

Agrégation anglais
Civilisation britannique
Le Royaume-Uni à l'épreuve
de la crise

5

Documents commentaire

1 Songs about Ireland

John Lennon, « Sunday, Bloody Sunday », 1972

- 10 **Well it was Sunday bloody Sunday**
Et bien ce fut lors d'un dimanche, un dimanche sanglant
When they shot the people here
Qu'ici ils tirèrent sur le peuple
The cries of thirteen martyrs
15 *Les cris de treize martyres*
Filled the free Derry air.
Remplirent l'air de la ville libre de Derry. (1)
Is there anyone amongst you
Y-a-t-il quelqu'un parmi vous
20 **Dares to blame it on the kids ?**
Qui oserait en rejeter la responsabilité sur les gamins ?
Not a soldier boy was bleeding
Pas un seul soldat ne saignait
When they nailed the coffin lids !
25 *Lorsqu'ils fermèrent les cercueils !*

[Chorus]

[Refrain]

- Sunday, bloody Sunday**
Dimanche, dimanche sanglant
30 **Bloody Sunday is the day !**
Dimanche sanglant, un jour à ne pas oublier !

- You claim to be majority**
Vous déclarez être en majorité
35 **Well you know that it's a lie.**
Et bien, vous savez que c'est un mensonge.
You're really a minority
Vous n'êtes réellement qu'en minorité
On this sweet emerald isle.
40 *Sur cette douce île d'émeraude.*
When Stormont bans our marches
Quand Stormont (2) interdit nos manifestations
They've got a lot to learn.
Il faut qu'ils en tirent une grande leçon.
45 **Internment is no answer**
L'internement (3) n'est pas une réponse
It's those mothers' * turn to burn !**
*C'est au tour de ces fils de *** de brûler !*

50 **[Chorus]**
[Refrain]

You Anglo pigs and Scotties

Vous, porcs anglais et écossais

55 **Sent to colonize the North**

Qui avez été envoyés pour coloniser le nord

You wave you bloody Union Jacks

Vous brandissez votre Union Jack (4) taché de sang

And you know what it's worth !

60 *Et pourtant vous savez ce qu'il vaut !*

How dare you to ransom

Comment osez-vous retenir en otage

A people proud and free ?

Un peuple si fier et libre ?

65 **Keep Ireland for the Irish**

Que l'Irlande reste aux mains des irlandais

Put the English back to sea !

Renvoyons les anglais chez eux par la mer !

70 **[Chorus]**
[Refrain]

Well it's always bloody Sunday

Et bien, c'est toujours et encore un dimanche sanglant

75 **In the concentration camps**

Dans les camps de concentration

Keep Falls Road free forever

Que Falls Road (5) reste libre à jamais

From the bloody English hands

80 *Des mains ensanglantées des anglais*

Repatriate to Britain

Rentrez en Grande-Bretagne

All of you who call it home

Tout ceux d'entre vous qui l'appellez chez moi

85 **Leave Ireland to the Irish**

Que l'Irlande reste entre les mains des irlandais

Not for London or Rome !

Pas entre celles de Londres (6) ou Rome !

90 **[Chorus]**

30 janvier 1972 : l'armée britannique tua 13 civils irlandais lors d'une manifestation en faveur des droits de l'homme.

(1) Derry, plus connue sous le nom de Londonderry, ville bastion de la lutte contre la domination anglaise

- 95 (2) en 1921, à la signature du *Traité anglo-irlandais*, l'Irlande du Sud devient indépendante alors que le Nord reste entre les mains des anglais, un parlement protestant est alors mis en place : le parlement de Stormont. Parlement qui fut aboli en 1972 suite à l'incident du *Dimanche sanglant*
- (3) *internement* : emprisonnement sans procès pour tous les suspects d'actes terroristes. Cela ne fut suspendu qu'en 1975
- 100 (4) *drapeau de la Grande Bretagne*
- (5) *Falls Road* : rue de Belfast à dominante Catholique qui est au centre des troubles de la ville.
- (6) en 1972 après l'abolition du parlement de Stormont, Londres gouverne directement l'Irlande du Nord
- 105

Paul McCartney, The Wings, « Give Ireland Back to the Irish », 1972

- 110 Give Ireland Back To The Irish
Don't Make Them Have To Take It Away
Give Ireland Back To The Irish
Make Ireland Irish Today
- 115 Great Britain You Are Tremendous
And Nobody Knows Like Me
But Really What Are You Doin'
In The Land Across The Sea
- 120 Tell Me How Would You Like It
If On Your Way To Work
You Were Stopped By Irish soldiers
Would You Lie Down Do Nothing
Would you give in or go berserk
- 125 Give Ireland Back To The Irish
Don't Make Them Have To Take It Away
Give Ireland Back To The Irish
Make Ireland Irish Today
- 130 Great Britain And All The People
Say That All People Must Be Free
Meanwhile Back In Ireland
There's A Man Who Looks Like Me
- 135 And He Dreams Of God And Country
And He's Feeling Really Bad
And He's Sitting In A Prison
Should He Lie Down Do Nothing
- 140 Should Give In Or Go Mad
- Give Ireland Back To The Irish
Don't Make Them Have To Take It Away
Give Ireland Back To The Irish

145 Make Ireland Irish Today

Give Ireland Back To The Irish
Don't Make Them Have To Take It Away
Give Ireland Back To The Irish
150 Make Ireland Irish Today

2 Shop stewards' priorities

New Left Review I/80, July-August 1973, Motor Stewards: Politics and the Shopfloor,

155 **An interview with Shop stewards from a car factory in the midlands.**

QUESTION: *Do you think that the Engineering wage claim for a £10 increase on the basic rate could be taken up and related to your problems? A real fight for a £10 increase would go completely against the Government's plans for Phase Three and the executive of the aeuw have been committed to it.*

160 Andrew (A shop steward): You cannot say the £10 rise has any meaning when one week the aeu vote unanimously for it, and the next Scanlon is round at Number 10 talking about Phase Three with the Government. It simply doesn't go together. The men on the floor don't want to listen to people like that, who are just two-faced.

165 Mark: (A shop steward): To be honest I've got no more faith in them fighting for a £10 increase than I have in the executive of this blasted club. It means nothing, we've heard it all before. I don't think the membership will react to it because they've been conned so many times on national wages increases. If I remember rightly the last few increases that have gone out nationally have been absolutely laughable: one of them was for five and sixpence a week spread over three years. Within that deal they threw away the shut-out guarantees that we had and accepted the principle of Measured Day Work. This time we need real firm leadership. If
170 we got that our job would be simple; the stewards on the floor would find it simple to bring the members with us. But, when we see so much back-peddling by the tuc and the executive of the unions, how can you expect the membership to have the confidence to take on the Government? This Government could be beaten tomorrow if the workers really rose up, but if
175 they did I'm certain that the leaders of the trade union movement wouldn't know what to do with the militancy.

Pete: (A shop steward): I think we need to draw some general conclusions about this. There is a sharp crisis of capitalism and a real offensive against working-class standards by the Government and the capitalist state. The tuc leadership has given up the struggle and
180 encouraged apathy on the shop floor. What I would like to ask is: what should we do now? Should we channel all our efforts to the Labour Party which is one sort of political solution? Do we come to a revolutionary analysis which poses a revolutionary solution? How do these things relate to one another?

185 Andrew: Well the Labour Party has got the strongest hold on the working class. But when you see the statements that Wilson makes it's a complete mess. We all want nationalization of big industry without compensation, but when the executive of the Labour Party comes out and

says 'no' to that straight-away, as soon as it's been proposed, you wonder what's going on. You can't confuse the blokes on the shop floor with that sort of behaviour; you can't tell them vote for Labour and if we work in the Labour Party we can change it all because they just won't believe you. As you have said before, you could have a hundred Trots in the Labour Party but it wouldn't make any difference. When it comes to taking all the big industries away from the capitalists they will bring out the Army and shoot you. So you have got to be organized to fight them. You can't work within the Labour Party so you have to have an alternative. But what alternative, I really don't know. You have so many segregated political parties at the moment.

What do the rest of you feel about the best political response in the present situation?

Mark: The working class have got Hobson's choice, haven't they? Tory, Labour or Liberal. I believe that the Labour Party is the better of three evils. To be quite honest there is no alternative. What has just been said is quite true. There are political affiliations and dogmas that don't allow some people to let their brothers participate in something even though they really agree. There isn't so much difference in what we believe, just differences on minor matters. But the major subject of what the working class must do, we agree about. We tried setting up an Action Committee to get rid of the Tory Government and to bring in a Socialist Government pledged to socialist policies. Very simple aims. I thought this was the real beginning of something. But the Trade Council found some reason to withdraw and then various political organizations withdrew. People went out of their way to spoil it, mainly because of political dogma.

QUESTION: *Was it organized to take some action; it's often action that brings people together?*

Andrew: Well, we did take some action; we had a demonstration to support the hospital workers when they were on strike. We added to the original terms of reference to say that the Action Committee will fight for any working-class organization that is under attack from the Tory Government and its system. We wanted to spread it to tenants associations, squatters, claimants union, any working-class organization. The Communist Party withdrew at this point. They didn't seem to like the idea for some reason.

QUESTION: *Did you try to involve people connected with the Labour Party in the Action Committee?*

Trevor: You wouldn't have a hope in hell.

Andrew: I think there were some Young Socialists at the last meeting.

You say you wouldn't have a hope in hell of bringing them in. But unless you ask them, how can you know?

