EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

Department of Political and Social Sciences

LABOURISM, IDEOLOGY AND THE BRITISH MIDDLE CLASS

James Newell

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the Degree of the European University Institute Department of Political and Social Sciences

Examining Jury:

Prof. Stefano BARTOLINI (Univ. Trieste/Geneva)
Prof. Ian BUDGE (Univ. Essex) (supervisor)
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Prof. Diane SAINSbury (Univ. Stockholm)
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SUMMARY

The thesis argues that non-support for Labour is just as sociologically problematic as support for the party within the middle class and that therefore what requires to be explained is not one or the other of these phenomena, but the reasons underlying any political choice or none. The view that voting can usefully be seen as an ideologically-determined act is then proposed and tested against data drawn from the 1983 British Election Study and the 1985 British Social Attitudes survey.

Starting with a critique of 'conventional' approaches to the relationship between party and class, a number of theoretical problems in the way of the view that middle-class Labour support stands in need of special explanation are highlighted. These problems, it is argued, derive ultimately from the fact that each approach is premised on a simple class-interests model of voting. The model is then investigated in greater detail (chapters 3 - 5) beginning with a test of the view that Labour-voting in the middle class can be explained in terms of an altruistic orientation to politics. Finding this wanting, we then proceed - through analyses of Labour's policy outputs and how these have compared with those of the Conservatives (chapters 4 and 5) - to assess the view that its lack of middle-class support can be explained in terms of its benefitting the middle class less than the Conservatives. This too is found wanting.

'Returning' thus, to 'first principles', we argue that since the parties themselves couch their electoral appeals to a large extent in ideological terms, the extent of Labour's middle-class support can be fruitfully regarded as a function of the ideological beliefs electors hold. Defining ideology as descriptive and explanatory beliefs having normative implications for action (chapter 6) and drawing out the implications of the
definition for the selection of appropriate indicators (chapter 7), we present evidence for our hypothesis, testing it against the influence of possible confounding factors (chapters 8 and 9).

Ideology survives our test and in our final chapter we point to a number of implications of our study both for future research and for the nature of Labour's electoral appeals. Our general conclusion is that in the Labour Party and the middle class, we have a case of an alignment which has been 'frozen' beyond a time at which it might have been reasonable to speak of the activities of governments, insofar as they impinge on postulated interests, as being the principal factor behind the pronounced anti-Labour partisanship of the class.
CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The main purpose of my thesis is to argue that voting can usefully be seen as an ideological act and that when viewed in this way it can help us to understand the significance of middle-class Labour voting in Britain. I use the expression 'to understand the significance of' rather than simply, 'to understand' or 'to explain' in order to emphasise precisely that in a sense, my purpose is not to explain middle-class Labour voting at all. Rather, the whole burden of my argument is that those middle-class people who do not vote Labour constitute just as much of a sociological problem as those who do support the party and that the concept of ideology can help us to throw some light on this whole issue. The research reported in the following chapters is thus not intended to provide a 'complete' solution either to the problem of middle-class voting, or to support for the Labour Party, but to challenge conventional views of the two phenomena and to suggest that ideology offers an illuminating way of relating one to the other. In short, my research is aimed at establishing that ideology can help in providing an answer to the question, 'Under what conditions will the middle class vote Labour?' My argument can thus be read as offering a hypothesis of voting as such.

To anyone with even a minimal acquaintance with British politics all this will seem very odd indeed, as he or she cannot fail to be aware of what might be called the simple 'layman's' view of the relationship between class and party in Britain. In its most unsophisticated terms, it goes like this: "The two largest parties are the Labour and Conservative parties and you have two classes: the working class and the middle class. The Labour party
promotes working-class interests, the Conservative party middle-class
together with scattered comments
interests. Members of the two classes are aware of this fact and vote in
the parties with the promotion of
class interests, (see chapter 8), together with scattered comments
throughout the political science literature. Runciman (1969: 94), for
evidence for this is given by survey data showing the extent to which
example, writes,
"There is nothing, in a sense, that needs to be explained about a South
Wales miner voting Labour or an executive of General Motors voting
Republican. The simplest model of rational self-interest is enough to
explain these cases..."

while Flamenatz (1958: 8) observes,

"The working man who votes Labour because he believes that the Labour
Party is the working man's friend, or the landlord who votes Conserv-
ative for a similar reason, is making a sensible use of his vote. More
sensible, perhaps, than if he allowed himself to be swayed by arguments
for or against, say, a strong policy in the Middle East for about the
merits of such a policy he may know very little".

As I shall show below, much work on the relationship between class and party
in Britain is premised on such assumptions. What follows from them is that
the most urgent problems requiring explanation are why a certain proportion
of the electorate habitually does not vote for its 'natural' class party,
(working-class Conservatives and middle-class Labourites) and the different,
though related question - of great topicality in recent years - of why the
traditional relationship between class and party seems to be disappearing.
From within this perspective, in other words, the small proportion of the
middle class which supports Labour constitutes a striking anomaly. However,
against this presumption of what is sociologically problematic must be set three observations.

One is that in other countries, middle-class supporters of the main left-wing party constitute a much larger proportion of the middle class as a whole as compared with Britain.¹ This means that, assuming all the parties in question follow broadly similar policies (which is a reasonable assumption in view of their widespread common designation as 'social democratic' parties),² the class-interests model of voting forces us to the conclusion that foreign middle classes are for some reason much less aware of their true class interests than the British middle class is.

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¹ Thus, while bearing in mind the problems of comparability, we may note that: in Sweden, over five elections up to and including that of 1979, middle-class support for the socialists parties averaged 32 per cent (calculated from fig. 5.3 of Korpi (1983: 88)); in Italy, 50 per cent of non-manual voters appeared to identify with one of the Left parties in 1975 (calculated from figure 3.3 in Penniman (1977: 112)); in Denmark in 1977, the Social Democrats obtained 30 per cent of the vote among white-collar workers and officials (and the three parties to the left of the Social Democrats actually gained more support (at 12 per cent) than among workers (11 per cent) (Fitzmaurice, 1981: 96-7). In Spain in 1979, the Socialist Party gained the votes of 34.9 per cent of that part of the electorate consisting of "employees, civil servants and liberal professionals" (Maravall, 1985: 151) while in 1986 the French Socialist Party gained 42 and 32 per cent of the votes of, respectively, professionals and top management, and white-collar workers (Frears, 1988: 226). By contrast, at the British General Election of 1987, the Labour Party gained just 18 per cent of the votes of those in the A, B and C1 categories of the Market Research Society's classification of occupations (Butler and Kavanagh, 1988: 275).

² In their book, Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe, Paterson and Thomas define social democratic parties as those adhering to "a belief that social and economic reform designed to benefit the less privileged should be pursued within a framework of democracy, liberty and the parliamentary process" (1977: 11). On the basis of this definition, the parties considered include the British Labour Party, the Swedish and Danish Social Democrats and the Italian Socialist Party - with the Italian Communist Party being given the status of 'candidate-member' of the category.
The second is that although the Labour Party places a certain (limited) rhetorical stress on class interests in its appeals (unlike the other major parties which explicitly reject such appeals), as Marxist writers have pointed out, the most distinctive feature of the Labour Party in office has been its moderation and the absence of radical legislation damaging to established interests. This is directly relevant to the third point, for while the class-interests model of voting is premised on the assumption that the Conservatives have served middle-class interests better than the Labour Party and/or that Labour governments are inimical to such interests, little hard evidence has actually ever been offered in this connection. In view of the lack of radicalism of Labour in office pointed to by the Marxists, the question of who it is that actually benefits from Labour governments therefore becomes very much an open one.

Taken together, these three reasons give us initial grounds for being sceptical of the view that it is middle-class support rather than non-support for Labour that is in need of special explanation. In order to highlight some of these points we shall briefly review three pieces of work on class realignment and class-deviant voting. Since it is premised to a greater or lesser extent on the class-interests model of voting, this work emphasises the theoretical difficulties in the way of the conventional view of middle-class Labour voting as requiring special explanation. We shall then present some empirical findings which pose problems for this view.


