

Locking Down Liberty

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Global Research, February 28, 2022

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Intelligence](#)

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Remember how the notion of freedom was spun by the ideologues of neoliberalism for decades prior to COVID? The freedom to consume. The freedom to make money. The freedom to be plunged into poverty and debt.

Platitudes about ‘individual responsibility’ and ‘standing on your own two feet’. A relentless ideological attack on the state and collectivism. Ideologically, at least, the individual and ‘the market’ were paramount. But in reality, of course, there was no genuine rolling back of the state: its machinery was used differently to facilitate the needs of global capital while attacking the labour movement.

In all this ‘freedom’, there was never much talk in the mainstream political and media narrative about the plight of the poor or workers who felt the brutal effects of the brave new world of neoliberal capitalism.

Never sufficient analysis either about offshoring manufacturing and service-sector jobs to cheap labour economies to boost profits. This was merely presented as efficiency and job creation for poorer countries, as if the owners of industry were on some kind of humanitarian mission.

But it was only ever the old colonialist mentality passed off in new clothing.

Today, this mentality manifests by subjecting poorer nations to IMF-World Bank ‘structural adjustment’ directives and beating them into being ‘business friendly’ and compliant with the needs of Western capital. Spin it any way you like, whether ‘foreign direct investment’ or ‘liberalising’ the economy, it amounts to richer countries merely using or loaning back money to the poorer countries (with strings) that [they stole](#) from them over the centuries.

Courtesy of lop-sided trade deals, the WTO and the international financial institutions, we see a model of ‘development’ characterised by indebtedness, displaced populations resulting from ‘infrastructure projects’ (to facilitate the needs of capital) and a deliberate running down of indigenous models of agriculture.

There was not much talk about ‘freedom’ in relation to the subsequent state-corporate

economic brutality experienced by society's most marginalised, highlighted for instance by Arundhati Roy in '[The Ghosts of Capitalism](#)' – the 'invisible' and shoved-aside victims of a rampant neoliberalism, with a good dose of state-backed violence always on hand to secure compliance.

Their 'freedom' never amounted to much in the first place.

Economic structural violence waged against people, economies and ecosystems courtesy of elite interests bent on monopolising energy, money, food, land and violence across the globe.

Yet the system now purports to care about the well-being of those it persistently regards as 'collateral damage' and 'economic fodder'. A system that by its very nature concentrates money, control and power at the top of the pyramid.

Consider that prior to COVID, Pfizer was "the [least trusted company](#) in the least trusted industrial sector in the United States", according to Nick Dearden, director of Global Justice.

But we are supposed to have faith in Pfizer and disregard its [lengthy corporate rap sheet](#) and its [unscrupulous profiteering](#) practices regarding its COVID vaccine rollout across the globe. We are supposed to trust its products and its vaccine data that it is trying so hard, with help from the US Food and Drug Administration, [to keep from the public](#).

At the same time, to facilitate uptake of Pfizer's injections, we hear a lot about 'collective responsibility'. A much-maligned concept in a dog-eat-dog neoliberal regime. Joe Biden, Justin Trudeau and others spin vaccine sceptics' talk of 'freedom' of choice regarding what is allowed to be injected into their own bodies as selfish and the domain of right-wing women haters and fascists.

The right to protest, to free speech, to associate and so forth were (and often continue to be) suspended as people were locked down waiting for 'the vaccine' thanks to a virus that mainly targets those over 80 and those with compromised immune systems due to existing (serious) morbidities.

We have seen all manner of state interference in the private lives of citizens over the past two years.

Political leaders like Macron, Trudeau, Biden, Merkel and Arden – the frontline managers and facilitators of private capital – have seemingly become so concerned about the public's welfare that their freedoms and rights must be trampled on by the state.

Those who demand freedom and have questioned the mainstream COVID narrative have been labelled 'anti-vaxxers', 'granny killers', irresponsible and as prioritising their own selfish needs over those of the collective.

Even those who claim to be of the 'left' have become part of the ideological apparatus of the state: joining in the chorus and defending tyranny as well as Big Pharma's rushed-to-market injections and its right to your body and right to make billions in the process.

Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine [brought in \\$37bn in 2021](#). Nick Dearden calculates the NHS has paid a mark-up of [at least £2bn](#) – six times the cost of the pay rise the UK government

agreed to give nurses last year.

Moreover, Dearden argues companies like Pfizer behave more like hedge funds, buying up and controlling other firms and intellectual property, rather than traditional medical research companies.

He says:

“The truth is, they aren’t the sole inventors of the vaccine. That was the work of public money, university research and a much smaller company, Germany’s BioNTech. As one [former US government official](#) complained, the fact we call it the ‘Pfizer’ vaccine is ‘the biggest marketing coup in the history of American pharmaceuticals’.”

Even though many on the ‘left’ have campaigned against the brutality of capitalism over the years, they bought into the fear propaganda from the start without question, helping to pave the way for pharma’s distorted profits, the destruction of small businesses and the loss of countless livelihoods due to lockdowns.

They stood by and watched the mega rich accrue enormous profits. [Research by Oxfam](#) has shown that the wealth of the world’s billionaires increased by \$3.9tn between March and December 2020. The world’s 10 richest billionaires collectively saw their wealth increase by \$540bn over this period. In September 2020, Jeff Bezos could have paid all 876,000 Amazon employees a \$105,000 bonus and still be as wealthy as he was before COVID.