Mark: Well, at the moment Wilson and the Labour Party are not appealing to the working class. The working class want a fair standard of living; what they want is an equal distribution of the wealth in the country. At the moment this wealth is being squandered—the Lonrho affair is a classic example. But the Labour Party doesn't want to take these things up and give a lead. I think they are making the same mistake they always make. They expect the working class to support them, but they do not appeal to them. What they are trying to do is appeal to

the middle class. I think this is their biggest failing. They should go full out and appeal to the mass of workers. It's this class that can put them in power and not the middle class. Now
230 Wilson has come out on the nationalization proposals and condemned the progressive move that Wedgwood Benn made. They have got to change their approach.

3. the New Unionism

235 [New Left Review 1/92, July-August 1975](#), Arthur Scargill, The New Unionism: An Interview:

Arthur Scargill:

240 In 1970 we had an abortive strike in Yorkshire. This was mainly because the issue at stake was the wrong one; we couldn't get the unity we wanted amongst the left and there were splits. But at the same time many valuable lessons were learnt because nearly half the coalfields in Britain came out on strike. After the '69 and '70 disputes it was clear that the union was never, ever going to be the same again. The pressure on the right wing was so intense that they saw that if they did not do something about the rules of the union for calling a strike, the left and the rank and file would sweep them aside and there would be an
245 alternative leadership. So they changed the rules of the union to allow strike action to be called with a 55 per cent majority vote instead of a 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent majority. This was to be the most decisive change of rule ever in the history of the union. Long before the 1971 wages negotiations Wooley had produced a wages resolution, and Alf Robens had called us adventurers because of the pamphlet that we had put out at that time. In 1971 we were able to
250 mobilize in every coalfield and what we wanted was the vote for action and we won it. For we got 57 per cent nationally. Of course it's a matter of history that the '72 strike took place after an overtime ban. But what is not generally known is where the picketing started in 1972—it started in Yorkshire.

255 We had every pit picketed on the first morning to get out the weekly-paid industrial staff-members, who were not members of the Yorkshire num, to make sure they were out on strike straight away. After this we immediately switched our attack to every major coal depot and power station in the region. This time, unlike 1969, we had the resources at our disposal, and the four areas—North Yorkshire, Barnsley, Doncaster and South Yorkshire—formed themselves into four Area Strike Committees under the arrangements provided by the Area
260 Council. I was appointed spokesman of the Barnsley Area Strike Committee and also put in charge of picketing. We had a number of battles inside the Committee as to the best tactics to employ. We had a thousand pickets deployed into East Anglia, and we had a major battle inside the Strike Committee. The differences of opinion were whether we should concentrate the pickets on one target or whether we should dispatch them all over East Anglia to all the
265 power stations. And the argument that won the day was the one to send them to Yarmouth, to Bedford, to Cambridge, to Ipswich, to Norwich, to all the different power stations. I said that this was stupid and would not prove successful. For three days we battled with police in the East Anglia area. Then we had a weekend Strike Committee meeting and changed the policy. I picked the phone up and called East Anglia hq and said 'Move everything in onto Ipswich
270 dock, move everything we can'. We produced a thousand pickets in an hour-and-a-half on Ipswich dock, and stopped the dock in an hour. We left a token picket at the docks, moved on, and closed down the power stations one by one. Within two days we'd shut the whole of East Anglia.

How did you get hold of a headquarters in the area?

275 What happened was we sent out scouts into the East Anglia area prior to the strike. I didn't
even know where East Anglia was. How do we contact East Anglia? Who do we know? Then
there was a message: 'We can provide accommodation and assistance.' It was from Essex
University. So we sent down a couple of car loads of our pickets and told them to report back
to me. They did, and, for two or three weeks, we billeted at Essex University about a thousand
280 Yorkshire miners in a fantastic display of solidarity. We showed to the university students a
degree of discipline and organization which they had probably read about in their Marxist
books, but had not seen for themselves. The first thing that we did was to tell them straight
that we were in charge and that we would determine what we did, because we knew how to
operate. We weren't being facetious or bigoted, but we knew exactly what we were doing.
285 They agreed. We had the International Marxist Group, the International Socialists, the
Workers' Revolutionary Party and all the other organizations coming together in what they
called a broad left alliance, a united front, at the University and agreeing with us that they
would have to sink their differences; that we would have to fight one common enemy and that
we had no time to discuss whether Trotsky said X, Y or Z in 1873. We were facing a battle,
290 and we operated in a very efficient way. We campaigned all over East Anglia and by the end
of the third week, the labour movement in East Anglia had suddenly woken up to the fact that
we were there! They started to forward assistance to us and we could move out of the
university, in order to protect the students, because the students were under increasing
pressure from the authorities for giving up their beds and sharing all their facilities with us.
295 Some of our boys were very comfortable there. We had difficulty in getting them home. This
was an absolutely tremendous experience and what was happening was this: our people were
becoming politically educated and were becoming aware of what the class structure and what
the class war was. In a matter of days, they were changing. Never mind about a thousand
lectures, this was it! We had men who would never have gone to a political meeting in their
300 life, not only going to the university at Essex and listening to speeches but actually getting on
their feet and speaking themselves. It was amazing. I went on a tour of all the universities in
East Anglia and spoke to enthusiastic audiences packed with university students *and* miners
together. The barriers were completely down and the unity was there for any one to see. That
was, I think, probably one of the most remarkable experiences that I have ever had, in the
305 sense of a mass picket. Saltley was something different again, something unique.

How did the strike develop on a national basis?

4 Britain and Europe according to Harold Wilson

BRITAIN'S NEW DEAL IN EUROPE

'Her Majesty's Government have decided to recommend to the British people to vote for staying in the Community'

HAROLD WILSON, PRIME MINISTER

DEAR VOTER

This pamphlet is being sent by the Government to every household in Britain. We hope that it will help you to decide how to cast your vote in the coming Referendum on the European Community (Common Market).

Please read it. Please discuss it with your family and your friends.

We have tried here to answer some of the important questions you may be asking, with natural anxiety, about the historic choice that now faces all of us.

We explain why the Government, after long, hard negotiations, are recommending to the British people that we should remain a member of the European Community.

We do not pretend, and never have pretended, that we got everything we wanted in these negotiations. But we did get big and significant improvements on the previous terms.

We confidently believe that these better terms can give Britain a New Deal in Europe. A Deal that will help us, help the Commonwealth, and help our partners in Europe.

That is why we are asking you to vote in favour of remaining in the Community.

I ask you again to read and discuss this pamphlet.

Above all, I ask you to use your vote.

For it is *your* vote that will now decide. The Government will accept *your* verdict.

[Signed:]

Harold Wilson

YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE

The coming Referendum fulfils a pledge made to the British electorate in the general election of February 1974.

The Labour Party manifesto in the election made it clear that Labour rejected the terms under which Britain's entry in to the Common Market had been negotiated, and promised that, if returned to power, they would set out to get better terms.

The British people were promised the right to decide through the ballot box whether or not we should stay in the Common Market on new terms.

And that the Government would abide by the result[...].

The Government have recommended that Britain should stay in on the new terms which have been agreed with the other members of the Common Market.

But you have the right to choose.

OUR PARTNERS IN EUROPE

With Britain, there are nine other members of the Common Market. The others are Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands.

Their combined population is over 250 million.

The Market is one of the biggest concentrations of industrial and trading power in the world.

Its has vast resources of skill, experience and inventiveness.

The aims of the Common Market are:

- To bring together the peoples of Europe.
- To raise living standards and improve working conditions.
- To promote growth and boost world trade.
- To help the poorest regions of Europe and the rest of the world.
- To help maintain peace and freedom.

The European Community and its world-wide links

THE NEW DEAL

The better terms which Britain will enjoy if we stay in the Common Market were secured only after long and tough negotiations.

These started in April 1974 and did not end until March of this year.

On March 10 and 11 the Heads of Government met in Dublin and clinched the bargain. On March 18 the Prime Minister was able to make this announcements:

'I believe that our renegotiation objectives have been substantially though not completely achieved.'

FOOD

Britain had to ensure that shoppers could get secure supplies of food at fair prices.

As a result of these negotiations the Common Agricultural policy (known as CAP) now works more flexibly to the benefit of both housewives and farmers in Britain. The special arrangements made for sugar and beef are a good example.

At the same time many food prices in the rest of the world have shot up, and our food prices are now no higher because Britain is in the Market than if we were outside.

The Government also won a better deal on food imports from countries outside the Common Market, particularly for Commonwealth sugar and for New Zealand dairy products. These will continue to be on sale in our shops.

This is not the end of improvements in the Market's food policy. There will be further reviews. Britain, as a member, will be able to seek further changes to our advantage. And we shall be more sure of our supplies when food is scarce in the world.

MONEY AND JOBS

Under the previous terms, Britain's contribution to the Common Market budget imposed too heavy a burden on us. The new terms ensure that Britain will pay a fairer share. We now stand, under the Dublin agreement, to get back from Market funds up to £125 million a year. There was a threat to employment in Britain from the movement in the Common Market towards an Economic & Monetary Union. This could have forced us to accept fixed exchange rates for the pound, restricting industrial growth and putting jobs at risk. This threat has been removed.

Britain will not have to put VAT on necessities like food.

We have also maintained our freedom to pursue our own policies on taxation and on industry, and to develop Scotland and Wales and the Regions where unemployment is high.

HELPING THE COMMONWEALTH

It has been said that the Commonwealth countries would like to see us come out.

This is not so. The reverse is true.

