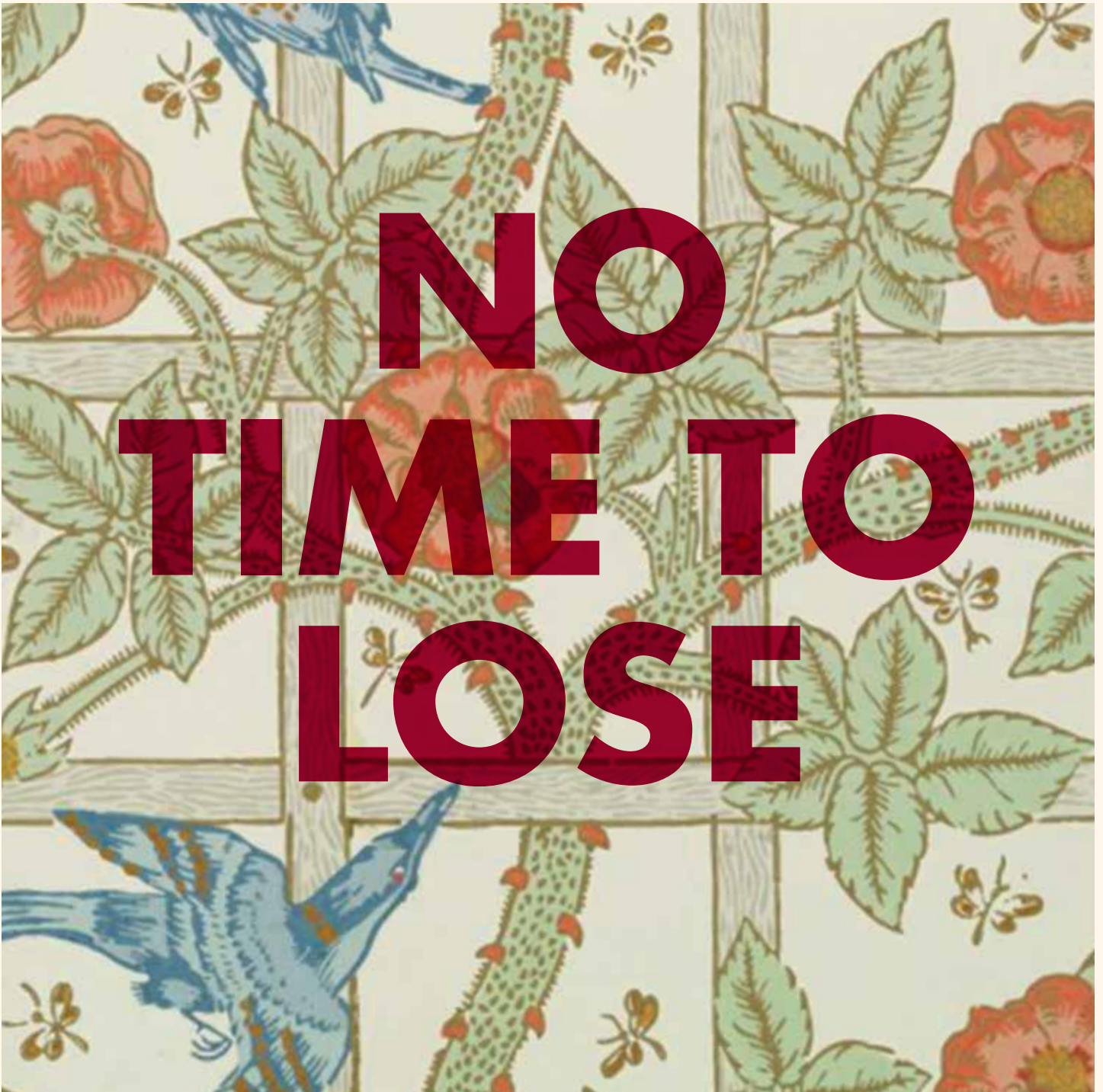


FABIAN REVIEW

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*Why 2014 is the last chance for Labour's radicals, with Emma Burnell, Sunder Katwala and Labour MPs **p8** / Mary Riddell interviews new shadow cabinet star Tristram Hunt **p14** / Stewart Lansley writes that redistribution is not enough **p18** / Colin Crouch explains how Labour can flourish in post-democracy **p22***

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FABIAN REVIEW

Volume 125—No. 4

Leader

Andrew Harrop 2 Small footsteps to big changes

Shortcuts

Dianne Hayter 3 Bringing back socialism?
Nick Butler 3 Labour into power
Diana Johnson 4 Due north
Sean Kippin 5 Reviving reform
Lara Norris 6 Popular politics
Andrea Westall 7 The power of association

Feature

Last chance saloon

John Healey, David Lammy, Lucy Powell, Chi Onwurah, Steve Reed 8 2014, Labour's year of ...
Sunder Katwala 10 Who will speak for England?
Emma Burnell 12 Ever closer union?

Interview

Mary Riddell 14 Class wars

Policy Pitch

Karen Rowlingson 17 A savings safety net

Essay

Stewart Lansley 18 The economic imperative

Feature

Colin Crouch 22 The possibility of post-democracy

Books

Anya Pearson 25 Clean break
26 Fabian Society section

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SOCIETY**

FABIAN REVIEW

Fabian Review is the quarterly journal of the Fabian Society. Like all publications of the Fabian Society, it represents not the collective view of the Society, but only the views of the individual writers. The responsibility of the Society is limited to approving its publications as worthy of consideration within the Labour movement.

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Small footsteps to big changes

Where once the belief in a gradual path to social progress was a cautious doctrine, now it makes Fabians the radicals—*Andrew Harrop*

FABIANISM HAS NEVER been a dogmatic creed, which is why the Society has been able to provide an intellectual home to so many famous political figures since it was founded, 130 years ago this January. But there has been an essence to Fabianism amid its diversity – a constellation of beliefs and an approach to politics – which must be at the heart of Labour politics in 2014 if the party is to embrace a radical governing project.

In the first half of our history the Fabians' defining political project was collectivism: the Society famously championed the guiding hand of a strong, expert state; but also promoted collectivism in the town hall and the workplace. In the second half of our life, from the 1950s, the hallmark of Fabianism has been its egalitarianism: it is Fabian thinkers who have continuously argued that the fight against poverty and inequality is the first duty of Labour politics. These twin interests explain why today we are as robust as ever in challenging all those who call into question egalitarianism or the agency of the state.

But above all Fabian thought has been defined by its orientation to the future. The society is the home of a left version of the Enlightenment tradition which champions social progress, rationality, expertise and evidence. This is reflected in the long-termist slant of our politics: our inclination to begin by asking how the world could look in many decades time and then to work backwards, setting clear goals and seeking practical and specific tools to bring them to realisation.

The Fabian belief in the gradual, long-term path to social progress was once a cautious doctrine, in opposition to revolutionary utopianism. But now it makes us the radicals, in contrast to the left's social conservatives and timid managerialists. Fabian gradualism is distinct,

not because we believe in small footsteps, but because we see them in a strategic context, where many incremental steps can form the road to transformative social and economic change.

This is the perspective Labour must rediscover at the start of 2014, for the time to plan for power is fast running out. In 2013 the party made real progress in defining its 'doorstep' offer. It set out a handful of clear reasons to vote Labour that mark it out from the coalition and which it could start to implement in its first 100 days. But what comes next? Promising to freeze energy bills cannot be seen as the risky outer limit of Labour's economic ambitions, but as a downpayment for five years of reforms to reshape the relationship between government and market.

The same is true across almost every area of policy: Labour needs a radical five year programme of government, because nothing else will be sufficient to bring about the structural reforms we need if Britain is to be a fairer, greener, more prosperous country in 20 years' time. The party must prepare for a huge increase in private and public investment; a five year scheme of total tax reform; much faster progress on decarbonising the economy; the building of millions of new homes; the labour market and social security reforms required to narrow inequalities; and major political reforms to reconnect people with politics.

It won't be possible to govern as radicals if Labour's offer is stripped bare, with nothing beneath a few headline promises on a pledgecard. Nor does any of this fit neatly under the anti-statist banner of Blue Labour, because the left can only bring about deep structural change through strategic, long-term state activism. It is only by re-embracing its Fabian roots that Labour can come to power in 2015 as a government ready to transform Britain. **F**

Shortcuts



BRINGING BACK SOCIALISM?

Today, Labour's democratic socialism means helping those without consumer power get a fairer deal, writes *Dianne Hayter*

I remember, just after Tony Blair was elected leader of the Labour party, hearing of his support for socialism. In fact, he spoke of it as two words: 'social'ism', making the case that Labour's concern was for a better society which we all worked to improve.

For myself, I like the words 'democratic' or 'parliamentary' preceding socialism, as it marks out that changes come with the will of the people, who must be persuaded and vote for the policies we favour in our march towards a fairer, more equal and just society.

Concern by the 'haves' for the 'have nots' is again in vogue, but where I differ from some earlier generations is in defining the 'have nots' in terms of power as well as in their economic relationships. So class, yes, remains important (since that is pre-eminently about power) but so does gender, age, ethnicity – and being a consumer, the purchaser or recipient of goods and services.

This latter has perhaps been less central to the way Labour tells its story, despite a proud record of action. But Ed Miliband's energy price freeze, championing of the rights of energy consumers puts this front and centre of Labour's offer.

Last month, CBI director John Cridland said: "Business is nothing if it doesn't deliver for the consumer. We are the consumer champion." But this assumes business is operating in a competitive market, where consumers can see the value, the price and the utility of what they are buying; that they have real choice, they can shop around, and that any complaint with a product will be rectified.

Sadly this is not the case for millions of consumers, especially where consumers are vulnerable (perhaps housebound with limited choice of suppliers; or in debt and needing a

loan). The disadvantaged are often less able to shop around and are disproportionately hit by big price hikes. For example, poorer households that rely on Economy 7 tariffs, which offer one tariff during the day and cheaper electricity at night, may shortly have to pay up to 35 per cent more for their night-time electricity bills than 13 months ago.

Furthermore, for all consumers many crucial markets are not as competitive as they should be. The Big Six energy companies, retail banks, transport providers – consumers are constrained in exercising choice and switching providers for something better. One only has to think of people seeking to buy or rent in a distorted housing market. House prices have risen nearly 6 per cent in a year, whilst private rents are now excluding all but the very rich from central London. In other markets – with lawyers, or buying pension products – either because the outcomes are long term, or because a client lacks sufficient knowledge in the service being offered, they haven't the information required to shop around.

We remain committed to democracy, and to increasing participation in the democratic process by all – including the Paxmans and Brands, but particularly the young

In all these cases, society must in some way 'stand in the shoes' of consumers, and champion their interest in products of appropriate quality and price.

This aspect of consumer protection is often decried by our opponents as 'red tape' or 'over-regulation', but all markets have rules and these should help those without consumer power get a fairer deal.

We know that healthy, competitive markets work in the interests of the consumer, but in too many sectors this isn't happening. My brand of socialism is about standing up to vested interests and fighting for consumers to prevent rip offs and ensure they get a fair deal. The greater competition which this approach brings is also a good thing for business.

Does this concentration on consumers detract from concern with wage-earners, or the unemployed? To the contrary. Most consumers at greatest disadvantage are

the low paid or those on benefit, so seeing them not simply in their working lives, but as patients, clients, shoppers, passengers, tenants or savers, and protecting their interests, helps exactly those whose access to a more equal and rewarded life has always been our focus.

So does democratic socialism form a framework for Labour today? Of course. We remain committed to democracy, and to increasing participation in the democratic process by all – including the Paxmans and Brands, but particularly the young.

And we remain determined to shift power and economic strength from vested interests to all citizens. Call it what you will. It's what I stand for. **F**

Dianne Hayter is a Labour peer



LABOUR INTO POWER

Labour will find allies in the civil service if it replaces the current culture of blame with a period of stability and respect, argues *Nick Butler*

After five years of a Tory coalition government one group of people will be particularly glad to see a change in 2015 – professional civil servants. At all levels, from the clerks in benefit offices to the permanent secretaries in Whitehall, they have had enough. This is not because they are partisan, nor simply because of the cuts in services and job numbers experienced in the last three and a half years. Civil servants have their personal views but also have an admirable ability to work for governments of all political shades. In general they have accepted the need for reductions in public spending, even if they dislike the clumsy way in which many of the cuts have been enacted. >>

>> The problem is that respect has been lost and has been replaced on the part of some ministers by a culture of abuse, and a tendency to blame staff for everything which goes wrong regardless of the facts. In a few departments relationships are good. But in major departments such as Work and Pensions, Defence, the Home Office and Education, ministers have come to see civil servants as part of the problem – obstructive to change, lazy and incompetent. These criticisms, which have fed through the media, have been made about staff at all levels but focused particularly on those in the top two or three grades. Since 2010 all but one of the permanent secretaries have left their jobs, often after bitter disputes with their ministers. Another two are now under immediate threat, with one the victim of active negative briefing to the newspapers.

The issue is not limited to permanent secretaries. Over the last year, civil servants have been blamed for the tendering problems over the West Coast mainline railway franchise, the chaos of the Border Authority, the failure of the green deal and the fiasco of welfare reform. In none of these cases has a minister accepted personal responsibility for any part of any of these problems. This political cowardice does much to explain the continuing exodus of some of the best staff.

When Labour returns to power it must change the 'upstairs downstairs' culture promoted by Francis Maude, the civil service minister.

Of course there are weaknesses. Several departments lack key skills. The Treasury staff are too young and too inexperienced in the real world and have made serious mistakes in handling issues such as public expenditure. Significant external recruitment is needed, for instance in managing the financial institutions. Across government generally there are too few people with knowledge of business, as the problems over energy policy show all too clearly. Ministers bear ultimate responsibility for the weakness of relationships with the energy companies, but they do need good policy advice from people with a commercial background if they are to avoid being rolled over by big companies with huge resources.

Overall, however, the positives far outweigh the negatives. The cuts have forced the civil service to slim down and to define its roles more clearly. What the service needs now most of all is respect and a period of stability to work on a programme of more fundamental if gradual change. There are acute pay issues in many departments. For those in the lower grades of the service, with a family living in London is appallingly

expensive. At the mid to higher grade the pay freeze coupled with increased pension contributions have reduced effective take home pay by 15 to 20 per cent. Labour should accept that to retain good people there must be some relaxation of pay constraints.

