

Coronavirus Conjuncture: Nationalism and Pandemic States

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Abstract

Writing from Britain in the month of May 2020, this essay draws the multiple and conflicting alignments of the Covid-19 moment into conjunctural relief. It seeks to understand how prominent trends of welfarism, collectivism and capitalism are being reorganised across a Left–Right spectrum and to specifically situate nationalism in this general political flux. Focusing on Britain, the essay will explore how an otherwise unsettled ruling Right is reviving a nationalist political imagination through a pandemic consciousness – with an emphasis on the politics of bordering, the spectre of China, reheated civic patriotism, a poetics of survival and melancholic whiteness. The essay will however also speculate about the limits to nationalism amid the imperatives of global pandemics.

Keywords

Britain, coronavirus, Covid-19, nationalism, pandemic

Introduction

Writing from Britain in the month of May, we are struck by the increasingly peculiar coalitions that Covid-19 has provoked. On the one hand, Tory ‘hawks’ and 5G conspiracists join the ranks of anti-authoritarian lockdown sceptics. Elsewhere, we see Left dissenters and millennial tastemakers decry even the slightest hint of state laxity. A muddled moment, in short, where the alt-Right gestures confidently to Sweden and the liberal Left reaches for China and South Korea.

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Amid the horror, tedium and confusion alike, Covid-19 is a moment of rupture and realignment. For some, this speaks to nascent Leftist possibilities as Right-populism flounders in the face of public health imperatives and its ethos of care and welfarism (Bakewell, 2020; Harris, 2020; Solnit, 2020). For others, the proven ability of neoliberalism to capitalise on crisis conditions remains ominous. There, a matrix of ‘under the skin’ (Harari, 2020) tech-corporate surveillance aligns with the further disciplining and automation of labour, and the increased remoteness of ‘socially distanced’ life strips what remains of interpersonal bonds and collectivist murmurs (Evans et al., 2020; Klein, 2020).

This short essay draws these multiple and conflicting alignments into conjunctural relief, by seeking to understand how prominent trends of welfarism, collectivism and capitalism are being reorganised across a Left–Right spectrum. But in so doing, the essay gives particular emphasis to situating the place of nationalism amid this general political flux.

Focusing on Britain, the first section of this article addresses how the governing Right has adopted, albeit reluctantly and partially, assorted policies and positions contradictory to their wider neoliberal principles. This comprises the incorporation of certain public health obligations which sit uneasily with the market-first orthodoxies they otherwise champion. We argue that this temporary Covid-19 mandated disruption to the governing conventions of neoliberal capitalism exacerbates an already emergent tension in contemporary right-wing politics – a tension where the Right’s avowed turn to a populist-nationalism has partially re-oriented as well as weakened its original neoliberal commitments. The second and third sections explore how this disjuncture between neoliberal capitalism and an emboldened politics of public health collectivism play out, with an emphasis on how the otherwise rattled Right will attempt to recuperate its nationalist position as befitting the moment’s pandemic consciousness.

Our overall argument is that while the Covid-19 moment allows for important anti-capitalist affordances, the spectre of nationalism frustrates such progressive openings – not least, through appropriating Leftist intuitions. The danger that awaits is not then a conventional neoliberal Right flatly rejecting progressive alternatives; but rather, a nationalist Right absorbing revitalised welfarist impulses. This essay calls herein for vigilance, asking that we not be seduced by nationalism’s well-trained collectivist conceits.

Biopolitics, Welfarism and Oxymorons

On 5 May 2020, the United Kingdom recorded the highest Covid-19 death toll in Europe. The hapless bluster of Boris Johnson and the economic Darwinism of Right ideologues shaped a series of political decisions with lethal consequences. The ‘market-first’ mantra behind the initial denialism was coupled to the deadly attempt at a ‘herd immunity’ approach, just as surrender to the impatience of business lobbies hastened the premature return of labourers to unsafe workplaces. Prison relief was mooted and then never realised. Deportations continued, even when the targeted displayed Covid-19 symptoms. And, of course, the availability of PPE¹ remained fatally inadequate, regardless of the numerical sophistry of ministers. When compared then to the scope of the economic

relief programmes elsewhere in Europe, the public health collectivism of Kerala, the test-and-trace technological efficiencies of East Asia or the compassionate liberalism of New Zealand, Britain's response was more explicitly contoured by both a market-society ethos and carelessness. This market-supremacist haplessness distinguished the UK not only with the highest death toll in Europe but also with a forecast for the steepest economic downturn. The worst of both worlds, it would seem (Malik, 2020).