Commonwealth Governments want Britain to stay in the Community. The new Market terms include a better deal for our Commonwealth partners as well as for Britain. Twenty-two members of the Commonwealth are among the 46 countries who signed a new trade and aid agreement with the Market earlier this year. Britain is insisting that Market aid for the poorer areas of the world must go to those in most need.

5 Keith Joseph Speech

310 SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 1974 509/74

**SPEECH BY THE RT. HON. SIR KEITH JOSEPH BT MP (LEEDS NE)
CONSERVATIVE SPOKESMAN ON HOME AFFAIRS, SPEAKING AT THE
GRAND HOTEL, BIRMINGHAM ON SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 1974.**

315 In the wartime army, they used to tell the story, apocryphal I am sure, about the regular army officer at the end of the first world war saying, 'thank goodness now the war is over we can get back to real soldiering'.

In the same way, some of us will be tempted to say, 'now the election's over, we can get back to real politics, Tory politics'.

320 Perhaps I should explain. I mean 'politics' instead of an exclusive diet of economics, and I mean Tory politics, all the things we Tories stand for, and have stood for long before Socialists came on the scene. Yes, we have to get economics back into proportion, as one aspect of politics, important but never really the main thing. This may be unfashionable, indeed anti-fashionable, because it is the current intellectual fashions which have wrought so much havoc in this country.

325 During the elections, discussion focussed almost exclusively on economics; and we lost the election. Were these two facts unconnected? I don't think so. The voter has faced three parties all of who claimed that they alone had the secret of fighting inflation, of achieving economic growth, of keeping down prices and providing benefits. This was the kind of auction in which Labour was bound to outbid us, because they are quite unhibited [sic], in promising the earth.

330 Over the years, this auction has raised expectations which cannot be satisfied, generated grievances and discontents. Far from bringing well being, this economics-first approach has aggravated unhappiness and social conflict, as well as over-straining the whole economic system to a point where it is beginning to seize up.

335 Would it not now be better to approach the public, who know that economics is not everything, as whole men rather than economic men? Should we not deal with matters which concern the nation; respect for other people and for law, the welfare of young people, the state of family life, the moral welfare of all the people, cultural values, public-spiritedness or its lack, national defence, the tone of national life? These are at the centre of the public's concern. The economic situation is not an independent variable; it reflects the state of political

340 life, the degree to which people are aware of realities, and the climate of opinion. You will only have a healthy economy in a sound body politic.

In the same way, our Tory approach to economics as party, as a tradition reflects our total approach to life and society .Our approach emphasises liberties, decentralised power, individual responsibility and interdependence. It differs substantially from that of Socialists. I
345 am not talking about people who happen to vote socialist, but the active Socialist members and the socialist intellectuals, those who have shaped current fashions regarding the economy, education, the arts, social welfare, the family.

And the opposite of socialist is not capitalist. Our party is older than capitalism, and wider than any class. It grew up in the first place out of concern for liberties, traditions and morals.
350 It has evolved a good deal in the past three centuries yet it has retained its essential character; its area of concern is the whole of public life and all matters which should be of public interest down to the treatment of every man, woman and child.

When we oppose nationalisation and increased state control over economic life - or at least I
355 hope we oppose them - we do not take this stand out of concern for the interests of a class of owners - and ownership is increasingly widespread - but because excessive state control and ownership limits the liberties of all citizens as well as leading to impoverishment.

When we oppose the imposition of a uniform state monopoly over education, it is not for the sake of privilege, but, on the contrary, in order that the area of choice call be widened and
360 made available to more citizens, that the talented children of the poor may have the best education in the environment most suited to them. We are opposed to using children as guinea pigs or spare parts for social engineers to experiment with. We are opposed to any policy that denies to parents the right to spend their own money on their children's education if they so choose.

365

Our view of ourselves as a national party has always meant basing ourselves on what the nation has in common notwithstanding the many distinctions which characterise it and which will continue to do so. We do not believe that national unity implies homogeneity.

The aspect of the Tory approach which I wish to discuss here tonight relates to the family and
370 to civilised values. They are the foundation on which the nation is built; they are being undermined. If we cannot restore them to health, our nation can be utterly ruined - whatever economic policies we might try to follow .For economics is deeply shaped by values, by the attitude towards work, thrift, ethics, public-sprit. (...)

6 From Harold Wilson's memoirs

Harold WILSON *The Final Term. The Labour Government 1974-1976*

London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson / Michael Joseph, 1979. Pp 105-107

380 The Lord President and Home Secretary and their advisers based their planning as far as possible on a political general election. But this meant that the two sides must so order themselves as to create two polling and propaganda organizations. This did not prove difficult. Both sides were to have free house-to-house distribution of the literature of each side, accompanied by strictly impartial polling instructions. They were told that their equivalent of a candidate's election address, in effect a
385 manifesto, uniform for the whole country, must not exceed 2,000 words. Government grants of £125,000 were available to each side, though in the final financial tally it proved that the pro-marketeters (Britain in Europe) had spent £1,365,583 as against £133,629 by their opponents.

In addition, the Government bore the cost of distributing the statements of both sides to every voter.

The national and provincial press were in favour of a 'Yes' vote almost without exception. Ministers
390 were of course free to campaign for the side of their choice, subject to the two rules that I laid down. The first was: no personal attacks. At one stage Tony Benn and Roy Jenkins got into a public brawl, and were promptly instructed to stick the issues: no personalities. Second, ministers were told that the 'agreement to differ' ended on 6 June, the day following the poll. From 6 June full collective responsibility would apply on the EEC as on all other issues. This was fully observed, and on the day
395 when the results were declared I was happy to see Tony Benn on TV handsomely accepting the verdict.

James Callaghan and I addressed meetings nearly every evening in the last fortnight and came together on the eve of the poll at Cardiff. Meetings were well attended and on the whole quiet and ready to listen, though I had some rough heckling in Glasgow, and barely succeeded in being heard at all in a London meeting packed by shouting demonstrators from the mindless extreme left, mainly
400 Communists.

The broadcasting authorities ran their part of the campaign on general elections lines though with one difference – the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, who had been in charge of negotiations throughout, were not invited to appear. We were somewhat puzzled, but when we met with the BBC and the chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, we learnt the reason, and it was
405 unassailable. The contest was not between parties but between two identifiable organizations. Balance in the general election sense meant equality of treatment for them, and would be upset if such extraneous characters as James Callaghan and myself were on the screens. The broadcasting authorities were absolutely right.

In the event, each of us was invited, but my own BBC interview, with Robin Day, was concentrated
410 almost entirely on the economic situation. That with Julian Haviland of ITV was much more on the referendum issues.

The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party decided to support the 'No' lobby. There was one acrimonious meeting where there was talk about an outright campaign against the Government. For only the second time since 1963 I laid my leadership of the Party on the line and a formula was produced with the help of the General Secretary. Looking back on that strange period a most interesting situation would have arisen had I resigned the leadership and yet been elected by the Parliamentary Party. The NEC decided in the event to support the 'No' cause on the basis of all aid short of war. Concretely they resolved to call a special one-day conference in London.

This took place at the Sobell Sports Centre in Islington on Saturday 26 April. The NEC had decided that I should be invited to speak at the beginning after which the real conference would begin. My speech was in a sober key, concerned to show that from Hugh Gaitskell's speech at Conference in 1962 our line had been that great good could come from membership; equally if we were faced with over-onerous terms Britain's interests would be harmed. I gave the simple arguments underlying the Cabinet's decision and recommendations to the House and the country. I was heard politely, with such cheers as there were coming from pro-marketeers. It was not my happiest Conference speech, but it was a chore and it was good to get it over. I left them in no doubt that however they voted – and how they would was never in question – the country would decide.

The message was underlined by the curtain back-drop to the stage, which was behind the speakers' rostrum and so placed that it was on televisions throughout the proceedings. Its message was 'Conference Advises – the People Decide'. The vote at the end of the afternoon – a card vote – recorded 3,724,000 against the Market, 1,986,000 for, practically 2 to 1. Then national verdict less than six weeks later was more than 2 to 1 the other way.

The Conference was in fact a non-event. It had had a great build-up in the press though it was forgotten by the following week. Political occasions are very much like Grand Nationals and Cup Finals. There is feverish speculation and great prophesying in the days before. Once the outcome is known discussion ceases and all that is remembered is the name of the winner, give or take a few who still cry 'foul'. So it seemed to us as James Callaghan and I winged our way to the thirty-four nation Commonwealth Conference at Kingston, Jamaica. The events there are recorded below but one surprise development there related specifically to the EEC and the referendum. While the final communiqué was being drafted, our chairman, Prime Minister Michael Manly of the host country, asked me to see him. He said, 'You don't know anything about this, and I'm not consulting you. I'm telling you that there have been consultations going on between all delegations except the British. We have decided to add a paragraph to the text declaring that the members of the committee regard continued membership of the European Community as in the best interests of the Commonwealth.' I was in no doubt, and he confirmed, that this was in part due to the successful negotiations of the Lomé Convention, with its massive help for forty-six developing countries.

