

A Tsunami of self-inflicted suffering.



An astonishing revelation to emerge from the recent Conservative party leadership election campaign were comments made by Mr Rishi Sunak that he had serious misgivings about the Covid-19 lockdown of society.

In a *Spectator* magazine article dated 27th August 2022, Mr Sunak divulged that he, *“wasn't allowed to talk about trade-offs. The script was not to ever acknowledge them. The script was: Oh, there is no trade off, because doing this for our health is good for the economy”*.

He continued by saying, *“We shouldn't have empowered the scientists in the way we did. And you have to acknowledge trade-offs from the beginning. If we'd done all that, we could be in a very different place”*.

Mr Sunak also expressed disquiet about the government's fear messaging. Referring to explicit public information posters showing Covid patients on ventilators in hospital he admitted, *“It was wrong to scare people like that”*.

Many people have frankly been astounded by Mr Sunak's comments. Let us not forget that he was the Chancellor of the Exchequer throughout lockdown, the second most senior government minister in the UK. It now transpires that he had serious qualms about the consequences of lockdown such as missed medical appointments, shutting businesses, shops, restaurants and closing primary and secondary schools.

On the one hand, Mr Sunak could be praised for now being honest and telling the truth about his unease. On the other hand, he could rightly be criticised for not publicly expressing these concerns at the start of lockdown back in March 2020. At

least his belated comments give credence to those questioning protesters who were unfairly lambasted and maligned during lockdown for expressing exactly the same sentiments.

Those dissenting voices included the thousands of respected public health scientists and medical practitioners around the world who signed the **Great Barrington Declaration**. This declaration derives its name from the town of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, United States where the declaration was signed on 4th October 2020. The declaration advocates a very different strategy than the severe lockdowns implemented by many governments. This alternative and more *proportionate* approach would be to protect the elderly and medically vulnerable whilst allowing all other persons to continue with their normal lives with no closure of schools, work places, restaurants etc. The declaration specifically refers to the disastrous collateral damage caused by strict lockdown policies.

Sweden was one European country which adopted very light touch restrictions along the lines advocated by the Great Barrington Declaration and despite shops, pubs, restaurants, cafes, primary and secondary schools remaining open in Sweden its death rate with Covid was only 1.2% compared to the UK's higher death rate (despite three full lockdowns) of 1.51%.

One crucial aspect of lockdown, namely the significant and continuing delays in the screening, diagnosis and treatment of a range of medical conditions, was discussed recently in a note-worthy editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* dated 18th August 2022.

It was observed that for 14 of the past 15 weeks, England and Wales have averaged **1,000 extra** deaths each week, none of which are due to Covid. Professor Robert Dingwall of Nottingham Trent University, a former government advisor during the pandemic, said, "*The picture seems very consistent with what some of us were suggesting from the beginning. We are beginning to see the deaths that result from delay and deferment of treatment for other conditions, like cancer and heart disease, and from those associated with poverty and deprivation. These come through more slowly – if cancer is not treated promptly, patients don't die immediately but do die in greater numbers more quickly than would otherwise be the case*".

In a similar vein, NHS England reported that as at the end of July 2022, there was a gigantic *6.84 million people* waiting for hospital treatment, a huge **58%** increase from the total of 4.2 million before the pandemic. This now means that approximately 1 in 8 people in England are currently waiting for an operation or other type of medical treatment.

Of course there are many other examples of the **negative indirect consequences** arising from lockdown in the UK including the following:-

- i) Retail closures – 17,323 shops and hospitality businesses (including pubs, restaurants and cafes) permanently closed during 2020 followed by 17,219 in 2021; a truly appalling total of **34,542** retail closures in 2 years (source PWC)
- ii) Evictions – **900,000** persons sadly fell into rent arrears by the end of 2021 and unfortunately face losing their homes (source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation).
- iii) Mental health – adult and child mental health services are being overwhelmed with a flood of new cases. In the Isle of Man in 2019 there were 6 suicides but in 2020 this tragically and dramatically increased to **22**.
- iv) Domestic violence – *Refuge* charity recorded a distressing **61%** increase in calls to its domestic abuse helpline during the period April 2020 to February 2021.
- v) Administration of Justice - a huge backlog of Court cases has developed. In England and Wales there were **58,271** Crown Court cases outstanding as at 9th June 2022 as well as **358,076** cases pending in the Magistrates Court, the highest ever totals (source: Law Society). Delayed trials plainly mean delayed justice for the victims of crime.
- vi) Education – there has been enormous disruption to childrens' education caused by school closures, remote learning, teacher absences and self-isolation after positive Covid tests. The **Nuffield Foundation** stated that on average pupils in primary and secondary schools were *three months* behind where they should be, with pupils from the most deprived schools and from schools with the highest proportion of pupils from black and ethnic minority backgrounds the most affected; 330,000 university students petitioned the government for a refund on tuition fees for the loss of face to face tuition during 2020 (source: Deloitte) and 700,000 children unhappily do not have a computer, laptop or tablet with which to access online learning (source: **Sutton Trust**).
- vii) Labour market – the *Institute of Public Policy Research* published a revealing paper in April 2022 indicating that the UK workforce is approximately **400,000** people *smaller* than before the Covid pandemic (as some persons choose to retire early or adopt a different lifestyle or simply do not wish to be employed). Such critical labour shortages push up wages which in turn filter through to product price increases. Lockdown can therefore be considered to be a contributory factor to the current sharp rise in UK inflation to over 10% and the looming *cost of living crisis*.

