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British National Sentiment

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There has been extensive research on Scottish, Welsh and Irish nationalism but little on British nationalism. Analysis of the British electorate shows that British nationalist sentiments cannot be reduced to the conventional left–right and libertarian–authoritarian value dimensions, and constitute a distinct normative dimension in their own right. They are related to attitudes towards Europe, nuclear defence, Scottish devolution and Irish unification. Although by no means as important as the left–right dimension, they are at least as important in contemporary voting behaviour as the libertarian–authoritarian dimension.

Nationalism has been one of the major driving forces behind twentieth-century European politics but has received rather little attention in England, where debates have more often focused on the role of class or other economic interests. The implicit assumption is that Britain, or at any rate England, can be characterized by a consensus on national identity and that nationalism has played little part in electoral politics. The relative lack of success of parties like the National Front or the British National Party compared with their European counterparts has perhaps reinforced this impression.

There have been empirical studies of the role played by nationalism or national identity in Scotland, Ireland and Wales.[1] But as far as we know there

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[1] On Scotland, see William L. Miller, with Bo Särlvik, Ivor Crewe and James Alt, 'The Connection between SNP Voting and the Demand for Scottish Self-government', *European Journal of Political Research*, 5 (1977), 83–102; Jack Brand, James Mitchell and Paula Surridge, 'Identity and the Vote: Class and Nationality in Scotland', in David Denver, Pippa Norris, Colin Rallings and David Broughton, eds, *British Elections and Parties Yearbook 1993* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993); Jack Brand, James Mitchell and Paula Surridge, 'Social Constituency and Ideological Profile: Scottish Nationalism in the 1990s', *Political Studies*, 42 (1994), 616–29. On Northern Ireland, see Richard Rose, *Governing without Consensus: An Irish Perspective* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971); Eddie Moxon-Browne, *Nation, Class and Creed in Northern Ireland* (Aldershot: Gower, 1983); and Geoffrey Evans and Mary Duffy, 'Beyond the Sectarian Divide: The Social Bases and Political Implications of Nationalist and Unionist Party Competition in Northern Ireland', *British Journal of Political Science*, 27 (1997), 47–81. On Wales, see Denis Balsom, P. J. Madgwick and Denis van Mechelen, 'The Red and the Green: Patterns of Partisan Choice in Wales', *British Journal of Political Science*, 13 (1983), 299–325; C. Ragin, 'Ethnic Political Mobilization: The Welsh Case', *American Sociological Review*, 44 (1979), 619–35. For a comparison of all three countries, see William L. Miller, 'The Denationalisation of British Politics: The Re-emergence of

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is no systematic work in England itself.[2] This neglect is partly, perhaps, because nationalist movements have typically emerged among national groups who (as in Ireland or Scotland) are excluded from political power, while national groups which already hold the reins of power in their own country typically do not need to establish a nationalist movement. Dominant groups rarely provide such visible manifestations of nationalism.

However, issues of national identity have long underlain English politics, and they are now coming once more into the open. The Conservative party (historically the Conservative and Unionist party) has a long tradition of distinctive policies on Ireland and on the Empire, and most recently has become distinctive in its approach to constitutional issues in Scotland. It also more subtly attempted to play the 'patriotic' card in the aftermath of the Falklands War. Most recently, of course, national identity has resurfaced on the English political agenda over integration with Europe.

The notion of nationalism is not a straightforward one. At the simplest we need to distinguish between national identity, which can be thought of as a categorical self-concept, and nationalist sentiment, which can be thought of as a dimension. Gellner defines nationalism as:

> primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist *sentiment* is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist *movement* is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind.[3]

(F'note continued)
the Periphery', *West European Politics*, 6 (1983), 103–29, and for an overview of the relation between nationalism and political behaviour, see J. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

[2] There has been considerable research on national pride in Britain, but none that we know of on the relation between national pride and voting behaviour. On national pride, see, for example, Richard Rose, 'National Pride in Cross-National Perspective', *International Social Science Journal*, 36 (1985), 85–96; Richard Topf, Peter Mohler and Anthony F. Heath, 'Pride in One's Country: Britain and West Germany', in Roger Jowell, Sharon Witherspoon and Lindsay Brook, eds, *British Social Attitudes: Special International Report* (Aldershot: Gower, 1989); C. H. Martin and B. Stronach, *Politics East and West: A Comparison of Japanese and British Political Culture* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1992). There is also an earlier tradition of work on the monarchy which is relevant to the study of British national sentiment. See, for example, Dennis Kavanagh, 'The Deferential English: A Comparative Critique', *Government and Opposition*, 6 (1971), 333–60; Edward Shils and Michael Young, 'The Meaning of the Coronation', *Sociological Review*, ns 1 (1953), 63–71; Norman Birnbaum, 'Monarchs and Sociologists: A Reply to Professor Shils and Mr Young', *Sociological Review*, ns 3 (1955), 5–23; J. G. Blumler, J. R. Brown, A. J. Ewbank and T. J. Nossiter, 'Attitudes to the Monarchy: Their Structure and Development During a Ceremonial Occasion', *Political Studies*, 17 (1971), 149–71.

[3] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p. 1. Gellner's theory of the conditions under which nationalism emerges has been criticized, but his discussion of the concepts remains a rather useful one.

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As Gellner points out, this definition assumes concepts of state and of nation. The former he defines in Weberian terms, as that agency within society which possesses the monopoly of legitimate violence. The latter is defined in subjective terms as groups which share a common culture and which recognize each other as belonging to the same nation.[4] The nation is not a legal concept, therefore, but a cultural one, and this is particularly important in Britain where we may all share legal British citizenship but also have differing notions of whether we belong to a Scottish, Irish, Welsh or indeed English nation.[5]

Gellner's conception clearly has immediate application to the United Kingdom, where we can see Scottish nationalism as a movement aiming at statehood for the Scots nation, or Irish nationalism as directed towards the reunification of members of the Irish nation with the Irish state. As Gellner suggests, nationalist sentiment is particularly sensitive to one particular form of the violation of the nationalist principle – that when the rulers of the political unit belong to a nation other than that of the majority being ruled.

