

Funding the Future

Article URL

Published: January 12, 2026, 7:31 pm

Only a bit over a week ago I [noted that unless the government decided there and then](#) that they must take action to tackle the spread of omicron then we would face a healthcare catastrophe. Not only might tens of thousands die unnecessarily, as the government's own scientific advisers were saying, but many more would suffer debilitating illnesses with long-term chronic consequences.

We know that the government did not act. The Cabinet met and the far-right, and those who now pander to them, including Sunak and Truss, vetoed measures that might save people on the grounds of cost and the supposed preservation of 'freedoms', most of which seem to revolve around the right to do harm.

This week matters got worse. As record numbers of cases are recorded, record numbers of children are admitted to hospital with Covid and hospitals face a double threat of people off sick and rapidly growing demand the Prime Minister could not even be bothered to call a Cabinet meeting. Presumably knowing that no measures would be agreed he caved in to the inevitable all on his own and decided no new measures were required in England.

As I tweeted yesterday evening:

<https://twitter.com/richardjmurphy/status/1475512289545629698?s=21>

I stand by that. What we have got is what Sunak always wanted. The far-right inspired [Great Barrington Declaration](#), which always wanted the virus to let rip so that the invisible hand of natural selection could seek out the fittest for survival, is having its day. The logic is simple. Older people, the vulnerable and even our economically inactive children do not matter since only those in work do, according to the logic of those who promote this idea, add to the net worth of society. And since the logic of those who promote this idea is that the fit are also the most likely to survive Covid, why worry about the rest?

Why worry about the NHS too? Ayn Rand abhorred such things. So too do the promoters of this idea. How dare we presume to provide healthcare for all, they say? The sooner it fails the better, they think. And remember Ayn Rand is [our Health Secretary's favourite author](#).

The time was always going to come when the right would run riot, thinking that after the deaths they had already caused the population was ready for anything.

But they did not allow for illicit partying. Something was always, eventually, going to expose the contempt of these people. Illicit partying has turned out to be that thing. I would have preferred it was unnecessary deaths, or the corruption of Covid contracts. It worries me that neither cut through. But partying during lockdown has. Even the genuine Conservatives are shocked by that. The polls now show the impact.

Of course, opinions will change. But that will only be the case if Omicron really is a damp squib, which is what the Cabinet are gambling on. The likelihood of that would seem to be very low indeed. In that case, we might be witnessing the moment that last happened in 2007 when Gordon Brown wondered if he might go to the country, did not, and thereafter suffered from the conclusion of too many at that time who decided that the time for a change of government had arrived. I suspect nothing can save the Tories now in a fair democratic process.

We do, of course, know that they are determined to undermine that fair democratic process.

We know too that they might have almost three years left to govern.

But gas their time come? I think so. I will leave it to another blog to muse on what a Tory scorched earth policy might look like in the meantime.