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As The [Guardian](#) notes in an editorial this morning:

The purpose of the state is freedom," the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza wrote. Its aim is to liberate everyone from fear, he argued, "so that they may live in security so far as is possible, that is, so that they may retain, to the highest possible degree, their right to live and to act without harm to themselves and others".

Boris Johnson might nod in approval at the first part of the statement. But the plans for axing Covid restrictions in England, which the prime minister set out this week, fall far short of Spinoza's fuller formulation.

The whole piece is worth reading. It concludes, referring to [The Lancet letter](#) I reproduced here yesterday:

If anything, the authors of the Lancet letter are too generous in describing this as "a dangerous and unethical experiment": that terminology suggests a degree of scientific rigour and concern. Instead, this is a political wager, in which large parts of the population are not players but gambling chips.

I concur.

The government is acting with total contempt, for the state, the instruments of government and the people of this country. Sometime this will catch up with them.