

## Remembering 100,000, and why some of them died

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On 3 February 2020 [Boris Johnson said this in his triumphalist post-Brexit speech](#) at Lancaster House:

*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.*

Yesterday [we learned that more than 100,000 people have died, some](#) as a result of that dogmatic folly. We lead only in our Covid death rate.

And Johnson is still there.

Let's never forget those who have died unnecessarily.

And hold to account those responsible.