7 1975 Commons debate on the economy

BUDGET RESOLUTIONS AND ECONOMIC SITUATION

House of Commons Debate, 21 April 1975 vol 890, cc986-991, 3.45 p.m.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Harold Lever)

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The House has clearly been greatly concerned in these discussions by the inflationary treadmill on which the nation finds itself, and I hope that the House will allow me to divert a little from the detail to some of the central economic positions which have resulted in this unfortunate circumstance. In the whole of the post-war period we have had chronic inflation. I do not want to go too far back because of the limitations of time, but in 1970 inflation started to take off, and in 1972 it got really under way with a fast, sharp increase in commodity prices which was added to in 1974 by the spectacular increase in oil prices. It is difficult to be certain about what caused this sudden take-off from the chronic level of inflation, which at first used to cause great alarm to which we later became reconciled as long as it was kept to what we thought were manageable proportions. One factor which has been greatly underestimated is the failure of the world to evolve a satisfactory new monetary system leading to currency stability after Bretton Woods in its then state had out-lived its effectiveness. Whatever may be the reason, that massive inflation started, and from 1972 to 1974 we witnessed inflation throughout the industrial world at a level not seen before in the post-war period and rarely seen before in the history of the advanced countries of the world.

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The effect of the sharp increases in raw material prices—particularly the effect of the increase in oil prices—was asymmetrical. It produced price inflation but demand deflation. It reduced demand by sending up prices. Not surprisingly, wages responded to the rising prices. Not surprisingly, the Finance Ministers and Chancellors of the Exchequer of various countries found themselves in an insoluble dilemma. The remedies that they had for price inflation were poison to the demand deflation problem, and vice versa. Therefore, we watched a raging inflation in terms of prices but a demand which was by no means adequate to keep all our economies fully employed. So we had rising prices and a fall in employment, and that is why, as the Chancellor pointed out, in 1974 wage rates increased by much more than prices.

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In his Budget speech, the Chancellor said that wage rates, not take-home pay, were increasing much more than prices. Take-home pay in real terms has been stagnant in this country and in many other countries since 1972. So the situation is that wage rates are going up faster than the cost of living, net real earnings are not increasing and demand is inadequate to sustain full employment. That is the national reflection of the world situation in which the price jump acts as a deflator of demand and, on the other hand, increases the cost of living. It is well, however, to bear in mind that, although it would have helped greatly the fight against inflation if we could have kept wage rates below the rise in the cost of living, the demand effect would have been even greater and the real earnings of workers would have fallen quite sharply.

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In the present situation it is clear that the power of the Chancellor is limited, as is the ability of the trade union leaders and workers to accept wage increases lower than the rise in the cost of living, or even to feel enriched by wage increases which are greater than the rise in the cost of living, when

demand is slackening throughout. The trouble is that no means exist by which individuals or groups can be faced with the aggregate effects of their demands, and as a result there is incongruity between the general will to share in an orderly way what is available in resources and the actual outcome.

495 I do not want to seek to explain why we have managed in the past in some respects, though by no means in every respect, rather better with this problem. We have got on to a treadmill and have been pushed there dramatically by the rise in commodity prices and oil prices. We are now kept there by self-sustaining inflation caused by wage increases. This situation must be dealt with.

500 It is difficult to say how we managed in earlier years. It is correct to say that in the past we did not manage in every respect in a better way because sometimes we paid a high price for our ability not to have to worry about inflation. It is as if we have been in a traffic system where the traffic was lighter in the past and when drivers drove more delicately. We have now a heavier weight of traffic with drivers moving at a much higher speed. It is obvious that we must find a solution which involves greater self-discipline, based on a greater awareness of our situation, than was the case in the past.

505 We want to maintain full employment, but it is clear that, unless we reduce the rate of inflation, the search for higher money wages will threaten full employment—and indeed is already doing so.

The importance of the social contract lies in the change of attitudes which it implies. That change of attitudes will mean that working people will seek voluntarily to make effective the general will which exists but which at the moment is not entirely in line with ultimate individual outcomes—
[Interruption.]

510 Conservative Members are entitled to have a laugh if they want one, but the Conservative Government were not startlingly successful in handling industrial relations. They hardly left this country with a high rate of prosperity and contentment as a result of their various convolutions. They were elected on a pledge not to bring in a statutory incomes policy. They scrapped that pledge without very much advantage to our people. However, I agree that nobody on the Labour benches is entitled to
515 claim that we have the magic answer to all these complex problems.

There has also been a good deal of confusion about what is involved in the social contract. [HON. MEMBERS: "You can say that again"] What we ask for in that contract is not wage restraint but wage orderliness—that is to say, an attempt to produce a broad division of available resources and reasonable order, to the advantage of all, since we would gain nothing by a disorderly scramble for the
520 limited resources which we have available. Nobody is asking working people to restrain their claims on society in real terms. What the Government are asking is that they sacrifice the shadow of monetary claims for the substance of real earnings which are compatible with the resources we have available.

525 I know that Conservative Members enjoy a good laugh at the concept of the social contract. We are told that it is dead, and I shall deal with the matter a little more fully later in my remarks. But no Conservative has come forward with a very convincing alternative—and that applies to the Conservatives when in Government and even now when they have the freedom of comment in Opposition. They have not offered the electors a cogent reason for believing that a Conservative Government would offer solutions to our inflationary problems and the industrial problems that go
530 with them.

There are a number of cosmetic achievements in this area to which Conservative Members can lay claim. We are constantly being offered solutions which involve monetarism. We are told that we

should cut the M1 monetary supply, or the M2 or the M5, which I think goes up to Scotland or Wales. I do not know what relevance these cuts have to the problem before us.

535 We are also told to cut the public sector borrowing requirement and the public sector deficit as a solution to our inflationary problems. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] That may be relevant, but it is more relevant to the man in the street to know what the policies entail in terms of employment prospects and our standard of life.

540 What, then, are the Tory so-called solutions? We are treated to statistical remedies. Somebody once said that statistics do not bleed. I could also add that statistics do not vote, and, therefore, Conservatives are a little timid in offering their views as to ways out of our problems. [Interruption.] I do not mind divisions of opinion in the Conservative Party on these matters. There have been divisions of opinion in the Labour Party on more difficult and tormenting questions. Even on matters which do not receive the same prominence in constitutional forms, in specialised areas, there can still be
545 differences of opinion in the Labour Party.

I think it must be said that nobody on the Labour benches is sure about Conservative policy on inflation and on industrial relations. Is a statutory policy still their hope or intention? The answer might be given in this debate by the right hon. Member for Leeds, North-East (Sir K. Joseph). Will the right hon. Gentleman be recounting his views on behalf of the whole of his guilty party on its
550 ineffectual efforts at a statutory policy? On the question of monetarism, I hope that he will help simple provincials in the Labour Party, such as myself, by telling us not what will be the statistical effect of monetary controls, but the real effects on the ground in language that employees will understand. I hope that he will tell my constituents what are his estimates of the number of unemployed that will be required, and for what length of time.

555 I respect the right hon. Gentleman's integrity and courage. I do not believe that he will shrink from giving an answer. The trouble is that he does not know the answer, any more than I do, about how many unemployed would be involved in the monetary solutions he commends to us.

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8 Michael Foot, The Red Flame of Socialist Courage

No one is less surprised than myself that this Conference has been dominated, and will continue to be dominated in my judgement, by the rising anxieties and fears and anger of our people about unemployment up and down this country ... Unemployment on this level is totally unacceptable to the Labour Movement. Of course, our unemployment is part of an affliction affecting the whole Western world; the Western world is gripped by the most complex and perilous recession which we have seen since 1945. It is indeed, in my judgement, a crisis of Capitalism of a most formidable character, and we have to muster all our energies, all our skill, to deal with it.

Let me start therefore by telling you what is my deepest instinct about the whole of this situation; it is of first importance for our country, and no less for our Labour Movement, that this crisis should be faced and surmounted by a Labour Government acting in the closest alliance and good faith with the trade-union movement of this country. (*Applause.*) If we were to fall apart, I shudder to think what would be the consequences for our people, for our young people and old alike, in unemployment and in all the other associated consequences. I shudder to think also what would be the consequence for our democratic institutions themselves. It is only three or four years ago that a Conservative Government used the opportunity which we gave them after 1970 to introduce the most insidious attack on trade unionism in this country which we have seen in this century. If we were ever fools enough to allow them to get the levers of power again, the whips would be changed to scorpions for our chastisement. Let us not make any mistake about that ...

People sometimes say: we will agree to some arrangement between the Government and the trade unions about wages, but only when you have the full panoply of Socialist measures actually put into full operation. I understand the argument, but I say it is unworkable. There is not a single Government in the world aspiring to change society that could work upon that system of transition, whether it is Communist, Maoist, Yugoslav, anything. Of course you could not work on that basis, and so I say, for anyone to argue that there shall be no concession to a Labour Government on these measures until all the other measures are in operation, that is not merely a recipe for the destruction of this Labour Government, it is a recipe for the destruction of any Labour Government. That has to be faced, too.

I am very glad that this Conference is going to be dominated also by the demand for new systems of investment, in the National Enterprise Board and the planning agreements and all the other matters that we have discussed and which we have had in our Party programmes. Of course, that is of paramount importance. But do not let anybody imagine that investment is a soft option. Investment is not a soft option. You can learn it from *Das Kapital* as well as from anywhere else, and I hope I will not be convicted for that. You can read it all there. Investment means very often, almost always, forgoing present claims in order to have future benefits. And you can do it by not so many methods. You can do it by the brutal capitalist methods of the nineteenth century, or

605 you can do it by the equally brutal, or maybe even more outrageous, methods of twentieth-century Stalinism, or you can do it by the politics of persuasion, by the Social Contract. You can do it that way. You can do it the democratic way, which is the heart and soul of our Labour Movement, and always has been. And it is that method by which we are going to seek for our success.