But stark as it was, that alignment was also disjointed. As mapped by Marxist commentator Richard Seymour (2020), the Covid-19 moment both clarified and intensified certain gaps in Britain's prevailing governing culture:

Neither the government, nor the Right, nor the state, are united around austerity logic in the way that they were in 2008. The Keynesian Right is growing, and the austere hardcore is shrinking. The 'hawks' are still in the cabinet, and still populate the backbenches and *Telegraph* comment pages, but their position is more embattled than it was. There is a constellation of forces, ranging from the far-sighted sectors of capital, to medical and scientific technocrats who aren't driven by market imperatives but by the imperative to promote life, to new Tory MPs elected in constituencies where austerity is unpopular, who are shaping the response in a different direction – though by no means an egalitarian direction.

One key element of the disjointedness Seymour speaks to has been the 'return of the big state' (Chakraborty, 2020; *The Economist*, 2020), which has flustered the ideologues of the Right by far exceeding the mere security or market-making function they designate as the state's proper preserve. This partial recovery of the state's 'left arm' – a notionally universalist return to the safeguarding of collective life – resulted in the mothballing of much economic activity in favour of public health. As the historian Anthony Barnett (2020) noted:

Most of us thought that "the system" of power and interest put profits before life, I certainly did . . . Yet when it came to the crunch, leading governments put the health of their citizens first, generating the sharpest recession ever known.

Indeed, under Covid-19, the state became the de facto dispenser of private sector payroll and the guarantor of business viability. This has included extensive job-retention and income support mechanisms as well as measures to mitigate business exposure such as mortgage and VAT postponements, business rate holidays and various loan and grant schemes.

There has also been in Britain the jolting of the Thatcherite moral economy – wherein the refrain of 'key workers' has implied a sharp corrective to the popular evaluation of labour status. The armies of private sector project managers that until then busied themselves with the marketing and delivery of surplus consumption have been left floundering by the material economy of crisis response. It is instead the cleaners, drivers, couriers, carers, packagers, teachers, factory-workers, supermarket staff and refuse collectors (not to mention doctors and nurses) who have been temporarily returned their rightful symbolic 'valuation', as labour that sees to the fundamentals of the common good. Startled Conservative MPs, suddenly taken by a Covid-19-induced epiphany, even exclaimed to Priti Patel (the Home-Secretary-executioner of all things migrant) that perhaps lessons

would have to ‘be learned’ about immigration (Read, 2020); lessons about what they had till then lampooned, in law as well as in gainful rhetoric, as expendable ‘low-skilled’ labour undesirable to the nation.²

Of course, the steep economic and social fallout that awaits will far exceed the scope of these patchy measures and occasional moral insights. The fallout of Covid-19 represents a turbulence that will leave permanent material and psychic wounds in the ability of many to resume market-routines. These wounds comprise the immediate turmoil of lost earnings but also the no less important experience of thwarted plans and rescinded expectations – undoing the already fragile confidence of navigating a late modernity, as Zygmunt Bauman (2004, 2011) famously argued, in which precarity and uncertainty are entrenched structural and subjective conditions of contemporary life. But it is also the unanticipated scope of this Covid-19 induced economic upheaval that gives added resonance to these temporary governmental actions, however inadequate. After all, could it be that these interventionist measures constitute the nascent drafting of a new economic common sense, calling time on the orthodoxies of austerity, fiscal prudence and small-state conservatism more broadly?

Instructive for any such speculation is the fact that today’s panicked turn to a neo-Keynesianism-cum-welfarism position is underpinned by a seeming commitment to collective biopolitical obligation. It is true, as Foucault (1977) has shown, that the biopolitical is ordinarily understood as maintaining the health of ‘the species’ in line with productivity imperatives – that is, the disciplining of a ‘docility-utility’ calculus and the appropriate forms of capital-friendly ‘social reproduction’ work. It is however also discernible that the biopolitical can have more literal saliences – in relation to the life of the body politic. As Bue Rübner Hansen (2020) observed about the Covid-19 context, ‘biopolitics can also be democratic’ and the ‘Leviathan routinely inept’. Put differently, under certain circumstances there arises a presentation of biopolitical work that revives an understanding of the human population as worth preserving for its own sake – that is, a defence of human life as an end in itself.