In this article, however, we wish to move the focus from the Scottish, Welsh and Irish nationalist movements to British nationalism, which can be thought of, as Kellas has suggested, as the 'official nationalism' of the British state. This official nationalism 'is based on British citizens and their patriotism'.[6] It has tended to oppose the separatist tendencies of Scottish, Welsh and Irish nationalism and has tried to reaffirm the unity of the nation-state. It has also, at least in the hands of recent Conservative governments, emphasized issues of national sovereignty in international relations, especially *vis-à-vis* European integration. These internal and external aspects of British nationalism may not be unconnected. As Kellas has suggested:

> There is evidence that internal national unity and the successful realisation of a nation-state produces stability and moderates the nationalism of a state's foreign policy. A state which is nationally and ethnically disunited may seek to divert attention from its internal problems by pursuing nationalist activities externally. So the internal and external aspects of nationalism are linked together.[7]

In this article we ask whether British nationalism is a source of cleavage within the British electorate and whether the supporters of the different parties (Greens and British National Party as well as the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats) differ in their acceptance of 'official' British nationalism. Our general assumption is that people have relatively stable and enduring values and sentiments which in turn will shape their attitudes towards transient political issues. Two major dimensions of values are usually distinguished: the left–right (or socialist–*laissez faire*) dimension and a libertarian–authoritarian

[4] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 7.

[5] For discussion of some alternative conceptions of nationalism, see Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991).

[6] Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, p. 52.

[7] Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, p. 149.

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dimension.[8] The principal question that we tackle in this article is whether nationalist sentiment should be conceptualized as an autonomous principle in its own right. Does nationalism constitute a distinct third (affective) dimension which structures a range of political attitudes and behaviour covering both internal and external aspects of nationalism? Or can we make sense of political attitudes in Britain without recourse to a notion of nationalist sentiment? Finally, how does this dimension relate to electoral behaviour?

DATA AND MEASURES

Our data come from the 1994 wave of the British Election Panel Study (BEPS). The BEPS is a panel study, following up respondents to the 1992 British Election Survey. Respondents were reinterviewed in 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996 and for the final time after the general election in 1997. The 1994 wave of interviews was conducted shortly after the European elections of 9 June 1994, and contained a number of questions covering those elections.[9]

Since our primary concern in this article is with the dimensional conception of nationalist sentiment, we have constructed a scale which attempts to measure the strength of people's British nationalist sentiments. In constructing this scale we are constrained by the limited number of questions available to us in the BEPS. We do not have any questions that directly tap the political principle enunciated by Gellner, but we do have a few which tap an affective dimension of British national sentiment. The ones which we have used are:

Britain has a lot to learn from other countries in running its affairs.
I would rather be a citizen of Britain than of any other country in the world.
There are some things about Britain today that make me ashamed to be British.
People in Britain are too ready to criticise their country

For each item there were five response codes, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. We have used these four items to construct a balanced Likert scale. Items have been recoded so that the overall scale runs from 1 to 10, high scores on the scale indicating British nationalist sentiment.

This scale has a rather meagre Cronbach's alpha (a measure of internal reliability) of 0.35, which is considerably lower than one would wish. With only four items a high level of alpha cannot be expected and in future research we hope to be able to construct a six-item version with higher reliability.[10] The present scale should, therefore, be regarded as an interim measure.

[8] See Anthony F. Heath, Geoffrey Evans and Jean Martin, 'The Measurement of Core Beliefs and Values: The Development of Balanced Socialist/*Laissez Faire* and Libertarian/Authoritarian scales', *British Journal of Political Science*, 24 (1994), 115–32.

[9] For technical details of the British Election Panel Study, see Appendix A and Lindsay Brook and Bridget Taylor, 'The British Election Panel Study 1992–95: Interim Technical Notes', CREST Working Paper 41 (1996).

[10] Two additional items have been included in the 1997 British Election Study and in the 1997 wave of BEPS: *The government should do everything it can to keep all parts of Britain together in*

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The low reliability is also due in part to the presence of question-direction effects: some respondents (particularly less educated ones) are inclined to agree with items and this tendency towards 'yea-saying' leads responses to items worded in the same direction to be more highly correlated with each other (and less highly correlated with responses to items worded in the opposite direction).[11] As can be seen, two of the items are worded in a pro-Britain direction and two in an anti-Britain direction. Factor analysis of the four items therefore results in a two-factor solution corresponding to the direction of the items. A higher level of internal reliability could be achieved by selecting items all worded in the same direction, but our preference is to have a balanced scale rather than an unbalanced one that has higher internal reliability but is subject to yea-saying and hence to bias. While issues of internal reliability are not trivial, issues of bias and validity are surely fundamental. We turn next, therefore, to consider criterion validity and in later sections of the article will consider predictive validity.[12]

In the 1992 round of interviews (as part of the Scottish Election Study), we also asked our respondents who were resident in Scotland about their national identity, and we can use this to assess the criterion validity of our measure of British national sentiment. We used the measure devised by Moreno which distinguishes people with dual identity as both British and Scottish from those who prefer one identity to the other.[13] The question wording was:

We are interested in how people living in Scotland see themselves. Which of the statements on this card best describes how you see yourself?

Scottish not British
More Scottish than British
Equally Scottish and British
More British than Scottish
British not Scottish

Our expectation is that people who described themselves as Scottish not British

(F'note continued)
a single state; and, *Britain should cooperate with other countries even if it means giving up some independence.* Cronbach's alpha for the resulting six-item scale was 0.51 in the final wave of BEPS.

[11] For a discussion of yea-saying, see H. Schumann and S. Presser, *Questions and Answers in Attitude Research* (New York: Academic Press, 1981). A relevant example is given in Heath, Evans and Martin, 'The Measurement of Core Beliefs and Values'.