We must face the crisis, beat the inflation, start the regeneration of British industry, lift this scourge of unemployment from our people. This is what we must do. It is the greatest summons that has come to our Labour Party in the seventy-five years of its existence. We face an economic typhoon of unparalleled ferocity, the worst the world has seen since the 1930s. Joseph Conrad wrote a book called *Typhoon*, and at the end he told people how to deal with it. He said, 'Always facing it, Captain McWhirr: that's the way to get through.' Always facing it, that is the way we have got to solve this problem. We do not want a Labour Movement that tries to dodge it; we do not want people in a Labour Cabinet to try to dodge it. We want people who are prepared to show how they are going to face it, and we need the united support of the Labour Movement to achieve it.

I believe that we can make this Conference one of the greatest in our history, not by stifling dissent or criticism or debate, however ferociously the criticisms may be put: of course not. Indeed, there would not be any life left in this Party if it had not been for those prepared to come along and advocate sometimes unpopular opinions and stand up for them, and discover that those unpopular opinions sometimes became accepted. So I am not asking for any dull uniformity or anything of the sort. I am asking this Movement to exert itself as it has never done before, to show the qualities which we have, the Socialist imagination that exists in our Movement, the readiness to re-forge the alliance, stronger than ever, between the Government and the trade unions, and above all to show the supreme quality in politics, the red flame of Socialist courage. That is what we have got to do to save our country, and that is what can come from this Conference. (*Applause. A standing ovation.*)

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Michael Foot, Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 29 September 1976

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9 The Thatcherite vision

Whenever I visit Communist countries their politicians never hesitate to boast about their achievements. They know them all by heart; they reel off the facts and figures, claiming this is the rich harvest of the Communist system. Yet they are not prosperous as we in the West are prosperous, and they are not free as we in the West are free.

Our capitalist system produces a far higher standard of prosperity and happiness because it believes in incentive and opportunity, and because it is founded on human dignity and freedom. Even the Russians have to go to a capitalist country - America - to buy enough wheat to feed their people - and that after more than fifty years of a State-controlled economy. Yet they boast incessantly, while we, who have so much more to boast about, for ever criticize and decry. Is it not time we spoke up for our way of life? After all, no Western nation has to build a wall round itself to keep its people in.

So let us have no truck with those who say the free-enterprise system has failed. What we face today is not a crisis of capitalism but of Socialism. No country can flourish if its economic and social life is dominated by nationalization and State control.

The cause of our shortcomings does not, therefore, lie in private enterprise. Our problem is not that we have too little Socialism. It is that we have too much. If only the Labour Party in this country would act like Social Democrats in West Germany. If only they would stop trying to prove their Socialist virility by relentlessly nationalizing one industry after another. Of course, a halt to further State control will not on its own restore our belief in ourselves, because something else is happening to this country. We are witnessing a deliberate attack on our values, a deliberate attack on those who wish to promote merit and excellence, a deliberate attack on our heritage and our great past, and there are those who gnaw away at our national self-respect, rewriting British history as centuries of unrelieved gloom, oppression and failure – as days of hopelessness, not days of hope. And others, under the shelter of our education system, are ruthlessly attacking the minds of the young. Everyone who believes in freedom must be appalled at the tactics employed by the far Left in the systematic destruction of the North London Polytechnic. Blatant tactics of intimidation designed to undermine the fundamental beliefs and values of every student, tactics pursued by people who are the first to insist on their own civil rights while seeking to deny them to the rest of us.

We must not be bullied or brainwashed out of our beliefs. No wonder so many of our people, some of the best and the brightest, are depressed and talking of emigrating. Even so, I think they are wrong. They are giving up too soon. Many of the things we hold dear are threatened as never before, but none has yet been lost, so stay here, stay and help us defeat Socialism so that the Britain you have known may be the Britain your children will know.

These are the two great challenges of our time – the moral and political challenge, and the economic challenge. They have to be faced together and we have to master them both.

What are our chances of success? It depends on what kind of people we are. What kind of people are we? It depends what kind of people we are. Well, what kind of people are we? We are the people that in the past made Great Britain the Workshop of the World. The people who persuaded others to buy British not by begging them to do so, but because it was best. We are a people who have received more Nobel prizes than any other nation except America, and head for head we have done better than America. Twice as well, in fact. We are the people who, among other things, invented the computer, refrigerator, electric motor, stethoscope, rayon, steam turbine, stainless steel, the tank, television, penicillin, radar, jet engine, hovercraft, float glass and carbonfibres... We export more of what we produce than either West Germany, France, Japan or the United States. And well over 90% of these exports come from private enterprise. It's a triumph for the private sector and all who work in it. Let us say so, loud and clear.

With achievements like that who can doubt that Britain can have a great future? What our friends abroad want to know is whether that future is going to happen. Well, how can we Conservatives make it happen? Many of the details have already been dealt with in the various debates. But policies and programmes should not be just a list of unrelated items. They are part of a total vision of the kind of life we want for our country and our children. Let me give you my vision.

A man's right to work as he will, to spend what he earns, to own property, to have the State as servant and not as master – these are the British inheritance. They are the essence of a free country and on that freedom all our other freedoms depend.

But we want a free economy, not only because it guarantees our liberties, but also because it is the best way of creating wealth and prosperity for the whole country, and it is this prosperity alone which can give us the resources for better services for the community, better services for those in need.

By their attack on private enterprise, this Labour Government has made certain that there will be next to nothing available for improvements in our social services over the next few years. We must get private enterprise back on the road to recovery, not merely to give people more of their own money to spend as they choose, but to have more money to help the old and the sick and the handicapped. And the way to recovery is through profits, good profits today leading to high investment, leading to well-paid jobs, leading to a better standard of living tomorrow. No profits mean no investment and that means a dying industry geared to yesterday's world, and that means fewer jobs tomorrow.

Some Socialists seem to believe that people should be numbers in a State computer. We believe they should be individuals. We are all unequal. No one, thank heavens, is

quite like anyone else, however much the Socialists may pretend otherwise. We believe that everyone has the right to be unequal. But to us, every human being is equally important. Engineers, miners, manual workers, shop assistants, farm workers, postmen, housewives - these are the essential foundations of our society, and without them there would be no nation. But there are others with special gifts who should also have their chance, because if the adventurers who strike out in new directions in science, technology, medicine, commerce and industry are hobbled, there can be no advance. The spirit of envy can destroy; it can never build. Everyone must be allowed to develop the abilities he knows lie has within him, and she knows she has within her, in the way they choose.

Freedom to choose is something we take for granted until it is in danger of being taken away. Socialist Governments set out perpetually to restrict the area of choice, and Conservative Governments to increase it. We believe that you become a responsible citizen by making decisions for yourself, not by having them made for you. But they are made for you by Labour all right!

Margaret Thatcher, Speech at the Conservative Party Conference at Brighton, 10 October 1975

10 God Save the Queen, Sex Pistols, 27 May 1977

God save the queen
The fascist regime
They made you a moron
Potential H-bomb

God save the queen
She ain't no human being
There is no future
In England's dreaming

Don't be told what you want
Don't be told what you need
There's no future, no future,
No future for you

God save the queen
We mean it man
We love our queen
God saves

God save the queen
'Cause tourists are money
And our figurehead
Is not what she seems

Oh God save history
God save your mad parade
Oh Lord God have mercy
All crimes are paid

When there's no future
How can there be sin
We're the flowers in the dustbin
We're the poison in your human machine
We're the future, your future

God save the queen
We mean it man
We love our queen
God saves

God save the queen
We mean it man
And there is no future
In England's dreaming

No future, no future,
No future for you
No future, no future,
No future for me

No future, no future,
No future for you
No futur

11 Tony Cliff : Why socialists must support gays (August 1978)

From **Socialist Worker**, No.583, 26 August 1978..

IN CLASS-INFESTED society there is oppressor and oppressed in all walks of life. Employer oppresses employee; man oppresses woman; white oppresses black; old oppresses young; heterosexual oppresses homosexual.

The true socialist is able to overcome all these divisions. An engineering worker who can only identify with other engineering workers may be a good trade unionist but he has not proved himself to be a socialist. A socialist has to be able to identify with the struggles of all oppressed groups.

We are all the children of capitalism, so we tend to conceive of the future – even the socialist future – in an ordered and hierarchical way.

It is as though the socialist revolution will be led by the Father of the Chapel in the print union, the NGA working on Fleet Street. Second in command will be an AUEW Convenor Section 1 from the toolroom in a big car factory. The lieutenants of the revolution will all be forty-year-old white male shop stewards.

If there is enough space then we'll allow blacks and women and gays to take part – providing they stand quietly at the back!

A lot of socialists still have difficulty believing that gays will be taking part in the revolution at all.

On the contrary we should look forward now to the first leader of the London workers' council being a 19-year-old black gay woman!

The system rules by dividing us. This means there is no natural way by which one oppressed group identifies with another. The most racist extremists in the Southern States of America are the *poor* whites – not the rich whites.

In the same way blacks do not *automatically* support women and women do not automatically support blacks. Gays will not *automatically* support other oppressed groups.

The Nazis sent thousands of gays to concentration camps. In Chile gays were castrated and left bleeding on the street.

But it is not true that, even given these facts, gays automatically become anti-fascist.

Tens of thousands of gays supported Hitler. Many were in the Brownshirts. After Hitler took power he turned on the gay support and slaughtered them in the Night of the Long Knives.

How can we explain gays joining the Nazis?

If you are an *oppressed* gay putting on a Nazi leather jacket and leather boots gives you for the first time a sense of power. It makes it easy to put down Jews, women and anyone else.

