

[Satire] Hancock's Half-Hour

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A brand new TV show has just been announced called Hancock's Half-Hour. Over the course of 30 minutes the main character, Hapless Hancock, playing the part of the Health Secretary, will highlight all the government's absurd policies and fake facts and figures surrounding the covid situation.

Some of the highlights of the show have already been leaked. One of the stories featured will be that of the Seagull on Brighton beach who is believed to be covid positive. In an interview, a public health official claims that the seagull definitely has covid as a local resident called Bob witnessed the bird regurgitating some chips it had stolen from a couple of pensioners sitting on a bench. This combined with the fact that another witness said it had beady eyes was enough to

convince the authorities of its covid positive status.

As a result of this spike in cases, Brighton beach has been sealed off, The Golden Cod chip shop where the pensioners purchased the chips has been demolished, the bench on which they sat has been removed and the surrounding area has been carpet-bombed.

The pensioners themselves have been placed in quarantine for six months and anybody returning from Brighton in the last few days have been told to put a cardboard box over their head whilst self-isolating for fourteen days.

As a precautionary measure all purchases of potato products in and around the South coast region have been banned with a prison term of three months and confiscation of their deep fat fryer for anyone that defies the new law. The head of the local police force was quoted as saying, "We will enforce the law with the utmost vigour. People have got to realise that cooking or consuming chips at this time could kill someone."

The seagull at the centre of the storm was not captured but authorities did manage to fit it with a track and trace ankle bracelet before it escaped. It is hoped that all the birds it comes into contact with will be able to be traced and locked into special nightingale aviaries that have been specifically set up for this purpose. Hapless Hancock was quick to point out that although the new facilities are called nightingale aviaries all species of birds can be accommodated.

As a result of this terrifying event, all local bird owners are now required to ensure their pets have beak coverings when they cannot social distance from other birds. Canaries, cockatoos, parrots and budgies are all subject to the new law but mynah birds are exempt as it was thought that putting a mask over their beak and preventing them from speaking for any period of time would cause them too much anxiety.

In the first show it is also believed Hapless Hancock will

announce new, stricter measures to prevent the spread of corona virus. According to the latest science, the virus can now make its way into a person's system via the skin, hair and ears and so it will become mandatory to wear full body coverings when indoors. Recommended coverings are hazmat suits, suits of armour, circa 16th Century or a beekeeper's outfit purchased from a reputable supplier. In the event that you do not own any of these, a home-made body covering will suffice and can be made out of any household material including old rags, toilet rolls or bits of coal. To help with designing your own body covering, a new billion-pound website has been set up by the Department of Health and Social Care.

As well as full body coverings the latest expert advice is that a kipper placed strategically in one's underwear should help prevent the spread of the virus. A study carried out by Poppycock University in Cambridge has shown that the viral load of the virus is inversely proportional to the size of fish used but it is only true for kippers. Other piscine species have been used but without success. Members of the public visiting their local fishmongers will be reminded to stay at least 10 salmon lengths apart at all times.

As new cases and fatalities are falling every day it is thought that the corona virus has mutated to become craftier due to a hitherto unknown gene called the sneaky gene. It is now believed by experts to have changed its modus operandi and is causing a completely different set of symptoms. These new list of symptoms will be revealed on the show but are known to include, 'looking slightly bewildered, walking with an odd gait, looking at other people in a funny manner and talking with a strange accent.'

The police are due to organise a press conference in the next few days where they will be encouraging the public to report anybody showing any of these signs to the authorities, emphasising it is now everyone's public duty to spy on their neighbours and be wary of anyone new in the area, particularly

if they have a limp and sound a little bit foreign.

As an incentive, a new scheme is to be introduced called, 'Squeal for a meal,' whereby any member of the public that grasses on another for acting oddly will get a voucher for a free meal at any local restaurant.

The programme will also feature the new virus behaviour modelling expert, Madame Zaza, who will predict the course of the virus by various methods including reading tea leaves whilst blindfolded, counting how many natterjack toads will gather on the trunk of a fallen oak tree before sunset, recording how long it takes a piece of cheese to go mouldy in an enclosed environment and seeing how many boiled sweets she can suck in an hour whilst wearing a Mickey Mouse mask. Madame Zaza's essential work will be sponsored by Mint Imperial college, London.

The latest science says these are the most accurate ways of predicting the behaviour of the virus as opposed to the previous method of thinking of a number, subtracting it from the average height of a giant sequoia tree, multiplying it by the distance between the moon and the earth at the time of a lunar eclipse and then adding a squillion to get the final figure.

This, of course, was the method employed by Fiddler Ferguson, the professor guilty of fiddling with the figures whilst he fiddled with his mistress.

The programme will also cater for the musically minded as it will feature BoJo the clown, doing a cover version of the Fun Boy Three's hit, The Lunatics Have Taken Over the Asylum, on a dither. (A dither is another form of the zither but is used solely by those who haven't got a clue what they are doing). Accompanying him will be the Health Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer. It is thought The Glum Boy Three will have a regular slot on the programme.

Despite all the measures that will be highlighted in the show, a leaked document from the cabinet office has predicted that the only way to truly eradicate the virus is by culling the entire population so that it has no more potential hosts. To this end, another scheme is being advised where you can commit suicide to avoid catching covid. It will be called, 'Check Out to Help Out.'

It is envisaged that there will be a large uptake as many members of the public desperately want to stay covid safe. However, if demand does not meet the required level, the scheme will become mandatory. Those unwilling to comply will be effectively water-boarded into submission by being forced to wear a dirty, homemade facemask during a heavy rainstorm.

Happy viewing.