[12] For a critique of Cronbach's alpha, see J. M. Cortina, 'What is Coefficient Alpha? An Examination of Theory and Applications', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78 (1993), 98–104. For a more general discussion of the issues of reliability and validity in political science, see Anthony F. Heath and Jean Martin, 'Why Are There So Few Formal Measuring Instruments in Social and Political Research?', in Lars Lyberg *et al.*, eds, *Survey Measurement and Process Quality* (New York: Wiley, 1997), pp. 71–86.

[13] See L. Moreno, 'Scotland and Catalonia: The Path to Home Rule', in David McCrone and Alice Brown, eds, *The Scottish Government Yearbook* (Edinburgh: Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland, 1988).

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TABLE 1 *National Identity and British Nationalism*

	Mean scores	*N*
Scottish not British	5.5 (5.2 to 5.8)	103
Scottish more than British	5.8 (5.6 to 6.0)	239
Both Scottish and British	6.3 (6.1 to 6.5)	186
British more than Scottish	6.7 (6.0 to 7.5)	23
British not Scottish	7.0 (6.1 to 7.9)	13
All	6.0	573

Source: 1992 SES and 1994 wave of BEPS; respondents resident in Scotland, unweighted data. Figures in brackets give the 95 per cent confidence intervals.

would have the lowest scores on our scale of British national sentiment while people who described themselves as British not Scottish would have the highest scores. Table 1 shows that this expectation was clearly met. Scores on the British national sentiment scale rise steadily as we move from respondents who saw themselves as more Scottish than British to those at the other extreme who thought of themselves as more British than Scottish.

In addition to this scale of British national sentiment we also employ the two Likert scales which we had developed previously and which measure left–right (or more strictly socialist–*laissez faire*) and libertarian–authoritarian values. These two scales are again balanced ones but use six items each. We have rescored them from 1 to 10, high scores representing *laissez faire* and authoritarian values respectively.[14] They were designed for use in self-completion supplements and were carried in the supplement to the 1994 round of BEPS interviews. The socialist–*laissez faire* scale had, in 1994, Cronbach's alpha of 0.63 while the libertarian–authoritarian scale had alpha of 0.56.

If all sixteen items which are used in building the three scales are included simultaneously in a factor analysis, a four-factor solution is obtained (as can be seen in Table 2). The first factor corresponds to the socialist–*laissez faire* dimension and the second to the libertarian–authoritarian dimension. The two 'anti-Britain' items have the strongest loadings on the third factor, although the libertarian items 'political parties which wish to overthrow democracy' and 'freedom to hold public meetings' also had relatively strong loadings on this factor, as did the left-wing items 'one law for the rich and one for the poor', 'major public services ought to be in state ownership' and 'it is the government's responsibility to provide a job for everyone who wants one'. Finally, the two 'pro-Britain' items had the strongest loadings on the fourth factor, but the

[14] Full details of these two scales are given in Heath, Evans and Martin, 'The Measurement of Core Beliefs and Values'.

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TABLE 2 *Factor Analysis of the Items in the Three Value Scales*

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Socialist–laissez faire items				
Ordinary people get fair share	0.64	0.21	0.00	0.06
One law for the rich	0.55	−0.17	0.38	−0.15
No need for trade unions	0.62	0.30	0.06	0.11
Private enterprise best	0.72	0.00	0.04	0.18
State ownership	0.37	−0.18	0.30	0.02
Provide job for everyone	0.37	−0.30	0.36	0.00
Libertarian–authoritarian items				
Traditional British values	0.01	0.35	−0.06	0.63
Censorship necessary	0.05	0.53	−0.04	0.33
Allow protest meetings	0.15	0.19	0.53	0.11
Homosexuality wrong	0.05	0.77	0.08	0.07
More tolerance	0.09	0.60	0.38	−0.10
Allow antidemocratic parties	−0.27	0.16	0.44	0.24
British nationalism items				
Britain should learn	0.07	0.02	0.59	0.11
Rather be British citizen	0.01	0.07	0.17	0.67
Too ready to criticize Britain	0.24	−0.09	−0.02	0.70
Ashamed to be British	0.10	0.04	0.57	−0.17
Eigenvalue	2.79	1.92	1.37	1.06
Variance explained	17.4	12.0	8.6	6.6

Source: BEPS, 1994 wave, weighted data.

authoritarian item 'young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values' also had a high loading on this factor.

In part, then, question-direction effects seem to account for the deviations from the expected three-factor pattern, although it is also possible that there are some substantive processes at work too. In particular, the presence of the 'traditional British values' item in the libertarian–authoritarian scale may slant this scale in a nationalist direction. However, the pattern of correlations between the three scales suggests that they are reasonably distinct from each other. As we have found in previous research, the socialist–*laissez faire* and libertarian–authoritarian items had a weak correlation of 0.16 in the 1994 BEPS wave. And the new British national sentiment scale had correlations of 0.31 and 0.28 respectively with these two older scales.

This pattern of correlations suggests that the British national sentiment scale lies midway between the other two scales, perhaps containing elements of both. Does it therefore add anything to the information already contained in the left–right and libertarian–authoritarian scales? Or is it simply an amalgam of the

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other two, with no additional explanatory power of its own? We answer these questions in the next section.

NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL ISSUES

As we noted earlier, our assumption is that people have relatively stable and enduring values and sentiments which in turn will shape their attitudes towards transient political issues. We begin by asking whether the notion of British national sentiment provides additional insight into the structure of contemporary political attitudes, or whether the conventional conceptualizations of left and right and of libertarian and authoritarian suffice on their own. More specifically, do nationalist sentiments help to account for attitudes towards (in Kellas's terminology) both internal and external issues, that is for attitudes towards Scottish and Irish nationalism and the possible break-up of the union as well as towards Britain's role in Europe and in international relations generally?