4. See, for example, Coates, 1980; Coates 1989; Miliband, 1961.
These two sets of analyses take up the remainder of this first chapter. Then, chapters 2 through 5 are designed to establish in a more positive and systematic way the theoretical priority of the question, 'Under what conditions will any middle-class people vote Labour?' over the seemingly more obvious question of how to account for those that do actually support the party. Chapter 2 sets out how we have chosen to conceptualise and operationalise class; since one's expectations concerning the relationship between class and party must be grounded in some presumption of what it is about class that it can serve to structure voting patterns, his definition of class ought to reflect this fact. In chapter 2, therefore, I argue that the measures of class adopted in much British electoral research fail on this score, and I argue for a conception of class which is based on politically relevant criteria. Chapters 3 to 5 seek to underscore our view concerning the equal importance of middle-class support and non-support for Labour more directly. Chapter 3 examines what for convenience can be termed the 'altruism thesis' in connection with middle-class Labour support. Finding this wanting, chapter 4 sets out an analysis of Labour's actions in office after 1974. Doing this allows us to offer an interpretation of the contemporary Labour Party which will serve as a reference point both in our later analysis of the ideological beliefs of the middle class and for the question we explore in chapter 5: 'To what extent have Conservative governments in fact benefited the middle class more than Labour governments?' Basically, the argument of these two chapters is this: although Labour was unable to

5. Essentially, this is to do theoretically, what Wright (1985) seeks to do empirically.
pursue policies essential to the creation of a large cross-class electoral constituency, (chapter 4), when a comparison is made with the policies implemented by the subsequent Conservative government, (chapter 5), it appears that in not supporting Labour, large numbers of the middle class are voting against their interests - whether in terms of what they actually want or in terms of what rationality leads us to expect them to want. Given that this is so, we have to look elsewhere than in actual policy outputs to find the sources of middle-class diffidence with respect to Labour.

1.2 The middle class and Labour: theoretical problems

The influence of the class-interests model in British electoral sociology can be most economically illustrated by referring to the work which has been done on the themes of 'class-deviant' voting and 'class dealignment' (the declining association between class and party). Accepting the model, attempts to account for these two phenomena must necessarily focus on one or more of three types of explanation. Showing how these explanations are deployed therefore illustrates the underlying class-interests model nicely. While retaining the basic assumption that voters act fundamentally out of self-interest, each explanation argues that one of the assumptions of the model is actually non-operative, that is: 1) that the parties either do not defend class interests after all, or else do not do so in a clear-cut way; 2) that class interests are not easily specifiable or have changed in some way; 3) that some people do not equate their interests with class interests,
or else 'get it wrong'. Attempts to account for class-deviant voting — and in particular working-class Conservatism — have concentrated mainly on 3), while attempts to account for class dealignment have focussed mainly on 2). 1) was briefly raised to account for electoral trends during the sixties, but since the seventies has been less heard after the apparent resurgence of class politics at the beginning of that decade. Let us briefly review each of these arguments.

Argument 1), (that the parties do not defend class interests or do not do so in a clear-cut way), is mentioned by Crewe, Särlvik and Alt in a 1977 article and rejected by them as an explanation for class dealignment between 1964 and 1974. The class alignment, as represented by the percentage of non-manual Conservative identifiers minus the percentage of manual Conservative identifiers, weakened over the decade from 43 to 32 (1977: 169). Until 1970, the authors suggest, it was plausible to account for this in terms of convergence between the parties (1977: 135):

"Both parties had come broadly to agree on fundamentals and in doing so had abandoned the purer expressions of class ideology. The Labour party was converted to the mixed economy with a strong private sector; the Conservative party was reconciled to the twin pillars of post-war recon-struction — a welfare state and an economy managed on broadly Keynesian principles. Indeed the 1966-70 Labour Government appeared to be acting against the interests, as conventionally conceived, of their own working-class constituency, by attempting to impose a variety of incomes policies and legal restrictions upon the traditional prerogatives of trade unions. In these circumstances it was hardly surprising that the class alignment was declining". (my emphasis)

6. This would be the case of the individual whose subjective class identity conflicts with his 'objective' class. Such a person might still associate the parties with different class interests and vote in accordance with such perceptions, but he would be a 'class-deviant' voter.
This quotation illustrates the assumptions of the class-interests model brilliantly: how can it be hardly surprising that the class alignment was declining in the given circumstances, if not because voters had been used to associate the parties with different class interests and to vote accordingly? The authors then go on to say that the conditions described above "went into reverse" from 1970 onwards: the Conservative government elected in that year "proposed inter alia to cut back welfare services not based on obvious need... to force local authorities to charge council-house tenants an 'economic' rent; to allow unemployment to rise to a more 'realistic' level; ...and to reduce by law the power of the trade unions" (1977: 135). Meanwhile, the Labour Party gave official support for trade-union defiance of Conservative legislation, the National Executive Committee produced a left-wing majority in 1972 and the party "pledged itself to a programme of industrial and land nationalisation more extensive than anything contemplated in the 1960s" (1977: 130). However, the class alignment (as measured above) continued to decline: from 35 to 32 between 1970 and October 1974. Therefore, given the other two assumptions of the self-interest model, the authors rejected the suggestion that a change in the behaviour of the parties could account for class dealignment.

Without anticipating the later discussion, there are several criticisms which can be made of this account not the least of which is the measurement of class and class alignment (something I shall come back to in chapters 2 and 3) which the authors employ. But even if we accept these, the arguments adduced for a 'return' to the politics of interests along middle-/working-class lines at the beginning of the 70s, are woefully inadequate: as I hope will become clear from the later discussion, such ideas as that reducing the power of the trade unions or cutting back on welfare services are (or were)
particularly in the interests of the middle class is not at all obvious, just as it is not at all obvious that land nationalisation is particularly inimical to such interests. Be that as it may, given that it was accepted that there had been a resurgence of class politics while the class alignment apparently continued to decline, attention shifted to another possible explanation of this phenomenon, a change in the nature of class interests.

Dunleavy (1979; 1980) offered an explanation for "the declining association between occupational class and political alignment" (1980: 364) in terms of newly-emergent production and consumption sectors. These sectors constituted new, vertical lines of cleavage which, by specifying "certain restricted cross-class interests" (1980: 378), served to blur the impact of class and expose sections of the electorate to cross-pressuring influences.

As far as production-sector cleavages were concerned, he argued that in contemporary Britain, the most important of these could be represented by the distinction between organised and unorganised labour, on the one hand, and between public-sector employees and those in private commercial enterprises, on the other. There was a conflict of interests between organised and unorganised workers inasmuch as the latter were much less able to maintain standards of living during inflationary periods: union wage militancy threatens the income status of unorganised workers and may be a principal cause of price increases in the first place. The conflict of interests between public- and private-sector employees rested essentially on the spreading incidence of income tax since the 1950s with the vast bulk of manual workers being drawn into the tax net and a steadily increasing proportion of their incomes being taken in tax. Coupled with the relatively greater militancy of public-sector employees, attention had thus been focussed on the relationship between their wage levels and the level of
taxation. Since the Conservatives are 'tougher' on the trade unions and on public-sector pay, one could thus expect to find within-class variations in political alignment described by the public-private sector split.

Similar reasoning was applied to consumption-sector cleavages. Here the important distinction was between collective modes of consumption (particularly council housing and public transport) on the one hand, and individualised modes (home ownership and private transport) on the other. There is a high degree of fragmentation in these areas of consumption (unlike telephone rental or education) so that again, there are vertical lines of cleavage specifying certain common interests shared between social classes in the same sector. These interests have to do with the relative incidence of taxes and subsidies across sectors. Dunleavy argues that differences in the parties' approaches to the sectors have been consistently high: "In its suburban, home-owner strongholds Conservative control of the local authority has safeguarded residents against threats to property values such as council housing construction (particularly overspill building by inner urban local authorities) or the building of higher density, lower cost homes in better residential neighbourhoods" (1979: 434). In transport, "Labour party initiatives to subsidize losses and provide concessionary fares have accounted for much of the rapid growth in urban public transport subsidies. Local conflicts in transport, as in housing, have thus clearly led to the emergence of 'adversary' positions in local party politics, and this has carried over into national party programmes as they become increasing composite amalgams of local commitments" (1979: 435-6). Controlling for social class, therefore, it is expected that those involved in the collective modes of consumption of council housing and public transport will be inclined to the left,
while those involved in the individualised modes of home ownership and private transport will be inclined to the right.