And unlikely as it may seem, this more democratically inflected biopolitical imperative was also present on our streets. It is tempting to see today’s injunction to ‘social distance’ as only the further privatisation of public space. But as the psychoanalytic philosopher Sergio Benvenuto (2020) argues, there are alternative resonances to such everyday public negotiations. When we socially distance, we also adopt the somatic norms of political care. We cross the road to *not* infect the other with whom we co-habit. We do not divert our path out of fear or disgust but do so to affirm public welfare, because we are all equally dangerous. This is therefore a rather different construal of the biopolitical – a politics of health and care as rendered through the vernacular and the quotidian.

We accordingly sense in the present a biopolitical imperative that is bigger than the disciplinary or managerial conception of governance. Put simply, the biopolitical imperative recovers something of a caring remit (Graeber, 2020). And as the National Health Service (NHS), in particular, remains an outsized presence in the immediate management of this crisis, its renewed sacralisation does bend the popular conceptualisation of governance back towards an ethos of public good and mutual responsibility. In other words, the Covid-19 moment marks a move away from the Poujadist, petit-bourgeois

ethos of self-interest Stuart Hall and and Martin Jacques (1983) identified as being characteristic of the post-welfare-state era.

Seasoned cynics of a Left persuasion will understandably say that much of the above is naive, constituting only a momentary postponement of market conventions. Such suspicion is of course warranted. Telling here is Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings' panicked recall of Isaac Levido (Lynton Crosby's political communications protege) – to stymie and reverse the potential political ramifications of the ameliorative measures that they have had to enact. As noted by an anonymous source close to Levido, the significance of his return lies precisely in the conviction with which 'he hates the (current) fiscal spending craziness. He's a proper conservative like Lynton' (Mason et al., 2020). To witness the current doyens of the neoliberal juggernaut reverting to type is however hardly surprising. A more searching critique therefore is focused not on the attempt at reversion itself, which remains a given, but on the possible limits to any such reversion amid an adapted conception of the social contract.

The Pre-Pandemic Crisis in Capitalist Morality

In order to draft a fuller picture of these possible limits, we argue in this section that the renewed collectivist, statist and anti-austerity positions of the Covid-19 moment drew from political tendencies already in play. It is also here that we begin to address the play of nationalism as relevant to this Special Issue. Namely, we argue that the hegemonic political culture particular to Britain had already been undergoing a significant shift, prior to the ructions of Covid-19. This is the radical lurch of the ruling Right towards a more hardened politics of English nationalism, engendering in turn a political gap in their wider shepherding of a concomitant capitalist ideology. And of particular significance here is the manner in which such alienating shifts in the governing culture has allowed younger generations to assume more distinctly oppositional political stances – an oppositional stance that becomes even starker amid the vagaries of the Covid-19 fallout.

In simpler terms, we wonder if certain inclusionary and even universal logics became available because of the English Right's overcommitment to Brexit-themed nationalism. Counterintuitive as it may seem, that extension distracted the Right from its post-war commitment to the moral project of market virtue – a project most associated with Thatcher. Of course, neglecting market virtue for Brexit rapture can be accounted for as hegemonic complacency – where the wider normalisation of neoliberal politics means the Right no longer needs to spruce and revitalise a market-society ethos. As Weber (2011 [1920]) commented long ago, contrary to various misreadings, the Protestant ethic was for him only a cultural catalyst of an emergent capitalist spirit. In time, the sheer embedding of a capitalist reality would make unnecessary such a complementary ethos. Nonetheless, it is also the case that the Right's neglect of capitalist virtue was compounded by nationalists dragging it elsewhere. A decade long Right-populist capture of political discourse (i.e. the wider 'culture wars' of nationalism/Brexit, race/anti-racism, gender/feminism and 'lifestyle'/environmentalism) has accompanied a partial disregard for capitalist common sense – crudely summarised in the 'fuck business' (Shrimley, 2018) rhetoric some current members of the ruling Right resorted to during the Brexit

campaigns. That has left an ideological void at the heart of the Right project. A void, even if readers contest the extent of it, that is not insignificant if one takes seriously the Gramscian premise that the cultural common sense always matters for the project of capital.

