



# THE ANVIL



MACG

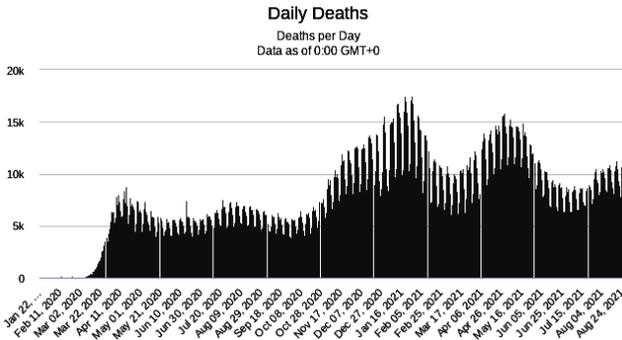
NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP

Vol 10, No 4

July 2021 - August 2021

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## TRANSITION TO DISASTER



Daily Covid deaths up to 31 August 2021  
Credit: [www.worldometers](http://www.worldometers)

The National Plan to Transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response is a plan for disaster. The Federal Government, at the behest of the most powerful capitalists in Australia, is planning to give up the fight to eliminate COVID-19 and even to re-introduce it into areas of Australia that are now free. It airily dismisses concerns by referring to the research of the respected Doherty Institute.

The National Plan is a single sheet of paper that sets out a four step process. We're no experts, but most points in Phases A and B appear to be a bureaucratic expression of the current framework. The really dangerous part is the final "Post-Vaccination" Phase D, where the proposal is to abandon all internal social distancing regulations and start "living with the virus".

The transition markers in the National Plan are reached when 70% and 80% of the population over the age of 16 are vaccinated. This equates to 56% and 64% of the total population vaccinated, a very long way below what is necessary to achieve herd immunity, especially with the Delta variant dominant. In these circumstances, a little elementary logic shows that abandoning social distancing will lead to mass infection and death. Certainly deaths will be much fewer than if no vaccines were available, but that doesn't make the plan in any way acceptable.

It is the reference to the Doherty Institute research that allows the Government to get away with a proposal that the lay reader can see is dangerous. The Doherty research hasn't been well circulated, though, because if it was widely read there would be uproar. Fortunately, the MACG has been able to find a valuable analysis by Matt Barrie at:

[https://medium.com/@matt\\_11659/australian-public-fed-nonsense-as-country-heads-to-irreversible-decision-99350b80125c](https://medium.com/@matt_11659/australian-public-fed-nonsense-as-country-heads-to-irreversible-decision-99350b80125c)

In summary, the Doherty Institute predicts mass hospitalisations and ICU demand that is double current ICU capacity.

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The consequences in death and serious disability should be obvious. And what's worse, the major difference that would be achieved by the desired 80% vaccination rate would be a delaying of the curve, as infections take longer to get hold in the community. The Doherty graphs, which cut off at 180 days after the transition to Phase B (where public health measures start to be relaxed at 70% adult vaccination), show cases continuing to rise at that point. This is not a path to freedom from COVID-19. It's a transition to disaster.

So, what's going on? The capitalist class in Australia wants to get back into the world economy. Certainly, mineral exports have been going gangbusters all along, but tourism and education, two huge export industries, have been closed down for over a year and the businesses in that sector are desperate to get going again. Capital also wants access to temporary migrant workers to be restored. Because their temporary status puts them at the mercy of employers, they are often employed at illegally low wage rates. Farmers and other bosses who make major use of this scam have been complaining bitterly about labour shortages.

The success of public health authorities in suppressing COVID-19 and then eliminating it from internal circulation (apart from periodic breaches in hotel quarantine) has produced a major problem for capital. Keeping COVID-19 out of the community has been greatly welcomed, but has led to the population being reluctant to rejoin the global economy while the virus is rampant overseas. Business has therefore had to pressure its political representatives to come up with a solution.

The National Plan is that solution and the current outbreak in New South Wales is the wedge which the Federal Government is using to make it look inevitable. Unlikely as it might sound, Scott Morrison and Gladys Berejiklian don't want to stop this wave. They just want it to move slowly, while the vaccination campaign is implemented.

The Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group calls on the labour movement in Australia to reject the National Plan to Transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response and instead to fight for the following program:

- Maintaining the objective of eliminating COVID-19 from the community;
- Free, safe vaccines for all, regardless of intellectual property;
- Adequate, tailored health information for all, communicated by people trusted by target communities in languages that will be understood;
- Adequately staffed and funded public health teams for testing and contact tracing;
- Purpose built quarantine facilities, appropriately staffed and capable of dealing with the required demand;
- A living income paid to all who need to isolate away from their employment on public health grounds;
- Cancellation of residential rent and mortgage interest for the duration of the pandemic.