In general Labour's new ministers will find civil servants intelligent, hardworking and well prepared – in some cases better prepared than they are themselves. In some departments work has already begun on what an incoming Labour government might want to do. The biggest problem is morale, and that can be turned around.

When it comes to policy, civil servants should be challenged and trusted: encouraged to be creative but made to take a suitable share responsibility for the delivery of agreed policies. Individual performance must matter – as it would for anyone working in the private sector. The best civil servants would accept and welcome such a change, particularly if it were matched by an open acceptance of responsibility by ministers.

In the past Labour's relationship with the civil service has been a mixed story. There have been numerous conflicts. No doubt there will be more. But overall Labour will be fortunate to inherit a service which through a period of abuse has managed to maintain its integrity and its values. Used and treated properly they can be great allies in delivering the huge programme of change and reform which is now needed. **F**

Nick Butler is visiting professor and chair of the King's Policy Institute at King's College London



DUE NORTH

London benefitted from massive public and private investment in the 1980s. Now it's the north's turn, writes *Diana Johnson*

In October, many northern citizens were told to pack their bags and move elsewhere for work. This latest call came in *The Economist*, who asserted that "governments should not try to rescue failing towns" such as Hull, Middlesbrough, Burnley and

Hartlepool. Ambitious residents should migrate to more prosperous places.

As reprehensible as this argument is, it expresses one undeniable truth: despite some recovery nationally, after three needless years of flat-lining, swathes of the north remains in recession. All the cities *The Economist* mentions have unemployment above the national average – higher now than in March 2010.

The coalition has used the rhetoric of decentralisation and 'rebalancing the economy' as a smokescreen for cuts to the north

Private sector employment rose by 1.4 per cent in the south east in the second quarter of 2013, but only rose by 0.1 per cent in the rest of England. It declined by 0.6 per cent in the north west. Britain needs a balanced recovery across all regions. Halving the output gap between the north and the national average would increase Britain's output by £41bn – not an insignificant contribution to deficit reduction.

I see the economic damage in Hull. With thousands of private and public sector jobs gone, we have more people not in education, employment or training – so called 'needs' – busy food banks and loan sharks occupying empty shops.

Britain wasn't always like this. Northern manufacturing powered Britain through the industrial revolution. By the 1970s, London had declined and for a time was poorer than the rest of the country, with the closing of east London's docks a classic example.

Rather than pursuing free market neglect and abandonment, in 1980 Michael Heseltine started 30 years of London Docklands regeneration, primed by massive and continuing public and private investment. Hull, facing similar decline in traditional marine industries, wasn't so blessed. Contrary to *Economist* remarks about northern towns being "propped up on piles of public money", Greater London has had a fatter slice of public investment and more political weight put behind attracting private investment than the north.

Even without northern migrants, London and the south east are already overcrowded, with unaffordable housing and a creaking transport network. A southern recovery based on financial services, private consumer debt and a new property bubble will not last.

We currently have the bizarre situation where those caught out by the lack of affordable housing and benefit cuts in the

south east are encouraged to move north for cheaper housing, while those in the north struggling with the lack of jobs are told to move south for work.

We need only look to the continent to find a positive alternative vision for our northern cities. Dresden, for example – formerly the eastern ‘sick man’ of a reunified Germany – grew faster than most other European cities in the early-2000s by creating a bustling technological sector: ‘silicon Saxony’. Although the remedies used in such areas are as diverse as the cities themselves, one common thread runs through all success stories: giving local authorities the power and money to pioneer their local solutions for local circumstances

The coalition has deployed localist rhetoric on regeneration, but it’s uncertain whether the reality will be more localist than 1980s Tory governments, and their urban development corporations.

Labour should delegate more powers to local authorities, particularly in employment and training, which is better delivered at a lower level. Labour councils such as Newham have worked with businesses and the unemployed to match workers to jobs, boosting local job acceptances from 2 per cent to 80 per cent.

By opting schools out of council control en masse, the coalition’s education policy undermines the successes of councils like Camden in bringing educators and employers together. Newcastle’s alternative co-operative schools model could trigger a skills revolution in the way our young people are prepared for work. Giving local schools and universities places in local enterprise partnerships, and businesspeople positions in school governors’ boards, is also essential.

Finally, we should enhance councils’ borrowing powers further and back calls for a regional investment bank, possibly financed through a one-off levy on commercial banks.

However, devolving power – not just blame – is only effective in regenerating cities like Hull if coupled with a strong central government commitment to reducing regional inequalities. The coalition has used the rhetoric of decentralisation and ‘rebalancing the economy’ as a smokescreen for cuts to the north. Hull’s recent success in being named 2017 City of Culture is a welcome move, but Rotterdam’s Kop Van Zuid – a similarly neglected port area – required solid funding commitments to transform itself into a ‘Manhattan on the Maas’. In the cities the *Economist* mentioned, local authority spending cuts range from £184 to £268 per head between 2010 and 2015 – well above the national average of £125.

In the digital age the case for so many industries clustering in the south east is less compelling than in the past. The north is well-placed to be a hub for many sunrise industries, with sufficient long-term government backing.

In 1997 Labour started to rekindle growth in northern cities. We must continue where we left off. Free market neglect has been tried in the north. We now need ‘one nation’ regeneration. **F**

Diana Johnson is Labour MP for Hull North



REVIVING REFORM

Despite current antipathy towards political reform, the country’s deep cynicism about politics and politicians requires a serious response, argues *Sean Kippin*

The prospects for fundamental reform of our political and constitutional arrangements are at a low ebb. After the defeat of the AV referendum and the collapse of Lords reform, most frontline political actors on the centre-left have accepted that the time is not right to revisit an unfashionable agenda and spend valuable political capital pushing for change that may not be realised.

In my view, this is to misread the situation. The next Labour government has an opportunity to meaningfully change the way politics works, and to usher in the ‘new politics’ that the coalition promised but failed to deliver. What’s more, any political project premised on the transformative ability of the state must include a recognition of the importance of political legitimacy.

For starters, Labour should keep alive those elements of the existing political reform agenda which could make a positive difference to the way our political and legislative processes work. The supplementary vote, for example, offers a logical and modest route forward for at least local elections. And although recent reforms have failed and restarting the process will be difficult, the House of Lords should be 100 per cent

elected, with experts brought into the legislative process in more imaginative ways than offering them seats in our legislature for life.

But the arguments for these changes are well rehearsed. Labour should look at less obvious ways of improving voter engagement and, critically, arresting the long-term downward trend in voter turnout.

We should explore new ways to hold corporate power to account, particularly given the transfer of power from democratically-elected politicians to unaccountable private bureaucracies

Firstly, the party should revisit the issue of boundary changes. By aborting the Tories’ partisan and self-interested attempts at reform, the party gained an electoral boost. But while nobody struck upon a compelling case for reducing the number of MPs outside of the Conservative party, it was difficult to find opponents, at least in principle, to parliamentary seats being the same ‘size’, particularly given the distorting impact of the first past the post electoral system. Labour should legislate to ensure that seat distribution is tied to the best estimate of the number of people living there, rather than those registered to vote. This would better reflect the fact that MPs are required to represent their constituents whether they are registered or not.

Secondly, Labour should look at new and innovative ways to increase registration and participation. Siobhan McDonagh’s private members’ bill to require benefit claimants to register to vote was seen in some quarters as illiberal, but it has the beginnings of a good idea. However, rather than focussing exclusively on benefits, this approach should be broadened to the receipt of services from local authorities, including registering to pay council tax. This would boost registration in areas that suffer from historically poor levels of political involvement.

Thirdly, Labour must look at making it easier to vote. While the country probably isn’t ready yet for online voting, a Labour government could look into the practicalities, and thrash out the conditions under which the integrity of voting could be guaranteed under such a system. Elections should also be held on weekends, over two or three days. Additionally, allowing young people to vote at school and universities, and older people to do so in care homes and hospitals could also help increase turnout. The current system is woefully inadequate >>

>> and exclusionary and there is a democratic imperative to broaden the availability of voting. This would see turnout increase, and reduce the calls for compulsory voting, which should be treated as a nuclear option to be explored only when all else has failed.

These changes would not represent the end goal of political reform, far from it. But they are also, in the main, achievable and progressive. However, Labour must also offer a programme for citizenship which goes beyond the political and embraces a level of involvement in the economy through the growth of the co-operative sector and the construction of an economy which gives everyone a meaningful stake in society. We should explore new ways to hold corporate power to account, particularly given the transfer of power from democratically-elected politicians to unaccountable private bureaucracies, and look seriously at the environmental citizenship movement.

Political reform is not glamorous, but it is important: the notion that the public's dissatisfaction with politics is unrelated to our crumbling political institutions is fanciful. Labour has an opportunity to empower the disenfranchised, reimagine our political institutions for this century and gain a meaningful political advantage from doing so. It should be grasped. **F**

Sean Kippin is managing editor of Democratic Audit. He writes in a personal capacity



POPULAR POLITICS

The public haven't lost faith in politics because there is something wrong with the public, writes *Lara Norris*

"Look love, you seem nice but why should I vote for any of you? What's the point?"

And therein lies the challenge of 2014. To shrug this off as apathy is to not only misunderstand the situation, but to be complicit in making it worse.

It is not that the woman who spoke these words doesn't care about her home, her



© Adrian Scottow

family, her job. She just doesn't see the link between her life and politics anymore.

To be honest, six or seven years ago neither did I. And yet in January 2013, I became Labour's parliamentary candidate for Great Yarmouth. In the 2013 county elections, though Labour made gains, the overall winners were UKIP. Despite barely delivering a leaflet or knocking a door, their message resonated with people. And I understand why.

With Labour working hard in every community there is no room for UKIP and those parties who would feed on people's discontent and fear

I spent some time campaigning recently against the privatisation of Royal Mail. I found myself at the business end of a megaphone for the first time. I shouted that people were getting a terrible deal – they were about to buy shares in a company that they already owned.

But a similar message needs to be shouted about people's vote. The power is already in their hands to change the world. The problem with the political system is not the system itself but the fact that somehow the population has been convinced that they don't own it. UKIP are simply offering their version of shares in the UK. Shares that every voter already owns.

So what is the solution? Simple: hard work, grassroots campaigning and a big dose of reality. It is time to put people back into politics.

I know, we all want the miracle diet, the get rich quick answer. But looking at the results of the council elections, the areas where there was sustained hard work and good community engagement went hand in hand with positive election results.

More importantly, we need to look at this again from the right perspective. The public

haven't lost faith because there is something wrong with the public. People have lost faith because there is something fundamentally wrong with the way that politics has played out over recent years.

We all joined the Labour party to change the world so we need to refocus on that goal. We need to stop looking at winning elections as being the only point of a campaign and fight for the right thing. Even the language that we use is often that of competition instead of compassion. Is it any wonder that the average voter doesn't feel able to connect? When someone tells us that they don't like what we say, let's stop ignoring them as dissenters and really listen.

The best news is that the process of better politics has already started. While David Cameron hired spin doctors and media experts to continue down the road of shadow puppet politics, Ed Miliband made a commitment to people in his relationship with Arnie Graf, the US community organising guru who is revolutionising Labour's approach to campaigning. All over the UK in places like Great Yarmouth the Labour party is starting to show that politics is about people. Community campaigns driven by local residents allow those who felt removed from politics to once again become involved in local politics. With Labour working hard in every community there is no room for UKIP and those parties who would feed on people's discontent and fear.

And as for the woman who asked me the question, her name is Jennifer, her house was riddled with damp and she felt powerless. She now has the repairs made that she needed and knows that her local Labour party are there all year, not just for elections. She is a grandmother who voted for the first time this year, and she voted Labour. **F**

Lara Norris is prospective parliamentary candidate for Great Yarmouth



THE POWER OF ASSOCIATION

Andrea Westall argues Labour's policy agenda still feels a long way off being truly transformative

Labour's focus for 2014 is understandably on developing clear manifesto policies to realise its 'one nation' ambitions in the economy and society. But will they add up to truly transformative and long-term shifts? Labour is clearly moving towards a more local, broad-based model of organising and action. However, policy ideas still tend to support the individual (or the individual business). The idea of economic democracy seems so far limited to workers on remuneration committees in large corporates, and organising effectively for the living wage.

In 2011 I edited an e-book – *Revisiting Associative Democracy*. It combined the thoughts of a diverse group of people on the contemporary relevance of Paul Hirst's mid-90s ideas on associational democracy – itself a long established, albeit relatively submerged, strand of socialist history and thinking.

Hirst argued that more associational democracy (simply, people organised voluntarily into groups), and widely distributed multi-stakeholder decision making, could help rebalance an overly centralised state and curb the dominance of big business. We used these thoughts as a springboard to discuss and debate ideas for a more personalised and collaborative welfare system; resilient, diverse and human economies; and ways to rethink participation and democracy. We did not agree with everything, seeing, for example, an excessive use of voluntary association in welfare and public services (for example, primary schools) as making it hard to build a common life, or enable truly democratic citizenship.

This was all before the discussions of Blue Labour, co-operative councils and

the call for 'one nation' started to embrace community power. In fact, some of the contributors to the edited e-book were part of those developments.

So what might still be useful in ensuring the next Labour manifesto can create truly 'transformatory' change?

What about also considering, for example, the relevance of this approach to SMEs and, in particular, the roughly 14 per cent of working people classified as self-employed in their main job, along with an unclear number of often vulnerable and quasi-self-employed? It's not just about regional banking. How can organising together, particularly where there is no union, support more secure lives? Perhaps pooling together to create more affordable childcare, sharing resources or creating collective buying power to reduce costs. Peer support and collaboration can also increase innovation, voice and power, or reduce isolation. There are lots of examples (for example, of co-working spaces) but it's not happening everywhere, or for everyone.

Networks of international cities are moving faster on sustainable change than central government policy or UN decision-making processes

Robin Murray wrote in *Revisiting Associative Democracy*, and has further developed these ideas elsewhere, that local economies could be more resilient, productive and human through "distributed systems of organisation, with complex webs of collaboration", still competitive and enabled further through digital networks. The successful example of federated co-operative structures of Mondragon in Spain, with intermediary organisations providing relevant training and co-ordination, were part of similar discussions by Labour policymakers and Paul Hirst in the mid-90s but dismissed as communitarian and 'exceptional'.

