

COVID-19 Vs the Economy - The Trouble Britain Now Finds Itself in

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There is no doubting to the observant, that the government of Britain has been negligent in its approach to the coronavirus threat. It is a matter of public record that they have failed in their primary duty to protect us all. Cemeteries and unemployment will be a stark reminder of this abject failure in the near future. Frankly, if the government was a company it would be facing corporate manslaughter charges and class-action lawsuits from the bereaved (which is already being threatened).

And yet, according to YouGov, the government is supported by well over 50 per cent of the voting population in its handling of the crisis. I suspect though that has a lot to do with the measures put in place to protect jobs and the economy. In this, the government appears paternal, albeit it is struggling to manage its own promises. However, I feel quite strongly that as the COVID-19 threat subsides and the scale of damage to the economy is unveiled and millions start to queue at job centres, this sentiment will quickly fade.

The corporate media in Britain have been, on balance, more subservient to the right-wing cause than doing their jobs in this crisis. I suspect this also has something to do with the PM's current hold on popularity.

Robert Peston [asks](#) a salient question without somehow realising what response he might garner from it - *"Having babies change us. Near-death experiences change us - Boris Johnson has the full set. So will he become a very different PM from the one the UK voted for in December?"* One of the very many answers he got went [along these lines](#) - *"He has 6, 7 or 8 children as far as I can tell. We don't know how many. He left his wife while (she was) being treated for cancer for what was his girlfriend although she became his fiancé when he was still married if I recall right. Near-death? He is a selfish person, I doubt it."*

It is here where we find ourselves in a quite unique position as a country. Moral authority necessitates the existence of and adherence to truth. In Boris Johnson, morality is literally non-existent. He demonstrates many characteristics of leadership a modern democratic country should not have in a PM. It is true to say we have a High Court certified liar at the helm who has also appointed a sociopath as his chief advisor. In a viral driven pandemic, being a sociopath is both pernicious in theory and deadly in reality.

This has been confirmed as it becomes increasingly clear that the reason the NHS was not completely overwhelmed was simple - people were left to die in their thousands, without medical intervention, in care homes and at their own homes. This was a deliberate, calculated policy of their own admission - called 'herd-immunity.' It was the preferred strategy to deal with the coming pandemic, which lays waste to those who are old, frail and

ill. Sociopaths view them as a cost to society, not members of our families, our community and the country they served and contributed to. It was Dominic Cummings himself who publicly pronounced with this strategy – “if a few pensioners die – so be it.”

It is also true to say that Boris Johnson got into power by fronting a campaign fined for its illegal use of funding, of breaking democratic laws and brazenly lying. He aligned himself to those with extreme right-wing views and promoted racism, division and hatred in our country.

Since arriving in Downing Street, the PM’s closest team has lashed out at the free-press, censored the news and threatened the public service broadcaster with oblivion. Boris Johnson himself has attacked democracy, and dished out unprecedented powers to himself and those who surround him.

The COVID crisis has provided a convenient shield against the pressure that was building over the scandal of the Russia Report, the Arcuri affair and blatant abuse of public office and matters surrounding conflict of interest.

The proroguing of parliament, bending the truth to the Queen and other anti-democratic incidents seem a distant memory – but they were just months ago.

We should not forget that Boris Johnson’s life is characterised by little more than theatrical events that endeared himself to a nation hooked on soap operas and so-called reality shows. And it is here we see how his life is unfolding before us. Aside from undisclosed and lavish freebie holidays from donors at the beginning of this year, in the space of just six months, he has got divorced, engaged, had a rather ambiguous brush with death, become father (again) while trying to steer the country through its worst crisis since the end of World War 2.

But what does Britain really need in its leader in a time of crisis? Honesty, integrity, commitment, accountability and the ability to be truly inspirational to help guide us all through these dangerous times would be desirable. Do you see any of those characteristics readily applicable in our Prime Minister? No, nor do I.

The Prime Minister is now supposedly anchoring the daily afternoon press conference but those expecting him to deliver some sort of road map for the way out of the lockdown and the catastrophe we find ourselves in will probably find themselves very disappointed.

As Dominic Raab announced on Wednesday, there will be no major decision on easing the restrictions before May 7. Now the government finds itself in a position where it has to over-compensate to prove it is not negligent. It’s as if they are going to shoot the horse before it bolts just to be certain.

The Tories now find themselves trapped in another dilemma. The party is funded by corporate donors and those donors are seeing their investment evaporate amid the crisis. Over [80 per cent of Tory funding](#) – and therefore their political existence relies on this cash and not member donations – and this may well force them to act in their interests and not that of the nation. It’s the same in America, another unfolding human disaster.

Ministers have been unnerved by the experience of Germany which saw a rise in infection rates immediately after an easing of some restrictions and the Government is rightly fearful

of moving too early. But it is just as fearful of being threatened by the withdrawal of its funding.

It has even been suggested that the decision to give figures for the daily death rates in care homes as well as those in hospitals was to underline the need to keep the lockdown in place. It may well also be yet another tactic to dumb-down the numbers. The FT (not a paper associated with salacious headlines and fake news) analysed total deaths and found a spike that correlated with COVID-19 being responsible not for 20,000 deaths – but double that.

The other problem Britain has is that Johnson sees his task, based on his personal experience, as being the nation's cheerleader in chief. And that's fine in a Brexit induced recession but not when real leadership and crisis management skills are required.

What is now needed are the best brains, those without any other incentive other than to help Britain get out of this very deep hole. But this government ridiculed the experts, so they can't now call upon them and this is a huge problem. Even SAGE has been found to be influenced by government strategy meaning we can no longer believe what they are saying either.

When this crisis comes to some sort of manageable end, when the calls for an enquiry are made and when lawsuits against the government and NHS mount – we'll see yet more lies, misrepresentation of the facts and all manner of concoctions. It takes strength and courage to admit the truth and to do your duty. Unfortunately, this is the era of populism and with Boris Johnson at the helm, there is an inevitability about what the future looks like.

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