

We have a right to sound government in the national int...

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Yesterday was a surreal day.

Parliament exerted its will on Brexit, under the leadership of failed Labour leadership candidate Yvette Cooper.

And parliament also exerted its will over the intimidation of those who want to remain in the EU, about whose actions the Met appeared indifferent.

Whilst Trump proved that tantrums can close down government, which is something we're close to learning in the UK as well.

None of these things should have been necessary of course. That's why it was surreal.

Labour should have lead the opposition on Brexit. The Met should be concerned about right wing thuggery. And we have a right to expect reason from those in high office. But what should happen and what is happening are not always coinciding right now, which is why predicting anything is exceptionally hard.

The reality is I applaud the cross party consensus that defeated the government yesterday.

And whatever his failings, Bercow (and others) are to be applauded for reminding the police that fascism matters.

But on tantrums, irrationality and false expectations what is there to say when they are all so pervasive in political narrative on both sides of the Atlantic?

I pray for a return to some sanity. Oddly, another attempt to shut down the government did reflect the fact that such sanity does exist. As David Howarth has noted on [The Conversation](#) website, Cooper's was not the only proposed Finance Bill amendment:

More dramatically, New Clause 25, proposed by the Liberal Democrats with the support of the SNP, Plaid Cymru and the Green Party, uses the mechanism of limiting the

government's power to levy income tax and corporation tax (about 38% of government revenue), a power that needs to be renewed every year, to force the government to rule out a no-deal Brexit by default.

At present the government only has the power to levy these taxes until May. This amendment (which will not pass) withdraws that right in the event of no deal, so shutting down a government that would be threatening to shut down the country.

Normally I would doubt the sanity of that. But these are not normal times and I think the smaller parties are right to point this out and declare their wish for sound government in the combined national interest. It seems such a long time since we enjoyed that. And the fact that their amendment will not pass is evidence it will not happen again soon. But one can wish. And ponder on why we reached such an impasse, without the police apparently noticing.