Once again, therefore, it was accurate perceptions of self-interest which tied class to party and when formerly class-specific interests became unhooked from class, one could expect the class-party tie to weaken. Again, however, it is not at all clear that this account gives a secure basis for understanding middle-class voting behaviour in relation to the Labour party. With regard to public-sector pay, Dunleavy gives no evidence that periods of Conservative government have in fact been associated with attempts to restrain public-sector pay to a greater extent than periods of Labour government. Numerous investigators besides Dunleavy (e.g. Alt and Turner 1982; Robertson, 1984) have pointed out that middle-class electors employed in the private sector are less likely to vote Labour than those employed in the public sector. Yet it is extremely difficult to produce conclusive evidence that public-sector employees have done better in terms of pay during periods of Labour rather than Conservative government. Therefore,

7. For instance, a recent article in The Economist (22.8.87, p24) suggested that "if you take the past seven years as a whole, total public sector pay has risen by 66%, compared with 79% in the rest of the economy". That this tells us little about the changing pay-fortunes of a given, concrete portion of the employed population over time can be appreciated from the fact that contemporaneously, the size of the public sector itself was being reduced through various privatisation measures: if the size of the public sector contracts relative to the private sector, then the total public-sector pay bill may fall relative to the private sector even though wages per head are rising much faster in the former than in the latter. Secondly, even if the relative sizes of public and private sectors are not changing, the internal composition of each sector's workforce may be undergoing differential change. For example, if there is a relative increase in the proportion of part-time manual workers in the public sector, then again, total public-sector pay may fall relatively in spite of faster increases in per-capita earnings.
the view that the public-private voting differential can be explained in the straightforward terms of corresponding differential party-effects is suspect to say the least. Similar reasoning applies to the consumption cleavages: the conflict of interest across the cleavage line supposedly had to do with the relative incidence of taxes and subsidies but again, we are offered no direct evidence in this connection; and whatever else the parties might have been doing on a local level, we are not told how that has affected national party differentiation other than it being simply asserted that "adversary' positions in local party politics have carried over into national party programmes" (1979: 436).

These points are not to be considered as nit-picking, for obviously what is lacking in these accounts is any well-developed conception of the cerebral processes underpinning the class alignment (or lack of it). As Butler and Stokes (1974: 67) have noted:

"The fact of partisan differences between classes is documented in a wealth of statistical evidence; the system of ideas, the attitudes, motives and beliefs which lie behind the observed differences have been largely neglected".

The so-called 'deference studies' concentrated on this aspect, for they attempted to account for that proportion of the working class which regularly supports the Conservative Party by focussing on the third assumption of the class-interests model, implying that working-class Conservatives do not equate their interests with class interests. The studies focussed on the role of cultural orientations in determining voting allegiance, and in this vein distinguished two types of working-class Conservative: the 'deferential' and the 'pragmatic' or 'secular'. The deferential was mainly characterised by his preference for socially superior leadership while pragmatists were "oriented more towards the economic and
welfare capabilities of the different political parties" (Jessop, 1974: 31).

The two types were thus held to encapsulate two radically different motives for working-class support for the Conservatives inasmuch as the first was relatively unconcerned about his economic advance, whereas for the second this was of prime importance. Yet on the basis of the evidence presented by at least one of the deference studies, that of Eric Nordlinger (1967), the attitudes and outlooks of the presumed 'deferentials' can be interpreted to suggest a basis of Conservative support which is difficult to distinguish from that of the 'pragmatists'. This bears on my analysis of middle-class voting and the Labour Party in two ways as we shall see.

To elucidate this, consider first of all, the concept of deference. Generically deference usually has to do with

"the acquiescence of someone in the actual or imputed wishes of another person in return for acceptance, again actual or imputed. Where compliance is with actual rather than imputed wishes, the medium of influence over the deferential person is advice, information, encouragement, or simply acceptance, and is based on his recognition and appreciation of the more or less diffuse status of the person to whom he defers. In the case of symbolic deference, or of deference to imputed wishes, the deferential acts in accord with his own beliefs as to how the recipient would wish him to act and he is rewarded by his own feelings of moral worth and self-esteem" (Jessop, 1974: 33).

Central to the concept of deference, then, is the idea of an exchange of acquiescence in another's wishes in exchange for the feelings of self-worth which flow therefrom. As such, it is a very general concept and as Jessop (1974: 34) has pointed out, it is possible to distinguish at least four different concrete types not all of which are political. This means that where they are held to be relevant, we need to know the mechanism by which they are translated into political commitments. Nordlinger apparently manages to avoid this problem by defining deferentials as those "who manifest a strong preference for men of high status as their governmental
leaders" (Nordlinger, 1967: 64). Operationally, he defines deference as the expression of a preference for a prime minister whose father was a member of the House of Lords rather than one whose father was a file clerk in one of the ministries, together with a preference for an Old Etonian rather than a grammar school man as a prime minister. Given the greater extent to which the Conservative Party has always had leaders of high social status as compared with other parties, a preference for such leaders is potentially of direct advantage to the party.

It is by no means clear, however, that these are particularly good indicators of deference in terms of the central aspect of acquiescence in another person's wishes. For a preference for high-status leaders could be based on any of a large number of different considerations none of which have anything to do with acquiescence. Indeed, the suspicion that a preference for high-status leaders may have more to do with other, pragmatic considerations than with deference is raised by the very frame of reference Nordlinger asks his respondents to use in making their choice in the first place: respondents are told that the two hypothetical candidates are of equal experience and ability and that any presumptions about what their party connections might be are to be disregarded. Not surprisingly, therefore, significant minorities of Labour supporters also give the

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8. In Nordlinger's study, "the degree to which deferentials are willing to submit to the judgement of such leaders, over and above expressing a desire to have them for leaders, is not used as a criterion in operationally defining the deferential respondents" on the grounds that "The question of submission, which is often automatically associated with social deference, will be treated as a separate variable in order to test this common assumption" (Nordlinger, 1967: 64). But if a preference for high-status leaders cannot be assumed to imply submission to such leaders, then why call it 'deference'?
supposedly deferential response in reply to the two questions: given that
respondents are effectively being asked whether they prefer a peer’s son and
an Eton man all other things being equal, what is perhaps surprising is not
that so many Labour supporters choose the high-status candidate, but that so
few do so. For when asked to explain their choices, the majority of those
(both Labour and Conservative supporters) preferring the peer’s son and/or
the Eton man give such eminently practical reasons as some variation on the
theme that the candidate is more likely to have developed the personal
qualities necessary for political leadership, or to have had a better
education. And who is to say that such beliefs are ill-founded? For example,
whatever one’s normative beliefs about the role of the public schools in the
stratification system – and this is a distinction which Nordlinger’s
respondents clearly recognise – is it not quite probable (given that the
development of leadership abilities has traditionally been considered one of
their principal functions) that the schools’ products are in fact more
likely to be effective as leaders? The Bolsheviks, who can hardly be
described as having been either ill-informed or deferential(!), certainly
thought so. 9 Finally, Nordlinger (1967: 81) himself acknowledges that

9. Consider the following description of the decision to appoint Rakovsky
as Soviet Ambassador to London and then compare this with some of the
replies of Nordlinger’s respondents:

"When Rakovsky was appointed to Britain in 1923 the main objective of
Soviet diplomacy was to break down the isolation of the USSR and, by
means of trade and commercial relations with the capitalist countries,
to begin to overcome the enormous economic difficulties resulting from
the Civil War and the war of intervention.

(Footnote continues on next page)
"workers who prefer leaders with high status justify their preferences not with the assertion that such men have a special claim to positions of authority" - surely the hallmark of deference - but because "of their presumed abilities, having acquired these abilities through the particular experiences and opportunities available to the upper classes".

What we see, therefore, is that the indicators of deference are so flimsy that the attitudes and outlooks of the presumed deferential Conservatives can with no lesser plausibility be interpreted as reflecting strictly pragmatic orientations rather than any attitudes of submission or acquiescence. And empirically it turns out that there is no particularly

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"Because of his personal qualities and international experience and reputation, Rakovsky was best suited to take on this task... The early Bolsheviks had very few diplomats with the culture, education and diplomatic veneer which could fit them gracefully into the salons and smoking-jackets of the still aristocratically dominated diplomatic circles of Western Europe... It was as an equal, however, that Christian Rakovsky confronted the leaders of bourgeois Europe. The "ambassador of the revolution", as Trotsky called him, was already perfectly at ease in the political and cultural centres of the west. A cosmopolitan who spoke most of the languages of Western and Eastern Europe, himself of an aristocratic family, Rakovsky had a profound and sympathetic understanding of the history, culture and politics of the countries of Europe" (Pagan, 1980: 35).

