



## Episode 1,766: Report from the UK: Restrictions and Panic

Guest: Dominic Frisby

**WOODS:** I feel like, you know when you're at a funeral, and you say, I'm sorry we have to meet under these circumstances? I feel like it's the same kind of situation. And in a way, I have the same kind of grief that I have at a funeral, to be perfectly honest with you.

**FRISBY:** Yeah, I mean, I don't want to sound too morbid, but I actually quite enjoy funerals. They're times of contemplation and insight.

**WOODS:** Well, then the lockdowns must be right up your alley, because it seems like England is being killed, honestly. It's just awful. Awful.

**FRISBY:** Well, I'm sort of a bit more ambivalent about COVID than I am about other libertarian or freedom issues, because I'm not a scientist. And the problem is that the science of COVID has become so politicized, so there are some, they tend to be the scientists that work for the government that are making all these projections about death rates and infection rates and so on. And then you'll read another scientist who's on the other side of the argument. There's a guy called Yeadon, who's done some podcasts in the UK, who has been a colleague of Sir Patrick Vallance, who's the government's top scientist, and basically says there's no such thing as a second wave. You can't have a second wave with this type of virus. And the whole notion is just illusory. And you listen to him talk and you go, wow, this guy sounds like he knows what he's talking about. And so you just don't know what to think.

But in terms of – and then you look at someone like Argentina, which had a very strict lockdown, but you go to countries like Argentina, and the law is just a sort of guide. It happens quite a lot. I think it might be applicable in Catholic countries, because the Irish are a bit like this, where the law is just a guide and you don't really need to follow it to the letter of the law. And in sort of Protestant Anglo-Saxon countries, the law is strict and it must be adhered to. And so Argentina, even though officially it had a lockdown, nobody obeyed it and it's got tremendously high rates. Whereas Sweden, the whole thing was voluntary, but a lot of people locked down anyway of their own volition, and they've dealt with the virus much better. So you just really don't know what to do or what to think.

But you know, my son's at university, for example. He's just gone to university, Bristol, one of the best universities in the UK. And he's paying an absolute fortune to go, and yet he's doing his entire course – he's gone into his halls of residence, but he's doing his entire course from his halls of residence on the internet. And you kind of go, well, you may as well have gone to the open university or the Khan Academy and saved a fortune. Everyone in his flat's had COVID, so they've all been locked down. Hardly anyone's showing any symptoms. The testing is

farfical. It's showing people as positive who aren't, not even asymptomatic. They actually don't have symptoms. And so this sort of central planning that goes on is a total mess.

And now, like London, where I live, we're on tier two. The government's brought in all these different tiers, these risk tiers. France has just gone into four weeks of lockdown, I don't know how many miles away, 70, 80 miles away on the other side of the Channel. The north of England, parts of that have gone into lockdown. Ireland's gone into lockdown. Has barely had any – it had like two deaths a day over the last two weeks, and Ireland's gone into full lockdown. So it's just insane.

And I think what it is, Tom, is when you start saying it's a conspiracy, you sound like a bit of a nutter. But there is a sort of – I don't even know what the word is. There's a confluence of vested interests who have jumped on the back of this. And it might be people of a certain political persuasion and they're exploiting it for their own political ends. And so I do think it's inevitable that we're going to some kind of health passport and track-and-trace – you know, at the moment, if you want to go and eat in a restaurant, you have to download the NHS, which is our health service app, and then click on the app when you go into the restaurant so that if anyone in the restaurant gets COVID, they can all get in touch, nominally. But now, effectively, the NHS can track and trace you. And it's all very well going, *Oh, but it's only for the good of your health*. But in malevolent hands, in the wrong hands, once a leader has that kind of information about you, it's a very powerful thing to have.

And there's very little resistance to be put up, because you're told you're immoral, for example, if you decide that masks don't work. People come and shout at you. And it's really given rise to these sort of busybodies. Like we're under this sort of – it's given rise to the busybody, if you know what I mean.

And so it's a basket case. Nobody knows what they're doing. And it has completely reinforced my belief that government is inherently incompetent. Even if there are competent people in government, the way government works is inherently incompetent. And there are 65 million people in the UK. The aggregation of 65 million individual decisions would result in a much better outcome than this sort of centrally imposed stuff, which is, a lot of the time, based on false data. So that's my little rant over with.