To explore this question we take a range of policy issues that were contained either in the 1992 BES or in the 1994 wave of the BEPS. The issues were all ones that had been selected because they were felt to be politically important in contemporary Britain; they had not been included in the questionnaires out of any desire to test theories of nationalism. The topics selected were:

Tax cuts and government spending (BEPS 1994)
Unemployment and inflation (BEPS 1994)
Nationalization and privatization (BEPS 1994)
Scottish devolution (BES 1992)
Reunification of Ireland (BES 1992)
European integration (BEPS 1994)
Britain's nuclear deterrent (BES 1992)
Aid to the Third World (BES 1992)
Racial equality (BES 1992)
Death penalty (BEPS 1994)
Stiffer sentences (BEPS 1994)

In five cases these items had been carried only in the 1992 wave of BEPS (that is in the original 1992 British and Scottish Election Surveys), whereas the items for the British nationalism scale were carried in 1994. In these five cases, then, we are asking our scales to predict attitudes held two years earlier – which makes considerable demands on the stability over time of our scales.

We regressed attitudes towards these specific policy issues on our three main value dimensions: the socialist–*laissez faire*, libertarian–authoritarian, and British national sentiment dimensions.[15] That is, we ran a separate regression for each policy issue, regressing attitudes towards that policy on the three value

[15] In most cases the dependent variables were measured with five-point agree – disagree response scales. Strictly speaking an ordered logit model would be preferred to linear regression but it is unlikely that the results would differ greatly.

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scales. Table 3 shows the standardized regression coefficients. These results show a satisfying pattern. There is a range of issues, such as privatization, unemployment and tax cuts, which are primarily influenced by the socialist–*laissez faire* scale and are weakly associated (if at all) with the other two scales. And there are others, such as the death penalty and stiffer sentences, which are primarily influenced by the libertarian–authoritarian value scale.

In between these two extremes come a number of items which are relatively strongly associated with our measure of British national sentiment. These items include both external aspects of nationalism, such as European integration and the retention of Britain's nuclear weapons, and internal aspects such as Scottish devolution and the reunification of Ireland. Racist attitudes, however, belong more to the libertarian–authoritarian dimension than to the nationalist one. While parties such as the National Front or British National Party have attempted to appropriate national symbols to their primarily racist cause, nationalism should not be equated simplistically with xenophobia or racism. The two concepts are not unrelated empirically, but they are by no means coterminous.[16]

The associations with British national sentiment are not as strong as those between the specific left–right and libertarian–authoritarian issues and their respective scales. Thus the British national sentiment scale has a maximum impact (with a regression coefficient of 0.19) on European integration, whereas the other two scales display several substantially larger coefficients. This suggests that British nationalism may not have the same degree of ideological distinctiveness and coherence as the other two dimensions. (However, it must be said that we cannot distinguish this 'real world' explanation from a methodological explanation that our measure of British national sentiment is simply a less reliable measure.)

None the less, the pattern of regression coefficients in Table 3 makes excellent intuitive sense and displays some conceptual coherence. Thus the item on which the nationalist dimension has both the largest relative and largest absolute impact is the constitutional one involving the possible loss of national sovereignty in Europe. On Gellner's account, this is precisely the issue with which a measure of British nationalist sentiment ought to be most strongly associated. It is also striking that the issue of British nuclear weapons is more strongly related to the nationalist dimension than to either of the other two dimensions. Again this makes intuitive sense – nationalists might be reluctant to see their nation-state dependent on supranational bodies for defence, and

[16] There has been a large literature on the relationship between authoritarianism, ethnocentrism and nationalism. Other studies have consistently found, just as we do, that there is a strong association between authoritarianism and ethnocentrism, but the results have been less consistent on the association between these two concepts and nationalism. In our case we found a correlation of 0.19 between our scale of British national sentiment and the item on racial equality. This compares with a correlation of 0.28 between the racial equality item and the libertarian–authoritarian scale. For a full discussion of other research, see H. D. Forbes, *Nationalism, Ethnocentrism and Personality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

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TABLE 3 *Predicting Attitudes Towards Policy Issues*

	Standard regression coefficients				
Attitides towards …	Socialist –*laissez faire* scale	British national sentiment scale	Libertarian–authoritarian scale	Delta	*N*
Nationalization–privatization	0.47***	0.07***	−0.06*	1.5	1,761
Unemployment–inflation	0.30***	0.03	0.01	0.3	1,763
Spending–tax cuts	0.25***	0.04	0.01	0.8	1,762
Scottish devolution	0.13***	0.12***	0.07**	28.9	1,633
Reunification of Ireland	0.10***	0.10***	0.06*	30.9	1,729
Britain's nuclear deterrent	0.10***	0.14***	0.06**	56.6	1,762
European integration	0.06*	0.19***	0.15***	52.5	1,766
Aid to Third World	−0.04	0.14***	0.17***	41.8	1,763
Racial equality	0.01	0.12***	0.25***	15.8	1,764
Death penalty	−0.05*	0.08**	0.34**	3.4	1,758
Stiffer sentences	−0.08**	0.09***	0.37***	4.2	1,760

†The column headed 'delta' displays the percentage increase in the (adjusted) R^2 when the British national sentiment scale is added to the model.

Sources: BES 1992 and BEPS 1994, weighted data. Note that the item on Scottish devolution was asked only of respondents in England and Scotland, with a separate question on Welsh devolution being asked in Wales.

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Britain's possession of its own nuclear deterrent can be seen as an important symbolic affirmation of British independence. The very phrase 'independent nuclear deterrent', which was so often used by its supporters, emphasizes the link with national sovereignty.

These results suggest that our scale of nationalism does relate to specific policy issues in conceptually coherent ways. It is also important to note that it has explanatory value over and above that provided by the two other value dimensions. In the case of attitudes to Europe, for example, the inclusion of the British nationalism scale increased the variance explained from 5.65 per cent to 8.62 per cent,[17] an increase of 52.5 per cent. The final column of Table 3 (headed 'Delta') displays the percentage increases when the British national sentiment scale is added to the model. As we can see, substantial increases are obtained in the case of Scottish devolution, nuclear weapons, reunification of Ireland and aid to the Third World as well as with European integration. In contrast, in the case of issues such as nationalization or the death penalty the inclusion of the British national sentiment scale makes very little difference to the variance explained. This demonstrates clearly that national sentiments have explanatory power over and above the left–right and libertarian–authoritarian scales and are more than an amalgam of the two established scales.