Vaccination must not be used as a tool for creating a capitalist dystopia where we must "live with" the virus. Instead, vaccination must be part of a coherent strategy to help eliminate it. It can be done. It must be done. We have to fight.

**ELIMINATE THE VIRUS**

## VACCINATION VS GLOBAL CAPITALISM

The SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus continues to sweep the world. So far, it has caused over 200 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 4,500,000 deaths. We know that many more of both have gone unrecorded, particularly in the Third World. Rich imperialist countries buy up the vaccines, pricing poorer ones out of the market. A more infectious strain, the Delta variant, has disrupted previous plans for a return to normality. Very few countries have escaped it and even their success may be temporary.

There is a connection. The failure of most governments to fight the coronavirus effectively has led to large pools of infection which are ideal for generating mutations. Selection pressure leads to more contagious strains becoming dominant. This is how the Delta strain emerged and more strains will be born as long as there are so many global infections.

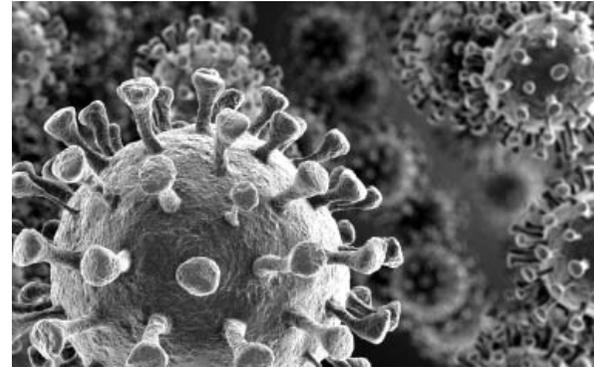
This is a disaster made by capitalism. Imperialism has kept most countries poor. In rich countries, governments reluctant to confront capital have failed to take effective action to stop the virus circulating. Many workers, left without enough economic support, have had to break health regulations. Some have become an audience for reactionaries who peddle unscientific nonsense about the virus, vaccines, masks or any number of quack remedies and crackpot theories. Many of these reactionaries are simply fools, but in amongst them are cynical Fascists, keen to create chaos and a desire for authoritarian solutions.

Intellectual property laws have created an

artificial shortage of vaccines and led to poor countries being outbid by rich ones. The vaccination rate in Africa is horrendously low and only 1.6% of people in low income countries have received any doses at all. Capitalism, by preventing an effective effort being made against the virus in the Third World, is thus creating new strains which strike back against rich countries.

As long as the virus exists, it will threaten to wreak a path of death and disability across the globe, wherever vaccination or other strategies fail. The only path to safety is to eliminate it completely. This will require vaccine production to increase by an order of magnitude. New vaccines must be developed – vaccines for children, vaccines giving maximum protection against the Delta strain and future variants, vaccines with fewer side-effects and vaccines which give life-long protection.

To achieve this, the rules of capitalism must be broken. Intellectual property laws restrict vaccine production and also restrict access to the best vaccines, so they must go. A massive research effort is needed to discover vaccines that can eliminate the virus. This requires breaking researchers out of their corporate structures so they can collaborate freely and globally. And finally, we need a co-ordinated plan to eradicate the virus worldwide, combining vaccination with public health measures. This will require shutting down industries and paying workers to stay home. Capital has resisted such measures and will continue to resist them.



Coronavirus  
Credit: University of Oxford

How will this program be won? The answer is the same as always. The working class, supported in the Third World by the other popular classes, needs to fight. We need to demand health and safety measures and to refuse unsafe work and we also need to mobilise a social movement. We must render society ungovernable and prevent the accumulation of profits until governments around the world have taken the necessary steps to beat SARS-CoV-2 for good.

And the movement we build while campaigning for this program will embody the values and practices of a new society. A movement based on solidarity and committed to liberty and equality for all. A movement which can make a revolution to overthrow capitalism and establish libertarian communism worldwide. Let's do it.

WIPE THE VIRUS FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH

**MACG**

### **What is Anarchism?**

*Anarchism is a social philosophy based upon the principles of liberty, equality and solidarity. It is the political dimension of a free society.*

### **What is Communism?**

*Communism is the principle of "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need". It is the economic dimension of a free society.*

### **What is the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group?**

*The MACG is an organisation of class struggle revolutionary anarchists who share political positions, articulated in theory, strategy and tactics.*

*We aim to encourage struggle by the working class for its own interests and, within that struggle, we aim to advance Anarchist ideas as its necessary philosophical basis.*

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