Particularly telling in Britain was the fact that the Conservatives' 2019 election campaign saw very little that amounted to a conventional defence of capitalist intuitions. Indeed, owing to such an audible silence, the Conservative electoral strategy might even be described as an anti-campaign. Mere nationalist sloganeering, often reduced to a tantric repetition of 'Get Brexit Done', did most of the work in a campaign characterised by negation (Davies, 2019) – renegeing, in turn, on any affirmation of capitalist commitments while casting all political opposition, be it radical or liberal, as the thwarting of the nation's patriotic will.

Any such neglect of a pro-market ethos does accordingly open the possibility for some of the present government's big spending and statist measures to gain a wider popular traction. To 'steal the Corbyn playbook',³ as one journalist put it (Peston, 2020), is not then merely an empty ruse, but one that gets further embedded in the political landscape, even without Corbyn.

But perhaps more significantly, any political reconstitution away from the project of capitalist virtue also extends and sharpens already entrenched generational antagonisms. As Keir Milburn (2019) and others have argued, without a project of capitalist ideology that positively explains the entrenched precarity young people experience, the Right is increasingly exposed to a generational disillusionment – a disillusionment that has exacerbated a range of anti-capitalist sensibilities among younger constituencies. Remember, that as far as the under-50s in the previous national election go, Corbyn's otherwise much-maligned Labour would have emerged victorious.

In the Covid-19 moment, some of this well-drafted embitterment found reductive expression in the 'boomer remover' memes and the multiple acts of spitting on the elderly. Unrepresentative as these morbid actions may be, they do hint at a wider malaise taking shape in the coronavirus fallout. During the lockdown the attenuated ideological project of capitalist virtue was compounded by the postponement of the public pleasure economy. Those consumer pleasures, core to capitalist subjectivities, were the only remaining allowance that late modernity extended to younger generations, subsequent to renegeing on a social mobility and meritocracy conceit. When pensions disappear, job security dissipates, and the only possession that accrues is debt peonage, there remained little to orient youthful narratives-of-self beyond the more immediate distractions of the 'floating world' sector. The recent present, from the vantage point of youth, was a blizzard of transient consumer experiences, proliferating at every turn and around which a semblance of life was grafted. But, crucially, this was also a form of enchantment that still relied on a *public* field – ranging from the ephemeral circuit of dating via Tinder, the consolidation of a food-and-drinks 'experience economy' and the wider routinisation of gym regimes, bespoke 'event cultures' and the relief of holiday escapes.

The lockdown's curtailment of public consumer activity – a situation that seems likely to be prolonged whatever 'return to normal' awaits us – does then intensify generational discontents. Only now, this discontent might obtain a more diffuse mainstreaming that reaches beyond youth constituencies, where the British state's relative absence in the

midst of a health and economic emergency might lubricate a greater receptiveness to the radical anti-neoliberal assertiveness of younger activists and opinion-makers.

The Nationalist Version of Crisis Management

In summary, the Covid-19 moment sharpened a series of contestations about public spending, the role of the 'caring' state and also the wider status of a capitalist common sense. But whither nationalism then, and whither its ability to consolidate contemporary Right hegemony? It is this question, concerning the general formalistic features of nationalism vis-a-vis pandemics and disaster, which we will now interrogate.

The populist-nationalists do appear for now relatively muted. To make hay in the midst of a formal national emergency is a poor look. Similarly, anti-expert stridency, otherwise so central to their political repertoire, is muffled when the authority of science enjoys renewed public status. Indeed, populist-nationalism as an entire form does seem uneasy when having to contend with actual crisis (Mondon and Winter, 2020) – as opposed to ones that are only simulated via 'Eurabia', immigrants raiding the collective treasure, and foreign languages running roughshod over dulcet England. The logic of separation and the allure of ethnonational 'culture' seem less convincing when contending with the 'immanence' of the present Covid-19 crisis (Ronchi, 2020).

But while the seemingly abrupt unexpectedness of coronavirus has exposed the populist-Right, their practised scripts floundering when faced with the immediacy of public concern for life and health, the emergent situation does also seem tailor-made for nationalist reassertion once it adapts to new fears. As political sociologist Paolo Gerbaudo (2020) reminds us, populist-nationalists are only biding their moment, only briefly wrong-stepped by the sudden recourse to science and universalism. The pointed play to anti-establishment motifs will indeed return; and expert opinion and liberal technocrats, particularly those of purportedly 'Left' or 'politically correct' orientations, will again be impugned, as having exacerbated and/or exaggerated the coronavirus emergency (Shrimley, 2020).