For any oppressed group to fight back there is need for *hope*.

If you are on the way *down* you feel despair. You look for a victim to kick.

If you are on the way *up* you look for a back to pat.

That's why only by building a socialist movement can you unite workers with oppressed blacks, women and gays.

And that's why it is so important for gays to organise for demonstrations like at Brick Lane and to feel able to identify themselves proudly as gays and – where possible – as revolutionary socialist gays.

Karl Marx wrote that capitalism unites the forces of opposition. But it also divides us. We have to struggle *consciously* for that unity.

We are one – all of us together – but only when we *fight* together.

12 Readers' letters to Spare Rib

FORUM

We received so many letters about the National Women's Liberation Conference, held in Birmingham on April 9 (SR 70), and so many responses to our first 'forum' on therapy (SR 69), that we decided to give over this 'forum' entirely to a selection of readers' letters.

The seven demands are listed on page five

Conference

Dear sisters,
It was my first conference and I wasn't prepared for its scale and intensity. I think the Birmingham women did more than their best to organise it and I hope they are not too demoralised by the plenary. When I left it, at 4.30, I was very freaked out and depressed by what happened. I thought it could be the end of the movement or at least a serious split.

We talked about it on the way back to Durham, and I was able to clarify my thoughts quite a bit. It was pointed out that although these scenes are heavy to go through for everyone (I'm thinking about our lesbian sisters feeling ripped off and reacting aggressively), they are necessary: every revolutionary minority has to create chaos and confusion as a first step to be recognised and heard (to the detriment, unfortunately, of other minorities—as seen in the plenary).

Two suggestions: Since the movement is getting so big and it gets so hard to organise a national conference, I think it might be better to organise regional conferences once or twice a year and then have delegates from the regions get together for the final decisions (a mini-plenary). A lot of trust is needed for this process but I think we can do it.

For a big gathering, which is important politically and emotionally, I think a summer festival would be a great idea—with feminist groups, plays, artists, creches etc. What do you think?

Gaelle Finley,
Langley Park,
Durham.

Dear sisters,
The conflicts (at the plenary) revolved around the differing analyses of the politics of our oppression that exist within the movement. These were highlighted and brought out by the debate on the seventh demand.

The Revolutionary Feminist Group seem to see the dynamics of our oppression as reducible purely to the social relations of patriarchy. In other words it is men *per se* who are the enemy. Given the biologicistic basis of their analysis, the liberation of both men and women together is a contradiction in terms since the interests of men and women are ultimately mutually

exclusive. Therefore it is only by destroying the oppressive relation of men over women, with women taking control, that women will be liberated. Thus the only priority of the women's movement should be the destruction of male supremacy. This seemed to us anyway the basic political logic behind their amendment to the seventh demand (*"Male violence against women is an expression of male supremacy and political control of women"*) and their suggestion that the six demands be abolished.

Obviously, as socialist feminists, we think that capitalist social relations (which are not necessarily synonymous with patriarchal social relations) and therefore the state, also play a decisive role in maintaining and perpetuating our oppression; that, therefore, a class analysis can help us understand *certain* areas of our oppression; and that our liberation is involved with that of all other oppressed people, including men. But what the specific relations are between patriarchy and capitalism is something we are only beginning to understand.

Many of us are new to the movement and all of us are ready to admit that we are unaware of (a) how oppressed we really are, and in what ways, (b) the nature of the internal and external dynamics perpetuating our oppression and (c) the reasons behind all the internal politics of the WLM! What we do believe, however, is that communication with other sisters is essential, that the Revolutionary Feminist Group, other radical feminists, in fact, other *feminists*, all have crucial insights and analyses on our oppression.

Our development will be less if we don't hear these points of view vocally, in a non-oppressive way, at day events, regional and national conferences. We left Birmingham wondering whether instead of the movement having differences of opinion within its ranks, it had irretrievable splits blocking communication. The only way out of these dilemmas is by further cross-fertilisation of ideas, not silence. We need to work out our ideas more specifically. It is easy to be negative about other points of view, but not so easy to put forward well thought out alternatives; easy to criticise the crude methods of communication employed at the end of the plenary, but yet another matter to devise open, flexible communication that actually does achieve something at the end of the day. But this we ob-

viously need to do. In the meantime, sisters, please write! Clapham Socialist Feminist Tuesday Group, c/o Women's Centre, 45 North St, London SW4.

To the Women's Liberation Movement
c/o Spare Rib

Although not active in the movement I'm a committed feminist and struggle every day in my work environment (as a secretary) socially and personally against role stereotyping. As I live in Birmingham I went along to the plenary session accompanied by two friends—another friend (Karen) attended the workshop sessions the previous day. We were all making our first real contact with the movement and hoped to experience an atmosphere of warmth, support and solidarity to help us to continue with our individual struggles and to encourage us to become active in the movement. Instead we felt the atmosphere to be alienating and threatening.

Karen experienced a thinly veiled attack for the apparently unforgivably anti-feminist act of wearing a skirt. Have we all struggled to shed the old suffocating 'sex object' stereotype only to be presented with an equally rigid image which we must force ourselves into in order to be accepted as sisters?

I had understood that we were striving for women to be accepted as a new, free, non-stereotyped human being; not doing the oppressor the honour of aping his dress, mannerisms and worst behavioural characteristics. The discussion on violence of all kinds perpetrated by men on women was constantly disrupted by bullying and intimidation by one section of the women present.

This is allowed to happen by the rest of the women due to their deliberate policy of non-organisation and structure, which obviously results in those with the loudest voices dominating the proceedings; all in the name of some naive, half-baked idealistic attempt to preserve something they dupe themselves into believing is democracy; but in fact effectively ensures that the movement doesn't expand and can therefore continue to be used simply for the selfish exploration and analysis of their own psyches.

As one of the 'ordinary' women I'm always hearing that the movement is trying to attract—the threatening stances, arrogant posturings and self-indulgent introspection I and my friends witnessed at conference have ensured that none of us will ever try to establish contact with the movement again. I'm only glad I failed to persuade more of my friends to attend. Friends whose commitment to feminist ideas is not yet as total as that of the four of us who did go—whose basic belief is miraculously unshaken by the experience.

So go home sisters, with your newly polished raised consciousness, and have no fear. There's no danger that the purity and idealism of your movement will ever be sullied by massive influxes of typists, housewives, factory workers, etc.
Ann Lee, Birmingham

Dear sisters,
This letter is written in the hope that it will initiate a discussion within the movement. This will be necessary if any group is going to be willing to organise another national conference in the light of what happened in Birmingham. Sisters who attended the plenary at this year's conference will have had a first hand demonstration of how a small group of disruptive and vocal women were able to ruin an important and potentially exciting discussion. We cannot understand the politics of women who say the movement is for all women but who act in a way that will alienate even the most committed.

Do we want the women's movement to be outgoing and to grow? If we do, then we must ensure that our movement is broad enough to accommodate differences. There can be disagreements about both tactics and priorities. However, at some level there must be a basis for agreement and this is one important aspect of our demands and is one very good reason for keeping them. The importance of the Women's Liberation Movement is that it *unites* issues such as lesbianism and equal pay within the general analysis of women's oppression. We should help one another, not just selfishly claim all the energy, time and attention for our own particular priority.

If even this goodwill is lacking then we have to ask the question: can it be created or should we go our separate ways? However, the dangers for everybody of splitting the movement are obvious. We must ask whether we are willing to let a small disruptive minority force a split which many of us don't want. The majority of women must start voicing their views—we have been too apologetic for too long. Women Against Racism and Fascism, Women's Therapy Centre, Rights of Women, Fifth Demand Group, Lesbian Left, LSE Women's Group.

Extracts from Brighton Women's Liberation Group's proposal to split the sixth demand, accepted at the conference:

(The sixth demand: *An end to all discrimination against lesbians and the right of all women to define their own sexuality.*)

1) We see the sixth demand as the lesbian demand, and the second half obscures the force of this. Also the two statements together alter the meaning of each. The right to define our own sexuality is seen as sexual preference, ie who you choose to sleep with or not, rather than how you relate to yourself and others. A lesbian demand in its own right covers areas of struggle including possible legislation on AID, custody, discrimination in jobs etc. It also gives political validity to lesbianism as a chosen lifestyle.

2) We think a women-defined sexuality is not a demand but rather a basic principle/premise/assumption underlying the ideology of the WLM. Therefore it could be tacked on to any or all of the other demands.

3) We can see the demands as potential focuses for campaigns to change specific areas of legislation, ie demands made of the state (men). The second part of

All letters have been cut for reasons of space and repetition.

13 Prime Minister Callaghan in 1978

(...) We shall shortly embark on the last session of Parliament - this Parliament - and therefore it is a suitable moment to look back and see where we came in. In those dark and candlelit days of the last weeks of the Conservative Government, the question that was being posed was: 'Is Britain governable?' In our 1974 manifesto we gave the reply, and I quote: 'Labour does not go along with the prophets of doom. Give us your backing over the difficult two or three years ahead. We shall get back on the right course. We have confidence in the British people.' 'Give us two or three years,' we said, 'and we shall get back on the right course.' The people did, and we have.

But why was there such gloom about Britain's prospects at home and abroad in those days? I give you the answer in two words - runaway inflation. Week after week, month after month, prices zoomed up, wages chased after them. Indeed, wages, you may recall, were indexed in order that they should keep up with the cost of living. Both wages and prices still went on going up, and the Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer printed pound notes by the trunkful in order to keep pace with the increase in wages that was being paid out, and in order to keep pace with the rising prices. Inflation threatened to submerge not only our personal standards and our family living standards - it threatened our very institutions. And at the end, nobody was a penny piece better off. Most people were worse off.

