

The issue around Johnson's partying is not about his ...

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The emergence of new allegations that Boris Johnson broke lockdown rules with regard to Covid on many newly discovered occasions does matter.

There has been a furious reaction from right-wing commentators about news that lawyers appointed to work for Boris Johnson on both the Covid inquiry and allegations that he misled Parliament have reported evidence that they have uncovered with regard to previously unknown parties at both Downing Street and Chequers to the police. This [absurd headline](#) in the Telegraph is just an example of how crazed this reaction is:



It would be easy to dismiss any comment by Allister Heath. It is not unreasonable to suggest that he is on the far right fringe of conservative thinking. That, though, is not the point. The issue is that in the face of civil servants and lawyers undertaking their responsibilities as laid down in the law and in the procedures of a functioning democratic government, a newspaper that was once thought to be the representative voice of boring middle England is suggesting that the whole process of democratic government be overthrown because that compliance with the law and due process is seen as a left-wing threat to its chosen far-right agenda.

Johnson has sacked his government paid for lawyers as a consequence of discovering that they, rather unsurprisingly, are willing to comply with the law. The irony is that if this incredibly wealthy man had been willing to pay for his own legal team, those

lawyers would not have been subject to the requirement to report their discovery of further potentially illegal parties taking place during periods of Covid lockdown to the police. No doubt he will now demand that a new set of lawyers be briefed, at considerable further cost to the state. But again, that is not the point.

The point is instead, a very simple one. It is all about whether the law is to be upheld, and whether the procedures of democracy are to be followed.

Just as Trump is trying to undermine the law, democracy and society as we know it in the USA, so too it would seem are Johnson and his supporters seeking to do the same thing here in the UK.

Trump has already fomented a physical assault on the institutions of democracy. People died as a consequence. So far nothing like that has happened in the UK, but it seems that US Republican inspired groups in the UK always follow a year or two behind in the wake of Trump. The language of people like Allister Heath is intended to provoke division, anger and resentment and has implicit within it a threat, precisely because it says that the behaviour of those civil servants - who he calls a left-wing elite blob - is itself threatening to the agenda that he supports and therefore the goals of those who support his opinion.

There is something deeply and profoundly worrying in all this. It is apparent that Johnson has never thought himself subject to the rules that others must obey. It is just as apparent that those on the far right now think that there are different rules for those who they think should be in authority and everyone else. Their opinion is, therefore, entirely contrary to the principles of democracy, which they now very obviously oppose.

In an era, when social media is so powerful and ideas can, as a consequence, be so polarised the required response to this is to promote ideas that necessarily demonstrate the benefits of democracy. Those ideas, would, as a consequence, promote the positive role of government. They would relate to equality. They would promote the interests of the majority. They would highlight the need to prevent market abuses that are so commonly associated with right-wing political thinking. They would seek to calm excess. They would promote long-term thinking. The focus would be on community. And I regret to say it, that this is not what I am hearing anything like strongly enough from Labour. My accusation against our Opposition is that they are simply not acting as a sufficient bastion for democracy at present.

All of this leaves me deeply worried. I do not think that this country cares for Johnson anymore. His stupidity, vanity and indifference have been seen through. However, the division he has created remains. That division is between democrats and those who would wish to overthrow it.

There is an existential fight for the future good governance of this country going on now. It is one that democracy has to win.