

Lemming behaviour as the world leaders force everyone to jump over the edge of the cliff

The reason for the explosion and deaths of the astronauts in Apollo 1 was ascribed to “a failure of imagination.”

By contrast our hysterical herd instinct flight response driven by the media (social and formal) is now causing worldwide economic meltdown with large scale poverty and deaths of the poor in the future. Lemmings for sure.

Encouraged by stock-market traders (who make money both ways), the world stock markets collapsed when corona was announced. Now everyone is jumping back in. Lemmings for sure.

We are not all at risk. In addition to herd immunity, many do not get infected at all and many get only minor symptoms. In fact, infection increases herd immunity. Deaths attributed to Covid 19 result largely from old age and comorbidities due to respiratory failure. Covid 19 has compressed the deaths that would likely have taken place in any event over the next five years. It is not indiscriminately incapacitating nor killing everyone it infects, certainly not the young and health. HIV/AIDS is not the issue, but TB will likely be.

If this was a “real” war like WW1 or 2, then the world leaders would have said “send in the troops to fight even though there will, of necessity, be many deaths BUT the economy must go full tilt to be able to pay for it.”

More lemmings to the slaughter: Counting the cost of Covid 19

Desperate to appear decisive, the Captain of RSA Titanic ignored the evidence of a low infection rate and chose to emulate the first world approach, completely ignoring our third world realities. His decision was informed largely by expectations and not hard facts. As a result, the future of all South Africans has been irreparably compromised. Lemmings for sure.

Despite the Captain announcing a stimulus package costing some R0,5 trillion, unpacking the package reveals a true cost to taxpayers of more like R100 billion. This package will run out in six months’ time and there will be no second chance.

Additionally, the loss in real GDP translates to R9 billion/day which totals R259 billion for the current lockdown. More if it is extended, even partially.

Job losses are expected to add another 1 million to the 10,2 million already out of work and over 30 million living in poverty. Of greater concern is the rise in the 8,2 million unemployed youth aged 15 to 34. This is where unrest will ferment most violently.

Prior to the lockdown the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) estimated that the economy will shrink by 6,1%, but many forecasters now expect it to be 10% as more collateral damage gets recorded.

Factoring all this in yields a true cost of the lockdown to be at least R0,5 trillion and, as is usual, the government will be relying on people of good will and civil society to prop up their failings with social services, food relief and similar.

Given that the roll-out of a safe and tested vaccine is likely to only be in a year's time normal deaths will continue.

Every year 480,000 people die in South Africa. This is broken down into 135,000 over 70yrs, 130,000 age 50 – 69yrs, 175,000 age 15 – 49yrs, 7,000 from 5 – 14yrs and 33,000 under 5 yrs.

The over 70's group, where some 70% of the deaths attributable to Covid 19 will occur due to comorbidities, currently has 370 deaths per day.

ALL DEATHS ANALYSIS DURING LOCKDOWN (35 days)

Normally there are some 1,320 deaths per day = total 46,200 deaths.

Let's assume that the lockdown has reduced/increased certain categories of death, as follows:

Homicide: 16,000 per year = 1,300 @ 50% reduction = 750

Road injuries: 16,000 per year = 1,300 @ 80% reduction = 104

Suicide: 6,300 per year = 525 @ 25% increase = 650

Total reduction: 204 deaths per day = total 7,140 deaths

TOTAL ADJUSTED ALL DEATHS: 39,060 deaths = 1,116 deaths per day

And RSA Titanic is now sinking ever faster under the decision relating to only 79 deaths which have been directly attributed to Covid 19 within a month, effectively 2,7 per day.

This makes a mockery of the decision to enforce the unaffordable lockdown.

RSA Titanic has done little to change the course of Covid 19. Testing has not ramped up to anything like the levels needed and health facilities still have a long way to go. Lack of facilities leading to increased deaths is the price of 26 years of government dithering, maladministration and pocket lining which began with the arms deal.

Although the Captain of RSA Titanic announced a phased easing of the lockdown, it will not alleviate the plight of the unemployed.

And by deploying the full military compliment, the government has acknowledged that it will not be able to cope with the flood of deaths in August/September when the second round begins. Heightened vandalism, riots and unrest with resulting police/army response add to the many deaths.

It is now unavoidable as RSA Titanic has squandered its meagre financial resources too early.

How will we survive round 2 of Covid 19 – and Covid 20?

Two things need to happen:

1. People of reason and credibility need to launch a constitutional challenge to the human rights abuses that the government has imposed, including denying many the right to earn a living. The objective is to force the full lifting of lockdown restrictions as soon as possible and allowing the resumption of the economy as fully and quickly as possible.

2. A referendum should be held to decide what course of action should be taken when Covid 20 (or similar disaster) arises and prevent another situation that will impact upon the poorest the most:
 - a) lockdown for a maximum of three weeks, or
 - b) no lockdown with social distancing enforcement (and international travel ban) or such similar alternative decision tree.

Never before in history have the healthy been quarantined in preference to those that are contagious.

History will judge harshly the actions of politicians and all those in positions of responsibility who either actively or passively helped create this disaster.

Please help unleash the people and let the economy recover as quickly as possible.

Regards and thanks

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