from ten days to five. It also dismissed the recommendation from leading health experts to require a negative test before returning to work. Many people are still contagious after five days, and so many health experts are simply ignoring the CDC's new recommendations.

The reason behind the CDC's changes is to set policies in place that allow employers to force workers back to work in half the time. Corporations, including Delta airlines, were concerned about infected workers missing work due to isolation requirements. What's their solution? Cut the requirements in half!

At the same time, many corporations have already eliminated paid sick days for Covid infections. And with this change, whether workers have any paid sick days left or not, this new policy will only end up putting more pressure on workers to return to work and infect others.

The Biden administration is reassuring people by saying that even though Omicron is extremely transmissible, it may lead to less severe illness. This might be true, but more data still needs to be reviewed. Regardless of the claims of the politicians

and the bosses, hospitalizations are climbing, approaching the highest peak of the pandemic. And hospitals are being pushed to the breaking point as ICUs fill up amid record staffing shortages. The daily death rate in the U.S. is still hovering around 1,500 deaths per day — that's 10,500 deaths every week. And in many places it has been next to impossible to get tested.

Their policies are playing with the lives of the most vulnerable. The hospitalizations of children under five — those too young to receive a vaccine — have doubled in the last two weeks, reaching their highest level since the pandemic began.

Aside from the immediate impact of the virus, studies have shown that there can be serious long term health risks for anyone getting Covid — what is known as "Long Covid." Any Covid infection, with or without symptoms, puts people at increased risk of developing diabetes, chronic fatigue, memory loss, neurological problems, respiratory problems, brain fog, depression, dizziness, blood clots and more.

Omicron, like the Delta variant before it, is the result of a low vaccination rate around the world. Only 50% of the world has been fully vaccinated. But in South Africa, where the virus really took hold, the rate is about 27%. In Palestine it is about 29%, and in Haiti less than 1%. With low vaccination rates around the world, the virus has a greater possibility of mutating into an even more powerful variant.

This criminal policy of protecting the profits of the vaccine-producing drug companies is responsible for the deaths and continuing misery of hundreds of millions of people. The vaccines they claim to own have been produced using the know-how of global science while our tax dollars helped finance the research and production. The patents to produce the vaccines should be released, along with an emergency program to make them available all over the world.

As much as everyone hoped 2022 might be the beginning of a new phase in this pandemic, at every turn the priorities of this system continue to prolong it.