In almost exactly the same vein, Nordlinger's respondents remark: "Moving socially among international politicians the working man may never feel at ease. The aristocrat is at ease with the others so he can concentrate on the job in hand. They can't sway him with promises of wealth and power since he already has it" (Nordlinger, 1967: 70). "I think it is the finest thing that can happen to a man to have a public school education ...I wish more boys could have the chance (my emphasis)... I think such men are better able to move in diplomatic circles... The education of these men is wider, they have a broader outlook" (Nordlinger, 1967: 74).
strong association between a preference for high-status leaders and such attitudes. It is quite possible, therefore, that the real reason behind the 'deferential's' preference for high-status leaders is that owing to their presumed abilities, they are felt to be more likely to deliver the general prosperity from which he too will benefit - a belief which was held to be the hallmark of the pragmatist's approach. Deference is essentially a psychological trait and I do not doubt that among those expressing a preference for high-status leaders there may well be some (even a majority) who enjoy the feelings of self-esteem and moral worth associated with deference. But would they continue to feel this way if they did not also believe that such leaders benefit them? And if they believe this, it is quite probable that it is at least partly because they feel they share the same interests as the leaders, i.e. that they reject class conflict. All these interpretations find support in Nordlinger's data. What, then, is

10. In order to test this respondents were asked whether a government staffed by the party which they opposed should carry out a policy they believe in even though the majority of the electorate is opposed to it. In this case a larger proportion of Labour supporters replied in the affirmative than did 'deferential' Conservatives. Even where the government in question was the respondent's 'own', the differential was not large, 81 per cent of deferential Conservatives favouring independent action in the face of electoral hostility as compared with 71 per cent of Labour supporters. Moreover, when presented with a situation in which the party they supported adopted a policy which diverged from their own views, and asked if they would still favour their own position or take up the party's position, 36 per cent of Labour supporters and 21 per cent of 'deferential' Conservatives gave the first answer.

11. Nordlinger asked his respondents what they liked about the Conservative Party. Leaving aside general responses to the effect that the Conservatives had 'done a good job', the most frequently mentioned type of response among 'deferentials', and the second most frequently mentioned type among

(Footnote continues on next page)
the basic explanation of working-class Conservatism? Is it deference, rejection of class conflict, both of these, neither of these or what?

What the deference studies serve to highlight then, is the near impossibility of disentangling, in an unproblematic way, the different motives behind why a person votes as s/he does. This is why I have chosen to examine middle-class support and non-support for Labour in the light of electors' ideological beliefs: subjectively, people's voting choices will be influenced by a large number of different factors so that any attempt to place the entire explanatory weight on such single factors as deference, altruism and so on is bound to create problems. According to the definition of ideology I have chosen to work with, no presumption is made about what beliefs voters may or may not have, which may be more or less influential or how they may hang together: although it is simplifying greatly, for now we may say that ideological beliefs are simply the sets of descriptive and explanatory beliefs that electors' hold about the political and social worlds. They are beliefs about what is and what is possible and as such tend to underpin voters' policy preferences and party choices. (So, for example, we find - as reported in chapter 8 - that among those who attribute high levels of unemployment to the activities of the trade unions or who are

(Footnote continued from previous page)

'pragmatists', was that the party acted for the good of the country as a whole (e.g. "they are fair to all and put the country first", "they run the country for all people and not just one class" (Nordlinger, 1967: 156)). 30 per cent of 'deferentials' and 22 per cent of 'pragmatists' mention either 'able leaders' or 'leaders' educations', while 9 per cent and 13 per cent of 'deferentials' and 'pragmatists' respectively mention 'prosperity'.
sceptical about the powers of governments to reduce unemployment, the Conservatives are the most popular party. Similarly, those who reject the suggestion that there may be a link between crime rates and levels of unemployment tend to be disproportionately Conservative. On the other side of the coin, Labour voting tends to be associated with the view that management and workers are on opposite sides and that employees need strong trade unions to protect their interests, and rejection of the view that the possession of nuclear weapons makes Britain a safer place to live. This is the first way in which the deference studies bear on the topic of this thesis. The second way is this: if the deference studies highlight the difficulty of disentangling the different motives underlying voting choices, and if, as I have argued, we cannot assume in a priori-fashion that this class is necessarily better off with that party, it follows that at the outset, what we need to explain is "not class splitting or class deviance, but the reasons underlying any political choice or none" (Jessop, 1974: 45).\(^{12}\)

1.3 The middle class and Labour: empirical problems

What we have been arguing up to now is that much work on the relationship between class and party in Britain has been based on assumptions which when questioned rather than taken for granted, underscore the equal importance of accounting for non-support as for support for a

\(^{12}\) The logic of my position is thus that any diagnosis for a specific group is implicitly based on a theory of voting as such. Of course this does not exclude that, of the variety of factors that might be included in any general theory, one (or more) turn out to be of greater (or lesser) importance in the case of specific groups: and as I think I succeed in demonstrating in chapters 8 and 9, ideology is of particular importance in bringing about a vote for Labour in the middle class.
party in any given class. At the beginning of this chapter we said that there were empirical findings which pose problems for the view that middle class support for Labour is more in need of explanation than non-support. Having looked at theoretical obstacles in the way of this view, we shall now examine this second issue.

The first aspect of this has to do with the effects of social mobility. Goldthorpe and Lockwood (1968) showed that having 'white-collar' affiliations reduced the likelihood of voting Labour among their sample of 'affluent workers'. Given that the middle class has expanded in recent decades leading to 'forced upward mobility', a larger proportion of the middle class than formerly will have 'blue-collar' affiliations. Therefore, applying Goldthorpe and Lockwood's finding 'in reverse', we would have expected middle-class Labour voting to have increased. Since this has not been the case, we have another reason why the proportion of the middle class that does not vote Labour constitutes as much of a sociological problem as those that do. We might also have expected middle-class Labour voting to have increased in recent years as a result of the growth of white-collar unionism and the public sector.

Whether we operationalise class in terms of the conventional distinction between 'manual' and 'non-manual' employment or in terms of the more theoretically grounded approach to be discussed in the next chapter, middle-class Labour voting shows trendless fluctuation over time as is apparent.

13. See also Heath, 1981, chapter 8. Although Goldthorpe and Lockwood's was not a representative national sample, Heath's analysis of the 1972 Oxford social mobility data confirms what Goldthorpe and Lockwood found with their restricted affluent-worker sample.
from figures 1.1 and 1.2. At the same time, the shape of the class structure has changed quite dramatically in the post-war period with the middle class growing, and the working class diminishing in size: the authors of the Oxford social mobility study present an analysis of census data which shows that as a proportion of the economically active population, manual workers fell from 64 to 53 per cent between 1951 and 1971 while professionals, administrators, technicians and managers increased from 12 to 19 per cent. Again, as a proportion of the electorate, Goldthorpe's (1980) class I and II categories increased from 18 to 27 per cent between 1964 and 1983, while his class VI and VII categories fell from 47 to 34 per cent. The lack of any noticeable increase in middle-class Labour support is surprising in the light of this data for 'increasing room at the top' must necessarily lead to increased upward mobility and we know from a number of voting studies that the upwardly mobile into a class are more likely to be leftward voting than those who are socially stable in that class. Let me put it in more precise terms.

If a 'higher' class is expanding, and a 'lower' class shrinking over time, then, unless there are compensating changes in the breeding habits of the two classes, successive mobility inflow tables (showing the social

14. Of course, fitting 'trend lines' to the above graphs would show an overall decline over the periods represented. If we alter our choice of starting and finishing dates - which are not theoretically chosen but depend on the availability of data - we can get a different picture, however. For example, if we excluded the 1983 figure, figure 1 would show an overall decline and figure 2 an overall increase.


origins of those currently making up a given social class) must show

FIGURE 1.1
Percentage of non-manual three-party vote going to Labour

1974 1974

FIGURE 1.2
Percentage of middle-class vote going to Labour 1964 - 1983

1974 1974
increasing proportions of newcomers in the higher class. This is what sociologists call 'forced' upward mobility. Secondly, studies by Butler and Stokes (1974), Abramson (1972) and Lopreato (1967), all confirm that the upwardly mobile into a class are more likely to vote for the main left-wing party than class members who, in terms of their fathers' occupations, were born into that class. This fact, together with the changing class structure and its associated forced upward mobility, lead us to expect trends in middle-class Labour support which are not those given above. The only explanation I can think of for this apparent contradiction is that in recent decades there have been political influences operating which, by alienating people in general from Labour, have offset the increased middle-class support for that party which we would otherwise expect. This interpretation is supported by the fact that in contrast to the middle class, in the working class, there has been a steady decline in Labour voting over the past two decades. 17 Regardless of whether this explanation is correct or not, mention of political influences once again draws attention to the importance of studying the sets of (ideological) ideas and beliefs which underlie people's political choices and forcefully underscores the point that we need to consider middle-class non-support for Labour as being just as problematic as support for that party.