Labour's role in animating cross-sector partnerships, creatively using local assets, or encouraging economic organising, could demonstrate its practical relevance, particularly where there are relatively high proportions of SMEs and the self-employed, such as in some rural and coastal areas. Some northern councils, such as Bolton, are just getting

on with a more collaborative approach to economic change.

Another useful insight could be the importance Hirst placed on widely distributed and networked social and economic governance. This creates ways to address complex and interrelated issues through multi-stakeholder negotiation, but with coordination and appropriate forms of regulation between multiple spatial and vertical levels (for example industrial sectors).

This obviously doesn't fit neatly or simply on an A5 campaigning leaflet, but this scale of thinking and action is increasingly necessary. How else are we going to be able to manage complex and multi-faceted problems such as affordable and sustainable energy? Networks of international cities are moving faster on sustainable change than central government policy or UN decision-making processes. Price controls of the type announced by Ed Miliband are clearly not enough to shift a market on their own. These are huge system shifts that need coordination and leadership, alongside robust negotiation by all relevant stakeholders, whilst ensuring that the needs of those with the least power and influence are included. Our current governance and democratic models or policy instruments seem inadequate to cope.

And how do we embed the needs of future citizens or the unrepresented environment? At a local level, Ian Christie suggested in *Revisiting Associative Democracy* institutionalising the longer-term and cross-cutting issues through, for example, creating second chambers in local government to engage people, businesses and associations beyond electoral cycles.

And at sector level, Penny Newman argued for more cross-cutting professional peer groups in the finance sector, to scrutinise each other, create standards and increase responsibility (including say public interest representatives to prevent group-think and self-preservation). Maurice Glasman talked similarly about vocational associations providing points of anchor and continuity in people's changing lives.

A bit more to do then... **F**

Andrea Westall edited Re-visiting Associative Democracy, published as an e-book by Lawrence and Wishart, and is a trustee of the Foundation for Democracy and Sustainable Development

Last chance saloon

The final countdown to the general election has begun and in 2014 the politically era-defining events come thick and fast. The Scottish independence referendum, European and local elections, the special conference on party reform, and the last party conference before the general election, will all test Labour's mettle.

But still the party remains unsure of its narrative for the general election. The internal political agenda is contested by those who want a safety-first election – to 'shrink the offer' – and those who want to put a bolder pitch to the British people in 18 months' time. For the radicals, 2014 is the last chance to define Labour's message for the electorate.

Over the next six pages, Labour MPs tell us what they think the party should focus on in 2014; Sunder Katwala makes the case for answering the English question; and Emma Burnell explains how Labour can navigate the process of reforming its relationship with the trade unions.

2014, Labour's year of...



... Public enterprise

Read the full article: http://bit.ly/Fabian_Healey

Recent polls suggest that over two-thirds of the public want to see large sections of the economy that are currently privately run brought into public hands – 70 per cent of the public want to see the railways renationalised, 71 per cent want water to be publically owned and 69 per cent the energy companies. The searing shock of the global financial crisis and the continuing struggle to meet rising costs of living has fuelled people's sense of systemic failure.

The right Labour response to this isn't a 1945-style programme to control the 'commanding heights' of the economy but to consider redefining public ownership; a new 'third way' on public action in a market economy. We can call it competitive public enterprise. The core insight of this approach is the state providing services as a competitive comparator or challenger to the private sector, not just as a public monopoly.

The public enterprise could be a comparator like East Coast has been for the rail industry, returning more to the taxpayer than any privately operated train company with less subsidy and record levels of customer satisfaction. Or it could be a public challenger, as set out in my private member's bill on private rented housing, which would enable councils to set up public letting agents, competing with the private sector and driving up standards.

The scope for such public enterprise is wide – from housing developers to business banks to transport and

energy – and it could reshape the way national and local governments act to correct dysfunctional markets and serve consumers.

John Healey is MP for Wentworth & Dearne in South Yorkshire, and an ex-Treasury minister and housing minister



... Youth employment

Read the full article: http://bit.ly/Fabian_Lammy

Our current back to work infrastructure is far from being up to the job. It is a mechanism that is tired, clunking, and poorly placed to meet the changing needs not only of young people – one in five of whom are unemployed – but of those who seek to employ them. The job centre's jargon of 'sanctions' and 'outcomes', its new carpets and its touch screen computers cannot mask the fact that it is a system which was established over 100 years ago that has failed to keep pace with our changing economy.

We must challenge the logic of herding our young people into high street holding pens in the hope of employment, rather than colleges and the community institutions. If prisons are schools for crime, then job centres are schools for unemployment, treating young people as claimants to be processed. Let's stop sending our young people to high street hubs that have become benefit centres rather than job centres.

Let's abolish job centre services for young people, and let those organisations that already work successfully with

young people get on with it. Where they are doing a good job, let them spread good practice – where they are not, let others take over. Skills, experience and relationships with employers are to be found in FE colleges, in work places, in community institutions. Let us allow those organisations that excel in working with young people to replace the current system that cannot meet their needs.

David Lammy is MP for Tottenham



... Childcare

Read the full article: http://bit.ly/Fabian_Powell

It should still be seen as a scar on our country that we have some of the lowest levels of maternal employment in the OECD. Mums, and it is still mainly mums, are stuck at home, priced out of the labour market by sky-high childcare costs. And we also know that by the age of three there are already huge developmental inequalities in children.

These problems are clear drivers for ambitious Labour policies in 2014. Labour's extension of the free childcare offer for three and four year olds from 15 to 25 hours for working parents, worth £1500 per child, will make real inroads to tackling this government's childcare crunch of rising prices, falling early years places and cuts to financial support. Our primary childcare guarantee would help working parents manage the logistical nightmare of before and after school care that many face.

These two policies are a sign of the importance Labour places on childcare but there is still much to do. Pushing the economic case for better childcare will be a central part of my campaigning in 2014. Getting childcare right will empower families to make informed choices about work and family life and boost tax receipts. Too many women leave the labour market when they have a child only to return on a lower wage later in life. If women are to keep their earning potential and status we need to think about developing a childcare system that places the views and choices of parents at the heart.

Lucy Powell is MP for Manchester Central and shadow minister for childcare and children



... Digital government

Read the full article: http://bit.ly/Fabian_Onwurah

Labour has traditionally been tech friendly, but we are not even beginning to reap the positive benefits of the way in which technology can change our public services. The internet and big data should lead to more direct, horizontal relationships that enable individuals to redress the balance of power with governments, big companies and institutions.

The possibilities are infinite. In Newcastle we have just finished piloting Chain Reaction, an adult social care programme in which personal budgets are used not for individualised day care but shared activities – like a group trip to the cinema – co-producing care based on sharing preferences and capabilities.

Right now, though, most people are experiencing what I call digital discomfort – about prying security services,

Amazon telling us what we should be buying, our children being exposed to online porn, Google recording our every move, or simply the onslaught of spam. Among my constituents, the fear of big data far outstrips understanding of the opportunities of open data.

So digital government must come with digital inclusion. 80 per cent of government interactions with the public take place with the bottom 25 per cent of society but only 15 per cent of people living in deprived areas have used a government online service or website in the last year, compared to 55 per cent nationally. This year Labour must establish the principles by which digital government should operate. That's why I will be leading a digital government review. Used properly, with proper concern for privacy, transparency and service design technology can be a powerful tool to reshape how government and citizens interact with each other.

Chi Onwurah is MP for Newcastle Central and a shadow business minister



... Transforming public services

Read the full article: http://bit.ly/Fabian_Reed

In 2014 Labour will need to explain how we will run public services when there's less money around.

First, we must reject the Tory approach of using it as an excuse to introduce permanent austerity. Instead, Labour must do better for less by transforming services so that existing resources are used more effectively. We must show that our approach to public services is about ensuring everyone has a stake. That means enabling people to come together to shape their own services, and ensuring public services are more directly accountable to the people who use them.

Many people living on social housing estates are deeply frustrated that they are forced to live in circumstances decided by their local housing managers over whom they have little, if any, control. But that can change. Where housing estates have become tenant-managed, crime rates and services often improve dramatically. Brixton's Blenheim Gardens Estate used to be a place that people were keen to move away from. Today it is a place where people are proud to live. The reason? The housing managers are employed by, and accountable to, a board elected annually by the people who live there.

Labour should focus on plans to reshape the state around citizens. This is revolutionary because it involves putting service-users in the driving seat, rather than trying to micromanage services from Whitehall. That's no easy thing. But do it we must, because Britain needs a credible answer to how we reform public services to do better for less.

Steve Reed is MP for Croydon North and is a shadow home office minister

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Who will speak for England?

However Scotland votes in its referendum, 2014 will be the year when politicians are finally forced to join in the conversation about Englishness. They need to work out what it is they want to say, writes *Sunder Katwala*



Sunder Katwala is director of British Future

2014 WILL BE a year when identity matters. The solemn commemoration of the first world war centenary will be a reminder of much shared British history, for good or ill. The immediate decision as to whether Britons will have a shared future too is for the Scots to make, when they vote in September on whether to end or mend three centuries of political union. Scotland's referendum will also, inevitably, make this the year in which we finally get around to talking about England.

There are, as yet, few signs of the English doing anything much to prepare for any fallout from Scotland's vote. The referendum dominates public life north of the border; many in England, Wales and Northern Ireland won't notice it is happening until next summer. Would a Scottish 'yes' vote be greeted with a shrug of the shoulders, or might the psychological reverberations, whether traumatic or liberating, go rather deeper? The absence of attention makes it hard to be sure. Little thought has been given to even the most basic of symbolic questions. We probably wouldn't bother to take the blue out of the Union Jack (for auld lang syne, and the so-called 'social union' too). But if Scotland voted to exit, what would the 'rest of the United Kingdom', the country formerly known as Great Britain and Northern Ireland, be called afterwards? (Little Britain, anyone?).

A Scottish 'no' vote remains the more likely scenario. This would probably also see a further renegotiation of devolved

powers, and rebalancing of identities, within the multinational UK. Scots alone will decide on independence, but the devolution settlement cannot be rewritten unilaterally. No further round of deeper Scottish devolution will prove possible without addressing the English question seriously for the first time.

That political reality is reinforced by the evidence of rising English identity. In the census, 70 per cent in England identified themselves as English, and only 29 per cent as British. Several studies show most people do hold both identities, but are now twice as likely to say that they are 'more English than British' than the other way around. This has sparked a good deal of talk about the need to talk about Englishness. Yet it never quite seems to happen.

David Cameron had a Democracy Commission, in opposition, to address the 'West Lothian Question' but its 'English votes for English laws' proposals remain in the 'too difficult to think about' box. Cameron does make a point, as prime minister, of flying the St George's flag from number 10 Downing Street on April 23rd.

Ed Miliband has given one keynote speech about Englishness, 18 months ago. The morning after the four day Jubilee weekend, he observed that those Union Jacks which had fluttered proudly in the rain would soon give way to St George's flags for the Euro 2012 football tournament. Miliband said that he wanted to develop a 'progressive

patriotism' comfortable with this pluralism. Explaining what that might mean may well fall to Jon Cruddas, who has long been the obvious Labour voice to speak to England. The party's policy coordinator has been saying that he "gets" Englishness for a few years now, and often worries aloud about whether his party will get it too. He has even encouraged a small cult of George Lansbury, Attlee's somewhat deservedly forgotten predecessor, who once penned a 1930s tome called 'My England'. Cruddas has said his own quest will be "Less *The Spirit Level*, more 'what is England'" but has given few further clues as to whatever may be bubbling away in the slow pressure cooker of his policy review.

Only very close observers of the Westminster village could so far have picked up these whispers that the party leaders think Englishness is going to matter.

Why has the Englishness debate stalled politically? Partly unfamiliarity, having not talked about England because Englishness and Britishness were not talked about for so long. Secondly, anxiety about the unpredictable consequences of embarking on a journey with no fixed destination, which means that England has remained the hole in the Polo mint of Britain's asymmetric multi-national politics. But, thirdly, there is still some foundational uncertainty and confusion as to what the English question is really all about.

David Cameron and Ed Miliband have become stuck in no man's land. They are aware that the Scottish vote will finally force the identity question, yet they are again now muted by the fear that addressing it before the referendum will position them as 'too English'. Yet public opinion in Scotland has no issue with England finding its voice too. Voices from outside of England – most notably Welsh first minister Carwyn Jones – have called for a pan-British debate, in which someone would have to turn up and speak for England.

The British party leaders' dilemma shows that there should be a senior politician to do just that: a secretary of state (and their shadow) with a specific brief to speak for England. This might help to remedy the political neglect that England has suffered: as John Denham has often pointed out, the parties issue Scottish and Welsh manifestos but leave England in a vacuum. The appointment could give fresh impetus to the debate about Englishness, while giving someone responsibility for chairing it and finding out the answers.

Before they do that, however, they may first have to work out what the question is. A brief tour of England's pubs and water coolers will find few raging debates about the correct constitutional settlement to answer the issue of West Lothian. This is not one for the wonks. The pet schemes of the major parties – regional assemblies, elected mayors, PR-elected second chambers – have been greeted with a mixture of apathy and rejection. The campaign for an English parliament cannot claim to have caught fire either. Instead of seeking a neat policy fix, we must instead recognise that the emerging politics of Englishness is first of all about cultural recognition.

**A brief tour of England's
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The cultural politics of Englishness are not primarily driven by devolution. As Lord Ashcroft's study of UKIP has persuasively shown, support for the eurosceptic party draws on a much broader and often inchoate set of cultural dislocations – 'you can't fly a flag of St George any more; you can't call Christmas Christmas; you can't wear an England shirt on the bus ... you can't speak up about these things because you'll be called a racist'. Devolution is just one further example of the English not getting a voice.

The association of Englishness with this kind of 'political correctness gone mad' backlash tempts many on the liberal-left to run away from it, fearing that the rise in Englishness marks an appetite for an atavistic retreat from the civic and inclusive Britishness of the Olympic summer of 2012. That is a mistaken instinct. There is no reason why Englishness should be dominated by the politics of grievance, though the refusal to give it a civic voice could see it curdle and sour. Most of those celebrating the Jubilee and the Olympics were English too.

