

## Truss wants to undermine public goods

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According to Politico this morning:

*In an interview with The Times, Tory leadership contender Liz Truss says that [Britain faces a “pivotal moment” and must “go for growth”](#) by cutting taxes. “People should be able to have as much of their own money as possible because they are best placed to spend it,” said Truss.*

Truss is, of course wrong. People are undoubtedly best placed to spend their money on some things. It would be ridiculous to pretend otherwise.

But people are not best placed to spend their money on health, education, tackling crime, defence, providing a social safety net, delivering environmental protection, and so much else. These things are public goods. They can only be supplied at all if they are widely, and most likely universally, available. There is no real market in them. No one could buy what is available collectively if they were to seek to do it individually and in isolation; the cost would be prohibitive.

So what Truss actually saying is that she wants to undermine public goods by prioritising private consumption, which is something quite different from what she explicitly says.

There is, however, a problem for Truss. The world wants more public goods right now. They are what we are most in need of. And that's why she would be a lousy prime minister.