- viii) Public finances – the UK Government spent approximately **£360 billion** on Covid measures. All government borrowing in respect of such astronomical Covid financial support will eventually have to be repaid by generations of taxpayers. Worryingly, *interest payments* on UK borrowing just for the single month of July 2022 were an eye watering all time record of £19.4 billion (source: Office of National Statistics). Increased government borrowing arising from Covid financial support schemes therefore means that massive sums of money which should properly be spent on new schools, railways and housing are now instead being disgracefully squandered on paying interest to financial institutions. In other words, if there had not been a lockdown, government borrowing and interest payments would be much less.
- ix) Abandoned animals – according to the *RSPCA*, animal rescue centres around the country are being inundated with pets abandoned after being bought during lockdown e.g. **Hope Rescue**, a animal charity based in Rhondda Cynon Taf, Wales, stated in October 2021 that it was experiencing unprecedented numbers of pets being dropped off at their centre, with *150 dogs* seeking new homes in that town alone.
- x) Foreign Aid – as a result of the colossal financial support given to individuals and businesses, the UK government substantially reduced its foreign aid budget from 0.7% Gross National Income to 0.5% GNI. This entailed a reduction of approximately £3.5 billion per annum in spending on developing countries e.g. the *Strategic Partnership Arrangement* with Bangladesh was cancelled in 2021 regrettably meaning that the UK would no longer provide an education for **360,000 girls** in that South Asian country (source: BRAC).

Separately, rigid lockdown restrictions on international travel devastated tourism throughout the globe with consequential profound impacts on local communities and wildlife e.g. in July 2020 it was reported that in the *Masai Mara* Safari Park, Kenya, lodge rangers laid off due to the absence of tourists resorted in desperation to killing for bushmeat the very lions and zebras they were previously employed and paid to protect. And in Uganda a 25 year old Silverback gorilla called **Rafika**, famous with tourists, who lived in the *Bwindi Forest National Park*, was heartlessly speared and killed by poachers in June 2020 (source: National Geographic).

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53024073>

United States

Draconian lockdown policies were implemented in the USA under the guidance of Dr Anthony Fauci, Chief Medical Advisor to the President of the United States.

Dr Fauci is due to retire in December 2022 and Dr Marty Makary, a public health expert at Johns Hopkins University has recently articulated the devastating harm and disruption to everyday life caused by lockdown in the US e.g. a record **107,622 drug overdose deaths** during 2021. See attached link.

Conclusion

In my presentation at the Villa Marina, Douglas, Isle of Man on 14th December 2021 I spoke about creating a **balance sheet** of the good and bad effects of lockdown, putting in the *left* hand column the good that has been done which would include supposedly all the deaths that have been avoided and in the *right* hand column all the bad things which have resulted from lockdown. The assertion made was that the *bottom line* of such balance sheet would clearly reveal that the detrimental consequences of lockdown far outweighed any benefits.

This is exactly what the emerging evidence and data is now proving. In other words that harsh government restrictions were unnecessary, disproportionate and indeed counter-productive.

As Covid fears dissipate, media hysteria subsides and common sense returns to public discourse, the truth is becoming clearer by the day that the catastrophic collateral damage (the trade-offs alluded to by Mr Sunak) caused by government lockdown of society amounts to nothing less than a **TSNAMI OF SELF-INFLICTED SUFFERING.**

Will any of the sanctimonious political and scientific architects of lockdown or its heavy-handed police enforcers and cheerleading news editors feel the slightest prick of conscience or embarrassment or show any moral contrition? Probably not, but apologies are awaited.

One vital issue notably not mentioned at all by Mr Sunak was *freedom* and how lockdown interfered with fundamental human rights. This unacceptable impact on civil liberties will be the subject of a feature in our Latest News coming soon.

Links:

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-lockdown-files-rishi-sunak-on-what-we-werent-told>

<https://trendingtoday.london/style/faucis-lockdown-legacy-daily-mail-online/>

<https://www.itv.com/news/2021-01-22/governments-new-covid-advert-can-you-look-them-in-the-eyes-and-tell-theyre-helping-by-staying-at-home>