**WOODS:** No, I agree with it, and I want to talk about some things that are specific to where you are. But let me just read you something that I sent out as part of my email newsletter the other day. This was something that was sent to me, and then I sent it out to my subscribers. The person writes:

"Attached is a local story of a recent outbreak at a hospital. This is the premier hospital in the northwest. It is the Level I trauma center and burn center for a four-state area. The outbreak occurred in a surgical unit, and 40 staffers and four patients have tested positive. Sadly, one of the patients died. You'll notice this line from the article:

'This virus spreads among patients and staff because of gaps in adherence to the precautions we know are very effective.'"

And then he continues: "Seattle is the most masked city I've been in. I drove up from Arizona in August, through Utah, Idaho, Montana, and Washington. And the surgery unit is the most

adherent to masking in the hospital even before COVID. And not just masks, but clean scrubs, shoe covers, hair covers, eye protection, etc. And it's well ventilated. It's the cleanest place in the hospital.

"So if a staff trained in how to keep their environment clean or even sterile, with all of the PPE that Fauci could dream of, in the most masked unit in a hospital, in the most masked city can't prevent the spread of the virus, what hope is there for the rest of society?"

So regardless of – you know, I understand your point about the science and we're not experts, and so on, but that kind of thing, it's analogous to the war on drugs in the United States. We have drugs all over our prisons. You can't keep the drugs out of prisons, you're not going to be able to keep them out of the local neighborhood. So we have to, at some point, face this. What exactly are we looking to accomplish simply by – I know we want to hector people, because if only they did X or Y, the thing would go away.

Look, what I know is that Sweden's not wearing masks. I know that. I mean, maybe 5% to 10% of them. And I know that for a fact, and they have been down to numbers that most countries would kill to have for months at this point. So I don't know how to account for that, but I do know that that's going on. What are we looking to accomplish by staying in the house? What is the point of the lockdowns? Eventually we come out and we've tricked the virus into going to some other planet?

Like I mean, I genuinely – at first I got we have to stay in the house, because maybe that'll slow the spread so the hospitals won't be overwhelmed. But your NHS admits they were never overwhelmed. And this so-called second wave, if it is a second wave, there are a lot of cases, but far, far fewer deaths per that number than you guys were having before. What are they telling you the goal is or the endpoint?

**FRISBY:** Well, they're not. And that's one of the problems. They keep shifting the goalposts. And for sure, like there are so many people who, as a result of NHS measures, haven't had proper treatment for their other illnesses that they have. There's this expression going round, "protect the NHS." But I thought the NHS was there to protect you. And there's loads of examples of people, for example, with cancer, who haven't had proper cancer treatment and, as a result, have died.

My daughter just had her tonsils out, and the ridiculous rigmarole. I had to sort of, like over six months, build up a rapport with the nurse who did the bookings, with the booking secretary, in order to sort of weasel our way and to get an operation on her tonsils, which should have just been an in-and-out job. And I mean, that's a trivial example.

But it's quite interesting if you go back and listen to the arguments about masks before masks became mandatory. And a lot of the people said this virus is so infectious and so small, the masks don't make any difference. And I think what it is, is masks, it's almost like a guilt thing. You want to be seen to be doing something to fight this virus. And so masks became a thing. But now the whole country is muzzled, and obviously criminals are exploiting this opportunity to wear masks and getting away with murder – literally, murder. There was a guy in the street not far from me who was jumped on by a bunch of other blokes, all wearing hoods and masks, and murdered in the street. And the CCTV camera doesn't know who they are, because they've all got masks and hoods on. And in schools, kids are using these masks to bully other

kids, you know, pissing in the mask and making the kid wear the mask and that kind of stuff that kids do to each other.

So, yeah, there's all sorts of horrible unintended consequences. And I think it's almost just like a guilt thing. People just want to show the world that they're doing their bit to help. And then everyone else, there's a sort of large majority of the population that doesn't know better or just doesn't want to get into a fight, so they just wear masks just to comply and make their lives easier.