So we rejected it - we rejected the pessimism that underlay that approach. We entered into arrangements with the trade unions before the Labour Government was elected which gave us a firm foundation on which to build. We did not under-rate in that manifesto the significance, or the difficulty, or the magnitude of the job that we had to do. Indeed, let me remind you what the opening words of the election manifesto were:

'Britain faces its most dangerous crisis since the war.' The words were sombre, they were true. And that, Madam Chairman and fellow delegates, is the pit from which we have escaped and to which we do not intend to return.

Today nobody denies that the Labour Government and the people, working together in partnership, have confounded the pessimists. There is no room for complacency - we could slip back into an inflationary situation, and, Madam Chairman, it is the Government's responsibility to prevent that - and I call on everybody, we need support from everyone as we do so.

The ultimate test of a Labour Government is how far it fulfils the needs of those who put their trust in it. As long as there is a family without a home, as long as there is a man or woman without a job, as long as there is a patient waiting for a hospital bed, or someone who suffers from discrimination

because of his colour or because of his race, or because of his creed, then our Government has work to do. It is in that spirit of challenge that I invite you to look forward to the next five years of Labour Government. This Conference comes at one of the most crucial moments in Labour's history. Not for the first time, a Labour Government has cleared up the chaos left by the Tories. The difference this time is that we have also been able to begin the process of improving the condition of our people. The importance of securing another term of office for the Labour Government is that for once we will not have to waste the first three years clearing up behind the Tories. (...)

(631 words)

James Callaghan, Leader's speech, Labour Conference, Blackpool, 3rd October 1978.

14 Margaret Thatcher on the vote of no confidence

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/mar/28/her-majestys-government-opposition-motion>

[Mrs. Margaret Thatcher \(Finchley\)](#)

[...] Let us take the Prime Minister's own objectives as the test by which he should be judged. He set them out in the first censure debate, which took place in June 1976. His first objective was to overcome inflation. Apparently the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not performed that feat by the time that the last election took place. Be that as it may, the fact is that this Government have been responsible for doubling the prices in the housewife's shopping basket.

Far from being overcome, inflation is rising again and will rise in the coming months. Indeed, on the Healey basis, it is already into double figures. It was on that basis that we were given by the Treasury, in a written answer, the figure of 13.3 per cent.

The Prime Minister's second objective was to make inroads into the unacceptably high level of unemployment...and to reduce it by 1979 to 3 per cent. Today it is double that figure. On that, too, the Prime Minister has failed.

The Prime Minister's third objective was to achieve a high-output, high-productivity, and a high-wage economy based on full employment". But only a week or so ago we had news of the worst level of manufacturing output this decade. A few days ago we had a chilling reminder that not only are our industrial competitors ahead of us in output but that they are pulling away from us at what seems to be an even faster rate.

For every extra unit of output from a worker in British industry over the last five years, our least efficient competitors—the Italians—produced two units, the Americans more than three, the French four and a half, the Germans five and a half and the Japanese more than six. In the same world conditions that we face, their Governments seem to be able to generate the conditions for success. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear"] This Government have failed.

Those were the Prime Minister's objectives. His strategy was the social contract, and then a new social contract [464](#) to enable us to proceed with confidence in the years ahead."—[\[Official Report, 9 June 1976; Vol. 912, c. 1458–62.\]](#) That strategy has totally collapsed, as many of us said it would, but we were regularly vilified for saying so. The fourth phase of that contract—the 5 per cent.—was never accepted by those for whom it was intended. It resulted in creating the very confrontation that the Prime Minister boasted he had replaced, by cooperation. The people witnessed the spectacle of a Government abdicating their authority to strike committees. The Prime Minister's objectives were not achieved, and his strategy failed.

The Prime Minister said that had his dream of new economic strength come about he would use it to strengthen our position abroad, to ensure a peaceful solution to world problems through the use of the United Nations, and to strengthen Europe's voice. What is the reality? Rarely in the post-war period can our standing in the world have been lower, or our defences

weaker. The international position is graver than at any time since the 1930s. The difference is that Britain is now a nation on the sidelines.

In one diagnosis, however, I agree with the Prime Minister. Influence overseas depends upon economic strength at home. A nation that cannot manage its own affairs properly is not in a position to give advice to those who can.

There are, I believe, four main things that have contributed to Britain's decline in the last five years. First, far too little attention has been given to wealth creation and far too much to wealth distribution. What has to be done? Top of the list must be a policy of incentive tax cuts. There has been agreement on that for years. The trouble is that the Government just do not do it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has sympathy with the tax position of management, but sympathy is as far as it goes. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Government's resident example of congenial and civilised man, is much more expansive. In a television interview he said: The rate of tax on salaried talent is very high in this country ... The putting of this right is a massive problem that will take a little time. I believe this to be a number one priority in the Chancellor's mind for future action ... That is my own view and ought to be. [465](#) But nothing was done. Even the Prime Minister tells his colleagues "If you talk to people in the factories and in the clubs, they all want to pay less tax." But pronouncement is not followed by policy. The lack of that policy leads to a haemorrhage of talent in management and resentment amongst the skilled.

The Jeremiahs sometimes say that the ordinary people of this country have lost the will to work, but let them work in other countries, where they are no longer frustrated by British tax rates, and they can out-produce and out-sell our competitors.

Vital as tax cuts are to restore management morale and the morale of the skilled worker, they are also needed to encourage the growth of small business. Mainly from that sector shall we achieve the new jobs—tomorrow's jobs—that we need for our young people.

No Government can protect yesterday's jobs for ever. They can postpone the day of reckoning, but they cannot escape it. They can ease the transition from one job to another, but this Government try to protect yesterday's job without facilitating the growth of new industries. That is a policy for penury and unemployment, from which the regions suffer most of all.

For wealth creation a different attitude to profits is required. Profits are pitifully low. As a result, several companies have announced cutbacks in investment plans. Examples are ICI and Hoover. The alternative of borrowing to invest is precluded from many businesses by the continuing prohibitive interest rates which are the consequences of this Government's policies.(...)

15 Welsh Nationalists on the vote of no confidence

Speech by [Mr. Gwynfor Evans \(Carmarthen\)](#), Debate on the « no confidence motion » proposed by the Conservative opposition, Westminster 28 March 1979.

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/mar/28/her-majestys-government-opposition-motion>

A week ago the position of my two colleagues in Plaid Cymru and myself was that we would vote in the earliest motion of confidence against the Government and for the Opposition. We had very good reasons and had drafted our own motion of censure which we intended setting down following that of the SNP. We wanted then, and still want, to place on record our disgust with the way in which the Government have fumbled clumsily and sometimes disastrously with the life of Wales. Not a single aspect of Welsh life is stronger because of the activity of this Labour Government.

I refer to employment. When the Labour Party came to power in March 1974, there were 38,000 people unemployed in Wales. Today, the figure is 88,452—an increase of 230 per cent. This is a tremendous waste of human resources at a time when so much work needs to be done in the country. Even now, there is a declining number of jobs for unemployed people in our country.

The Government decided on withdrawal of an active regional policy. The regional premium came to an end in 1976, the IDC policy has become worthless, and, when London found itself needing jobs, regional policy was effectively abandoned. The Government have also consistently refused to draw up an economic plan for Wales.

The Government have failed to give a lead towards a new industrial order—we had expected that—based on co-operation and harmony, and a common purpose in industry, which should be the objective, of industrial democracy. This has not happened. Part of the consequence has been the industrial chaos seen this winter. The period of the last Labour Government between 1964 and 1970 saw one coal mine closed in Wales for every seven weeks of that period. The Government still intend to allow the closure of coal mines in Wales. We have had notice that a number whose stocks have not been depleted are to be closed. The subsidy for coal in Wales is only £3 a ton compared with £11.93 a ton in Germany and £24.60 a ton in Belgium.

Looking at the steel industry, one notes that the promised investment in Port Talbot has been suspended, with the result that uncertainty looms over its future. Shotton is now following East Moors and Ebbw Vale as a victim of the Government's failure to provide conditions suitable for the survival of these basic industries.

We have one of the worst housing records in the United Kingdom. We have an older stock of houses in Wales than in any other part of the United Kingdom. Houses are in great need of repair and replacement, but public expenditure on housing in Wales has actually been reduced below the United Kingdom average. It was only 3.9 per cent. of the United Kingdom average last year. There are now 107,000 houses in Wales condemned as unfit for human habitation, with over 50,000 families on the housing waiting list. Yet, with a job on this scale to be

carried out, 15,000 building workers are unemployed. Effectively, no leasehold reforms of any value have been enacted.

My constituency is particularly interested in agriculture, but the Government have failed abysmally to fulfil the plans set out in their pamphlet "Food from Our Own Resources". Half the growth sectors identified in that White Paper have seen a decline in production. There has been no serious attempt to establish effective policies for marginal land, of which we have such a great quantity in Wales. Marginal land development is essential to increased food production in our country.

Morale in the health services has declined sharply because of mismanagement and bureaucratic structures unresponsive to human needs. Adequate resources have not been made available, with the result that the level of service in hospitals has dropped and waiting lists have escalated. In the largest hospital in my constituency, with 560 beds, we do not even possess a unit for intensive care. Insufficient nurses is a situation found in so many places in our country.