THE SOCIAL BASES OF BRITISH NATIONALIST SENTIMENT

Theories of nationalism do not give us any especially clear leads in identifying the social bases of nationalist sentiment. However, a relevant conceptual distinction is between 'exclusive' or ethnic nationalism, on the one hand, and 'inclusive' or social nationalism, on the other. An exclusive form will, by definition, be restricted to the members of a particular ethnic group and will have an ascriptive and particularistic character. In such cases ethnic markers such as language or religion would be strongly associated with nationalist sentiment. In Northern Ireland, for example, we would expect to find that national identity and nationalist sentiment were strongly linked to religious denomination, and denomination is certainly strongly related to attitudes towards constitutional issues.[18]

[17] The relatively low variance explained is due in part to the fact that our dependent variables have only five response categories. The maximum variance that could in theory be explained is thus likely to be considerably less than unity. As it happens we also have an eleven-point scale for measuring attitudes to Europe in addition to the five-point scale used in Table 3. If we use the eleven-point scale as our dependent variable, variance explained increases from 8.8 per cent to 13.3 per cent. For a discussion of the kinds of statistical issue involved, see David R. Cox and Nanny Wermuth, 'A Comment on the Coefficient of Determination for Binary Responses', *The American Statistician*, 46 (1992), 1–4.

[18] See, for example, Geoffrey A. Evans, 'Northern Ireland during the Cease-Fire', in R. Jowell *et al.*, eds, *British Social Attitudes: The 13th Report* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1996); Bernie Hayes and Ian McAllister, 'British and Irish Public Opinion Towards the Northern Ireland Problem', *Irish Political Studies*, 11 (1996), 61–2.

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In contrast in Scotland, as Kellas has suggested, nationalism has more of a social character. It is, he writes, 'based on a shared national culture, but not on common descent. It is "inclusive" in the sense that anyone can adopt that culture and join the nation, even if that person is not considered to be a member of the "ethnic nation". '[19] Nationalism in Scotland, therefore, is not so ascriptive as in Northern Ireland and has a more voluntaristic character. We would not, therefore, expect to find that Scottish national sentiments were as strongly related to ethnic markers as in Northern Ireland. Research on support for the Scottish National Party (SNP) in Scotland has suggested that its most powerful determinants are in fact age and social class, the SNP being particularly attractive to the young and working class.[20]

Similarly, official British nationalism can also be expected to have a more inclusive character. Indeed, the more effective it is as an official nationalism, the more consensual we would expect it to be and the weaker its relationship with particular social groups. On theoretical grounds we might expect it to be more closely linked with the dominant institutions of the British state, such as perhaps the salariat, the established Church of England, the public schools, the military and the monarchy. We might also expect to find an important generational basis to national sentiment: the generation who lived through the Second World War and its aftermath of the Cold War might well exhibit stronger nationalist sentiments than do younger generations among whom, as in Scotland, alternative identities might have more appeal. In this respect British nationalism might prove to be the obverse of Scottish nationalism structurally as well as politically. Since Scottish nationalism is to some extent opposed to the continued subordination of Scotland within the British state, we might expect it to appeal to precisely those groups that are least enamoured of Britishness.

Table 4 shows that age and education have the strongest associations with British national sentiment. Graduates prove to be the least likely to express nationalist sentiments while the unqualified are the most likely to do so. Older respondents display higher scores on the British national sentiment scale; people aged 50 or over in 1992, most of whom would have been born before the war, are particularly likely to score highly on the scale. It is tempting to interpret these age differences as generational rather than life-cycle ones. Very similar results, and some evidence for a generational interpretation, have been found in the case of support for attitudes towards the monarchy (which are closely associated with national pride).[21]

As might be expected, British nationalist sentiment is strongly related to national identity, Scots and Irish scoring significantly lower than the British or English. There is also the anticipated association with religion, members of the

[19] Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, p. 51.

[20] See Brand, Mitchell and Surridge, 'Social Constituency and Ideological Profile'.

[21] See Anthony F. Heath and Alison Park, 'Thatcher's Children?' in Roger Jowell *et al.*, eds, *British Social Attitudes: The 14th Report* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1997).

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TABLE 4 *The Social Bases of National Sentiment*

	Dependent variable	
	British national sentiment scale	Scottish national identity scale
Age in 1992		
20–29 (base category)		
30–39	− 0.07	0.15
40–49	0.14	0.00
50–59	0.32**	0.21
60 and over	0.48***	− 0.39***
Highest qualification		
Degree	− 0.72***	− 0.22
Intermediate	− 0.21**	0.05
None (base category)		
Religion		
Church of England/Scotland	0.27***	− 0.19*
Catholic	− 0.04	0.00
Nonconformist	0.17	− 0.07
Other	− 0.21	− 0.37**
None (base category)		
Social class		
Salariat	0.22*	− 0.39***
Routine	0.02	− 0.21**
Petty bourgeoisie	0.33*	0.00
Foremen	0.20	− 0.15
Working (base category)		
National identity		
British (base category)		
Welsh	− 0.03	—
Scottish	− 0.48***	—
Irish	− 0.62*	—
Variance explained (adjusted)	7.8%	6.0%
N	1,701	884

Sources: BEPS, 1992 and 1994 waves, weighted data (for column 1); SES 1992, unweighted data (for column 2).
*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$.

established churches expressing greater British nationalism. Other dominant groups in British society are the salariat and the bourgeoisie, and while their estimated coefficients are relatively small, they are none the less significant. The estimated coefficient for members of the armed forces was also of similar magnitude, but given the very small numbers in our survey it did not reach

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conventional levels of statistical significance and we have therefore omitted this variable from the analysis.[22]

It is also interesting to note which structural locations and characteristics failed to show significant net associations with national sentiment. Gender, ethnic origin (black or Asian), unemployment, trade-union membership, region of England and, most surprisingly, private schooling all proved to be non-significant. In these respects British national sentiment does appear to be relatively consensual.