Symbols do matter when it comes to Englishness. Adopting Jerusalem as an English sporting anthem for English teams, so ceasing to appropriate the British anthem even when playing against Scotland or Wales, should work for everyone. So why not celebrate St George's Day properly – and make sure that everybody is invited to the party? St George's Day bank holiday wouldn't just prove those who fear 'not being allowed to be English' wrong; it would offer them a positive Englishness we can all share.

If cultural recognition matters to minorities, why wouldn't it matter to majorities too? This civic, celebratory Englishness already exists, but (surprisingly for those who remember the hooligan era) seems to be practised only during major football tournaments. 2014's World Cup summer will see the St George's flag flown everywhere, to support the civic Englishness of a multi-ethnic team, whose diversity is so routine and commonplace that it is barely noticed.

Support for these simple signals of how England's voice can count would help to open up broader questions about representation and voice. British-wide cultural institutions, from the National Theatre to the BBC, should think about where and when they need a distinctively English dimension, just as parliament itself will need to in any further round of devolution.

But perhaps politicians might engage substantively with the English question more easily once they realise that they don't need to begin the debate with the answer. To find out what the English want, we need to create more cultural and political space for English voices to be heard. What political leaders have seemingly failed to grasp, however, is that the conversation is already bubbling up – but they are not yet part of it. Dodging the question will not be an option. 2014 looks likely to be Britain's year of identity. Our political class will be pitched into a debate about Englishness whether they like it or not. They should start working out what they want to contribute. ■

Ever closer union?

Perhaps the biggest test for Labour in 2014 will be navigating its ambitious party reform agenda. *Emma Burnell* explains how the party can renew its historic relationship with the trade union movement and ensure the people's party and the people's movement continue to represent actual people



Emma Burnell is a Labour blogger and campaigner

THE LABOUR PARTY was formed to be the voice of ordinary working people in parliament; the unions the voice of ordinary working people in the workplace. We have had different challenges through the ages and we have not always acted as best we could when in power or in conflict, but we have always retained those core values.

In September, Ed Miliband put forward a plan to 'mend not end' Labour's relationship with the trade unions, with union members actively opting in to support the party, rather than having to opt out from doing so. The reform process is being led by Lord Collins, a former Labour general secretary, whose proposals will be voted in at a 'special conference', scheduled for March 1st 2014.

It is vital that the Labour party and the Labour movement move forward together, but we can only do so when both parties agree what forward movement looks like. At present, and with time running out, we seem a long way away from that.

Both the unions and the Labour party were formed in a time when rigid hierarchies were the norm. This is a habit that neither has ever lost. Deference lives on in strange ways in organisations whose purpose is to break down the barriers that hold the working classes back. But deference is

gone from almost everywhere else in society and rightly so. The union movement, the Labour party and the monarchy remain – do we really want to be in this odd triumvirate, trying to retain these trappings of the late 19th century? Or do we want to live up to the best of our values and share power internally while fighting for a greater share externally for the vast majority of the British people?

One of the best ways of understanding your own organisation is to see it through the eyes of a stranger. This is why the work Arnie Graf has done in challenging the old Labour shibboleths of branch meeting rules and internal machinations have struck such a great chord. Most of us already knew all this stuff. We've sat through the meetings for long enough. But it took someone from outside to point out the Emperor is stitchless.

Where a workplace is unionised, it is generally the reps who set the tone of membership. I've had great union reps and dreadful ones but this still reinforces a hierarchy that denies the true meaning of 'representative' where power comes up from the bottom. It is equally unclear what would bring someone from a non-organised workplace to join a union.

Union density is in crisis. Non-public sector membership is just 14.4 per cent. We just aren't reaching, supporting,

talking to or fighting for millions of ordinary working people. SMEs account for 99.9 per cent of all private sector businesses in the UK and nearly 60 per cent of private sector employment. These people need and deserve workplace representation, and we need a better way of reaching out to offer that. We cannot allow union representation to be pigeonholed as it is.

Equally, let us not tell ourselves fairy tales about our own past as a party. Our conference has changed to be less democratic, but that does not mean the Labour party was ever a bastion of internal democracy. It was always a system that favoured those who knew the rules of the game.

As Labour became New Labour, the rules were reinterpreted to force control upwards and towards the centre. Branches and CLPs became little more than delivery machines for the messages dictated from on high. I have heard countless examples of ways in which the opinions, policy demands and campaigning needs of ordinary members were side-lined. This reached its peak during the Iraq war, but a great many other areas became unnecessary 'tests of strength' where the leadership sought to prove how strong it was by once again squashing a restless membership. On education, on the health service, on civil liberties and on social housing, the leadership's attitude was that if the membership were unhappy, they were probably doing the right thing.

This can hardly be considered a healthy long-term strategy for any organisation that is so dependent on the money, motivation and good will of its members.

At the same time, the union movement was consolidating from smaller job-based unions to large 'super unions'. While this ensured the strength of those organisations that were left, it increased the hierarchy of the organisations and removed them further from the workplace. Consequently, they are now further from the concerns of their members and further from their members' opinions when it comes to the relationship with the Labour party. In fact, polling has shown that a large majority of Unite members – for example – support the proposals originally mooted by Ed Miliband.

I believe completely in a vibrant and active Labour party and a vibrant and active labour movement. I believe it is really important that they work together. But I do not believe the way either work at the moment is sustainable. I don't see a future in the current models and that scares me. Because I worry that too many vested interests in both movements care less about the future of the movements than ensuring they keep the outdated rules in place that keep their positions safe.

We can't allow that to happen to the Labour party, and we can't allow it to happen to the union movement. Ordinary working people deserve better. Neither movement should exist within its own bubble, looking only to its own ends. We need to build movements that build up the members of those movements.

Power must be devolved from the Labour and union leaderships because this is the only way these movements can survive and grow through a century in which representative

democracy is increasingly being found wanting and power is increasingly being demanded by the people.

But it must also be devolved because it is the right thing to do. If we want to be the party and the movement that give voice to ordinary working people, we need to do so not by speaking for them, but by providing the platforms to amplify their voices. By listening and responding to them. By putting those voices at the heart of our joint mission.

That is what the Collins review must achieve for union members within the Labour party. So what are the practical ideas that could bring this about?

Ultimately, the relationship between Labour and the unions is about values not money. But managing how the money works will guide the way our relationships develop. Because devolving the financial decisions will devolve decision making.

Unions don't get value for money by funding unwieldy air wars at the heart of the Labour machine. They have minimal impact and no

input from the people they are designed to reach or those who have to match the messages on the doorstep.

Their money would be better spent and better understood by working with key constituency Labour parties on equal terms, on individual projects designed to genuinely make an impact to the lives of local union members. Ideally, such projects would be co-produced, with local union members and local Labour party members working together on projects to benefit their communities.

Like Labour's 'campaign, diversity and democracy fund', this could only be drawn on at a local level, but unlike this fund, the decision making from the funders must be made on a regional or sub-regional basis. In this way, decisions will be made by people who have walked down the streets they want to improve, who know the people whose lives will be changed. Decisions made that don't start and end in a financial transaction, but work to develop ongoing and mutually beneficial relationships. As most of the large unions have either a well-established or fast-developing regional framework this should be relatively easy to organise – though eventually, I would prefer the decision making takes place even more locally.

This is the change we need to see both in Labour and in the unions. Devolving funding decisions and the power they carry to local decision makers, and allowing them to use the money in the ways that will best benefit their members locally, will change the way both local Labour parties and unions are run and transform our local relationships from transaction towards interaction. But this must go much wider than simply some structural changes to the Labour party. We must all, union and Labour members – and the thousands of us who are both – embrace this new culture, and throw off what is holding us or our fellow members back.

This is essential. Labour must gain power as a collective and share power by ensuring our leaders give it away. That is our mission for the 21st century. If we shy away from it, we will fail ourselves. But more importantly, we will fail those we seek to represent. For perhaps the last time. ■

If we want to be the party and the movement that give voice to ordinary working people, we need to do so not by speaking for them, but by providing the platforms to amplify their voices

Class wars

Mary Riddell speaks to Tristram Hunt and finds that the Labour party has not only a new shadow education secretary to flesh out the least developed area of Labour's policy prospectus, but a fully signed-up outrider for Milibandism



Mary Riddell is a columnist for the Daily Telegraph

IS THE LABOUR party ready for a leader called Tristram? We may never find out. On the other hand, the unforeseen elevation of Tristram Hunt to shadow education secretary provoked an unusual buzz of speculation. The oracles of the media ruminated on his likely status in a post-Ed world, and *The Spectator* named him Newcomer of the Year, possibly for his achievement in facing up to Michael Gove without being torn limb from patrician limb.

For Hunt, despite possessing an accent, wardrobe and demeanour that would allow him to blend seamlessly into any comprehensive school staff room, is undeniably posh. The son of Lord Hunt of Chesterton, he is an alumnus of University College school, in London's Hampstead, and Trinity College, Cambridge. While such a pedigree is no impediment to high office in any political party, Labour is rarely short of those ready to grumble about perceived elites.

Recently, for example, David Lammy MP was reported as warning that Labour must be more than "the party of Primrose Hill and Parliament Hill." Does Hunt subscribe to the worry that his party is too weighted towards the chattering classes? "Who am I to say anything on that? The

challenge is to have vibrant local parties and to make sure we grow them."

He is, however, eager to play up the less academic side of his clan. "My mother is a retired landscape architect, and my grandfather was an artist. My wife is a textile designer, so there's a strong history and environment which I understand of technical, practical skills and craftsmanship." While Hunt's artisanal roots seem more William Morris than Bill Morris, his attachment to vocational and technical training is at the heart of an education mission that began on the night, some weeks ago, when he received a text from Ed Miliband's office alerting him to a reshuffle the next day.

"I thought: That's nice – that I was enjoying what I was doing but that if something came up, I'd take it. Parliament wasn't sitting, and I turned up in my jeans. Ed seemed a bit surprised, and then my office phoned and said I was scheduled to see him after Rachel Reeves [promoted to shadow work and pensions]. Suddenly it assumed a bit more significance. Ed offered me the job, and I was shocked."

Of all the major policy areas in Miliband's 'one nation' prospectus, education has seemed the least fleshed-out.

Although Hunt is quick to pay tribute to his predecessor, Stephen Twigg, whom he credits with “much of the heavy lifting”, he does not deny that the education debate has been dominated by a secretary of state whom he has called a “zealot”.

“There is a lot of Michael,” he says, adding that “if we’ve lost any ground it is disturbing.” Hunt appears not only to acknowledge that there has been a hole in the policy prospectus but also to diagnose one possible cause. “In education you have a particularly strong voice in the trades union movement. The NUT or NASUWT absolutely have their role, but the debate is often framed with the government on one side and the unions on the other. We need to be in the space of putting out a message and an attractive political prospect around education. On childcare, on the forgotten 50 per cent or on what we want to do about teacher quality, we’re beginning to lay out some of that terrain.”

Would he accept that the line between Labour and the Tories seems blurred, at least to the average voter? Maintaining the drive towards academies and rebranding free schools as ‘parent-led academies’ do not, I suggest, denote a radical departure. Hunt disagrees, citing “clear red and blue water between us”. Or, to continue the aquatic metaphor: “When it comes to schooling, no school is an island.”

In contrast to Gove’s “highly aggressive, investment banker model of schooling in which each school out-advertises each other and tries to compete,” Labour would have “some competition between schools but within a collaborative framework ... and we’d also, where we need new schools, absolutely think about establishing parent-led academies ... Innovation, yes, but with some basic systems of transparency and accountability.”

To improve standards (and no doubt to avoid the problems which have afflicted free schools such as the al-Madinah in Derby) Hunt envisages a middle tier of oversight. Is he not simply building in another layer of expensive bureaucracy? “No, because head teachers [tell us] it’s very good to have an external body or commission or system which forces them to challenge each other and collaborate. We’re not interested in creating bureaucracies for political purposes.”

With David Blunkett, a former education secretary, studying the details of how best to construct bodies suited to different areas, Hunt mentions no plans to remove any powers from local authorities. He does however warn of “the drawbacks of the politicisation that local authorities can have when it comes to education policy ... So there are understandable reservations about previous models, but we don’t want to create a bureaucracy for the sake of it.”

As an academic and a historian, Hunt is drawn from a different milieu than more mechanistically-minded predecessors. Amid the (understandable) focus on structures and the goal of training children for work, should he not also focus on the neglected question of what education is actually for? “You’re absolutely right, and this is something Ed himself is rather passionate about and wants us to work on – which is that the education debate can end up as being all about structures. What do we want the 16 or 18-year-old to come out of school with? What education have they enjoyed; what have they experienced?”

“You can’t give an inch in terms of maths and English, because we know they are fundamental in a devastatingly

competitive world. But are we seeing a steady loss of art and music and creativity in the curriculum when we also know that is one of Britain’s USPs in a globally competitive world. There’s something in our soil and in our cities when it comes to music and literature and art and design.” Challenging as it may be to marry such ephemeral qualities with get-ahead competition, Hunt sees another challenge.

How, he wonders, do you balance “our obsession with benchmarking” with “mindfulness, social skills, emotional intelligence, eloquence, the ability to have a conversation – all these elements which are often created and developed organically in more advantaged communities.” These unquantifiable skills are, as Hunt notes, on the wishlist not of some wistful do-gooder but of the hard-nosed CBI.

Those who tend to lack these skills, along with any academic credentials are the “forgotten 50 per cent” on whom Miliband and Hunt are focused. With the emphasis shifting to the ‘technical baccalaureate’, vocational education and apprenticeships, the spotlight has once again fallen on the poor relations of the system, colleges of further education. Is Labour’s demand that FE teachers should be fully qualified with the minimum of a GCSE in maths and English not a terrible indictment of their current state?

While Hunt points out that you might have “a brilliant plasterer teaching plastering” without any academic qualifications, new recruits will have to hold or acquire a basic qualification. In addition, unnecessary and worthless certificates will be stripped out. “We need to be very strict about schools and colleges selling pupils a pup.”

