Chapter 6
Pandemic Woes

ABSTRACT

This chapter takes a deep dive into the COVID-19 global pandemic of 2019-2020 and the ways in which this one major issue caused a massive breakdown in cooperation, the global supply chain, and global economics. The pandemic has shed light on the world order to come, and it looks much more transactional than ever before. The chapter also highlights vaccine diplomacy and nationalism.

INTRODUCTION

As has been discussed throughout the previous chapters, as well as in Stacey (2020) regarding the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on the intensification of nationalism across the international community. The coronavirus pandemic (as stated) has had a major impact on the world order, and global alliances (and conflicts); the rapid proliferation of the disease from China to the Western world has upended the traditional, rules-and-institution based system that was made interdependent (socially, politically, and most importantly, economically) via the internet and communicative platforms that developed throughout the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The pandemic has accelerated deglobalization, particularly where it involves global supply chains, availability of protective equipment (including medical quality masks to larger, more immediately necessary items such as ventilators); this insecurity on the global scale has caused a retreat to the national level to provide for citizens – effectively countries are turning to national and local governments for more effective

responses than international or multinational solutions. The COVID crisis has arguably been perceived as the *nail in the coffin* that is the globalized world order; the recovery from the pandemic will be staggered and threatens to pit state actors against each other as in the hegemonic days of yore. The chapter will explore the rising tide of populist nationalism around the world that has led to theories and ideologies associated with de-globalization or the return of political focus to the domestic arena versus focusing on issues of mutual concern (climate change, terrorism, COVID-19).

The pandemic has rocked the international community and caused much turmoil involving economic and political decisions intended to contain the spread of the virus and/or protect citizenries; this has so far impacted the industrialized countries and is just now (2021) starting to make inroads in less industrialized nations, or those that are already adversely impacted by the global recession, natural disasters, and (often) authoritarian politics. The pandemic will be devastating in many developing countries, particularly those with poorly preforming economies pre-pandemic. The COVID outbreak was first recorded on December 27, 2019 when "health officials in Wuhan, China, learned that a novel coronavirus was responsible for a mysterious respiratory illness that proved resistant to anti-flu drugs and which had been observed in patients several weeks prior" (Cimmino, Kroenig, & Pavel, 2020, P. 4). Chinese officials throughout December 2019 and into January 2020 attempted to conceal the outbreak, going as far as admonishing doctors and journalists who made an effort to discuss the virus publically or warn Chinese citizens (Page, Fan, & Khan, 2020). The spread of the virus was swift, moving from China to Vietnam, to Italy and mainland Europe, and by January 13, 2020 to the United States by way of Washington state and a traveler coming back from the Wuhan-region. Although China did institute a lockdown on travel within the country and outside of it, the lockdown order was not implemented before nearly five million people had left Wuhan without being screened for COVID-19 (Cimmino, Kroenig, & Pavel, 2020, P. 4). What followed was the varied national responses, including the complete closure of country's borders, a slowdown or in some cases a halting of commercial enterprises and retailers, and in most places, at least a brief closure of school systems.

Obviously the most impactful of these is the closing of borders to travel but also trade, causing a ripple effect in the global market economy that we have yet to recover from entirely. Cimmino, Kroenig, and Pavel note, "At the start of 2020, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for

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