We can also test our hypothesis that the social bases of British nationalism would be the obverse of those of Scottish nationalism. As our measure of Scottish nationalism we use the five-category scale ranging from 'more Scottish than British' to 'more British than Scottish' described earlier (high scores indicating greater Scottishness). The second column of Table 4 displays the results. (We removed the measure of national identity from the model to avoid circularity.)

In general the results for Scottish nationalism are indeed the obverse of those for British national sentiment. The signs are neatly reversed for age, membership of the established churches, and for social class. The major exception is education, which has negative signs both for British national sentiment and for Scottish national identity. In Britain as a whole, the highly-educated tended to obtain low scores on the British nationalism scale, but in Scotland this does not translate into high scores for Scottish nationalism. The explanation is likely to be that higher education leads to internationalism and in this sense would be opposed to specific nationalisms, whether British or Scottish. In this respect, then, the internal and external aspects of nationalism might be somewhat at odds with each other. If we look at the specific issues which tap the internal and external aspects of British nationalism, we find that higher education has the predicted positive relationship with attitudes to European integration but no relationship with Scottish devolution. Age, however, has the expected negative associations with both.

BRITISH NATIONAL SENTIMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE PARTIES

How important, then, is British nationalism in electoral politics? A first overview can be obtained by looking at the relationship between the three value scales and support for the parties in 1994. In order to include small parties such as the British National Party and Greens, who have few party identifiers or voters in our samples, we do not use the standard party identification measure but instead use questions which asked respondents how they felt towards the parties.

[22] It is important to note that the coefficients in Table 4 must be interpreted as net of the other variables in the model. The coefficients in Table 4 should not, therefore, be taken to indicate that the salariat is overall more nationalistic than other classes. Many members of the salariat will of course be highly educated, and on that account will be less nationalistic.

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Respondents were asked:

Please choose a phrase from this card to say how you feel about the Conservative party … strongly in favour, in favour, neither in favour nor against, against, strongly against.

In the 1994 wave of BEPS, identical questions were asked about feelings towards the Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, British National Party and, in Scotland, the SNP (in Wales, Plaid Cymru). We classify as supporters people who felt either 'strongly in favour' or simply 'in favour' of the party in question. Note that these are not mutually exclusive categories – respondents could be in favour of more than one party.

In Table 5 we show the mean scores of the six groups of party supporters on our three value scales (all scored 0–10). As might be expected, the major parties' supporters are most strongly polarized on the left–right scale, with a gap of 2.0 points between the Conservatives' 5.8 and Labour's 3.8. As Brand and his colleagues have shown, the SNP attracts voters on the left,[23] while we can see that the Liberal Democrats and Greens also lie to the left of centre.

TABLE 5 *Value Positions and Support for the Parties in 1994*

	Mean scores on the value scales			
Respondents who were in favour of the …	Socialist –*laissez faire*	British national sentiment	Libertarian–authoritarian	*N*
Conservative party	5.8	6.9	6.2	474
Labour party	3.8	5.9	5.7	795
LD party	4.3	6.1	5.7	691
Green party	4.2	5.7	5.3	388
BNP	4.5	6.3	6.4	37
SNP (Scotland only)	3.8	5.7	5.7	82
Plaid Cymru (Wales only)	4.0	5.9	6.2	16

Source: 1994 wave of BEPS, weighted data.

Again, as expected, the major parties are much less divided on the libertarian–authoritarian scale, with a gap of only 0.5 points between the Conservatives' 6.2 and Labour's 5.7. It is in fact the Greens and the BNP who provide the extremes on this scale, Green supporters on 5.3 being the most libertarian and the BNP supporters on 6.4 being the most authoritarian.

Crucially for our present concerns, we find that the supporters of the major parties are more divided on our measure of British national sentiment than they are on the libertarian–authoritarian dimension. Moreover it is the Conservative not the BNP supporters who have the highest scores on our measure of British national sentiment, while the SNP and the Greens (probably for rather different

[23] See Brand, Mitchell and Surridge, 'Social Constituency and Ideological Profile'.

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TABLE 6 *Value Scales and Vote in the 1994 European Elections*

	Logistic regression parameters for contrasts with Conservative vote		
	Liberal Democrat	Labour	SNP
Socialist–*laissez faire*	− 0.87***	− 1.50***	− 0.87**
Libertarian–authoritarian	− 0.37**	− 0.13	− 0.37
British national sentiment	− 0.36**	− 0.41**	− 0.55**
% correctly classified	76.9	84.3	84.9
Delta†	14.4***	18.7***	8.2***
N	524	776	139

†Delta represents the improvement in fit (− 2 log likelihood) obtained when the British national sentiment scale is added to the model.
Source: BEPS 1994. The SNP figures are based on unweighted comparisons between SNP and Conservative voters in Scotland only. Other figures are based on weighted *N*s.
*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$.

reasons) have the lowest scores. Perhaps most interestingly, we find that the BNP supporters are in no way distinctive in their nationalist sentiments. Previous research has shown that it is attitudes towards race that are most closely associated with support for the BNP, and, as we have suggested earlier, racial prejudice and xenophobia are more closely linked to the libertarian–authoritarian dimension than to nationalism.[24]

The national sentiment scale is not, then, simply a pale reflection of either the left–right or the libertarian–authoritarian scales. It orders the parties rather differently from either of the other two scales. Moreover, in a multivariate analysis, we find that it makes a significant net contribution to the explanation of party support, even after the other two scales have been included in the analysis.

For our multivariate analysis we take as our dependent variable voting behaviour in the 1994 European elections. In Table 6 we carry out three separate logistic regressions, the first contrasting Conservative and Liberal Democrat voting, the second contrasting Conservative and Labour voting and the third, for respondents in Scotland only, contrasting Conservative and SNP voting. This is effectively equivalent to a multinomial logistic regression. We use the three value scales as our predictors (and the models contain no other exogenous variables). In all three regressions we can see that the left–right dimension has the strongest net association with vote, the parameter estimate being largest in the case of the Labour–Conservative contrast. The libertarian–authoritarian

[24] For an analysis of issue positions and support for the National Front, using the 1979 BES, see Anthony F. Heath, 'What Has Happened to the Extreme Right in Britain?' *Res Publica*, 37 (1995), 197–206.