Unsurprisingly, Hunt’s main criticism of all that ails the education system is directed at Gove, who is “terribly linear and thinks the job is done once you change the name plate on a school.” Even so, he reserves a rebuke for the Labour education policy of the Blair years. “Ed understands, as I do, the value that certain structures can bring to education, but that’s not the be-all and end-all. Where he does make a split from the past – or a growth – is that in 1997 the focus was on standards and expansion of the higher education sector. We all thought the knowledge economy was the answer and that financial services would keep going for ever.

“We did not focus on vocational education and the FE sector to the degree that we should have done. If we want a rebalanced economy and regional growth, we need that [transition]. We weren’t focused on that enough. We got into this myth of being a post-industrial nation, and there wasn’t a powerful enough voice. We got there in 2008 with Peter [Mandelson] and his industrial policy. But from 1997 to 2007, there was a failure to recognise the significance of technical education.”

Hunt has been put on the spot over the education of his own children – a five-year-old son who is in a state primary school and two younger daughters. Jeremy Paxman took some delight in asking him repeatedly whether he would ever send his children to schools with unqualified teachers – a question to which he obtained no definitive response.

“I’m doing my second kid’s application at the moment, and hopefully she’s going to the same school as her brother. They’re going to stay in the state system.” So why didn’t he simply tell Paxman that he wasn’t going to send his children to private schools but that there might be a place in state schools for visiting experts to give the odd lecture without formal teaching qualifications? “Who knows what >>

>> Jeremy would have done with that? His agenda is different. All I'll say is that my children are in the state system, and they're going to stay there."

Since Hunt is listed as a supporter of the cross party group Balanced Migration, where exactly does he stand on an issue with which the Labour leadership is wrestling? "Frank Field, who is the co-chair, shares some of the same concerns. I'm influenced by my time as MP for Stoke-on-Trent. I remember talking to a young, second-generation Pakistani British lad who was concerned about the speed of change in the community as a result of the failure to introduce controlled migration from the EU accession states last time.

"That spoke to me very, very powerfully. So it seems to me that we did want controls...I think the answer is partly on the supply side," he says, citing the Miliband plan to make those who hire foreign workers also take on British apprentices. "We've got to make sure that we're training our young people for jobs [in which they will] succeed [but] the real fear is that we got the numbers wrong last time, the statistics were very poorly produced, and policy flowed from that." Is he in favour of the UK looking again at the free movement of labour within Europe? "I would say that is above my pay grade.

"What we can do in the education sphere is to [show] that there is a growing issue of white British boys not getting the education they want." Several times during our interview, Hunt raises the problems of a group which seems to preoccupy him above all others.

Presumably he seems them as the cohort most failed by a migrant influx? "None of this is to say there isn't more work to do with black Afro-Caribbean boys and in urban areas. But we do know from Alan Milburn's social mobility work and elsewhere that there is a strand of low-attaining, not necessarily poor, boys in suburban coastal districts – you can draw a line from Lincolnshire through Norfolk, Suffolk down to the Kent coastal towns – who are not being challenged or served effectively enough by the education system.

"It doesn't matter that these are white boys. It's not about the colour of their skin. It is a grouping that we know we have an issue with." While London schools have been transformed "and that has particularly impacted on other race communities, we have a problem in other parts of the country that particularly affects white British boys." Since the areas he cites are exactly those of high recent migration, presumably he thinks the two issues are linked?

"Exactly. And that comes back to the supply side. We have to get in there." Hunt declines to say quite how he would intervene, saying "I'll swerve that one" when asked if Labour should curb migrant benefits and charge for NHS services. None the less, his views sound more robust than those of other colleagues lining up to repent Labour's past liberalism on immigration.

Although Hunt, who contrives to be both Blue and Blairite, eludes easy labels, he seems a total convert to Milibandism. Does he see himself as the leader's

intellectual outrider? "It's very, very important that we all [accept] the duty to broaden and deepen the one nation argument. While he cites "Liz Kendall on social care and Stella Creasy on payday lending" as powerful influences, Hunt's scholarship and charm clearly equip him to take on the challenge.

"Ed always says that we either go big or we go home. Ed likes the battle of ideas and an argument about the nature of our political economy. That's why this talk of us just wanting 35 per cent and nipping over the line is really not the ambition I hear coming from Ed." Like the leader, he foresees a dirty election. "How David Cameron marries his vision of himself as a liberal, 'big society' Tory with the barnacle-scraping politics of Lynton Crosby is very hard to see. I think Ed is right to call it now so that people know what sort of politics are being played."

On the other hand, the Arsitotelean politics of virtue, adapted by Miliband with a little help from the Harvard philosopher, Michael Sandel, and others surely sit uneasily with the Falkirk selection process, and Labour's links

to the disgraced former chairman of the Co-op Bank and – for that matter – with Hunt's own recent reavowal of Labour's mutualist, co-operative and associationist roots? Although Hunt does not resile from his faith in the model, he admits that the Co-op debacle "is very, very disheartening to see."

Despite such glitches, he is confident that the Miliband vision of responsible capitalism is sellable on the Stoke-on-Trent doorsteps, where he believes Labour's stance on zero hours contracts, payday loans, immigration and much else will answer the question: why should we vote for you? His great mentor, Lord Mandelson, was more critical, suggesting that the energy price freeze might mark a retrograde step. Would Hunt agree?

"I speak to Peter, as do many people on the frontbench. He is a very valuable figure, and he has his own views as a senior [presence] in the party. There'll be internal criticism, external criticism, conversations with Ed. The great strength of Ed is going beyond some of the tribal yin and yang stuff and using the experience of people like Alastair (Campbell), Alan (Milburn) and Peter."

Hunt, by contrast, is self-deprecating about getting up to speed in his new role. When I press him on what Labour's offer will be on childcare for all under-threes, he says: "I'd be selling you a pup if I told you where we were on that." On the broader themes of Project Ed, he has no hesitation. Asked what policy he would cite to persuade a doubtful constituent to vote Labour, he says: "The jobs guarantee. Smashing the spectre of youth unemployment."

Should Hunt's enthusiasm prove as infectious as he hopes, then the Labour party will be absolved, for the foreseeable future, of wondering whether it is ready to be headed by a Tristram. Does he hope, none the less, one day to lead his party? "I'm so excited by the prospect of Ed Miliband in Number 10 and of being education secretary," he says. "I am focused only on that." ■

There is a strand of low-attaining, not necessarily poor, boys in suburban coastal districts ... who are not being challenged or served effectively enough by the education system

Policy pitch

A savings safety net

People on low incomes should be encouraged and supported if they wish to save, argues *Karen Rowlingson*



Savings provide an important financial cushion to meet unexpected expenses and yet many people in Britain lack even a small safety net of this kind. In 2008/10, nearly a quarter of all households (24.3 per cent) in Britain had negative net financial wealth – higher levels of debt than savings. And a further 28 per cent of the population had some net financial wealth but not very much – less than £5,000. Clearly, it is difficult for many people to build up savings when incomes have been, at best, stagnating and prices have been rising. Nevertheless, government can play a role here as we currently subsidise high income savers, through tax-free Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) but do nothing to help those on the lowest incomes who wish to save. So what can policy do?

The Saving Gateway was a flagship matched-savings scheme designed to encourage and reward people on low incomes to save, but it was scrapped on grounds of cost by the incoming coalition government just months before its planned introduction in 2010. A number of new policy ideas have been proposed in its place, not least the suggestion from IPPR for a new life-course savings account to help people save through easy access to accounts, possibly through supermarkets. The IPPR argued that the government should pay a bonus into accounts on a sliding scale, dependent on the average balance held in the account over the preceding three years. Only four withdrawals a year would be allowed before this bonus is lost, in order to encourage people to retain savings in the account. Funding for the scheme could come from replacing the cash ISA scheme. This is likely to be unpopular with those on middle and high incomes but would rebalance the current incentives to save, which largely miss those on the lowest incomes.

Another option would be to introduce workplace savings schemes with auto-enrolment. For example, when people join an employer, as well as being automatically enrolled into NEST (the National Employment Savings Trust pension scheme), or another form of occupational pension,

they could also be enrolled into a savings scheme. Bonus payments could also be paid for those saving on low earnings. Employers could work in partnership with credit unions to provide the schemes building on the work they currently do. Credit unions have received government funding under the modernisation programme but this is still woefully insufficient given the amount of private sector investment in payday, and other high cost, lending. More financial support to credit unions is therefore essential.

The government also needs to review the way that entitlement to some social security benefits is reduced if people have savings over a certain amount. This effectively penalises those who have saved and these means tests are currently being extended to many of those in work as they move from tax credits to Universal Credit.

The financial services sector could also play a role here with innovative products such as Lloyds and TSB's 'Save the Change' facility. This is designed to overcome inertia around saving because every time someone uses their debit card the amount spent is rounded up and the difference is transferred to a savings account. Savings accounts could be (and many are) designed to make access more difficult though not impossible (for example 48 hour notice, withdrawals made in person). This reduces the chance that sav-

ings will be drawn on too easily. Accounts could also be specifically geared towards saving for a particular purpose, for example 'car accounts' with incentives such as offer of free breakdown cover. And other incentives might be product tie-ins, discount vouchers or prize-based savings accounts.

People on low incomes should be encouraged and supported if they wish to save. There are, however, two underlying barriers here. The first barrier is the low level of incomes that many people have to struggle on to make ends meet. Savings policies won't tackle those problems and so broader policies to increase incomes at the bottom, and middle, are essential. The second barrier is the lack of support for savings from the government and financial services sector. This is partly due to ambivalence about saving – the government wants consumption to fuel the recovery. And the industry makes more money from loans than savings. Furthermore, interest rates are incredibly low so it does not make as much sense for people to save as it would with higher rates. One suggestion to tackle this is to establish a not-for-profit organisation to represent the interests of savers, as recommended in the University of Birmingham's recent report on the distribution of wealth. A portion of the fees that savers pay to the financial services industry already fund trade bodies and regulators. If some of these fees could be directed to an organisation to represent savers it might be able to challenge some of the long-standing market imperfections in the industry, not least the high fees and low levels of service which seem unlikely to represent genuine competitive market clearing levels.

Saving is extremely difficult for people on middle and low incomes but many wish to do so. There is a role for government in not just addressing the wider living standards crisis that makes saving such a struggle, but developing policies that make it easier to put money aside for when we really need it. **F**

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The economic imperative

There is now a growing consensus that economies built around poverty wages and huge corporate surpluses are unsustainable. *Stewart Lansley* outlines a new economic model that shares the cake more equally



Stewart Lansley is a visiting fellow at Bristol University and the author of The Cost of Inequality and with Howard Reed, How to Boost the Wage Share

AS THE GENERAL election creeps into view, focusing Labour minds on how to draw together a wide-ranging policy review into a realistic programme for government, there is a growing debate on the merits of 'predistribution' in tackling inequality. Is it better to aim for reducing the dispersion of market incomes or rely mainly on 'redistribution' through tax and benefits? While the last Labour government introduced the minimum wage, it relied largely on the latter, attempting to soften the impact of markets through a revamped tax credit scheme that boosted the incomes of the lowest paid.

Ed Miliband has signaled his intention to give more weight to predistribution. Others have their doubts. In a recent critique in the IPPR Journal, *Juncture*, the American academic Lane Kenworthy argued that securing a narrower gap in market incomes will be difficult. Instead we will need to continue to rely on redistribution. So is this right? Should the thrust of achieving greater equality come through a boost to redistribution or can we really reshape markets to produce fairer outcomes?

While achieving a more equal share of the cake before tax and benefits requires a diverse range of policies – ones that tackle, for example, the growing educational divide and Britain's failing housing market – the most significant driver of rising inequality over the last three decades has been a process of 'wage compression'. While the share of national output going to profits has been rising, the share going to wages has fallen from an average of around 59 per cent in the two post-war decades to a little over 53 per cent today, with most of this fall concentrated in the lower half of earnings. As a result, the proportion of the UK workforce that is low paid has almost doubled over the last 30 years and now stands at over a fifth. With a large majority of the 580,000 jobs created since 2010 also low paid, the nation's army of low earners has continued to swell through the crisis.

These trends have had profound social and economic effects. They have capped opportunities, boosted in-work poverty and weakened the incentive to work. They have driven up the cost of income support while turning Britain into a leading low-paid economy.

Kenworthy argues that the long squeeze on wages is set to continue: economies like the UK and the US will continue to hemorrhage better-paid manufacturing jobs, union bargaining power will go on declining, and there is limited scope for raising the minimum wage. Because of this, he argues that while there may be some potential for predistribution, most of the strain will have to be borne by 'good old fashioned public insurance' through more generous tax credits.

So how significant is the problem of wage compression and what policy approach would be most effective in tackling it? In 2011/12 aggregate wages across the whole economy stood at £835bn. This is around £85bn less than if the wage share had held its 1979 level. The argument about predistribution is essentially about how much of this £85bn shortfall or 'wage gap' could be restored without a loss of competitiveness or jobs.

A recent study has looked at the potential impact of four predistribution style measures on the wage-gap: a small increase in the minimum wage, a halving of the numbers below the living wage, an extension of collective bargaining

and a significant reduction in unemployment.¹ It found that a modest boost of 40 pence to the minimum wage and policies that halved the numbers earning less than the living wage would raise the wage floor for around 3 million low paid workers. In combination these two measures would add around £4bn to the aggregate wage bill, closing about 4.5 per cent of the wage gap.

A more significant fall in the wage gap and increase in the wage share would require bolder and more controversial policies, notably through a shift in the balance of bargaining power in favour of the workforce. Because of the 'wage premium' associated with collective bargaining, the deliberate erosion of labour's strength since the 1980s has played a big role in wage depression. Indeed, a doubling of the proportion covered by such collective agreements – bringing Britain closer to the European average – would significantly boost wages. Achieving this would require bold measures – such as the reintroduction of wages councils on a sectoral basis to set minimum wages by industry – but it would add an estimated £13bn to the wage pool, and close 16 per cent of the wage gap.

The other most significant measure would be a boost to the level of employment. The average level of unemployment in the UK has been much higher over the last 30 years than in the immediate post-war era. Tight labour markets – with lower low levels of unemployment – are associated with higher wage growth so that a rise in employment would also boost wages, by around £4bn.² Together, these four policies would close around a quarter of the wage gap, adding over £20bn to aggregate wages and boosting pay especially amongst middle and lower earners. Such changes would thus have a noticeable, if modest impact, reversing the 30-year long trend of a shrinking wage share. Going further would require a more active industrial strategy aimed at a long-term rebalancing of the economy towards sectors that can support higher-waged employment and reducing the number of 'bad jobs'.

