

The deep seated corruption at the heart of populist gov...

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Published: January 12, 2026, 8:17 pm

The FT has reported President Obama as saying last night that:

This administration has shown it will tear our democracy down if that's what it takes to win.

Evidence to support this hypothesis has been reported. But I am not commenting on the US election by noting what Obama said. What I am interested in is the growing belief that the rules do not matter any more.

The evidence for this is widespread.

Cummings, Gove and Johnson give contracts for hundreds of millions to their friends without a tendering process.

Matt Hancock tears down a public entity employing thousands without consultation or parliamentary consent and appoints a friend with a long record of failure to head its replacement.

Priti Patel posts tweets regretting the death of a 16 year old refugee in the English Channel but continues to send gunboats and demonise those desperate people who try to make that crossing.

The Daily Mail does nothing to stop those gloating about his death.

And the Chancellor intends to end furlough support for those who might be unemployed and smaller businesses whilst continuing programmes to support the City.

Do they think we don't notice?

Is it that they think there are enough gloaters in the Mail to get them re-elected, because they are undoubtedly real?

Or have they been so corrupted by neoliberal thinking that the means do not matter any more, and only the end does?

I cannot answer those questions. that is because I cannot comprehend mindsets that think as these people do. It's not just that their lack of ethics and empathy repulse me, it is their greed and indifference based in a sense of wholly unjustified entitlement that I cannot understand.

And yet I know this is the issue we must face. In the face of blatant corruption, in the sense of the distortion of all that we have thought to be appropriate in public life, we have to make clear why standards matter. And given the deep seated nature of that corruption now that is going to be hard.