In broader terms, the situation seems particularly conducive for the proverbial 'de-globalists' to have their populist say, to entrench the primacy of the nation-state, to invite (illusory) closure, to engage in protectionist scrambles for select health resources – what some call 'vaccine nationalism' (Mancini and Peel, 2020) – and to retrench the validity of the border (Gjevori, 2020). And while nationalisms of recent vintage have turned on the aversion to *particular* conceptions of the outsider (variously racialised minorities, certain forms of immigration, the EU, 'liberal internationalism' and select non-governmental organisations (NGOs)), there is now a possibility for the logic of nationalism to establish its optimal orientation in which a *general* outsider condition can be declared a realm of peril. Consider how Covid-19 offers nationalism a winning card to conclusively condemn human mobility tout court, as opposed to having to rely on particular renditions of undesirability and threat. Such a shift from the particular to the general helps entrench nationalisms' wider validity as a custodian of political desire, a validity that already asserted itself pre-pandemic but might find in the present an even broader horizon against which to write its appeal (Rachman, 2020).

Needless to say, nationalist myopia remains fatally compromised in the face of pandemics. It not only refuses to contend with the distinctly global scale of the problem but

also looks for solutions to disrupted global economic flows at the level of national consolidation. It is, in other words, a political project that can at best postpone crisis even as it allows for crises to multiply. As observed by the Chuang Collective (2020), an uncompromising set of dissident Chinese Marxists, the ‘destruction wrought by unending accumulation has extended both upward into the global climatic system and downward into the microbiological substrata of life on Earth’. The effects of such microbiological and stratospheric mayhem alike scatter into multiple thickly knotted vectors (Liu, 2020) that no amount of nationalism can inure. Yet, a nationalist rendition of crisis response can only place the problem exogenously, refusing to acknowledge the metonymic equivalent of the crisis that sits within. The crises that borders and fortifications shape to repel is always-already inside.

It might seem ironic that nationalism is intensified just as the problems it contends with are so indelibly immanent. Just like the challenges of climate breakdown and capital’s fleet-footed ability to escape governance, the threat of pandemics requires a radically global and radically post-imperial scale of accountability and action (Koram, 2020). But it is precisely this long-standing irony that explains the absence of an internationalist response to the pandemic, at least within Europe. Consider here the initial failure to efficiently distribute crisis-response resources; the continued reluctance by many in Northern Europe to issue the mutualised ‘coronabonds’ necessary for the eurozone to survive (Münchau, 2020); and the refusal to coordinate relief that would help the most exploited populations of the world stave off the catastrophic economic impact of lockdown measures (Gunaratnam, 2020). In the midst of a ‘global pandemic’ there is then an almost total absence of political feeling for the world, and certainly not for its most vulnerable – who are already figured as post-corona demons who must be kept apart, be they in refugee camps and ships at the borders of Europe or in war ravaged and/or agriculturally depleted zones that the ‘overdeveloped’ West is answerable for.

To that end, even as the pandemic offers nationalism its trump card of a general aversion to the ‘outside’, any putatively *general* claim will still have *particular* touchstones. The Chinese in particular, given their economic threat, are likely to be figured as viral pariahs, drawing on colonial lines of racial peril and Sino-menace. The wider purpose of checking the increased clout of China’s market position had already been previewed by the tariff and technology wars spearheaded by Trump. But the Covid-19 themed frothing about China, some even mooted a contorted indemnity case to be issued (Hawker, 2020), does suggest that the overdue Anglo-American ‘reckoning’ (Macshane, 2020) with the rise of Chinese capitalism is finally finding the contingencies it was fumbling for (Milanovic, 2020). It could even be said, from a distinctly British perspective, that anti-EU delirium was the quixotic chimera that stood in for the wider rise of China – where the experience of diminished authority in the play of global capitalism yields a revanchist nationalist politics. The prospect herein of protectionist intensification as coupled to a reheated and amplified Sinophobia, and compounded by an ethos of Eurocentric entitlement and grievance, risks endowing 21st-century nationalisms with a distinctly new civilisational reference and scope.