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scale, however, proves to have a significant net association only in the case of the Conservative–Liberal Democrat contrast. It does not appear to have a significant impact either on the Conservative–Labour or the Conservative–SNP contrast. (The parameter estimate reaches 0.37 in the case of the Conservative–SNP contrast, the same as with the Liberal Democrat contrast, but does not reach statistical significance because of the smaller *N* involved.)

The British national sentiment scale, however, has a significant impact in all three contrasts. Unsurprisingly, it has the biggest impact in Scotland with the SNP, but it has almost as large an impact on the Conservative–Labour contrast. The final row of the table (labelled 'Delta') shows the improvement in fit obtained when the national sentiment scale is added. As we can see, in all three cases the improvement (for the loss of one degree of freedom) is highly significant.[25]

One possibility is that the results, even for the contrasts with Labour and the Liberal Democrats, have been driven by Scottish politics. In Scotland, the Labour and the Liberal Democratic parties have both adopted a strongly devolutionist stance, leaving the Conservatives as the only unequivocally unionist party. Since nationalist issues are more politicized in Scotland than in England, could it be that Scottish voting behaviour is driving the results shown in Table 6? The answer to this question is an unambiguous 'No'. When we re-run the Conservative–Labour and Conservative–Liberal Democrat regressions for England, omitting all respondents in Scotland, the parameter estimates for British national sentiment are unchanged. British national sentiment therefore plays a role of a similar size in English Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democratic politics as it does north of the border. (Of course the total impact of national sentiment will be much greater north of the border because of the substantial role of the SNP.)

Another possibility is that the context of the European elections in 1994 heightened the salience of British sovereignty as an issue and hence of national sentiment as an explanatory variable. Are the results which we have documented so far specific to the context of the European elections? Clearly we shall need to replicate the analysis in a different context in order to be sure, but one preliminary test we can carry out is to use our 1994 measures of the three value scales to predict voting in the subsequent, 1997, general election. This is a rather severe test of our scales given the three-year interval between our measures of the predictor and response variables. The results are shown in Table 7. The explanatory power of our models in Table 7 is somewhat reduced from those in Table 6, no doubt because we are predicting behaviour three years' later. Thus the percentage of cases correctly classified falls, in the case of the

[25] The figures in the final row of Table 6 represent the change in the log-likelihood obtained when the national sentiment scale is added to the model which contains the other two scales. It can be thought of as showing the unique contribution of national sentiment to the fit of the model. The change in log-likelihood is distributed approximately as chi-square, when the sample size is large, and the level of significance of the change can therefore be ascertained from the usual chi-square tables.

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TABLE 7 *Value Scales and Vote in the 1997 General Election*

	Logistic regression parameters for contrasts with Conservative vote		
	Liberal Democrat	Labour	SNP
Socialist–*laissez-faire*	− 0.64***	− 1.16***	− 0.76***
Libertarian–authoritarian	− 0.32***	− 0.21**	− 0.36*
British national sentiment	− 0.28***	− 0.30***	− 0.46**
% correctly classified	72.1	78.7	79.2
Delta†	13.5***	20.6***	8.5***
N	737	1,129	140

†Delta represents the improvement in fit (− 2 log likelihood) obtained when the British national sentiment scale is added to the model.
Source: BEPS, 1994 and 1997. The SNP figures are based on unweighted comparisons between SNP and Conservative voters in Scotland only. Other figures based on weighted *N*s.
*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$.

Conservative–Labour contrast from 84.3 per cent to 78.7 per cent. There is a corresponding decline in the size of many of the parameter estimates, although the magnitude of the decline is much the same for the British national sentiment scale as it is for the socialist–*laissez faire* scale. Moreover, our measure of British national sentiment still makes a significant contribution to the fit and is still of broadly equivalent magnitude to the libertarian–authoritarian dimension. So even on this rather stringent test the British national sentiment scale passes.

We also need to remember that comparisons between European and general elections are complicated by the much higher level of turnout in the latter than in the former. Thus differences between Tables 6 and 7 may be a result of the differences in the kinds of people who turn out and vote in European and general elections rather than differences in the way the same individual votes in different contexts. Thus if, in Table 7, we restrict our sample to those respondents who actually voted in the 1994 European elections, we find that the parameter estimates for British national sentiment rise to the same level as in Table 6.

CONCLUSIONS

British national sentiment does seem to divide the electorate and to be distinct from the long-standing left–right and libertarian–authoritarian dimensions. While it is correlated with both of these dimensions, and in a sense lies mid-way between them, it cannot be reduced to them and has additional explanatory power of its own. In keeping with its role as the 'official' nationalism of the state, British nationalism has a relatively inclusive character. Its social base is, to some

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considerable extent, the mirror-image of that of Scottish nationalism, to which of course official nationalism, at least under the Conservatives, was directly opposed.

These national sentiments structure attitudes towards more topical political issues in coherent ways, both internal and external. And it proves to be significantly associated with vote, both at the time of the 1994 European elections and at the 1997 general election. To be sure, both these elections may have been somewhat atypical ones where national sentiments played an usually prominent role. Thus in 1994 the 'external' issue of national sovereignty received unusual prominence in the context of the debates over European integration and the Maastricht Treaty, while the role of the Referendum party in the 1997 general election may also have heightened awareness of these issues. The 'internal' issues of devolution for Wales and Scotland may also have played an unusually large role in 1992 given Labour's manifesto commitments to hold referendums on a Welsh Assembly and on a Scottish Parliament.

It might be anticipated, then, that both external and internal issues might in future disappear off the political agenda if these issues of European integration and Scottish and Welsh devolution become consensual ones once again as part of a new constitutional settlement. Alternatively, if further challenges to official nationalism emerge (either from Europe for integration or from Scotland for independence), the political salience of national sentiments might strengthen. The future of the nationalist dimension in British politics is thus likely to have a highly contingent character. We would not wish to claim that British national sentiments will always display the importance we have seen in this article. Rather we might expect them to play an intermittent role – perhaps one of trendless fluctuation – in British politics in contrast to the persisting, and dominant role, of the left–right dimension.

