

Truss shambles

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I intended to write a review of Truss's energy plan yesterday, but events got the better of it.

The most appropriate thing to say is "what plan?"

Truss made the biggest spending commitment she is likely ever to make, but could not tell us what it will cost and will not do so for a month.

For those already in fuel poverty, or near it, this will undoubtedly continue under this plan. Without significant changes to benefits that will be very much worse in 2023/24.

The wealthiest get an absurd and unjustified level of support under the plan, which increases inequality as a result.

Business, public services and charity are in limbo, having no clue as to what help they will get, and with it then only being available for six months at most when households will get support for two years. This seems too little to stave off recession.

Fracking is in, as is oil and gas extraction. It is as if we have no climate crisis. Energy efficiency and renewables - together the cheapest, quickest and most effective way to deliver energy efficiency - were ignored, entirely. This was gross irresponsibility.

And how any of this will be funded we do not know, except there will be no windfall taxes on profits arising from the exploitation of war, which is quite extraordinary and was well dealt with by Keir Starmer.

To describe this as a plan would be too kind. It was nothing of the sort. It was a shambles, issued after she had the whole summer to work out what she would do.

As portents for the Truss premiership go, this was bad, and it followed her first rebuke from the Speaker, who described her government as incompetent.

Truss now gets a respite. After months without government, parliament will not now sit

for the ten days of official mourning for the Queen. Then there will be the party conference break. To say government has departed the UK would not be unkind. To suggest Truss did not play her first day well would be generous.

What a shambles.