So just how feasible is such a package? There is no reason why the first two measures – lifting the minimum wage and reducing the proportion below the living wage – could not be implemented. The increase in the minimum wage would merely restore its real level to that of 2008 with minimal effect on jobs. A phased move on the living wage could be achieved without significant job losses or increased costs to firms.³ And the second two, changing the balance of bargaining power in favour of the workforce and the pursuit of lower unemployment, are more difficult but ought to be key elements of a progressive alternative.

These measures would have the important impact of taking some of the pressure off redistributive tax and benefit measures. Indeed, it is arguable that any attempt to achieve extra redistribution through existing mechanisms would face its own set of constraints.

The existing benefit system in the UK does provide a substantial boost to the incomes of those working for low wages, while reducing the inequality of market incomes.⁴ Labour from 1997 embraced a strategy of labour market freedom buttressed by 'stealth redistribution', with a much strengthened system of social protection for those in work. While this helped reduce poverty and raise living standards at the bottom, by 2010 the policy had clearly run out of steam. >>

>> Gradually, Britain's system of income support has come to play a greatly extended role, way beyond its original aims. The need to compensate for the failure to provide decent livelihoods and work for a rising proportion of the workforce has led to a steady rise in the total benefits bill from an average of 8.5 per cent of GDP in the 1970s to an average of 12 per cent over the last 25 years. The aggregate cost of social security is also set to rise over the next few years, despite a number of cuts in benefit levels.

A further constraint is that the cost of social security spending is increasingly born by those whose earnings are not much higher than those in receipt of credits, one of the likely explanations for the apparent hardening of public attitudes towards benefits in recent years. The British tax system shifted from being progressive to regressive during the 1980s, and the burden of welfare spending now falls more heavily on middle than top income groups.

Redistribution from the middle to the bottom is hardly a progressive strategy. Without reforms that tackle the explosion of tax avoidance and create a more progressive tax system, any further hike in the level of wage subsidies would do little to secure redistribution from the top, while risking the further erosion of support for the welfare state.

By subsidising low-paying employers, the tax credit system may encourage lower pay, thus entrenching the problem it is trying to solve. Indeed, it is likely that the removal of measures from the 1980s to maintain pay levels may have encouraged British employers to take us down an economic 'low road' of low pay and productivity.

Others, such as the Harvard political theorist, Roberto Unger, have a more fundamental critique of the emphasis on redistribution. Writing in *Juncture*, he argued that it has diverted attention away from more important goals towards "after-the-fact redistribution and regulation rather than any reshaping of either production or politics. By the terms of that bargain, any attempt to alter fundamentally the productive and political arrangements was abandoned."

So, while reversing wage depression will face a number of hurdles, there are also limits to the potential of traditional redistribution to reduce inequality. And there is also an increasingly powerful political case for tackling low pay at source, with declining living standards set to be a central issue in the 2015 election.

Ed Miliband has been making the running on improving the wage floor. But with relatively few firms signing up to the living wage, and a justifiable reluctance to make the living wage statutory, Miliband has now pledged to give a tax break lasting a year to firms which pay the living wage. He has also asked Alan Buckle – deputy chairman of KPMG – to work with businesses on the detailed implementation of this scheme and on how to encourage greater use of the living wage. The 'make work pay' contracts will aim to raise wages and keep the benefit bill down by a switch from topping up wages via tax credits to improving them at source with employer subsidies, though with the advantage that the tax break will be limited to a year. Once introduced by

firms the presumption is that the policy would stay when the tax break is removed leading to a permanent rise in the wage floor.

But there is a further critical argument in favour of pre-distribution, and that is one of restoring economic sanity. According to economic orthodoxy, the shift from wages to profits over the last 30 years – not just in the UK but in the US and to a lesser extent in other rich nations – should have improved economic health. Instead, it has created a number of highly damaging distortions, fracturing demand, promoting debt-fuelled consumption and raising economic risk. While profits have been booming, the share of GDP going to private investment in the UK has been in steady decline. Because labour is cheap, firms have less incentive

to become more productive, helping to turn the UK into today's low value-added and low-skilled economy.

The evidence is overwhelming: an excessive imbalance between wages and profits breeds fragility and weakens growth. According to the International Labour Organisation, nearly all large economies – including the UK and the US – are 'wage-led' not 'profit-led'. That is, they experience slower growth when an excessive share of output is colonised by profits.

The wage/profit imbalance has, arguably, also prolonged the crisis. While living standards have been falling across rich nations, and wage-based consumption has slumped, corporate profitability has reached new heights. The result is a global economy awash with spare capital. American corporations are sitting on cash reserves of \$1.45tn, the equivalent of a tenth of the American economy, and a sharp rise since 2010. We can add to this the trillions in private accounts owned by the world's billionaires.⁵

In the UK, corporate cash piles and personal fortunes have also climbed to record levels. The world's corporate and personal money mountain – sitting in banks and corporate treasuries – could have been used to launch a sustained recovery, renewing infrastructure and creating jobs. Instead most of it is lying idle – 'dead money' according to Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of England.

The 'distribution question' has long been a central issue of political economy. But even its discussion was dismissed as heresy by the market theorists who dominated economic thinking from the 1980s. "Of the tendencies that are harmful to sound economics, the most poisonous is to focus on questions of distribution", wrote the Chicago economist, Robert E Lucas, Nobel prizewinner and one of the principal architects of the pro-market, self-regulating school, in 2003.⁶

That view is no longer tenable. "I think our eyes have been averted from the capital/labor dimension of inequality", declared another Nobel laureate Paul Krugman in 2011. "It didn't seem crucial back in the 1990s, and not enough people (me included!), have looked up to notice that things have changed."

To correct this imbalance and the distortions it creates requires a new economic model that gradually returns the

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wage share closer to its post-war level with big firms devoting more of their profits to pay. There is now a growing consensus that economies built around poverty wages and huge corporate and private surpluses are unsustainable. In that sense creating a more equal distribution of the cake, before the advent of tax and benefits, is an economic necessity, and one that is being acknowledged even in the most unexpected of quarters.

“Going forward...labour will fight back to take its proper (normal) share of the national cake, squeezing profits on a secular basis” wrote the leading Société Générale financier, Albert Edwards in a note to his clients. Both Christine Lagarde, head of the IMF, and President Obama have signed up to the need to boost wage shares.

Yet despite the developing consensus, the imbalance is getting worse. Where there has been growth, most of the gains have accrued to the top one per cent, while the gap between wage and output growth across rich nations has risen through the crisis.⁷ It is this gap, one which first emerged during the 1980s, that is the primary explanation for falling wage shares and growing surpluses. Kenworthy argues that this 30-year old trend is more likely to be the ‘new normal’ than a temporary aberration. The presumption here is that market activity cannot be shaped by government intervention and that we simply have to live with the outcomes, however shocking, ameliorating their social impact through redistribution as best we can.

On present trends, the next phase of wage growth is likely to be weak with the risk that the wage share continues to shrink. This would mean another hike in the level of inequality. Even at this early stage of recovery the combination of stalled living standards and the growing mountain of idle money in the UK and the US may be quietly sowing the seeds of the next crisis. Although new jobs have been created in some higher paid sectors like business services during the crisis years, they have been outstripped by jobs towards the bottom end of the pay ladder while the number of jobs in middle-pay brackets has fallen, leaving an even more polarised pay structure. Partly as a result, consumer credit levels in Britain are rising at the fastest rate since 2008;⁸ payday lenders and the ‘Wonga economy’ are becoming an issue of increasing political salience. The mega \$920 million fine imposed by regulators on JP Morgan for reckless financial trading, along with new

allegations of bank manipulation of the multi-trillion dollar foreign exchange market, are sure signs that little has changed. Another is the risk of another bubble in house prices and some company valuations.

As recovery gathers pace, global cash surpluses – heavily leveraged – are likely to find homes that raise economic risk and feed another round of destabilising financial deal-making. This year has seen a number of multi-billion pound deals financed by this cash mountain, from the £15bn Liberty Global bid for Virgin Media to the \$24bn attempt on Dell, the PC maker.

The private equity giant, the Carlyle Group has \$50bn of ‘dry powder’ waiting to pounce as opportunities become available, while Blackstone has nearly \$40bn. Such activity means huge windfall gains for the small number of ‘marriage brokers’ masterminding the deals, but paid for by the upward transfer of existing not the creation of new wealth.

If this is the new norm, it is unsustainable. Sticking with the status quo and allowing the top to continue to reap most of the gains from growth will end in another crisis. A bit more redistribution through more generous income support will not provide the level of correction needed. What is needed is an economic alternative around a more proportionate sharing of the cake, with wage rises matching productivity growth, with capital reined in and the rich made to pay more. Far from easy to achieve, but increasingly an economic imperative. **F**

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The possibility of post-democracy

The rise of new social movements and the shift of contemporary Conservatism to a more extreme market individualism creates a vast political territory that Labour might occupy – but only if it doesn't seek to control it, writes *Colin Crouch*



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NO ONE CAN say that contemporary western societies are anti-democratic, like the world's many dictatorships. Elections, free debate, the rule of law all function; but somehow the dynamism of the political system is moving elsewhere – just as industry still exists in a post-industrial society, but most of the energy has gone to the services sectors. Hence, we are on the road towards post-democracy. That was the central thought that led me to write my 2001 Fabian pamphlet *Coping with Post-Democracy*, which became the book *Post-democracy* in 2004.

The 'elsewhere' to which I saw our politics going were the small circles of overlapping business lobbyists and a politico-economic elite. No conspiracy theory explained the process; its causes were beyond easy human control. First, the political parties of western democracies were based on the religious and class antagonisms of late 19th and early 20th century societies, when different groups had acquired a sense of political identity in struggles over their exclusion. Since the days of universal citizenship, new classes developing in post-industrial society did not have to struggle for inclusion and so did not (need to) develop a distinctive political awareness of who they were. The big exception to this was the global class of major shareholders and business executives, who knew exactly who they were, had an ideology (neoliberalism) to express themselves, and had the power to exercise major political influence.

The second process was economic globalisation, which meant that power was increasingly being exercised by international business interests ranging at will over transnational territories beyond the reach of nation states, the level at which democracy remained largely trapped.

As a result of these two processes, the political class was finding itself increasingly unable to relate to voters through parties, which seemed to belong to the quarrels of the past, while business elites and lobbyists were providing increasingly congenial company. Elections, while still crucial for protecting citizens' rights, were becoming an increasingly empty shell when it came to expressing serious conflicts of interest. We had not yet arrived at this point, I argued, otherwise the environmental and feminist movements would not have been able to have their impact; but we were on the road towards post-democracy.

That was written before the financial crisis of 2007–08. I cannot in any way claim to have predicted this, but the way in which it has been managed has been completely in line with expectations of how post-democratic regimes would respond, showing that we have moved a good way further down that road. The banks, having been deemed 'too big to fail', were given privileged treatment in setting the terms for rescue from the disaster to which their appallingly negligent behaviour had brought us all. Rescue packages placed the burden on the rest of the population through cuts in public spending, especially therefore on those most dependent on help from the welfare state, people far poorer than the bankers whose incomes and institutions they were now helping to stabilise. In the process, the crisis was redefined by political leaders as having been 'caused' by excessive levels of public spending, as though the banks had had nothing to do with it. The crisis has therefore now been used to achieve permanent reductions in the size and scope of the welfare state in many countries. The argument about public spending is valid in a roundabout way, in

that governments who sought political advantage by not increasing taxation to pay for expanding social policy were able to finance their sleight of hand by borrowing from the banks. But the banks were willing to make such loans, which clearly had little chance of being repaid. Normally an irresponsible creditor shares the burden of a bad loan with the irresponsible debtor; but not when the creditor has the political clout of the great banks in the wake of the crisis.

This post-democratic aspect of the crisis was seen at its most extreme in the eurozone, where an ad hoc group constituted by the European Commission, the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and a committee of the banks involved, imposed terms on the debtor states of south-west Europe and Ireland. True to post-democracy, the deals were democratically 'ratified' by national parliaments. Meanwhile, the European parliament had no voice at all – partly because the UK government had vetoed any use of the formal EU institutions for tackling the eurozone crisis.

While some observers on the left had seen the crisis as being one for deregulated neoliberal capitalism and therefore likely to challenge its survival, I believed that it would only demonstrate the power that financial institutions held over (post) democracy, and wrote my book *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism* to argue why. Particularly important was the way in which some governments had become dependent, not just on their own chronic debt, but on their citizens taking on high personal debts in order to sustain their living standards at a time of stagnant real incomes – a process that I called 'privatised Keynesianism'.

These had been two pessimistic books, but pessimism is an attitude that belongs only to the dark view of humanity of the extreme right. I have therefore subsequently written *Making Capitalism Fit for Society*, which argues that the more that the neoliberal agenda extends the rule of markets, the more it creates a contesting agenda for social democracy. This is because the extension of markets is always accompanied by negative externalities with which the market itself cannot cope. Social democracy – alongside the green movement – is the only established political force that has at the core of its agenda dealing with the negative consequences of the markets with regulation and social policy, while accepting the value of the market economy. Therefore, the more neoliberalism we have, the more work there is for social democracy to do. Similarly, the growing concentration of political power in business hands can only be challenged by a movement with social democracy's history of challenge to that power. I wanted to counter the attitude of many 'third way' social democrats that the past achievements of their movement belong in some kind of political museum, needing to be looked after as past legacy but having little meaning in a future that is only neoliberal.

But if our politics is becoming increasingly post-democratic for the reasons I have claimed, what chance does social democracy stand of pursuing such an agenda? In each of my little books I have ended by pointing to the potential of wider social movements of anger and protest at the corporate behaviour and the negative consequences

of neoliberalism. Parties, cut off as they are today from much of the public, can do little by themselves; and given the past record of the relations of their leaders to business concerns who can reward them handsomely after they have left office, we have little grounds for trusting them to do so. But in the wave of campaigns, often based on social media, like the Occupy! movement that have focussed attention on the growing inequalities of wealth and power that neoliberalism has created, we today have the chance of

something better. Thanks to them, social inequality and corporate misbehaviour are being discussed again as they have not been for decades. They can also embarrass governments themselves by drawing attention to some of the destructive things they do in a more convincing way than opposition parties, who have to make

such attacks as a matter of routine. What else explains the determination of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats to gag the campaigning activities of charities and voluntary bodies – though not, of course, those of lobbyists directly employed on the staffs of corporations?