But for example, today I just walked past a guy, a security guard when I went on the train. And he had a mask, and I had a mask. And we made eye contact with each other. But I couldn't – normally, I like to sort of smile at people. But I couldn't tell if that guy was smiling at me, if he was giving me dirty looks. I was looking at him, smiling, but then I realized he couldn't tell if I was smiling at him. So did he think I was being confrontational? So it's just giving so much scope for misunderstanding, and then you get confrontation.

And it's all from some basic thing of wanting to do something, which is the inherent problem with government in the first place. It always wants to help. And sometimes it wants to do harm, but even in helping, it just meddles. And so I sang a COVID song in my standup routine. And I wrote this in March. I'll send it to you if you want to put it out in your show. But "Maybe the fear is worse than the disease. Do we really need to bring the world to its knees?" That's the lyric. And I think the fear of COVID – I'm not saying – it obviously kills people. It's obviously very dangerous, and you have to act accordingly, particularly for the older section of the population. It is worse than flu, but it does now seem that either this latest round that's doing, it's a weaker strand or we've built up a resistance or the virus has burnt itself out or something. I don't know, because as you say –

**WOODS:** Or treatments have improved.

**FRISBY:** Or treatments have improved. All these things, and it's just not as harmful as it was. And if you came to the government now and said, "There's this virus doing the rounds, and it kills less than one and 100. We need to destroy lives and totally rethink the way we operate," they'd go, no, you're being ridiculous. But this sort of communal fear has come in, and as I say, this confluence of vested interests that have exploited it. And if we go down this track-and-trace, everyone's controlling you, you have to wear a mask the old time, the world is going to be a much grimmer place in two years from now than it is. And from my tax book that I wrote, the evidence of every crisis in history is that taxes – and tax is a code for government control – they go up during the crisis. And after the crisis has passed, they never go back to the levels they were before the crisis began. And that happens with taxation, but it happens with every form of government control. And taxation is a measure of freedom. And so that's where we're going. So it is very concerning. And it's like it's like a snowball. A confluence of bangles, is what it is.

**WOODS:** There's a lot there to unpack. I am following what's going on over there a little bit, and I saw a story the other day saying – maybe you saw this – something like the police will be used to break up Christmas dinners. Did you see that headline over there?

**FRISBY:** Yeah. And we've got a knife-crime epidemic in London. We've got a really serious problem. And we've got a serious terrorist problem here, as well. There are a lot of people who hate the English who live in England and want to – and just as we're talking now, a

couple of hours ago, somebody has been decapitated in France. Decapitated. Not stabbed, decapitated. What kind of insanity brings about decapitation? Now, surely, police resources should be going into dealing with knife crime and decapitation and physical threats to people's livelihood than breaking up Christmas dinners amongst folk who just want to be with each other and their family at important points in the year.

**WOODS:** Now, then the other thing that I saw, another interesting item involves theater. You and I are very interested in theater.

**FRISBY:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** And I saw that Mischief Theatre is bringing *The Play That Goes Wrong* back in a socially distanced setting. And they say it's not clear that we can make any money on this, but we can employ 60 people who have been desperate for months. Now, I don't know if that's going to be successful or not, and I'm sure a lot of people are panicked over there. But that surprised me, because at the same time that's happening, my understanding is bars are still open but there are tremendous restrictions with regard to socializing, visiting other people, having contact with other people. Can you try to summarize exactly what it is that you, as a citizen over there, need to know about what's allowed what isn't?

**FRISBY:** Well, it's a bit headless chicken syndrome. But there's some bars and so on that took it very seriously, and others that were just like, oh, this is ridiculous. But then what was happening is everyone was getting drunk, as you do in the pub, because that's why people go to the pub, to have a drink. People were getting drunk and then slapping their fellow man on the back and camaraderie and all the rest of it. And so they introduced this 10 o'clock curfew to try and get people home earlier before they were too drunk, because they were worried that all the camaraderie that was going on in the pubs was causing the spread of the virus, although I'm not sure how much evidence there was for that.

