

The UK has been corrupted and accountants, lawyers and ..

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Andrew Rawnsley wrote this in [The Observer](#) yesterday:

*Once upon a time, Britons would have been astonished and appalled to find scandal simultaneously bespoiling their royal family, prime minister and largest police force. We are less shockable now. There's a good reason, which is that there is much less naive reverence for institutions than there was in the past. There's also a bad reason for our diminished capacity to be scandalised by scandal. We have become wearily accustomed to seeing the public trust betrayed. Where once jaws would have dropped, grotesque misconduct in public life often provokes no more than a fleeting furore or a resigned shrug. That makes us part of the problem, too. When we expect to be let down, we settle for further decay. **The British won't get better service from their institutions until they start demanding it and so insistently that they can't be ignored.***

I added the emphasis.

I agree with Andrew Rawnsley. As [I argued yesterday](#), **corruption is now so pervasive that the blind eye that we have turned to it has now led to the possibility of war.**

But it is worse than that, serious as the situation in Ukraine is.

The weary tolerance of tax abuse as if it is normal has led to the corruption of public standards to such an extent that it is normal to think people are going to break rules.

The deliberate provision of opacity, which has become such a feature of UK company law over the last thirty or so years (and Labour is not without blame here) has been accepted as if dirty dealing behind closed doors is acceptable.

The idea that opaque financing is acceptable has led to the presence of think tanks whose funding is unknown on television, providing who knows what causes with platforms for which they need not account.

The idea that Russians can pay small fortunes for tennis matches with the prime minister has become a joke, and not a cause for concern.

That cash can be used to acquire access is considered normal.

Corruption has become endemic in the UK in other words and is a pandemic around the world.

And underpinning it all are the accountants, lawyers and bankers who think that their first job is to undermine the rule of law by finding ways to avoid the impact of regulations for their clients.

When will those pursuing these professions say that this practice is no longer acceptable?

When will we see action by them to promote transparency and not opacity?

When will the avoidance of regulation be considered professional misconduct within these professions?

These are questions that those professions need to answer, because the three of them are at the heart of the degradation of values in public life in UK and around the world.