As I have said, in recent decades two further 'social structural' changes have been going on which, in a manner analogous to the changes in the class structure, also lead us to expect increasing middle-class Labour support; these are the growth of white-collar trade unionism and of public

17. See Heath et al., 1985, tables 3.1 and 3.2 pp30, 32-3.
sector employment. Between 1948 and 1979 white-collar union density increased from 31 to 44 per cent (Price and Bain, 1983: 51). All of this growth took place between 1968 and 1979, and in absolute terms is in fact more remarkable than the proportional growth of 11 per cent indicates, for potential white-collar union membership was of course expanding at the same time. The association between union membership and Labour voting is well documented. (Among others, see, Butler and Stokes, 1974; Dunleavy, 1980; Rose, 1974). So again, the levels of middle-class Labour support given above are rather surprising. Moreover, in this case the curiosity goes beyond the straightforward empirical anomaly since some of the factors which have been held to be responsible for white-collar trade unionism (e.g. the 'proletarianisation' of white-collar work)\(^1\) are ones which on theoretical grounds we might expect also to be strongly linked to Labour support.

Why has the increasing middle-class composition of the party's membership not been reflected in increased middle-class voting support? After all, the view that the middle class is in some sense 'naturally conservative' in its political attitudes cannot be sustained without qualification: in terms of social issues which do not have economic implications, they are notably to the 'left'\(^2\) of the working class in which

\(^1\) See Crompton and Jones, 1984, chapter 5, for a review of the debate on the relationship between proletarianisation and white-collar unionisation.

\(^2\) The relative liberalism of the middle class is confirmed by our own data: we found that on the 'Civil liberties' and 'Law and order' dimensions discussed in chapter 9, middle-class voters, regardless of party, were more liberal than working-class ones.
case Labour (or the SLD for that matter) and not the Conservatives would seem to be the more 'natural' choice for most middle-class voters. (Nor is it obvious that the working class and not the middle class is particularly receptive to measures supposedly in the former's interests: surveys repeatedly show that majorities in all classes are opposed to further nationalisation, are willing to endorse the view that "trade unions have too much power" etc; and as historians of the Labour Party have emphasised, it was not until 1918 that the party (nominally) embraced socialism as an ultimate goal: "the initial difficulty which socialists faced was that workers were distrustful of any influences originating outside their class. Socialism seemed an abstract and an alien ideology in relation to daily experience. It was not apparent to workers that an improvement of their conditions required that the very system of wage labour must be abolished" (Przeworski, 1980: 38)).

Finally, while overall public-sector growth has been somewhat less dramatic than changes in class structure or the rise of white-collar unions, it is still important because it is in those parts of the public sector which are the heaviest employers of middle-class labour that growth has been fastest. Thus, "The typical public sector worker is no longer a soldier or industrial worker but rather a white-collar employee in

20. From a content analysis, (using the measure of intensity suggested by Osgood et al., 1956), of the Labour and Alliance manifestos for the 1987 General Election we found that the Alliance was at least as committed to radical reform in such areas as civil liberties, citizen political influence, rights of women and ethnic minorities and treatment of offenders as was the Labour party.

21. Parry (1985: 60, table 2.2) estimates that in terms of his definition, public-sector employment as a percentage of the employed labour force, grew from 25.6 to 31.4 per cent between 1951 and 1981.
education, health or public administration" (Parry, 1985: 54). Again, the greater tendency for middle-class voters in the public sector to support Labour as compared with their private-sector counterparts has been noted by many authors (among whom may be mentioned Alt and Turner, 1982; Dunleavy, 1980 and Robertson, 1984). Since this tendency has most often been explained in terms of the presumed interests of public-sector employees in voting Labour, we come full circle and are brought back to the voting model we started out with: for if the level of middle-class Labour support has refused to rise in line with what seems to be a changing internal employment-sector composition of the class, this would seem to cast doubt on either or both of two assumptions of that model, i.e. that there are strong partisan differences - in this case towards the publicly-employed electorate - and that such differences are perceived and acted upon.

1.4 Conclusion

We are now in a position to summarize the argument of this first chapter. We will do so by following the suggestions of Budge and Farlie (1983: 149) and setting it out as a set of interrelated propositions: "verbal propositions... [provide] a strict and testing way of summarising a theory, since most ambiguities which slip into general discourse are mercilessly exposed. Hidden postulates must also be explicating, since otherwise the chain of reasoning presented in the propositions remains incomplete".

1. Most people's views on the relationship between class and party in Britain take as their implicit starting point, i) that linked to classes there are different 'interests'; ii) that there are strong partisan differences in terms of these interests (i.e. that the parties really do
'defend' different 'class interests'); iii) that most voters know this and act accordingly.

2. Within this framework, middle-class Labour voting, along with working-class Conservatism and class dealignment, constitute 'departures from normality' which need to be accounted for.

3. Attempts to account for the last two of these phenomena have implicitly argued that the assumptions concerning 'class interests' and voters' subjective assessments of these need to be modified; at the same time the question of strong partisan differences has not been adequately dealt with.

4a. At the outset of research we are sceptical of the view that there are strong partisan differences in terms of interests which either are, or once could be, associated with a split along middle-/working-class lines.

4b. Getting to grips with the subjective factors underlying people's voting choices is inherently problematic.

5. Initially, therefore, there are no compelling theoretical grounds for holding, as the class-interests model enjoin, that middle-class support for Labour constitutes a more striking sociological problem than non-support for the party.

6. Empirically, this claim is reinforced when it is born in mind that middle-class Labour voting has not increased even though factors known to be associated with Labour voting - working-class origins, trade-union membership and public-sector employment - have apparently become more widespread within the middle class in recent decades.

In the next chapter we set out what, in the rest of this thesis, we shall mean by the terms 'middle' and 'working' class and why we use them in that way. The claims that class influences vote or that the parties benefit different classes necessarily assume some conception or other of class such
that it can influence vote or that the members of a class can be the recipients of benefits etc. Until recently, little attention had been paid to this issue in British electoral research. But since we believe a person's class position to be an important influence on his ideological beliefs which in turn influence his vote, we think it is incumbent upon us to say what it is about class such that it can have this effect - something which can only be done by considering different definitions and operationalisations.
CHAPTER 2: Class

2.1 Introduction

No attempt will be made to come up with anything that I would wish to advance as the definition of class superior to others which have been proposed. Empirically, classes 'in themselves' are manifest only as sets of "closely related inequalities of economic condition, power and opportunity" (Westergaard and Resler, 1975: 27). Therefore, disputes over 'What Is Social Class' are of doubtful value: "class", like any other sociological concept, is a device by which social facts are to be understood, and, in the last analysis, the definition of class that is adopted can be justified only by its usefulness in the explanation of particular and concrete events" (Lockwood, 1958: 213).

In most empirical political and social research in Britain, class is either measured in terms of a distinction between manual and non-manual labour or in terms of some form of 'social grade' schema - usually the Registrar General's classification of occupations, or else the Market Research Society's classification. Most researchers simply adopt whichever schema seems to accord most closely with their "intuitive senses of tidying up marginal cases" (Robertson, 1984: 12); but it is precisely because I think that the usefulness of these schemata in the explanation of voting is...
doubtful that some time must be spent, prior to the main discussion, in arguing for an alternative approach.

2.2 Abstract properties of class

As I shall argue later, in constructing classifications of particular classes we will be more or less obliged to use their positions in the social structure of society as our criterion in deciding individuals' class placements; but whatever they might be in addition to being patterns of structural positions, classes do not constitute formal statuses. In other words, the pattern of structural positions making up classes are not positions which are consensually or officially defined in such a way that any corresponding distribution of rights and obligations would as such be sanctioned as legitimate. Classes, in short, are not feudal estates. Let us examine this proposition, for it carries an important implication for the sort of concept class is.