But you go to the pub, and there is a bit – you're supposed to sit in pods of six people and all this, and some pubs have put up these plastic screens in between tables and others haven't bothered. And then you go to like restaurants and they're a lot more careful about people going in. And some restaurants can be like, you have to wear a mask to go from the entrance of the restaurant to your table. And then I was in a restaurant the other day, and she didn't want to let me in. I forgot to bring a mask to the door of the restaurant, and she didn't want to let me walk across the restaurant to my table. And it turned out my table was like five yards from the door anyway. And in the end, I managed to persuade her that if I pulled my T-shirt up over my nose, I would be safe [laughing].

And then some of the comedy clubs have opened. I can't really comment on it, because I don't know that much. I mean, I love it, but I haven't actually been. But theater is such a difficult business as it is, and ticket prices are already astronomical. And I wanted to put on a play three or four years ago, and I just looked at the numbers, and it's just so hard to make money. It's such a difficult business. And that's with full capacity. But when you can only operate at one-third capacity, it's just really hard. So some of the comedy clubs have opened, but again – like so I did a round at a comedy club last week, which would normally seat 300, and now it was only seating 100, and they put more gaps between the table. And there was like this line on the stage, and you weren't supposed to walk past the line to talk to the audience or anything. You have to keep back behind the line [laughing].

**WOODS:** Well, the thing is, I'm sure you know, as a performer, having those fewer people there, the energy level isn't the same. People don't laugh as much. It doesn't work.

**FRISBY:** Exactly. Laughter is a herd thing. And you know, they show videos of kids, they show them the same cartoon, and the kid who's watching the cartoon by himself just watches it. If there's two kids, they're smiling. If there's a group of kids, they roll with laughter. At the same cartoon. It's a herd thing. And so once you've got 100 instead of 300 in a comedy club, the laughs aren't as loud. They don't come from the belly in the same way. They don't hit you as hard on the stage. And overall, it's just not such a good experience. I mean, there are still some clubs that are doing it and they're making it work, and that it's loads of people acting in their own self-interest, surmounting all the obstacles that stupid people are throwing in their way, if I can misquote Adam Smith. But so people are finding ways to make it work, but on the whole, it's just a mess. And a mess of their making. And some comedy clubs, they're trying to make you wear masks in a comedy club. You know, how can the audience wear masks in a comedy club, but you're allowed not to wear a mask if you're eating? So there's all sorts of weird ways where, if you buy a ticket, you get a free pizza. And then they put the pizza on the table, and you have to sort of pretend to be eating and then you —

**WOODS:** Yes, right.

**FRISBY:** So it becomes so stupid. But anyway, as I say, people are finding ways around it.

**WOODS:** The thing is, I don't know how to explain it, because again, I'm not a scientist. What I do know is that there do seem to be things about this virus that go a little bit beyond what people probably learned in chapter two of *Introduction to Epidemiology*. I'll just say that, because there's something very strange about it, where in different countries you have dramatically different results, even though they have much the same policy. That could have something to do with how they're measuring it. Who really knows?

But things like in the US, just one month ago, *The Los Angeles Times* reported that we should expect in the next month an 89% increase in hospitalizations for the virus. And again, I'm not a scientist, but I knew that wasn't going to happen. In the same way I wasn't a foreign policy specialist, but I knew there were no weapons of mass destruction, because you know, I read the papers. I assess whether Donald Rumsfeld is trustworthy or not, and I make my decision. So a month has now passed. Not only was there not an 89% increase; there was a 14% decrease in hospitalizations. Now, did anybody say anything? *Like oh, well, let's at least admit we're happy about this.* No, not a word. There's no mention of it.

Or near where I live in Florida, about two and a half weeks ago now, there was a big rally with our governor and with the US president. And all the opponents of these people said this is going to be a super spreader event. That's their magic word, *a super spreader event*. And so of course, everyone said we were going to be driving by piles of dead bodies two weeks later. Two and a half weeks later — so I'm being a real sport here. Two and a half weeks later, our deaths continue to fall. You look at the charts, there is no indication that this event took place. Nothing. So does anybody say, *Gee, you know what? Maybe we overreacted. Maybe this thing doesn't work the way we think it does, or maybe there's a lower threshold for immunity than we thought there was?* They're on to the next panic thing.