Internally, the inner city – with its working class, migrant and racialised minority populations – may form as another disease vector for the making of the post-Covid-19 nation. Here, the closure of south London’s Brockwell Park during the early days of

Covid-19 provides something of a guide (Brewis, 2020). The scrutiny of social distancing there drew from the stigmatising histories of hygiene and sanitation long associated with working class and multicultural British cities. The provincial NIMBYism and occasional vigilantism of pastoral folk, as mobilised against itinerants and fresh-air seekers in the Peak District,⁴ is the other side of the same coin that demands the closure of open space to 'outsiders'. Even the rainbows that were emblazoned on people's windows as the lockdown continued might be indicative of this trend. In one sense markers of a child's innocent call to solidarity, they also signalled micro-territories of fortified health; regimes of self-willed sanitary regimentation that we must subjectively embrace. These emblems are unsettlingly close to the frontier logics that ward off the diseased on the terms of the nation. Indeed, at this level of popular nationalist creep, it is telling how quickly the weekly 'Clap for Carers', which was ostensibly a display of support for the strained NHS and care sector, became couched within a fanfare of British communitarianism. In the absent recall of Big Ben to mark Brexit Day, which Boris Johnson had touted as a vanity gesture worthy of the heroic liberation from Europe, the clapping of hands incrementally replaced the clap of the bell as the nation's sonic stamp.

Of course, these cultural dynamics sit alongside stark demographic disparities. It is still the case that in Britain racialised minorities are disproportionately shouldering the sacrifices of the NHS and in the wider population 'Black people were four times as likely to die of Covid-19' (Booth and Barr, 2020; Haque, 2020; ITV, 2020). And while the deaths of NHS workers are at least being mourned and their lives celebrated – the patriotic cry for the NHS ensures that – those warehouse, taxi and delivery workers, who are also disproportionately from minority and migrant communities, remain publicly invisible. Such indifference, as sourced in well-rehearsed racial coordinates, becomes even more marked when one considers the disregard for those who suffer in the many refugee camps that dot the European border. These are people who are already slated for death and for whom the 'Blitz spirit' has no spare compassion (Trilling, 2020). In other words, the attentiveness to life and its value that has resurfaced in our Covid-19 moment all too predictably stops at the borders of race and nation.

Conclusion

The risk herein for the coming future is not that the Right will refuse to absorb certain welfarist conceptions of the polity – it is rather that the Right will do so in the name of nationalism. What at once appears as the opening of universality and welfarism might at the same time be a chronically nationalist capture. To narrate a global viral pandemic as a British national affair, and to think a response to it through national service, is demonstrative of the continued potency of Britain's reactionary nationalism (Davies, 2020). The wider media spectacle that accompanied the centenarian war veteran Captain Tom's spirited charity efforts alongside the scaled up Victory in Europe (VE) Day celebrations constitutes here a characteristically hammy prelude to what is ultimately a more menacing political affinity that British nationalism might draw as we emerge from the Covid-19 moment.

This is not to deny the victory the Left scents in the seeming return of welfarism vis-à-vis the belligerent business-first 'Malthusianism' that was mooted in Britain's initial 'herd

immunity' approach. Indeed, many promising correctives to how the public evaluates public spending, the value of labour and the role of the state are being glimpsed – correctives that fortify revitalised popular conceptions of mutual care and concern. But it is also the case that such reconfigured conceptions of the biopolitical can be forestalled and worked back into a politics of nation – a politics that renders others disposable just as it also gives false shelter to the self-same capitalist drives that induce crises in the first place.

Seen in more general terms, the nationalisms that have already become ascendant the world over stand to be further galvanised in a time of pandemics. Pandemic states can excite to even fuller effect the drives of the nation. The poetics of heroic survival, the safety of the primeval hearth, the sublime awe of bordered fortification and the sadistic thrill of aversion to the foreign and external are all amenable to such nationalist affirmation. But the conjuncture also offers up other possibilities. It is our hope here that the contradictions that arise from the global scale of current and coming crises, the weakened hold of everyday capitalist virtue, a youthful anti-capitalist culture and a renewed attachment to mutualism will prevent the coming political moments from being ceded to the destructive myopia of nationalism.

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Notes

1. Principally the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) used by health and care workers.
2. And though the mandate of Brexit Britain has seen Patel persist with her swinging 'immigration bill', it is also apparent that these implications of the Covid-19 moment have allowed for a backlash that was just a short while ago implausible (BBC, 2020).
3. Under Jeremy Corbyn's Left-leaning leadership, the Labour Party adopted public spending and welfarist policies more in keeping with the democratic socialism of the post-war years than the redistributive capitalism of New Labour.
4. Referring to reports of Peak District (a famed area of natural beauty in England) locals blocking roads and confronting cyclists to deter them from accessing the countryside (Murphy, 2020).

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