The differentia specifica of capitalism with respect to feudalism is that the former is a system of commodity production in which, by virtue of the 'ownership rights' over his own labour power which is legally guaranteed to each individual, labour power itself becomes a commodity bought and sold on the market. In feudal societies individuals are not free in this sense. On the contrary, there is an "authoritative allocation of work" (Giddens, 1973: 82) whereby the individual is obliged to practice that vocation which is prescribed him by an interlocking system of legally sanctioned rights and obligations defining the division of society into a series of estates. The dissolution of these estates (which is a necessary condition for the unfettered development of capitalism) is, at one and the same time, a process of the establishment of the principles of freedom of contract and economic exchange and of the legal equality of the contracting parties. Any
particular pattern of domination and subordination or distribution of power and privilege which emerges within capitalism is thus sanctioned as legitimate precisely because it is the outcome of the operation of these principles and not tied to a particular pattern of rights and obligations.

In other words:

"While it is a power structure, the market is not a normatively defined system of authority in which the distribution of power is, as such, sanctioned as legitimate. The rights of property, and of the sale of labour, are rights of the alienation or disposal of goods ('commodities' in the Marxian sense), which underpin the system of power, not in spite of, but because of the fact that they are specified in terms of freedom of economic exchange" (Giddens, 1973: 102).

As a consequence, classes as structural positions have no generally recognised public identity: since the distribution of power and privilege is perceived as the outcome of free market exchanges, there is no consensus that such inequalities indicate the outlines of any particular system of classes. In feudalism, the distribution of power and privilege enters into the very definition of the different estates.

Since, then, classes-as-patterns-of-structural-positions are not publicly sanctioned, we may say with Steven Lukes (1987: 78) that classes exist in a given society to the extent that there are significant links between structural positions and two other 'levels' of social life: "(2) the intersubjective or meaningful level of social consciousness..." and "(3) the level of action individual and collective..."

"To see this, we may construct the following thought experiment. Imagine a society in which no such links obtain. People's occupations or market positions, say, have absolutely no bearing on their self-understanding or interpretation of their social world (which is defined in quite other ways - in terms of kinship perhaps or religion) and neither has any relation to their individual or collective actions, which are quite unpredictable on the basis of either. Could classes really be said to exist in such a society?"
As it stands there are two difficulties with this position, the first being that at level (1) it obviously needs to be specified exactly what positions are to count. To see this we can do another thought experiment. Suppose we are Marxists and we say that the relevant positions are those which define individuals' locations in terms of the relations of production and we accordingly identify a bourgeoisie on the one hand and a proletariat on the other. Now imagine a society in which bourgeoisie and proletariat have been abolished, there is common ownership and control of the means of production, and distribution is governed according to the principles of "from each according to his ability to each according to his need". However, in this society there is a grouping, let us say shoe-makers, who for one reason or another develop a grievance which they want remedied. They are all highly conscious of their status as shoe-makers and down to the very last person are united in a combative organisation to push their claim. Do we then want to say that shoe-makers constitute a class? (Other examples would be solicitors, doctors or even printers in Britain).

The second difficulty with the Lukes approach is that it is not easy to apply to empirical research. What I mean is this: I assume that in the social sciences, the principal purpose behind distinguishing between different classes is to be able to use class as an independent variable in the explanation of various social phenomena (such as, for example, differences in child-rearing practices, differences in levels of educational attainment and so on). Obviously if we are to use class in this way we need to have certain criteria for assigning cases to one class or the other. Where there is an obvious and strong relationship between structural positions, social consciousness and action, this poses no particular problem, but suppose - which I assume is the more usual case - it is not
easy to identify straightforward or strong relationships between the three. What do we do then? In such a situation it is very difficult, on Lukes' account, to talk in terms of class at all and yet whatever the degree of correspondence between the levels of structure, consciousness and action, we still intuitively feel that class is an important determinant of such phenomena as the distribution of income and wealth, likelihood of falling into poverty and so on. This being the case, when we are investigating these matters in practice, and thus deciding on an appropriate operational definition of class, we usually have to rely on just one of the levels as our criterion in deciding on the class-placement of our sample. Doing this, however, violates Lukes' insistence that class be defined in terms of the links existing across all three levels.

If we choose the second and third levels as our criteria of class placement, then we may be in danger of falling into a tautology particularly if we accept with Wright (1985) that one of the most important purposes of class analysis is to explain class-formation, class-consciousness and class struggle. This is the fate of Parkin's analysis. In Marxism and Class Theory (1979), Parkin uses Weber's notion of 'social closure' to define classes in terms of the principal forms of collective social action which they employ to maximise their claims to resources. On this basis Parkin argues that we can distinguish between dominant and subordinate classes. The dominant class typically uses the institutions of private property and credentials to maximise its claims to resources and it does so by co-opting the coercive authority of the state in its support. This is because, in Parkin's analysis, both property-ownership and credentialism are defined as nothing other than those rules, enshrined in law, which confer a power to exclude people from usage of physical production assets on the one hand, and valued
positions in the division of labour on the other. Subordinate classes are
defined in terms of their predominant use of usurpationary forms of
collective action such as trade-union struggle. Such struggle, undertaken in
response to the exclusionary forms of action of the dominant class, involves
the mobilisation of power in an attempt to win a greater share of resources
for the subordinate.

One of the advantages that Parkin claims for his analysis is that it
abolishes the problem of the relationship between the first level of
structural positions and the third level of organised action. He writes:

"...incumbency of position in a formally defined structure does not
normally correspond to class alignment where it really counts - at the
level of organised political sentiment and conduct. This serious lack of
fit... arises from the initial theoretical decision to discount the
significance and effect of variations in the cultural and social make-up
of the groups assigned to the categories in question... If the mode of
collective action is itself taken to be the defining feature of class,
as proposed by the closure model it follows that problems of this kind
do not arise. There is no independently defined structure of positions
for class action to be discrepant with (Parkin, 1979: 113).

Not only does this approach abolish the problem of the relation between
levels by definitional fiat, it effectively precludes us from appealing to
class-membership in an attempt to answer such questions as why a given group
engages in a particular kind of distributive struggle; for to say that this
or that group engages in exclusionary struggle because it forms part of the
dominant class, for example, is a tautology. Moreover, since Parkin
distinguishes between inter- and intra-class cleavages in terms of whether
the exclusionary or usurpationary mode of closure is the principal mode of
distributive struggle characteristic of a group, he forces us to conclude
that white workers in South Africa say, belong to the dominant class in that
country - something which is counter-intuitive, to say the least.
In the light of these suggestions it seems to me that for better or worse we are forced to construct classifications of class relations at the first level of class. Doing this however means that whatever classificatory scheme we agree upon will, as I have said, have no generally recognised public identity and hence that our scheme will necessarily be an analytic construct or "an abstraction from reality, selecting and focussing on certain aspects of reality... [in order] to guide and suggest fruitful areas of investigation" (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969: 74). This in its turn means that in the final analysis the only criterion by which we will be able to judge our scheme is by its usefulness in the explanation of particular and concrete events. Showing such usefulness will at a minimum involve showing that our scheme is systematically related to the sorts of social phenomena which we already know to be influenced by class location.