So I guess my question is — and I know there's no way really to answer it, but at some point, maybe you will never get to zero deaths, in the same way you'll never get to zero deaths from

a lot of things that we don't even think about anymore. But maybe it could be — I'm just trying to think of the way they could be thinking. I'm trying to imagine that these are people of goodwill. I'm trying to imagine that they're not psychotic, that these are people of goodwill who are in a difficult situation — so I'm trying to be charitable here — and they're just trying to figure out what is the best, safest outcome for everybody. It could be they're waiting for a vaccine, and/or they're waiting, as the virus weakens, as they tend to do over time, then we can start opening up a bit more. It just would be nice if they would say, look, here are the numbers we need to reach in order to say all clear. And here are the exact numbers we're looking at. And I feel like we're not unreasonable as citizens to demand a simple answer like that.

**FRISBY:** You know what part of the problem is? We're governed by the media. And I think this applies in America as well.

**WOODS:** Oh, yeah. More so.

**FRISBY:** Yeah. And so the media sensationalize the tiniest thing, and then they demand that the government and politicians do something about it. And so if there's one person who dies of COVID — now if I'm right, the coronavirus is a common cold. So I imagine every day somebody dies of the common cold, an old person, a vulnerable person, something. But we haven't stopped the world for the common cold. So until the end of time, every day, if you look hard enough, you will be able to find somebody who has died of coronavirus. Okay. And if the media now are determined to sensationalize that and get everyone's knickers in a twist and all in about it, we are going to go into a world in which this will never end.

And I just think government's hubristic. They think they can change the climate of the world. And they think they can eradicate it so that the nobody — and there are left-wing people claiming one death is one death too many, and we must eradicate. We must not stop until coronavirus is eradicated forever. Well, that's just not possible. If you follow that logic, you have to ban driving. You have to ban flying. You have to ban crossing the road. You have to ban the most trivial issues. You have to ban swimming — isn't swimming in swimming pools the second biggest killer in America or something, drowning in swimming pools? So we have to ban swimming pools. Do you know what I mean? It's just stupid.

But there are people who think like that, and our politicians are so weak and so terrified of the media that they pander. And I mean, you're lucky. In Donald Trump, you've got a guy who either is so confident or so insane or whatever it is that it just seems to brush off him. But that just makes him even more despised. But over here, our politicians don't have that the same mettle, and they just pander the whole time, and it's pathetic. But while they do, it will be a mediaocracy.

**WOODS:** Oh, yeah, I have no doubt about that. And that makes me want to ask — and before I ask it, I'm just going to say quick thing, because I do want to wrap up. I don't want to take too much of your time. But there is a website I just found called [ThePriceOfPanic.com](http://ThePriceOfPanic.com). There's a book called *The Price of Panic* that just came out about the virus, but it's not related to that. [ThePriceOfPanic.com](http://ThePriceOfPanic.com), and what it has is articles from mainstream media sources about all the collateral damage being done. So hunger and poverty, death from other diseases, harm to children, anxiety, depression and suicides, political oppression, it's all being chronicled there.

**FRISBY:** That's good. There's Lockdown Sceptics in the UK that's doing that —

**WOODS:** Yes, I've been looking at that. Yeah, now *skeptics*, do you spell that with a K over there? How do you spell *skeptic* in the UK?

**FRISBY:** I'm now panicking, but I would say, S-K –

**WOODS:** Yeah, no, with a C –

**FRISBY:** Yeah, S-C-E-P-T-I-C.

**WOODS:** Yeah, so just so everybody knows, it's *sceptics* with an S-C-E because of your crazy spelling over there.

**FRISBY:** Hey, we invented the language.

**WOODS:** [laughing] Yeah, I know. I was wondering if you were going to try and challenge me on that. But we bastardized it real good over here.

**FRISBY:** You made it easier.

**WOODS:** I know at least a little bit – I saw a picture of you recently – I think, if I'm remembering this right. Did I see a picture of you with Nigel Farage?

**FRISBY:** You did.

**WOODS:** What's he been doing during all this?

**FRISBY:** Well, I mean, that guy's a hero. He really is. And I mean, he did a great speech at a Donald Trump event yesterday, I saw on Twitter. And he has a little chat show that he does on YouTube, and I went on his chat show to just do an interview about my book *Daylight Robbery*. And then we went from the chat show, we went and had a boozy lunch, and I think it's everyone's dream come true to have a boozy lunch with Nigel Farage.

