

The Tories have taken us to a place where those who can...

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Boris Johnson's press conference concerning his Covid plan was a staggering debacle yesterday.

First, there is as such no plan. All that is actually happening is that the government is denying that it has any further responsibility for managing Covid risk. Doing so will now be at our cost and is all down to our common sense. It's as if all those years of learning about public health taught us nothing. It's also as if the government had now abandoned all responsibility for flu, or measles, or heart disease. And it's as if they had decided free at the point of use was no longer a characteristic of the NHS.

Second, the inability of Chris Whitty and Patrick Vallance to handle the contradictions in their positions was painful to watch. After sharing responsibility for all those excess deaths they cannot leave their posts. Simultaneously they know what they are being asked to endorse by their presence is unsustainable and without any scientific support.

Third, it is apparent that Sunak's inner sociopath is in full play. Rather than provide the NHS with the £5bn it thinks it needs to manage Covid and begin to beat waiting lists he denied the funding. Millions will suffer, and some will die because he is dedicated to a false economic dogma of balanced budgets and simultaneously cannot comprehend waiting because his wealth means he never has to.

Fourth, there is, of course, no need for this rationing: modern monetary theory makes clear that if the healthcare backlog can be cleared then we can afford to clear it by creating the necessary money to do so. That's why it is so painful to watch what Sunak is doing.

Fifth that is why it is so hard to also see him impose a new health tax from April, with testing kits to be paid for by families who will not be able to afford them and who cannot afford to take time off if they are ill in any case. Journalist after journalist pointed this out to Johnson. He ignored this further cost of living imposition. As Patrick Vallance noted, Covid has fed off inequality. He failed to add that the government is fuelling it.

Sixth, as Johnson noted, Covid is not over. New waves will happen. More people will die. The next wave could be more or less deadly, we simply do not know.

But whatever happens we have a government that now is seeking to say that it washes its hands of all responsibility for Covid. It is abandoning testing. It's supposed dependence on anti-viral drugs cannot work as a result. And it has said that the economic consequences of whatever happens now is down to others to bear as it will spend no more.

Politically, medically and economically this is incompetent. It is as if all the effort to address this issue is now deeply regretted. The message from Sunak is very clear: he thinks we should have let it rip all along. The fight to save life, businesses and society was all in vain, he obviously thinks (because I think he is the source of this policy).

Eugenically, those who were dying should have been allowed to, both in human terms and with regard to the economy.

This is where the Tories have taken us. To a place where we are on our own when only collective action still make sense. Worse, we are in a place where those who cannot afford Covid healthcare are simply abandoned to their fate.

How did such profound corruption came to power in the UK?