

How long would the government survive if there was a po...

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According to [The Sunday Times](#):

Britain faces shortages of fuel, food and medicine, a three-month meltdown at its ports, a hard border with Ireland and rising costs in social care in the event of a no-deal Brexit, according to an [unprecedented leak of government documents](#) that lay bare the gaps in contingency planning.

The documents, which set out the most likely aftershocks of a no-deal Brexit rather than worst-case scenarios, have emerged as the UK looks increasingly likely to crash out of the EU [without a deal](#).

Compiled this month by the Cabinet Office under the codename Operation Yellowhammer, the dossier offers a rare glimpse into the covert planning being carried out by the government to avert a catastrophic collapse in the nation's infrastructure.

I am well aware that the government says that this is all 'project fear', but this did originate from within the Cabinet Office. It's their 'project fear' in that case.

I just want to ask a simple question, and that is, suppose that this is right? What if, despite ministerial denials, which so far most people have been all too willing to believe there is supply chain break down post-Brexit, most especially with No Deal, [which I now think increasingly likely](#).

Noone in the UK has lived through a deliberate, government-created food, fuel and medicine crisis.

Likewise, no one in the UK has lived through so deliberate a government-created slaughter of businesses, which I think might well be the biggest long term impact of Brexit because the cash flow crises it will create will send so many businesses under, pro-longing any downturn for much longer than almost anyone else is predicting at present, simply because businesses will no longer be there to recover by early 2020.

And therefore no one really knows how people will react to this situation, which I think

will likely happen, and, as I note, be of long-lasting duration.

In that case, this scenario needs real consideration now, not least because it is all too likely to happen. If anyone is scenario planning for it I have not noticed it, at least in the political sphere. Scenario analysis for what might happen before 31 October is one thing, but what happens afterwards?

The questions that need answering, as far as I can foretell are these:

1. How will shortages be managed?
2. How will civil disorder be managed?
3. How will the government survive?
4. What government will succeed this one in the event of chaos that demands change, with no time to hold an election?
5. What will the reaction plan be?
6. How might a reaction plan be delivered?

The brief answers are that the shortages will not be capable of management: only rationing might do that, and that would require more planning than we have time for. Real shortages will follow then, and those least well off will almost certainly be hit hardest: that's the rationing system that the market always imposes.

I think this will result in civil disorder. Parents unable to feed their children do not sit quietly by. I can see no way that the police or army might contain such disorder if it was widespread, not least because their families will be impacted alongside everyone else.

Can a government survive a state of chaos that it has deliberately created? I very much doubt it, even if Johnson did manage to get an election and win on or around Brexit day. I cannot foresee a large majority for him in such an election, even if such a victory were to happen. The swing in sentiment would rapidly move against any government that deliberately delivered chaos to this country, even if it had a majority.

What government should succeed Johnson's in that case? I reiterate what I have said before: political differences would have to be put aside and a coalition would need to be created in the short term. But there would need to be agreement as to limited duration and no actions excepting crisis management.

What will the reaction plan need to be? First: immediate application to the EU for a deal, in response to which they will offer that agreed with May, without a doubt. It may well pass.

Second, emergency bailout funds for failing businesses will be required.

Third, rationing may be necessary.

Fourth, a national reconstruction plan will be required: I foresee the situation being as bad as that.

Fifth, I would suggest that electoral reform would be a necessary response to the crisis: never again should we be left in this situation.

And how might such a plan be delivered? That depends on the courage of the politicians who must craft it. That might require another blog.

But, and this point I stress, given that this scenario is likely to come to pass whoever wins the likely Johnson called October or November election, which will happen before the chaos descends, Labour may consider itself fortunate if it does not win on that occasion. I know it will try to do so, and that is its job, but the truth is this crisis has to hit the Tories and them alone if it is to come to pass. They will have created this mess, which I think will happen. They must pay the price for it.