While lockdowns and restrictions were imposed on ordinary people and small businesses, the winners were the likes of Amazon, Big Pharma and the tech giants. The losers were small enterprises and the bulk of the population, deprived of their right to work and an entire panoply of civil rights.

A report by the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#) stated that COVID-19 policies had severely disrupted economies and labour markets in all world regions, with estimated losses of working hours equivalent to nearly 400 million full-time jobs in the second quarter of 2020, most of which were in emerging and developing countries.

Among the most vulnerable were the 1.6 billion informal economy workers, representing half of the global workforce, who were working in sectors experiencing major job losses or had seen their incomes seriously affected by lockdowns. Most of these were self-employed and in low-income jobs in the informal sector.

For policies that were supposedly brought in to protect health, there has also been immense damage resulting in lengthy non-COVID healthcare waiting lists for all manner of life-threatening diseases and conditions.

A more logical approach to protecting public health would have involved the promotion of a targeted strategy based on risk along with early intervention treatments as set out in the [Great Barrington Declaration](#). But this was not even up for debate. Censorship and smears were the norm.

Locking the global population in their homes, or in places like India compelling millions to walk huge distances or travel in crowded conditions to return to the countryside, until a vaccine was made available smacks of incompetence or worse – a predetermined agenda.

Writing in the [Contemporary Voice of Dalit journal](#) (31 October 2021), researchers Krishna Ram and Shivani Yadav note the effects of COVID policies in India:

“The economic tumult caused by the pandemic over the past two years has the potential to double the nation’s poverty... Our calculations show that around 150–199 million additional people will fall under poverty in 2021–2022; a majority of which are from rural areas, owing to the immiserate nature of the rural economy. Further disaggregation reveals that the SC/ST [*Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes*], casual labour and the self-employed are the most impacted groups.”

It is clear who was influencing the lockdown-COVID public health policy. In a report by Yohan Tengra of the Awaken India Movement, it is described how the Gates Foundation and Big Pharma have infiltrated and co-opted key public health institutions at the national level in India, not least the COVID-19 National Task Force.

Tengra [says his report](#) has exposed:

“... not just the names of those who are sitting in this task force but also how they are financially connected to the pharmaceutical industry and vaccine mafia. This task force has been responsible for the aggressive push to lockdown, mandatory mask requirements, forced testing of asymptomatics, dropping ivermectin and hcq from the national protocol, suppressing vaccine adverse events and a lot more!”

It was fitting that an MP [recently asked](#) in Canada’s parliament just who does the government serve: Klaus Schwab and the World Economic Forum (WEF) or Canadian citizens?

A pertinent question. But any enquiry should look beyond the WEF to include the wider digital-financial-industrial complex which has used COVID as cover for [bailing out and restructuring capitalism](#) and trying to manage its [long-term falling rate of profit](#).

These issues are at the heart of the ‘Great Reset’ or ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’ that Klaus Schwab and others talk of. Concepts that – like neoliberal globalisation in the 1980s – are given a positive spin and which supposedly symbolise a brave new techno-utopian future.

The WEF, Big Finance, Big Tech, the Gates Foundation and Big Pharma have been heavily promoting the COVID-Great Reset agenda from the start. This has to date resulted in the reinvigoration of an ailing pharma sector with a multi-billion-dollar windfall, the eradication of smaller firms and jobs and the injection of much-needed liquidity into what were by late 2019/early 2020 collapsing financial markets.

Former WEF-sponsored ‘[young global leaders](#)’ like Trudeau, Macron, Merkel and Arden rose to the political helm of various countries. Destined for the top, they were groomed for their future role to steer a corporate-led global agenda.

Given AI-related automation combined with the levels of unemployment manufactured via the lockdowns, it is debatable whether a mass labour force and the means to reproduce it (through mass education, healthcare, etc) will still be required.

Today’s ‘global leaders’ will continue to fulfil their roles by managing dissent through mass surveillance and clamping down on civil rights as the effects of inflation (induced by the

liquidity injected into the system), joblessness and post-COVID austerity measures kick in.

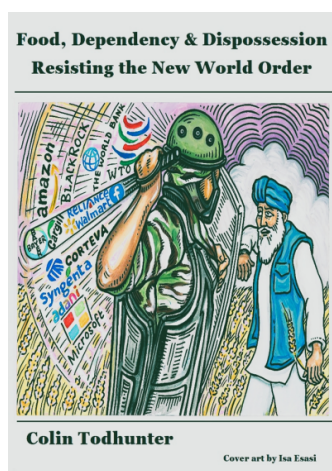
They will of course still facilitate freedom: that of capital first and foremost.

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Read Colin Todhunter's e-Book entitled

Food, Dispossession and Dependency. Resisting the New World Order

We are currently seeing an acceleration of the corporate consolidation of the entire global agri-food chain. The high-tech/big data conglomerates, including Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook and Google, [have joined traditional agribusiness giants](#), such as Corteva, Bayer, Cargill and Syngenta, in a quest to impose their model of food and agriculture on the world.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is also involved (documented in '[Gates to a Global Empire](#)' by Navdanya International), whether through [buying up huge tracts of farmland](#), promoting a much-heralded [\(but failed\) 'green revolution' for Africa](#), pushing [biosynthetic food](#) and [genetic engineering technologies](#) or more generally [facilitating the aims of the mega agri-food corporations](#).

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