

The Biden administration is lying: Scientists warned about Omicron threat

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Amid a new wave of infections throughout the United States triggered by the Omicron variant of COVID-19, with lines at testing sites stretching for city blocks, Vice President Kamala Harris lied to the public by claiming that “scientists” and the White House could not have expected the rise of the dangerous new COVID-19 variant.

“We didn’t see [the] Delta [variant of COVID-19] coming,” Harris said in an interview published by the *Los Angeles Times* on Friday. “I think most scientists did not—upon whose advice and direction we have relied—didn’t see Delta coming. We didn’t see Omicron coming. And that’s the nature of what this, this awful virus has been, which as it turns out, has mutations and variants.”

Harris’s lie is aimed at evading responsibility for the catastrophic outcome of a policy of sacrificing human life for private profit. Harris and Biden take the public for fools, expecting that a favorable media will not take them to task.

The world’s leading virologists, epidemiologists and health experts, however, excoriated Harris’s statement.

“I personally warned” the White House “in Dec 2020, that variants were coming & we needed plans & action immediately,” wrote Rick Bright, a member of Biden’s COVID-19 transition advisory board. Bright wrote that he “Suggested measures to detect & slow the spread & need to update vaccines. They all knew. #NoSurprises”

Bright, the former head of the US Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, famously filed a whistleblower complaint condemning the Trump administration’s efforts to downplay the threat posed by COVID-19 and warned that “public health officials were fully aware of the emerging threat of COVID-19 by early January 2020.”

Replying to Harris’ claim that no one knew the danger of new variants, virologist Angela Rasmussen replied, “‘We’ did. The leaders just didn’t listen.” Epidemiologist Gregg Gonsalves added, “WE ALL SAW THIS COMING.”

“Do you know what ‘we’ also warned about?” wrote virologist Kristian G. Anderson. “The need for vaccinating the world, while also ensuring the need for boosters. The need for better facemasks, provided free. The need for widespread, cheap, rapid testing.”

Andersen was one of the loudest scientific voices warning about the dangers of new variants. In an article published in the *Washington Post* on October 18, Anderson warned, “I see nothing that suggests this virus is quieting down... I don’t think this virus is as transmissible as it can be.” World Health Organization COVID-19 technical lead Maria Van Kerkhove warned in that article, “We need to keep the respect for this virus... this virus still has quite a lot left in it.”

Like the Biden administration, the editorial pages of all the major US newspapers ignored the warnings of the scientists, declaring that the pandemic would end when it became “endemic” in the population.

The *World Socialist Web Site*, by contrast, prominently reported and amplified the warnings of the scientists.

Nearly a year ago, on December 22, 2020, the WSWS warned,

The longer the virus is allowed free rein, and the greater the number of people it is allowed to infect—through the criminal policy of “herd immunity”—the more likely it is to become more infective and, potentially, more lethal.

One month later, on January 30, the WSWS published a Perspective column entitled, “Shut down schools and businesses to stop the spread of new COVID-19 strains.” It stated:

Scientists have warned for months that the more the coronavirus spreads, the more it changes. And the more it changes, the greater the possibility that it evolves as less susceptible to vaccines and thus more dangerous.

On April 5 of this year, the WSWS editorial board published a statement entitled, “An emergency program to stop the global new wave of COVID-19!” We warned:

The claim was that allowing the disease to spread unchecked would result in its disappearance on its own. It has led instead to the creation of new, more virulent and more lethal variants of COVID-19. In addition to making people more susceptible to reinfection, the variants have partially degraded the effectiveness of at least some vaccines, squandering one of the most potent weapons available to suppress COVID-19.

On November 21, the WSWS initiated the Global Workers’ Inquest into the COVID-19 Pandemic. In its statement announcing the Inquest, the WSWS wrote: “Scientists have repeatedly warned that continued mass infection amid the slow rollout of vaccines creates evolutionary pressures that threaten to produce a vaccine-resistant variant.”

Less than a week later, the WHO announced that Omicron was a “variant of concern,” and in the past three weeks it has spread rapidly throughout the world.

The emergence of the Omicron variant has exposed the bankruptcy and criminality of the “vaccine only” strategy of the ruling class—the claim that the development of vaccines would, like a “magic bullet,” bring the pandemic under control without any public health measures aimed at controlling the continued

spread of the virus throughout the world.

This “strategy” has been premised on the rejection of any measures—including the shutdown of schools and non-essential production—that undermined the profit interests of Wall Street. This policy has now produced its predictable, and predicted, disaster.

Even so, the Biden administration is doubling down on keeping schools and businesses open in defiance of calls by scientists. As a result, health care systems around the United States are being overwhelmed.

“Our state health care system is currently collapsing,” warned Dr. Nadine Himelfarb, the president of the Rhode Island chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians, on Tuesday.

Harris’ stupid and lying claims that “we didn’t see Omicron coming” are only the latest in an unending wave of falsification, misinformation and propaganda from the ruling class and its media mouthpieces since the beginning of the pandemic—falsifications employed to justify a policy that has resulted in the deaths of more than 825,000 people in the US, according to official figures, and more than 5.3 million people globally.

The exposure of these lies is a critical task of the Global Workers’ Inquest into the COVID-19 Pandemic, being conducted by the WSWS to develop an understanding within the working class of the social and political interests behind the greatest crimes in modern history. This, in turn, is an essential foundation for the development of a mass social and political movement in the working class to fight for the elimination and eradication of COVID-19, waged in opposition to the entire ruling class and the capitalist system.



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