War plotters at Munich Security Conference hear call for surrender to COVID-19

Andre Damon 20 February 2022

In an embrace of the pseudoscientific theory of "herd immunity," billionaire Bill Gates, the fourth-richest man in the world, told the world's preeminent military affairs conference that mass infection with the Omicron variant was a "type of vaccine" against COVID-19.

"The virus itself, particularly the variant called Omicron, is a type of vaccine, that is it creates both B-cell and T-cell immunity, and it's done a better job of getting out to the world's population than we have with vaccines," Gates said.

He was speaking at the Munich security conference, where political, military and business leaders are discussing plans for war against Russia. While the "threat" from Moscow is entirely concocted, the coronavirus pandemic, a real and terrible danger to the world's population, was presented as positively benign.

Gates is a leading funder of public health initiatives around the world, maintains a liaison with the White House on public health issues and meets regularly with Biden administration officials as an adviser on public health.

Responding to Gates' statement, virologist Angela Rasmussen wrote, "Nothing to see here, just one of the most powerful voices in public health low-key advocating for a "let 'er rip" approach rather than pledging to put his full weight behind achieving global vaccine equity."

She continued, "And for all those saying that's not what he meant, what purpose does calling the virus 'a type of vaccine' serve? It justifies not taking further action to provide vaccines globally because the global community already got omicron."

The concept that allowing the population to become infected with COVID-19 will offer protection from future infection is known as "herd immunity." In 2020, this approach was denounced as wildly unethical pseudoscience by nearly all US public health authorities.

That year, White House coronavirus coordinator

Deborah Birx called proponents of the theory "fringe," saying the implementation of their policies would lead to the preventable deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Dr. Anthony Fauci called the theory "nonsense and very dangerous," while World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus denounced it as "unethical."

But, particularly with the Omicron variant, the Biden administration adopted the policy of making mass infection the "new normal," slashing recommended isolation guidelines, encouraging states to end contact tracing programs and actively discouraging the wearing of masks.

As with the Trump administration's promotion of "herd immunity" under the slogan "the cure can't be worse than the disease," the Biden administration's promotion of mass infection, rebranded as "living with the virus," is not driven by science. It is an effort to ensure corporate profits and a rising stock market, no matter the cost in human lives.

Gates, in other words, was openly expressing what has in fact become the policy of the Biden administration and nearly every other government in the Americas and Europe.

Gates was the first speaker at the Munich Security Council's panel, "Finding a way out of the pandemic," which also featured WHO chief Tedros. Gates began his remarks with the claim that COVID-19 infection should be understood as a "type of vaccine."

Gates continued, "If you do serosurveys in African countries, you get well over 80 percent of people have been exposed either to the vaccine or various variants. And so what that does which is it reduces the chance of severe disease, which is mainly associated with the elderly and having obesity and diabetes, those risks are now dramatically reduced because of infection and exposure."

"We'll have rebounds, but they'll be more typical seasonal flu levels, where of course you don't generally shut things down."

Gates's comments were no mistake. His remarks were a more assertive and crude formulation of a similar sentiment voiced by Dr. Anthony Fauci in January at the gathering of billionaires at the World Economic Forum. Fauci raised the prospect that the Omicron variant was a "live virus vaccination," saying he "hoped" this would be the case.

The statements by Gates and Fauci come as the corporate media ever more openly declares the COVID-19 pandemic over. Last week, the entire US media hailed a report in the Associated Press that claimed, absurdly, "73% of US now immune to omicron."

That report claimed, "The omicron wave that assaulted the United States this winter also bolstered its defenses, leaving enough protection against the coronavirus that future spikes will likely require much less—if any—dramatic disruption to society."

In reality, neither vaccination nor prior infection offer "immunity" to COVID-19—a fact that even advocates of mass infection are forced to admit. In a January 6 paper in JAMA, Ezekiel Emanuel, Michael Osterholm and Celene Gounder observed that "Neither COVID-19 vaccination nor infection appear to confer lifelong immunity."

A survey by Imperial College London found that twothirds of those infected with the Omicron variant of COVID-19 were previously infected.

Fauci's comments about a "live virus vaccine" were directly at odds with his earlier statements in 2020, which correctly called the concept of "herd immunity" nonsense.

"If you let infections rip as it were and say, 'Let everybody get infected that's going to be able to get infected and then we'll have herd immunity," Fauci said then. "Quite frankly that is nonsense, and anybody who knows anything about epidemiology will tell you that that is nonsense and very dangerous."

The most vocal denunciation of "herd immunity" in 2020 came from Dr. Tedros, who shared the platform with Gates at the Munich Security Conference.

In October 2020, Tedros said, "Herd immunity is a concept used for vaccination, in which a population can be protected from a certain virus if a threshold of vaccination is reached.

"Herd immunity is achieved by protecting people from a virus, not by exposing them to it.

"Never in the history of public health has herd

immunity been used as a strategy for responding to an outbreak," the WHO chief said, calling it "scientifically and ethically problematic."

"Letting the virus circulate unchecked, therefore, means allowing unnecessary infections, suffering and death," he concluded, two years ago.

Although it was not clear whether Tedros, who arrived late, had heard Gates's remarks, his comments at Munich were in fact a rebuke to the narrative the billionaire was promoting.

"High vaccine coverage in some countries, combined with the lower severity of omicron is driving a dangerous narrative that the pandemic is over. But it's not," Tedros said.

"Not when 70,000 people are dying a week from a preventable and treatable disease. Not when 83 percent of the population of Africa is yet to receive a single dose of vaccine. Not when health systems continue to strain and crack under the caseload. Not when we have a highly transmissible virus circulating almost unchecked."

Tedros warned, "Conditions are ideal for more transmissible, dangerous variants to emerge."

The World Health Organization director-general was forced to beg for \$16 billion in emergency WHO funding, which he correctly called "peanuts." In fact Gates, with a net worth of nearly \$130 billion, could cover the cost eight times over.

"The pandemic must remain our focus," Tedros pleaded.

But these remarks were completely out of keeping with the tone of summit, focused on "moving on" from the pandemic in preparations for a major war between the United States and Russia.

As the conference's chairman Wolfgang Ischinger put it in his opening remarks, "We cannot just postpone world politics. Security challenges don't do social distancing." In other words, war in Europe requires surrender to the pandemic.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact