

## BUSINESS EYE

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# Is the cure worse than the disease?

WRITTEN BY

ALEX PRATT



Founder of reading lighting manufacturer, Serious Readers and chairman of IoD South Region

[www.bucksherald.co.uk](http://www.bucksherald.co.uk)  
@bucks\_herald

**T**his week's thoughts on the future of mankind come to you as we look over the precipice of the greatest economic depression in hundreds of years yet are focussed on whether or not Dominic Cummings filled up with petrol on the way to make sure his autistic four-year-old was safe while he battled on for the rest of us.

Is this the new normal? Seems like the old political hatred to me.

I should say at the outset that I believe Dominic

Cummings to have wrought a colossal amount of damage to our country and the world through his role as 'Manipulator in Chief' in relation to the lies we were told by the Brexit 'Leave' campaign.

To put it mildly, I am not a fan and I personally do not think he is fit for the office he holds.

On both accounts however, while I still hold these opinions, I have accepted that I am in a minority.

We have left the EU (and await the next economic cliff-edge) and Boris was elected with a stonking majority under Mr Cummings' advice and guidance.

What I therefore find appalling is the sanctimonious criticism of his political enemies in the Press and in Parliament forcing the distraction of the entire Government from incredibly serious work saving lives, by claiming they are trying to prevent a loss of public confidence in and adherence

to government guidelines while all the time being the ones fanning the flames.

If Kier Starmer and Steve Baker had not made such a big thing of supporting another trial by media, then none of us would have noticed.

Meanwhile the 'National Worry-list' is making us seriously anxious about our future.

Closing down society was not a thought-out response because we were ill-prepared. It was a desperate measure in a desperate moment. It has slowed the progress of the pandemic by enforcing social isolation, but at a terrible price.

Goldman Sachs has predicted that India's GDP could shrink at an annualised rate of by 45 per cent in one quarter and South Africa's by 25 per cent.

The World Health Organisation has warned that Covid-19 threatens vaccination programmes with millions of

lives placed at extremely high risk.

It is estimated that as many as 90 per cent of the most vulnerable children in our country have had no education at all during lockdown.

This 12-week 'bank holiday' as a cure is now being viewed in the cold light of day as potentially much worse than the disease.

America's unemployment rate jumped from 3.5 per cent in February to 14.7 per cent in April and is still rising. In Britain, a third of new graduates have lost their job offers. A delay in cancer consultations by six months alone has been calculated to offset the life-years gained from treating the equivalent number of Covid-19 patients by 40 per cent.

Lifting the lockdown clearly also risks a second wave. Iran re-opened in April, but last week had to turn Tehran and eight provinces into "red zones", because the virus is once again rampant.

A thousand illegal immigrants have apparently waded ashore during lockdown.

Jaguar Land Rover, Rolls Royce, British Airways and JCB are all fighting to stay in business and shedding tens of thousands of jobs in the process. Aston Martin's share price has dropped by over 90 per cent. Shell and Marks and Spencer have slashed their dividend payments, making all our pensions weaker.

When a global company like Hertz looks destined for bankruptcy with a reported \$18 billion of debt, you know this is going to get ugly.

The trouble is that the Government and the media did such a good job of terrifying us into staying at home. This is why some teachers are refusing to go back to work when the risks are low, which can only slow the progress of the economy and cost more lives in the process.

So, while Dominic Cummings is in my personal view

a blight on our country, what would be worse would be to hound someone out of office who has not broken any law nor guidance, and despite contracting the virus in his family, simply acted as I would have done to be able to protect my four-year-old autistic son while carrying on working relentlessly to help solve the significantly serious issues we all face.

We need to stop vilifying those with whom we disagree. We need to stop looking for imperfections in others and destroying them for it.

We need to focus on the clear and present threats to our lives and stop allowing the agenda to get side tracked by the politically motivated.