**WOODS:** Sure.

**FRISBY:** It like went on into the afternoon, and it was just great. He's such good company. And he was telling me some stories, and they were so funny. But anyway, what's he doing? One of the things he said to me that was quite interesting is he was like, *People in politics, they think it's over. They think I've gone quiet. But I went quiet for a couple of years before, and then I came back with the Brexit party. And I've gone quiet again, and they think I've gone quiet, but I'll be back. Don't you worry. I have unfinished business.* So you know, I think we'll be hearing from him again. He never stops working. He never stops reading. He's trying to uncover frauds all the time, malpractice by government.

And he's brought great attention to migrants crossing the English Channel illegally in boats and then arriving in the UK and then being put up in four and five star hotels that are vacant because of coronavirus [laughing]. I mean, it's such a racket. And then all the hotels are going, we're empty, we can house these illegal migrants, and the government doesn't know what to do with them, so it sticks them in these in these hotels. And so you've got this ridiculous situation with loads of illegal migrants living in four or five star hotels. And Nigel

Farage brought that to everyone's attention. But it's still going on, but you've got to credit — he never stops.

And so yeah, so that's what he's up to, fighting the fight. And he's got no platform. You see a guy gets a column in *The Sunday Times* or *The Financial Times*, or they're on the telly or on the BBC. They've got the platform of that organization. Farage, he's constantly just doing it all with his own wits and his own supporters. And he's just fighting for what he believes in. Even if you disagree with what he believes in, you've got to admire the man because he never stops. He's a brilliant speaker. He's s tremendously articulate, and he's got huge amounts of courage.

**WOODS:** Well, what has Dominic Frisby been up to, and what are you up to, and is there anything we can promote for you in these dark times?

**FRISBY:** Yeah, I tell you what there is. I'd love to just give it a plug. And if you want, I can send you a little audio trailer for it, Tom.

**WOODS:** Please.

**FRISBY:** Which is that I've written this audiobook called *The Shadowpunk Revolution*. And I grew up, I used to love the old concept albums of the 1970s, where there'd be a story with a brilliant soundtrack to it things, like the *War of the Worlds* and — you know, there's loads of them. And so I have written this sci-fi rock drama, and I wanted it to be a metaphor for Bitcoin. But instead of making it about Bitcoin, we decided that these techno activists have invented these coats, invisibility coats that protect you from surveillance against state and corporate surveillance. And so what's happened is these coats are being misused. Some people are using it simply as defense, but other people are using these coats to commit crimes. And then there's a police officer — it's set ten years in the future, and there's a police officer who goes on this mission to find out who invented these coats and what they're all for.

And it's called *The Shadowpunk Revolution*. Obviously, the people who invented Bitcoin are called the cypherpunks, so *shadowpunk* is a little reference to them. And you can get it on Audible or on iTunes, and it's only an hour long, so it costs like \$3 or something. It costs nothing. And it's got this fantastic rock soundtrack by this rock guitarist called Asaf Zohar, and there's my beautiful, dulcet tones narrating it. And yeah, if I can plug that, *The Shadowpunk Revolution*. And I'll send you a trailer, Tom, if you want to play that.

**WOODS:** Yes, please do. Please do. Yeah, definitely. Well, I'll have that stuff. I'll have everything that we've talked about here, and also that Price of Panic website. I'll put all that up at [TomWoods.com/1766](http://TomWoods.com/1766). And all I can say is I can't wait to get back to London someday, because the two times I was there I just had the time of my life and I just loved everything about it. And let's hope we come out on the other side, as normal as possible.

**FRISBY:** Yeah, I mean, my mum lives in Palm Springs a couple of hours east of Los Angeles. I can't go. We're not allowed to visit. No visits just from the UK at the moment.

**WOODS:** Well, you guys won't let us visit either, I don't think. This is terrible.

**FRISBY:** It really is ridiculous. Anyway, Tom, I can't wait to have a – we'll have a boozy lunch.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that's what we've got to do. Thanks so much.

**FRISBY:** Thank you very much, Tom. Always a pleasure talking to you.