

Johnson's refusal to isolate led us to the point where ...

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We should never doubt that the UK government chose that we suffer Covid-19 more than other states.

On February 3rd Boris Johnson gave a speech in Greenwich in which he praised the virtues of growing trade, which he claimed the UK would enjoy after leaving the EU on 31 January. [He said:](#)

Trade used to grow at roughly double global GDP — from 1987 to 2007.

Now it barely keeps pace and global growth is itself anaemic and the decline in global poverty is beginning to slow.

And in that context, we are starting to hear some bizarre autarkic rhetoric, when barriers are going up, and when there is a risk that new diseases such as coronavirus will trigger a panic and a desire for market segregation that go beyond what is medically rational to the point of doing real and unnecessary economic damage, then at that moment humanity needs some government somewhere that is willing at least to make the case powerfully for freedom of exchange, some country ready to take off its Clark Kent spectacles and leap into the phone booth and emerge with its cloak flowing as the supercharged champion, of the right of the populations of the earth to buy and sell freely among each other.

And here in Greenwich in the first week of February 2020, I can tell you in all humility that the UK is ready for that role.

Note carefully what he said.

He said he'd make trade and commerce a higher priority than coronavirus.

His dismissed isolation (autarky) as a bizarre reaction to Covid-19.

And he said the UK would stand against what he called such irrationality.

We are paying a massive price for that.

We locked down too late, when far too many already had Covid-19, with which they have now infected their families, amongst others.

Because we locked down too late when too many already had coronavirus our death rate is still rising when in other countries - the USA apart, who suffered this same delayed reaction - it is almost certainly falling and the stats may be reliable, [unlike ours](#).

And Johnson himself got it.

Let's not ever think him some sort of hero for having survived. His beliefs led us to suffer this crisis more severely than we needed. He can't deny it. Those opinions are on record.

He has to be held to account for them now he's getting better and will hopefully make a full recovery.