What kinds of position, then, are to count in determining class location? After all, pupils, parents and working women are not normally thought of as constituting classes (although, obviously, the last of these categories could be thought of as constituting part of a class). Most researchers use occupation as their most immediate, empirical criterion of class placement. We may, therefore, agree with Reid (1977: 15) that at the most abstract level, an adequate definition of social class is that it is "a grouping of people into categories on the basis of occupation". But why use occupation? The reason is presumably that occupation is thought to constitute the most reliable and valid indicator of whatever it is that is taken to be the essence of class (location in terms of the relations of production if one is a Marxist, for example) and hence the single best predictor of the sorts of phenomena that previous research or our intuition tells us are class-related. Having a satisfactory indicator of class
location, however, leaves us with the problem of how the vast array of occupations is to be cut up, or where to place class boundaries. Our solution to this problem amounts to the application of theoretical criteria to decide how to group occupations together into the categories constituting our classes; and that is, our solution will be determined by whatever it is we take occupation to be an indicator of. If we take occupation to be the indicator of some quantitative or gradational variable, such as status for example, our placement of class boundaries is very likely to be arbitrary, and the utility of the resulting class schema correspondingly diminished: if using such a schema we find that there is a relationship between class position and vote, for example, essentially all we learn is that hierarchy is related to voting; we get little insight into what it might be about such classes that they influence voting patterns. If, on the other hand, we use occupation as the indicator of some qualitative distinction, such as that between manual and non-manual labour, for example, we at once increase our chances of gaining some explanatory insight. Let me spell out exactly what I mean: class classifications can be either gradational - in the sense that classes are distinguished in terms of the possession of some quantitative attribute (such as income or status) - or they can be qualitative (as is, for example, the Marxian distinction between bourgeoisie and proletariat). The first type of classification is necessarily arbitrary in the sense that quantitative distinctions are inherently incapable of furnishing criteria for deciding where to place class boundaries. This being the case, such classifications can tell us little beyond e.g. that those with higher incomes are less likely to vote Labour than those with lower incomes, those with more status are more likely to vote Conservative than those with less status and so on. Qualitative distinctions, (such as, for example, that
between manual and non-manual employment), on the other hand, at once suggest a range of much more profound reasons why we might expect people in one class to be more inclined to a particular form of behaviour than those in another. For example, if we find that manual employees are more likely to vote for the left than non-manual employees we might conclude that this has something to do with their need for collectivist solutions to the problem of material security:

"For example, manual wage-labourers have relatively little security of employment and relatively poor fringe benefits such as sick pay and pension schemes. They have little control over their own working conditions and little discretion, being subject to managerial authority, over what they do at work. They also have relatively poor chances (despite some social mobility) of gaining promotion to the better paid and secure managerial positions. As a result manual wage-earners cannot be sure to improve their lot through individual action. Instead they must look to collective action, either through trades unions or political parties" (Heath et al., 1985: 14-15).

2.3 Registrar General's and Market Research Society's classifications

There is a strange disjunction between what Anthony Giddens (1973: 9) calls "the almost unending literature which exists" on the theory of social class and the way in which it is measured in most empirical social research in Britain; for one would expect the obvious theoretical divergences in the treatment of class to be reflected in "a corresponding variety and lack of consensus amongst empirical systems of social classification. And yet this is not the case" (Szreter, 1984: 523): Reid (1977) "lists a variety of 70 studies, mostly completed in the 1960s and early 1970s, of which 49 employed a version of the Registrar General's... social classification, whilst half of the remainder used the highly derivative Market Research system" (Szreter, 1984: 540). For reasons which I shall set out below, this reliance on standard classifications and the implied lack of concern about their theoretical limitations, is something to be regretted.
The Registrar General's classification of occupations finds its origins in the concern of its progenitor, T.H.C. Stevenson, to analyse the relationship between social class and infant mortality as part of an attempt to assess the rival claims of environmentalists and hereditarians concerning the causes of social inequality at the beginning of the century. As Szreter (1984) has shown, Stevenson's classification reflected the terms of this debate in incorporating a model of society as composed of a hierarchy of grades or strata ordered according to their relative status. Essentially there were five grades from Class I - "the upper and middle class" - to Class V - "occupations including mainly unskilled men". Szreter (1984: 538) argues that the classification embodies what he calls five "extremely tenuous" assumptions:

1. That social inequality necessarily exists.  
2. That there is a single continuous scale of social positions or status, which can be conceptualised for convenience's sake as a small number of ordered grades forming a hierarchy.  
3. That this hierarchy is co-existent with the entire population of individuals comprising the nation, and exists throughout society in essentially the same form regardless of locality or community.  
4. That the characteristic, 'status', can be both conceptualised and empirically measured as if it were a uni-dimensional property or attribute of individuals, possessed by all in varying degrees.  
5. That occupation is the best reliable single such empirical indicator of this attribute of individuals".  

In fact, assumptions 2 to 5 at least are largely well-founded; the problem with the Registrar General's classification lies elsewhere.  

That there does indeed exist a single, continuous scale of status which is reliably measured by occupation is demonstrated by the fact that there is a large measure of agreement on the relative standing of occupations which is independent of the social characteristics of those asked to do the rating. Individuals may disagree about the social honour that different occupations ought to be accorded, but this is a different matter from their
awareness of occupations' factual social standing deriving from their knowledge of how the actual rank order works in everyday life. (Parkin, 1972). Young and Willmott (1956) found that when asked to rank occupations according to their own personal criteria of worth, many in their manual-worker sample placed manual occupations above non-manual ones as, among other things, they considered social usefulness to be an important criterion of moral worth. But as Parkin (1972: 43-4) has noted, even though some individuals may not accept the existing status order as legitimate, preferring some other rank order, "it seems likely that they too would be constrained to act according to the norms of the factual status order, particularly in their encounters with members of the dominant class. To do otherwise, especially in the work situation, could produce sharp negative reactions". Status, in the sense of 'social prestige', is therefore a real social fact and in questioning that it is essentially the same "regardless of locality or community" and a "uni-dimensional property... possessed by all in varying degrees", Szerer is conflating "status as a reputational attribute of persons, and status as a formal attribute of positions" (Parkin, 1972: 34). 2

What is wrong with the Registrar General's classification, then, is not that it makes dubious assumptions about status, but precisely that its status categories are distinguished "for convenience's sake" — rather than

2. The former is "a reputational attribute attaching to particular persons [and] arises on the basis of interaction in face-to-face situations"; whereas the latter describes "the system of ranked positions which constitutes the national prestige structure" (Parkin, 1972: 34-5). The former is clearly likely to vary in character from community to community and unlikely to be uni-dimensional.
being explicitly argued for on the basis of theoretical or empirical considerations. The problem that this gives rise to can best be illustrated by bringing the second commonly used classification - that of the Market Research Society (MRS) - into the picture, as the problem is common to both schemes. It is a problem which stems from the fact that the schemes embody a gradational conception of class or "a conception of stratification... as a monolithic hierarchy or a 'layer-cake' of strata" (Halsey et al., 1980: 17).

The MRS classification distinguishes six categories labelled A, B, C1, C2, D and E. The jump between C1 and C2 represents the division between manual and non-manual jobs with jumps between other categories representing somewhat finer hierarchical distinctions: for example, categories A and B distinguish 'Higher managerial or professional' and 'Lower managerial or administrative' employees, and C2 and D distinguish 'Skilled' and 'Unskilled manual' employees. (E is a residual category consisting of pensioners, those dependent on social security schemes etc.).

Now the division between manual and non-manual jobs is usually justified by appealing to two sorts of argument: one is based on the structure of rewards and privileges and emphasises that "differences in the reward position of white-collar or non-manual groups are less marked than are the similarities when compared with the situation of blue-collar or manual categories" (Parkin, 1972: 25); the other focuses more on the change in work-place environment that takes place as one crosses the boundary between non-manual and manual employment. Both these sorts of argument owe much to the distinction (which has by now become common currency) made by Lockwood (1958) between two elements of an individual's class situation, i.e., market situation, "consisting of source and size of income, degree of job security and opportunity for upward occupational mobility" and work situation or "the
set of social relationships in which the individual is involved at work by virtue of his position in the division of labour" (1958: 12). In terms of either or both of these 'situations', then, the gap between white- and blue-collar occupations is considered to be larger than that between jobs inside the two categories. Whether or not it is true that the market and work situations of certain white-collar occupations are coming increasingly to resemble those of manual jobs, for the moment is not particularly to the point; my concern, rather, is to focus attention on the criteria by which occupational categories are demarcated regardless of whether the application of such criteria is entirely correct or not.

Beyond the white-collar – blue-collar split it is somewhat difficult, to say the least, to argue that the various categories owe their existence to a placement of boundaries which is much more than arbitrary. For instance, one could, perhaps, argue that in passing from B to C1 one is crossing a potentially significant authority threshold, but where is the qualitative distinction in the circumstances of "senior managers with more than 25 subordinates", on the one hand, and "senior managers with 10-25 subordinates", on the other, that places one in the A category and the other in the B category? Then again, one should not be misled into thinking that the apparently clear distinction between skilled and un-skilled manual work necessarily represents any real difference in terms of job content so much as the result of rather random and diverging processes of social definition. Thus, "about 60 per cent of the modern manual labour force in Britain is classified as skilled (by the Office of Population Census and Surveys). But this classification is really most misleading, because its definition of skill embraces most of the jobs that popular usage treats as semi-skilled (for example, all driving jobs) and because very few workers in this
category even remotely resemble the old style, fully trained and formally qualified tradesman. In an investigation carried out in 1971, the OPCS found that two thirds of all workers who were classified as skilled for census purposes had no qualifications of any kind, including apprenticeships (OPCS, 1973, p243)" (Hill, 1981: 189).