In education, there has been a failure to use teachers who have been trained in great numbers in our country, with the ridiculous consequence that hundreds of teachers are on the dole while many schools have classes that are far too large to enable the children to be taught properly. Virtually no lead has been given in what should be the right of all Welsh people to have their children educated in the Welsh language, both in primary schools and secondary schools. The Government have taken no step towards the achievement of this right. We have a higher proportion of pre-1903 school buildings than any other country in Britain. Yet too little money is spent on improving the standard of school buildings.

On taxation, the Government have allowed inflation to increase faster than the rise in the threshold level for payment of income tax, with the result that people on very low incomes, even pensioners, find themselves paying tax.

In broadcasting, despite the commitment of the Government for years past to establish in Wales the fourth channel as a national Welsh channel, no effective steps have yet been taken to that end. This means that the language is being more rapidly eroded than it should be eroded—a language that is the greatest treasure we possess in Wales, one of the greatest treasures in the whole of these islands. The Government have made no attempt at all to implement the fine recommendations of their own Welsh Language Council. It has now been disbanded. Not one of its recommendations has been fulfilled.

16 Gerry Fitt on the vote of no confidence

Speech by Gerry Fitt, SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party), MP for Belfast West, during the debate on the motion proposed by the Conservative opposition, opposition “That this House has no confidence in Her Majesty's Government”, 28 March 1979.

http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/mar/28/her-majestys-government-opposition-motion#column_516

[Mr. Gerard Fitt \(Belfast, West\)](#)

This will be the unhappiest speech I have ever made in this House. When I was elected in 1966, I sat on the Labour Benches. I was under no compulsion to do so, but I had been a committed Socialist all my life. Therefore, when I came to this House I felt proud and honoured to associate myself with the Labour cause.

When the Labour Government were defeated, I took my place among Labour Members on the Opposition Benches. Throughout a 14-year period in Parliament I have never once voted in the Conservative Lobby. I have at all times committed myself to support the policies which I honestly believed were for the good of the United Kingdom.

Even in the years when we were in Opposition and when the Conservative Government were courageously trying to grapple—and to some extent succeeding—with the problems of Northern Ireland, I voted on every other issue with the then Labour Opposition. I repeat that the Conservative Government of 1970–74 tried courageously to reach a settlement in Northern Ireland. However, all that we had built up so laboriously was wrecked by the election in February 1974. We then in May of that year experienced the UWC strike. That strike terrified the Labour Government. Since then the Labour Government have been running away. They have not stood up to Unionist and Loyalist extremists as they should have done.

When we look back in history, we see clearly that Labour Governments are not the best Governments to grapple with the Irish problem. That does not apply to Labour Oppositions. When Labour is in Opposition, one sees the real conscience of the Labour Party. Labour Members are not then restricted by the reins of office.

This evening I find myself in a most difficult position, both personally and otherwise. I heard the speech of the Prime Minister and I agreed with every word of it. I hope that when there is an election a Labour Government will be returned again. I have also heard the speeches so far from the Opposition Benches. They do not particularly fill me with enthusiasm when one envisages an incoming Conservative Government. But I believe that the policy on Northern Ireland adopted by the Labour Government since 1974 has been disastrous for the communities in Northern Ireland. The Conservatives tried to bring people in Northern Ireland

together, but the communities are now more divided than they have been since the onset of the present troubles in 1969–70.[...]

Throughout the years Hansard will tell the story of the votes that have taken place and the way in which I have voted on matters such as the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Bill, the emergency powers Bill, the [Prevention of Terrorism \(Temporary Provisions\) Bill](#), and so on. Those hon. Members who are true Socialists voted with me on these matters—they were men who had nothing to gain from coming into the Lobby with me but who were activated by concern about Northern Ireland. It has been hard for me to take the fact that the Government Front Bench has taken a diametrically opposed view to me over Northern Ireland.

It has been said that if I do not vote for the Government tonight and there is an election, the alternative is just as bad. I do not think that that is so. I want to see a continuation of the Labour Government. But if there is a Conservative Government, I warn them not to get carried away with the belief that somewhere around the corner there is a military solution to the Northern Ireland problem. Unfortunately, that is the tune that we have heard from the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Every Monday morning at 10 o'clock he sees the Chief Constable. Every Monday at 1 p.m. we hear on the news that so many IRA men have been caught and so many have been sent to gaol. Every Monday the Secretary of State looks for a military solution. But there will be Mondays and Mondays and more Mondays when there will be no military solution, and there will be no solution at all until we start to grapple with the political problem of Northern Ireland.

My grievances are very clear and readily understood. Although not too many of my hon. Friends will stand up and say this in the House, many of them have told me that they recognise what has been going on over Northern Ireland and that they are sorry. Many regret bitterly ever having done a deal with the devil in the person of the Northern Ireland Unionist Party. But it is too late now. In all conscience, and understanding the real needs of Northern Ireland, I would be a liar and a traitor to the people who sent me here if I were to go into the Lobby tonight with the Labour Government to express confidence in their handling of the affairs of Northern Ireland. I want to see an election as soon as possible. I want to see the Labour Government win with such a majority that never again will they have to rely on the votes of the Unionists in Northern Ireland.(...)

I have a loyalty to this Government, to my own working class and trade union background, and to the whole working-class movement in the United Kingdom and further afield. But I have a greater loyalty to the people of Northern Ireland who have suffered so tragically over the past 10 years. I am speaking with their voice tonight. It is their voice saying that because of what the Government have done in the past five years—disregarded the minority and appeased the blackmailers of the Northern Ireland Unionist majority—I cannot go into the Lobby with them tonight.

17 Looking back on the seventies

A most important decade In all sorts of ways, in fact, Britain reflected the new mood of the late Seventies more obviously than many countries. This was not least made apparent in the fact that, within little over a year in 1975-6, both Britain's major political parties had chosen new leaders. Those two typical 'fantasy figures' of the Sixties, Heath and Wilson had departed (as at much the same time, though for rather different reasons, 5

had the leader of Britain's third largest party, Jeremy Thorpe). And in many ways, the two figures who succeeded Wilson and Heath could not have provided a greater contrast. However much his detractors claimed that the 'bluff avuncular style' of Jim Callaghan who succeeded Harold Wilson as Prime Minister in 1976, was just a facade, in reality hiding a weak man, prone to panic, the fact remains that the atmosphere of British political life did change markedly after Wilson's departure. 10

Seeing himself initially as 'Moses' come down from the mountain top to utter stern truths to his people, Callaghan did run a tighter, more orthodox monetary policy, and unlike his predecessor was not afraid on occasion to spell out to the unions the economic facts of life. Inflation did come down a long way from its traumatic peak in 1975 (in fact to 9% by 1979) and, assisted by that greatest unlooked-for bonanza of the Seventies, North Sea oil, which only four years after it began to flow in 1974, was already meeting four-15

fifths of Britain's needs, the country's financial picture by the late Seventies looked, at least outwardly, rather more rosy. Even more interesting, in terms of the changing mood of the times, was the emergence of Mrs Margaret Thatcher, symbolising a very different kind of conservatism from that which Mr Heath had stood for. By the late Seventies, indeed, it was widely accepted that the revival of conservative attitudes which had 20

begun to show as early as ten years before had at last reached the point where it was the most powerful, even intellectually vigorous force in English life. Certainly it seemed a long way from that triumphant onward march of 'permissive' morality, 'progressive' attitudes in education, and general neophilia which in the Sixties had dominated English life in all directions. Similarly, there was a widespread and deepseated reaction to those heady days of the Wilson government in the mid-Seventies, when it had seemed 25

that the trade unions and an ever-expanding bureaucracy were carrying all before them. Various former left-wing writers, such as Paul Johnson, and politicians, like the one-time Labour Foreign Secretary Lord George Brown, were now in the forefront of those warning that the power of the unions and the overmighty spread of government (which by 1975 had come to represent or control 60% of the entire British economy) might be just the forerunners of Britain's possible eventual collapse into the kind of Marxist, 30

totalitarian state which many of the more extreme members of the Labour Party, such as Mr Anthony Wedgewood Benn (who had changed his name during the Seventies to plain Tony Benn) seemed to see as increasingly desirable. By the last two years of the Seventies, the thought that at least one more last-ditch attempt should be made to save Britain from such a fate by giving a try to Mrs Thatcher's 'new Conservatism', had for 35

many clearly become irresistible. If there were any doubts that she might be pre-empted by the success of Mr Callaghan's 'Moses' act in talking tough to the newly-quiescent unions,

they were rudely dispelled in Britain's 'winter of discontent' in 1978-9, when the lower paid unions in particular plunged the country into the kind of social chaos it had never known before. Amid three months of the worst winter weather of the decade, and a flood of newspaper headlines and television interviews reflecting a mood of surly, 40

inhuman aggression among the strikers and their leaders that was almost entirely unprecedented in English life (e.g. the ambulance-drivers' spokesman who said 'If it means lives lost, that is how it must be...we are fed up of being Cinderellas, this time we are going to the ball'), hospitals were closed, ambulance services withdrawn, water supplies and sewage shut off, even bodies remained unburied ; while a combination of strikes by lorry drivers and petrol tanker drivers seemed for a while to threaten 45

that the country's entire economic activity might be brought to a standstill. In May 1979, Mrs Thatcher's electoral victory seemed to mark an appropriate break with much of the kind of thinking which had dominated English life for twenty-five years. As for whether it might be a real turning point, or just a short-lived interlude, only the events of a new decade, the Eighties, could tell. Christopher Booker, *The Seventies*, London : Penguin, 1980, pp. 18-21.