Rather than trendless fluctuation, however, it is possible that British nationalism may already have reached its apogee and be destined for gradual decline in future. The generational basis of British national sentiment suggests that official nationalism, at least in its current form, might have a limited life span as older generations gradually leave the electorate and are replaced by younger, more internationalist cohorts. Scottish nationalism, given its basis among younger voters, might have a more promising future. But generational change is slow and is liable to be swamped by 'period' effects deriving from specific political contingencies.[26] Moreover, predictions derived from earlier theories of political generations have not always been notably successful.[27]

[26] For a demonstration of the dominance of period effects over generational ones in explaining attitude change, see Anthony Heath and Jean Martin, 'Changing Attitudes Towards Abortion: Life-cycle, Period and Cohort Effects', in B. Taylor and K. Thompson, eds, *Understanding Change in Social Attitudes* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1996), pp. 55–74.

[27] See, for example, Ivor Crewe, 'Do Butler and Stokes Really Explain Political Change in Britain?' *European Journal of Political Research*, 2 (1974), 47–92.

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APPENDIX A: THE PANELS

Our data come from the 1992–97 British Election Panel Study (BEPS). The panel is a follow-up of respondents to the 1992 British and Scottish Election Studies. The panel was interviewed annually up to 1994, and thereafter at six-month intervals up to the time of the general election in 1997. The 1992 survey was carried out by face-to-face interview, as were the 1994 and spring 1995, 1996 and 1997. The autumn 1995 and 1996 waves were conducted by telephone, while the 1993 wave was a postal one.

The original 1992 BES oversampled in Scotland in order to enable a detailed study to be undertaken of Scottish voting behaviour for the Scottish Election Study.[28] A number of additional questions were asked only of respondents resident in Scotland. Where the data are used as a British sample, a weighting factor is used to downweight the Scottish oversample to form a representative British sample.

In the 1992 BES, 3,534 interviews were achieved, a response rate of 73 per cent. Of these original respondents 2,277 participated in the 1994 wave, on which this article is primarily based, and 1,924 in the final wave after the 1997 general election. Every effort has been made to maintain the panel, but clearly it has been subject to attrition and inevitably the attrition has been concentrated in certain groups rather than uniform across all groups.[29]

APPENDIX B: QUESTION WORDING FOR POLICY ITEMS

1992 Interview Questionnaire

32 Which of these statements comes closest to what you yourself feel should be done? If you don't have an opinion just say so.
Britain should keep her own nuclear weapons, independent of other countries
Britain should have nuclear weapons only as part of a Western defence system
Britain should have nothing to do with nuclear weapons under any circumstances

33a Do you think the long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be for it …
… to remain part of the United Kingdom
or, to reunify with the rest of Ireland?

47b And using this card, please say whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements, or say if you are not sure either way …
The government should give more aid to poor countries in Africa and Asia?
[The response codes were Strongly agree/Agree/Not sure either way/Disagree/Strongly disagree]

50e And now I want to ask about some changes that have been happening in Britain over the years. For each one I read out, please use this card to say whether you think it has gone too far or not gone far enough …
Attempts to give equal opportunities to black people and Asians in Britain?
[The response codes were Gone much too far/Gone too far/About right/Not gone far enough/Not gone nearly far enough.]

60a An issue in Scotland is the question of an elected Assembly – a special parliament

[28] Brand, Mitchel and Surridge, 'Social Constituency and Ideological Profile'.

[29] Details of panel attrition, its effect on the representatives of those left in the panel, and measures taken to minimize it, also investigations of whether membership of the panel conditioned respondents into behaving differently than they would otherwise have done, may be found in Bridget Taylor, Anthony Heath and Peter Lynn, 'The British Election Panel Study 1992–95: Response Characteristics and Attrition', CREST Working Paper no. 40 (London and Oxford: Centre for Research into Elections and Social Trends, 1996).

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for Scotland dealing with Scottish affairs. Which of these statements comes closest to your view …

Scotland should become independent, separate from the UK and the European Community

Scotland should become independent, separate from the UK but part of the European Community

Scotland should remain part of the UK but with its own elected Assembly that has some taxation and spending powers or,

there should be no change from the present system

1994 Interview Questionnaire

11 Do you think that Britain's long-term policy should be …
to leave the European Community,
to stay in the EC and try to reduce its powers,
to leave things as they are,
to stay in the EC and try to increase its powers,
or, to work for the formation of a single European government?

38a Some people feel that getting people back to work should be the government's top priority. These people would put themselves in Box A.
Other people feel that keeping prices down should be the government's top priority. These people would put themselves in Box K.
And other people have views somewhere in-between.
Please tick whichever box comes closest to your own views about unemployment and inflation.

39a Some people feel that government should put up taxes a lot and spend much more on health and social services. These people would put themselves in Box A.
Other people feel that government should cut taxes a lot and spend much less on health and social services. These people would put themselves in Box K.
Please tick whichever box comes closest to your own views about taxes and government spending.

40a Some people feel that government should nationalize many more private companies. These people would put themselves in Box A.
Other people feel that government should sell off many more nationalized industries. These people would put themselves in Box K.
Please tick whichever box comes closest to your own views about nationalization and privatization.
[These three items offered respondents eleven boxes labelled A to K.]

1994 Self-Completion Survey

201b Please tick one box for each of these statements, to show how much you agree or disagree with it.
Britain should bring back the death penalty

201c People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences
[The response codes were Strongly agree/Agree/Neither agree nor disagree/Disagree/Strongly disagree/Can't choose.]

Note that the items on European integration, the future of Northern Ireland, nuclear weapons, racial equality, the death penalty and stiffer sentences have been reordered so that high scores represent 'right-wing' answers. In all cases 'Don't knows' have been included with the mid-point, and 'Not answereds' have been excluded.

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