The proliferation of such movements has been the main way in which citizens have been fighting back against post-democracy, and it has been encouraging and invigorating to witness. But by themselves these movements are tiny pygmies pitted against the might of global concerns, gnats trying to annoy elephants. Occasionally they can and do achieve individual victories against some corporations. Indeed, if there are finally effective moves to stop the scandals of firms who so organise their financial affairs that they pay tax only in the most fiscally indulgent regimes, it will be largely to the credit of such activists. However, as this last point shows, much though not entirely all of what they can achieve has to be routed through government action. The state is the only force that stands some realistic chance against global corporate power. Citizens' actions and campaigning groups are no substitute for formal politics, but a rich and vital tonic for it, interrupting the march towards a passive post-democracy.

What then are the relations between social movements and parties of the left? Usually they are deeply problematic. Party people complain that the movements see only their part of the picture and neither have nor seek any wider responsibility. All that energy and money, they think, would be better employed knocking on doors and funding party election campaigns. Even worse, these autonomous groups are not loyal and might well start to criticise left parties themselves. Is it not better to have a few loyal think tanks, creatures of parties without real autonomy, whose leaders are dutifully awaiting their seats in parliament or other public patronage?

But such an attitude is not even in parties' own long-term interests. The politically conscious citizens of post-modern societies do not accept the disciplines of party membership and voting loyalty that earlier generations perhaps did. They neither live in the dense communities that once supported such solidary behaviour, nor accept the disciplines of bureaucratic organisations. Such a mentality now embraces a large majority of the population, as it dates back to the generation of the late 1960s, now becoming old-age >>

By themselves these movements are tiny pygmies pitted against the might of global concerns, gnats trying to annoy elephants

>> pensioners. Neoliberalism and the free market found ways to address that post-modern mentality, which tend to elude the parties and other structures of the established left. But these citizens have shown that they will support important causes in their own more or less informal ways. In so doing, they are innovating campaigning methods suited to their generation. They are also creating groundswells of public opinion that parties of the left can share and use, provided they do not try to take the organisations over.

But many protest movements are not associated with the left at all, or are prevented by charitable status from having any political attachment. They are likely to be seen by left parties as highly unreliable for other reasons. Groups campaigning for rural England stopped the coalition from privatising the country's forests; the National Trust is finding itself at the front of moves to limit the deregulation of urban development. How can these be of any relevance to a political revival of the left?

There is an important lesson here. There was a time when British Conservatism embraced a strong concept of a public interest, of collective goods and civic pride, and many organizations clustered around that set of attitudes in a politically understated way. As contemporary Conservatism moves more extremely to an essentially US-based ideology of market individualism, it vacates a vast political territory

occupied by citizens who have a concept of a public good, though they would be uneasy to see this claimed by a particular party. In the past such people provided an implicit base of support for a certain kind of Conservatism, and the Tory party was usually intelligent enough not to try to bring them under control. That body of opinion might now provide a similar base for Labour instead – provided the party is willing to leave it at that, unstressed.

Labour movements everywhere developed within hostile societies where almost all institutions outside the party and its unions were governed by their enemies. Not surprisingly, they huddled together for warmth and took the attitude that who is not with us is against us. Believing themselves to represent the inevitable forward march of history, they felt they could do without those who would not formally commit themselves to a shared allegiance. But times are very different now. Well over half a century of the democratic welfare state has created widespread pools of implicit support for social democratic values, while neoliberalism is imposing, with the massive weight of corporate power, an ideology that is in many ways uncongenial. In the context of an increasingly post-democratic world, those widespread pools need to be understood, allies in various coalitions and causes, but with both their autonomy and their partisan unreliability deeply respected. ■

The accidental international adventures of a Fabian pamphlet

Although I had once been a member of the Fabian Executive, and indeed the Society's chair in 1976, I owe the invitation in 2002 to write my pamphlet *Coping with Post-Democracy* entirely to a French PhD student of mine at the European University Institute in Florence, where I was then working. On a research trip to London he became part of the centre-left thinktank world, and more or less by chance suggested to Gavin Kelly, then director of the Society's research, that they invite me to write a pamphlet.

Gavin was enthusiastic and started working on me. At the time I had been having conversations with my younger son, then in his early 20s, about the disillusion his generation felt with the way democracy was working, and I put some of the substance of these discussions into *Coping with Post-Democracy*. Somehow the dynamism of the political system had gone elsewhere: the small circles of overlapping business lobbyists and politico-economic elite.

By chance I gave the pamphlet to my friend Alessandro Pizzorno, who passed it to the publisher Giuseppe Laterza. He in turn suggested I make the pamphlet longer, less Anglo-centric, and he would have it translated and published in Italian. It then appeared in a number of languages – Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Greek, German, Russian, Swedish, French, Slovenian – and including English thanks to John Thompson at Polity Press – over the next few years.

The German translation did not appear until 2008, the year of the financial crash. Although I in no way predicted that crash, the political universe described in *Post-democracy* seemed very relevant as the world's great banks were able to force democratic political systems to bend to their will. For German readers my thesis rang

topical bells, and German sales have outstripped all other languages combined.

In the immediate aftermath of the financial crisis, many on the left believed that the neoliberal model would now meet its comeuppance. I was sceptical, believing that our politics had become too dependent on the role of easy, irresponsible credit to sustain popular consumption and avoid discontent as wages stagnated and inequalities grew under increasingly post-democratic social arrangements. To produce *Post-democracy II*, I added some new ideas about how enormous concentrations of economic power could be converted into political influence. I managed to interest Polity Press and Laterza again, and the book was published in English in 2011 as *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*. To date there have also been Spanish, Chinese and Arabic translations, and it won 'das politische Buch' prize of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in 2012.

Most of the things I write are fairly indigestible academic works, but I had been trying since 1980, without success, to write for wider circles of readers. Eventually it was a series of accidents that put me in the way of people who were willing to help me find a popular voice. But first of all I have to thank that French student who first put the Fabians back on my track in 2002. His name? Frédéric Michel. If that rings a bell, it is because in 2013 he featured at the Leveson inquiry as the News International lobbyist who had been trying to persuade the coalition government to give more control over the satellite TV monopoly, BSkyB, to Rupert Murdoch's News International conglomerate. Paradox, or what?

Colin Crouch

Books

Clean break

Vicky Pryce's hybrid prison memoir may not be entirely successful but it illuminates the need to change how we treat female offenders, writes *Anya Pearson*

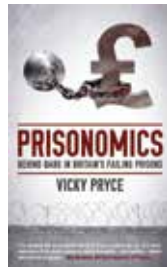
The division between freedom and being put behind bars can come down to a single mistake, writes Vicky Pryce in her new book *Prisonomics*. Half prison diary, half analysis of the economic and human cost of keeping women in prison, the book is a reflection on the eight months Pryce served in Holloway and East Sutton Park for accepting ex-husband Chris Huhne's penalty points on her driving licence. Pryce has tried to harness the unwanted publicity from the case and use it to show that the criminal justice and prison system is "devised by men, run by men and does a great disservice to British women".

She stands alongside Baroness Corston, the Prison Reform Trust and the Howard League for Penal Reform, whose research she cites frequently, in arguing that the current prison system is particularly failing women offenders, is costly and not fit for purpose. In 2010, 45 per cent of women leaving prison were reconvicted within one year. According to the Ministry of Justice the total cost of reoffending by all prisoners is estimated to be between £9.5bn and £13bn per year. In times of austerity, *Prisonomics* asks whether Britain can improve upon its "tough on crime" stance (and soaring prison population) through a more humane and effective system that makes better use of public spending.

Central to Pryce's analysis is that women in prison are as much victims as perpetrators of crimes. This narrative is most powerful when Pryce recounts the personal stories of fellow 'residents' she encounters at the prison hair salon or canteen, whose fragmented, painful lives illustrate the statistical evidence effectively.

Pryce finds that most women who enter the prison system have complex emotional and mental health problems that are exacerbated during their sentence. Some 37 per cent say they have attempted suicide and nearly 40 per cent have received treatment for a mental health problem in the year before entering prison. Just over half are addicted to drugs, and one in three has experienced sexual abuse. Around 18,000 children are separated from their mothers by imprisonment each year. As well as negatively impacting their families, the separation can be more than prisoners can bear; during Pryce's sentence one young mother at East Sutton Park misses her children so terribly she attempts suicide and is sent back to a closed prison.

The hybrid style of the book, interlacing Pryce's experience of prison with secondary research, poses difficulties and sometimes the overarching economic purpose isn't properly served. Erwin James' prison memoir is far



**Prisonomics:
Behind Bars in
Britain's Failing
Prisons**

Vicky Pryce
Biteback
RRP £16.99



*Anya Pearson
is editorial
assistant at the
Fabian Society*

less whimsical; Pryce mentions pudding so frequently it should probably have its own index entry. Her warm, engaging tone can sometimes give way to ill-judged anecdotes that hammer home how different her circumstances are from her fellow inmates – like the embarrassment of finding she had absent-mindedly hoarded £1,490 cash in the darker recesses of her handbag before entering Holloway prison (easily done, I'm sure). Another entry under 18 May 2013, when she is under home detention curfew, opens with the following quandary: "A difficult decision to make: would I have enough time to get to Oxford and back to watch my son, who is studying there, act in the Jez Butterworth play *The Winterling*?"

Like its author, the book was clearly angling for an early release and despite the thoroughness of the research, the findings feel rushed in places. The fact that the first 250 pages are given over to diary-style entries makes the substantive economic analysis in part two feel more like an afterword. The title *Prisonomics* promises an entirely new economic perspective, but instead, Pryce paints rather broad strokes – suggesting community orders along with gender-specific rehabilitation, employment and education programmes. These recommendations provide a valuable summary of what we already know to deliver greatly improved results, but they don't significantly build on the work of others and more research is needed evaluate the cost and benefits of different approaches.

A real strength of the book lies in the microeconomics of education and employment opportunities for women prisoners. At East Sutton Park, Pryce talks to women like Debbie who is building a new life thanks to Working Chance, the main employment agency for women offenders. Schemes like this reduce reoffending and bring a lifetime net saving to society of approximately £69,000 per offender.

Studies show that public opinion favours cutting reoffending rates, counterbalanced by achieving good value for money. To achieve this, policy must be refocused towards rehabilitation over punishment; Sadiq Khan, the shadow justice secretary, has recognised how essential it is to deal with "the underlying issues many offenders face so they can get a job, reconnect with family and find a home upon release". But as Pryce points out, few MPs or rising ministers seem to show much interest in heading up a campaign to reduce the number of women sent to prison each year. Her book contributes to an important conversation, but it's the stories of these fragile women prisoners that should inspire a renewed debate on the future of prisons. ■

Growing together

The Fabian Women's Network is changing. It's the perfect excuse to stop and take stock of what we've achieved as a network and what we should do next, writes

Sarah Hutchinson



The Fabian Women's Network (FWN) has recently been formalised, with our first committee elected and our constitution accepted. As we move on to the next stage, foremost in our minds has been how to maintain what is distinctive about FWN. The network gives women the opportunities to get involved with politics, try new things and build their own political networks. We've seen members use their experience with FWN to stand for council, parliamentary or European elections or work for an NGO.

In the past, the fluidity of the network has been a great source of strength. For example, the major seminar we held in February 2013 on universal childcare, where Ed Balls committed to making childcare a priority for 2015, was followed by the launch of a pamphlet in the summer and childcare has become a key campaigning issue for Labour. Our work was driven by Shama Tatler, whom we were able to platform without her needing to stand or get elected first. This in turn helped us raise the network's profile and build links with MPs, think tanks, campaigns and other people who wanted to get involved.

We're determined that this flexible element of FWN won't be lost, but having a formal committee will give us the opportunity to do so much more. After our annual general meeting this autumn, the committee met to discuss how it would work, who would take on what roles, and what we should plan for the coming months.

But we also discussed what we think FWN should be for. What are we trying to achieve and how? Spurred on by feedback from members at our AGM, these discussions are still ongoing.

Over the coming months, we'll be using the skills and dedication of the committee to make some changes. We will be focusing on building our financial base through sponsorship and donations so we can continue to reach out to new members through events, publish *Fabiana* and more. We're refreshing the design of *Fabiana* and we have a new website, designed by FWN committee member Sofie Jenkinson, so we can keep in touch with members, publish blog pieces and engage with more women all over the country.

We're determined that this flexible element of FWN won't be lost, but having a formal committee will give us the opportunity to do so much more

But inherent to our nature as a network, we will continue to evolve. Our members will be fundamental to this; one of the most exciting things about FWN is the range of talent, knowledge and enthusiasm we have within our ranks. We want to harness that and give members a chance to get involved. We need your time, your ideas and your enthusiasm to put on events, write articles, build local networks and shape our campaign priorities.

That way we can ensure that in the run up to the 2015 election, women's voices are at the forefront of political debate. The new committee is just the start: now it's over to you. **F**

Sarah Hutchinson is vice chair of the Fabian Women's Network

If you'd like to join the FWN mailing list (men welcome!) or find out how to get involved, email fabianwomen@fabians.org.uk or visit www.fabianwomen.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**ADVANCE DATE FOR YOUR DIARY
Annual House of Commons Tea
Tuesday 8 July**

For information about all these events, please contact Deborah Stoate on 0207 227 4904 or at debstoate@hotmail.com

The power of the past

After 80 years at Dartmouth Street, an exhibition of rare archive material commemorates the Fabian Society's move to 61 Petty France. *Anya Pearson* talked to artist Esther Windsor about the exhibition



Hello, Esther. How did you come to work with the Fabians?

I'm an artist, academic and curator. Andrew Harrop heard about an exhibition I did at the Working Men's College archive and he asked me if I'd be interested in creating one for the Fabian Society as they moved to a new building.

What were your thoughts while looking through the Fabian archive?

The Fabian archive constitutes an important bedrock of collective thinking. Looking at pamphlets spanning over a hundred years, I noticed that historical issues such as rent control, industrial relations, women's rights, Europe, racism and mental health mattered then as they still do so concretely now.

I was also struck by the purity and simplicity of design. A set titled *Socialism in the sixties* had a black margin and block of colour, which changed from pink to yellow to turquoise to red with titles including *Freedom in the Welfare state*, *The Irresponsible Society*, and *The Existing Alternatives* (Raymond Williams). The colours perfectly matched the political issue, allowing a place for urgency or enquiry. They were like works of art, or poems.

Can you see clear connections between the Fabian designs and other visual traditions?

Political ideas will always seek and be shaped in visual metaphors. For me, the period of Modernism and the development of the welfare state – with its aspiration to public, civic life – go hand in hand. There was the Brutalist architecture movement and the 1950's neo concrete movement in Brazil. Around this time, the British system artists adopted chance,



a method used in Dadaism. Constructivists were also experimenting with using lines and mathematics to make paintings. It was a reaction to hierarchical political systems, seeking new and unexpected outcomes.

What was the process of creating the exhibition?

I love Modernist art so I was thinking of colour blocks, loudness and quietness, gaps and pauses, density of titles – much like a punctuated story. It was an aesthetic process that also paid respect to prominent Fabian authors. In displaying the work I had in mind Mondrian, who worked with grids of vertical and horizontal black lines and the three primary colors in ever-changing relationships. It also reminded me of concrete poetry, in the use of book covers as poems. Language is very important to me – I have studied Psychoanalysis at MA and I have just completed

a PhD in Fine Art called Ugly Beast, a critical study of curating contemporary fine art.

What is your favourite Fabian pamphlet?

I was pleased to see Fabian pamphlets addressing the issue of mothers as workers as early as 1910. I liked this quote from Margaret Cole in *Growing up into Revolution* (1949):

“There are three stages in the life of any woman in public life. In the first she is that ‘charming and intelligent girl’; in the second she becomes ‘that rather frightful woman’; and in the third she is ‘that very interesting old lady’”.

I also liked Tract 459, *Deserting the middle ground: Tory social policies* (1978), which outlines the Tory aim to extend the private housing market. It features a sketch of Margaret Thatcher by Peter Fluck which I

mistook for David Cameron at first glance!

The Fabian Society has a rich archive at the LSE. What other projects could be embarked upon next?

Art is as a powerful tool and I think it’s urgent that the Fabians harness, in a way that fits their quiet way of working, the power of their visual history – especially in a modern political era that rewrites and forgets history. Ed Milliband was very complimentary about the exhibition – I suppose in a room of Fabians we all have parts of the archive that speak to our own memories and experiences. **F**

Anya Pearson is editorial assistant at the Fabian Society

The Fabian archive exhibition can be viewed at 61 Petty France, London SW1H 9EU. www.esterwindsor.com

Listings

BEXLEY

Regular meetings. Contact Alan Scutt on 0208 304 0413 or alan.scutt@phonecoop.coop

BIRMINGHAM

Regular meetings at 7.00 in the Priory Rooms, Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF. Details from Bob Ingrams bobblins2@aol.com

BOURNEMOUTH & DISTRICT

Friday 31st January 2014: Any Questions Evening. Panel will comprise Sharon Carr-Brown, Paul Toynton, Douglas Lock and Dr Melanie Semple.

Friday 28 February: Steve Laughton, Director of Talk International, Labour Economic Policy Group & The Exchange Reform Group: "Busting Economic Myths to Rebuild the UK Economy".

Friday 28 March: Sharon Hodgson MP, Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities: "Women, Family & Equalities"

Meetings at The Friends Meeting House, Wharnclyffe Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth at 7.30. Contact Ian Taylor on 01202 396634 for details or taylorbournemouth@gmail.com

BRIDGEND

Society re-forming. Members or potential members should contact Huw Morris at huwjulie@tiscali.co.uk or telephone 01656 654946 or 07876552717

BRIGHTON & HOVE

Details of all meetings from Maire McQueeney on 01273 607910 email mairemcqueeney@waitrose.com

BRISTOL

Regular meetings. Contact Ges Rosenbergl for details on grosenberg@churchside.me.uk or Arthur Massey 0117 9573330

CAMBRIDGE

Details from Kim Jarvis on cambridgefabians@gmail.com www.cambridgefabians.org.uk. Join the Cambridge Fabians Facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/cambridgefabiansociety

CARDIFF & THE VALE

Details of all meetings from Jonathan Wynne Evans on 02920 594 065 or wynneevans@phonecoop.coop

CENTRAL LONDON

Details from Giles Wright on 0207 227 4904 or giles.wright@fabians.org.uk

CHATHAM & AYLESFORD

New Society forming. Please contact Sean Henry on 07545 296800 or seanhenry@live.co.uk

CHISWICK & WEST LONDON

All meetings at 8.00 in Committee Room, Chiswick Town Hall. Details from Monty Bogard on 0208 994 1780, email mb0141362@blueyonder.co.uk

COLCHESTER

16th January, 7.30 pm: Gregg McClymont MP, on Pensions. Friends Meeting House, Church St., Colchester. Details from John Wood on 01206 212100 or woodj@madasafish.com or 01206 212100

CUMBRIA & NORTH LANCASHIRE

Meetings, 6.30 for 7.00 at Castle Green Hotel, Kendal. For information, please contact Dr Robert Judson at dr.robertjudson@btinternet.com

DARTFORD & GRAVESHAM

9 January: Mike Gapes MP on 'The Middle East' Regular meetings at 8.00 in Dartford Working Men's Club, Essex Rd, Dartford Details from Deborah Stoate on 0207 227 4904 email debstoate@hotmail.com

DERBY

Details for meetings from Alan Jones on 01283 217140 or alan.mandh@btinternet.com

DONCASTER AND DISTRICT

New Society forming, for details and information contact Kevin Rodgers on 07962 019168 email k.t.rogers@gmail.com

EAST LOTHIAN

Details of all meetings from Noel Foy on 01620 824386 email noelfoy@lewisk3.plus.com

EDINBURGH

Regular Brain Cell meetings. Details of these and all other meetings from Daniel Johnson at daniel@scottishfabians.org.uk

EPSOM & EWELL

New Society forming. If you are interested, please contact Carl Dawson at carldawson@gmail.com

FINCHLEY

Enquiries to Mike Walsh on 07980 602122 mike.walsh44@ntlworld.com

GLASGOW

Now holding regular meetings. Contact Martin Hutchinson on mail@liathach.net

GLOUCESTER

Regular meetings at TGWU, 1 Pullman Court, Great Western Rd, Gloucester. Details from Malcolm Perry at malcolmperry3@btinternet.com

GREENWICH

If you are interested in becoming a member of this local Society, please contact Chris Kirby on ccakirby@hotmail.co.uk

GRIMSBY

Regular meetings. Details from Pat Holland - hollandpat@hotmail.com

HARROW

Details from Marilyn Devine on 0208 424 9034. Fabians from other areas where there are no local Fabian Societies are very welcome to join us.

HASTINGS & RYE

Meetings held on last Friday of each month. Please contact Nigel Sinden at fabian@sindenql.com

HAVERING

31 January: Jon Cruddas MP on 'from now 'til next election' at The Royals at 7.30. **7 February:** AGM at 7.30, the Billet Studio. **17 March:** Cllr Mike Le Surf on 'Learning Disability'. Details of all meetings from David Marshall email david.c.marshall@talk21.com tel 01708 441189. For latest information, see the website <http://haveringfabians.org.uk>

ISLINGTON

Details from John Clarke at johnclarke00@yahoo.co.uk

LEEDS

Details of all meetings from John Bracken at leedsfabians@gmail.com

MANCHESTER

Society reforming. Details from Rosie Clayton on mcrfabs@gmail.com www.facebook.com/ManchesterFabians Twitter: @MCR_Fab

THE MARCHES

Society re-forming. If you are interested, please contact Jeevan Jones at jeevanjones@outlook.com

MERSEYSIDE

Please contact Hetty Wood at hettyjay@gmail.com

MIDDLESBOROUGH

Please contact Andrew Maloney on 07757 952784 or email andrewmaloney@hotmail.co.uk for details

MILTON KEYNES

Anyone interested in helping to set up a new society, contact David Morgan at jdavidmorgan@googlemail.com

NEWHAM

Regular meetings. Contact Tahmina Rahman: Tahmina_rahman_1@hotmail.com

NORTHUMBRIA AREA

For details and booking contact Pat Hobson at pat.hobson@hotmail.com

NORTHAMPTON AREA

If you are interested in becoming a member of this new society, please contact Dave Brede on davidbrede@yahoo.com

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE

Any Fabian interested in joining a North Staffordshire Society, please contact Richard Gorton on r.gorton748@btinternet.com

NORWICH

Society reforming. Contact Andreas Paterson - andreas@headswitch.co.uk

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Details from Lee Garland. secretary@nottsfabians.org.uk, www.nottsfabians.org.uk, twitter @NottsFabians

OXFORD

Please contact Michael Weatherburn at michael.weatherburn@gmail.com

PETERBOROUGH

Meetings at 8.00 at the Ramada Hotel, Thorpe Meadows, Peterborough. Details from Brian Keegan on 01733 265769, email brian@briankeegan.demon.co.uk

PORTSMOUTH

Regular meetings. Details from Dave Wardle at david.wardle@waitrose.com

READING & DISTRICT

For details of all meetings, contact Tony Skuse on 0118 978 5829 email tony@skuse.net

SHEFFIELD

Regular meetings on the 3rd Thursday of the month at The Quaker Meeting

House, 10, St James St, Sheffield.S1 2EW Details and information from Rob Murray on 0114 255 8341or email robertjmmurray@hotmail.com

SOUTH EAST LONDON

29 January: Professor Rosemary Ashton on 'Victorian Bloomsbury'. 8.00 at 105 Court Lane, Dulwich SE21 7EE. For details, contact Duncan Bowie on 020 8693 2709 or email duncanbowie@yahoo.co.uk

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Contact Tony Eades on 0208487 9807 or tonyeades@hotmail.com

SOUTHAMPTON AREA

For details of venues and all meetings, contact Eliot Horn at eliot.horn@btinternet.com

SOUTH TYNESIDE

13 January: 7.15 at Ede House. Planning meeting. For information about this Society please contact Paul Freeman on 0191 5367 633 or at freemansmb@blueyonder.co.uk

SUFFOLK

23 January: AGM and Jeremy Corbyn MP on 'For a Just, Peaceful Foreign Policy'. Details from John Cook on 01473 255131, email contact@ipswich-labour.org.uk

SURREY

Regular meetings at Guildford Cathedral Education Centre Details from Robert Park on 01483 422253 or robert.park.woodroad@gmail.com

TONBRIDGE & TUNBRIDGE WELLS

For details of meetings contact John Champneys on 01892 523429

TOWER HAMLETS

Regular meetings. Contact: Kevin Morton - 07958 314846, email - towerhamletsfabiansociety@googlemail.com

TYNEMOUTH

Monthly supper meetings, details from Brian Flood on 0191 258 3949

WARWICKSHIRE

All meetings 7.30 at the Friends Meeting House, 28 Regent Place, Rugby Details from Ben Ferrett on ben_ferrett@hotmail.com or <http://warwickshirefabians.blogspot.com/>

WEST DURHAM

The West Durham Fabian Society welcomes new members from all areas of the North East not served by other Fabian Societies. It has a regular programme of speakers from the public, community and voluntary sectors. It meets normally on the last Saturday of alternate months at the Joiners Arms, Hunwick between 12.15 and 2.00pm - light lunch £2.00. Contact the Secretary Cllr Professor Alan Townsend, 62A Low Willington, Crook, Durham DL15 0BG, tel, 01388 746479 email Alan.Townsend@dur.ac.uk

WIMBLEDON

Please contact Andy Ray on 07944 545161or andyray@blueyonder.co.uk

YORK

Regular meetings on 3rd or 4th Fridays at 7.45 at Jacob's Well, Off Miklegate, York. Details from Steve Burton on steve.burton688@mod.uk

Fabian News

Noticeboard

Subscription rates

The Annual General Meeting on 16 November agreed new subscription rates:

Ordinary rate

£42 a year or £3.50 monthly

Reduced rate

£21 a year or £1.75 monthly

Students, retired members, and the long-term unemployed may pay the Reduced rate.

Fabian Fortune Fund

WINNERS:

Ben Steinberg £100
Diana Warwick £100

Half the income from the Fabian Fortune Fund goes to support our research programme. Forms and further information from Giles Wright, giles.wright@fabians.org.uk

130 YEARS OF FABIANISM

2013 has been a landmark year for the Society. We've hosted some of the largest events in politics and published influential reports on the future of public spending, Labour's electoral strategy and whole person care. We also moved to new premises, formally opened by Ed Miliband in October.



2014 will be similarly significant: on 4th January we will celebrate our 130th birthday. We'll be running a series of activities throughout the year to mark the occasion and discuss what Fabianism means today.

Send us your ideas on how to mark the anniversary at
130@fabians.org.uk

FABIAN QUIZ



**EXODUS:
IMMIGRATION AND
MULTICULTURALISM
IN THE 21ST
CENTURY**

Paul Collier

Mass international migration is a response to extreme global inequality, and immigration has a profound impact on the way we live. Yet our views – and those of our politicians – remain caught between two extremes: popular hostility to migrants, tinged by xenophobia and racism; and the view of business and liberal elites that 'open doors' are both economically and ethically imperative. With migration set to accelerate, few issues are so urgently in need of dispassionate analysis – and few are more incendiary.

Here, world-renowned economist Paul Collier seeks to defuse this explosive subject. *Exodus* looks at how people from the world's poorest societies struggle to migrate to the rich West: the effects on those left behind and on the host societies, and explores the impulses and thinking that inform Western immigration policy. Migration, he concludes, is a fact, and we urgently need to think clearly about its possibilities and challenges: it is not a question of whether migration is good or bad, but how much is best?

Penguin has kindly given us five copies to give away. To win one, answer the following question:

Who was the last British prime minister to represent a London constituency during their premiership?

Please email your answer and your address to: review@fabian-society.org.uk

Or send a postcard to:
Fabian Society, Fabian Quiz, 61 Petty France
London, SW1H 9EU



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THAN FRIDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2014**



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or call: **0845 60 60 640***

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