The point is this: 1) to the extent that class categories are distinguished in ways that have little theoretical justification or empirical evidence to back them, the evaluation of rival findings of research into the political effects of class is thereby complicated: Suppose we wish to explore the party composition of a sample according to class position. We are obliged to adopt a simple middle-/working-class dichotomy. One researcher opts for a 30-per-cent middle-, 70-per-cent working-class division while another uses a 40-50 breakdown. The consequent divergence in findings may well be more than trivial. This simple consideration "must provoke uneasiness about the routine and fairly arbitrary way that survey respondents are so often assigned to the categories of middle and working class" (Kahan, Butler and Stokes, 1966: 123). Quite. 2) The MRS and Registrar General's classifications are distinctly unhelpful if not positively misleading, when it comes to teasing out answers to basic questions concerning how and why class serves to structure voting patterns. Since the boundaries between occupational status categories are not defined on the basis of any presumption of what criteria might be politically relevant, essentially all we learn from them is that hierarchy is related to voting. (Indeed one can go further, as Heath et al., (1985) do and say that the MRS
classification encourages quite mistaken notions about voting). Overcoming these problems requires that, in deciding what measure of class to use, one takes into account what the connection between class and vote is presumed to be, thus allowing one's measurement decision to be influenced by his presumptions concerning why electoral behaviour should be based on classes in the first place.

To illustrate: at the 1983 election there was a rather sharp divergence in the voting patterns of categories C2 and D and many commentators have argued that skilled workers are more Conservative than the semi- and unskilled (Heath, et al., 1985: 26). Yet the C2-D distinction completely obscures the existence of categories that are actually very distinctive in their voting behaviour. "Some skilled manual workers are foremen or self-employed". When these are excluded, the majority who remain prove to be rather more prone to vote Labour, not less, than the rest of the working class. 51 per cent of the skilled workers voted Labour compared with 48 per cent of the semi- and unskilled" (Heath, et al., 1985: 20). Placing self-employed manual workers together with farmers and small proprietors in a category which they label 'The Petty Bourgeoisie', Heath et al., find that they have a grouping which is very homogeneous in its voting behaviour (71 per cent of its votes went to the Conservatives in 1983) - something for which there is a plausible-sounding account:

"They may have very different incomes, but what they share is the fact of being 'independents' who are directly exposed to market forces without the cushioning of bureaucratic employment or trade union membership. They have an interest in creating conditions favourable to private enterprise and individual success. They will be particularly

receptive to individualistic and 'free enterprise' values" (Heath, et al., 1985: 15).

The point is, once we begin to ask what it is about class such that it may influence voting, we obtain a much more satisfactory picture of the relationship between the two. Thus, Heath, Jowell and Curtice, taking as their principal criterion of class division employment conditions — broadly conceived — argue that it is the latter that provide the fundamental determinants of values and political allegiance. Since, on the basis of their occupational status, the self-employed will be dispersed across the Market Research categories from A to D, they clearly stand as "the most serious challenge to the use of social grade for political analysis" (Heath, et al., 1985: 15). Social grade, in sum, obscures more than it illuminates and does nothing to help us sort out what the connection between class and vote might be.

2.4 An alternative approach

As developed by Goldthorpe (1980; 1982) and applied by Heath et al., (1985), the conception and operationalisation of class that I propose to work with, then, uses employment conditions as the criterion of class division. Employment conditions are composed of the two elements of market and work situation described above. The quotation at the end of section 2.2 described why, reasoning from their market and work situations, one might expect manual wage-labourers to be more likely than other classes to display political attitudes and behaviour favourable to the left. Manual wage-labourers (excluding foremen and the self-employed) make up what I shall refer to as the working class.

The middle class for the purposes of this research consists of only some of what are vaguely referred to as 'non-manual' or 'white-collar' employees.
Bain and Price (1983) show that it is extremely difficult to come up with a definition of these terms which does not leave behind a host of anomalous cases. Thus the most popular type of definition equates white-collar employment with 'brain work' (as opposed to the predominantly 'brawn work' supposedly characteristic of manual employment). But "filing clerks and copy typists are normally classified as white-collar employees 'while a highly skilled electrician and a compositor in the printing industry would be classified as manual employees. It is extremely doubtful whether the work performed by the first two occupations involves greater intellectual effort than the work performed by the latter two..." (Bain and Price, 1983: 48). In view of cases such as these, Hyman (1983: 3) is right to point out that "Any notion of a rigid demarcation between mental and manual work is arbitrary and artificial": all jobs involve some combination of mental and physical effort. However, the point is rather secondary in importance as far as the job of deciding on a useful definition of the middle class is concerned.

Any attempt at operationalising a concept such as class will involve dealing with cases which are difficult to place. The distinction between white-collar and manual employment is usually made not because these characteristics are held to constitute criteria of class placement in and of themselves, but because (however difficult to define), the characteristics are thought to correspond with appropriate criteria - in our case market and work situations. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, the important issue is not whether certain marginal cases really are 'white-collar' workers according to some definition but whether those who would be classified as white-collar workers by any definition of the term really are significantly different from manual workers according to the criteria that are held to set them apart.
Drawing on Goldthorpe’s (1982) suggestions, I would argue that there is a category of professional, administrative and managerial employees which, in terms of their market and work situation, mark them off, not only from manual wage-labourers, but also from other white-collar workers, conventionally defined. These I shall call the middle class. Goldthorpe accounts for the distinctive employment conditions of these employees in the following way. First of all, given the need of the employing organisation to delegate authority and/or draw upon specialised knowledge, there is a problem of ensuring that employees charged with such responsibilities act in ways compatible with the organisation’s goals; this in turn depends on the degree of such employees’ organisational commitment, “rather than on the efficiency of ‘external’ sanctions and rewards” (Goldthorpe, 1982: 168). Therefore, the employment relationship is regulated by a ‘code of service’ which differs fundamentally in its implications from the ‘labour contract’ regulating the employment of other grades of employee: whereas “the labour contract provides for more or less discrete amounts of labour to be exchanged for wages”, the service relationship is founded on trust (Goldthorpe, 1982: 168), or in other words, on the presumption that within their areas of autonomy and discretion, the employees will act to the best of their ability to further the organisation’s aims. The employment conditions (level of remuneration, job security and opportunities for upward occupational mobility) of the middle class, then, “are ones which clearly reflect, whether by design or evolution, the need for creating and sustaining [this trust]” (Goldthorpe, 1982: 168). Goldthorpe summarises the argument for treating professional, administrative and managerial employees as holding basically similar class positions as follows:

"The employees, in being typically engaged in the exercise of delegated authority or in the application of specialist knowledge and expertise,
operate in their work tasks and roles with a distinctive degree of autonomy and discretion, and in direct consequence of the element of trust that is necessarily involved in their relationship with their employing organisation, they are accorded conditions of employment which are also distinctive in both the level and kinds of reward that are involved. In other words, professional, administrative and managerial employees are in these ways typically differentiated from other grades of employee - and most obviously from wage workers - in the character of both their work and market situations" (Goldthorpe, 1982: 169).

These, then, are my middle and working classes. (For details of their operationalisation one should consult Goldthorpe (1980: 38-42) and Heath et al., (1985: 25)).

Since the middle class is viewed here as comprising only particular kinds of white-collar employee, the question arises as to the position of other, numerically rather large, groupings such as clerks, typists, secretaries, sales assistants, telephonists, receptionists - occupations which are often collectively referred to as 'routine white collar'. Since I have defined the middle class supposedly on the basis of a similarity of market and work situations, consistency demands that exclusion of these other groupings be justified in the same terms; or more particularly, since the category of white-collar employment as a whole relates closely to what is often referred to as 'the middle class' in popular discourse, it needs to be shown that the above-mentioned groupings are in fact closer to what I am calling the working class than to the middle class. This involves showing - since market and work situations are our criteria of class placement - that routine white collar workers' incomes, degree of job security and opportunities for upward mobility are more similar to those of the working class than to those of the middle class and that their degree of authority, autonomy and discretion is likewise more similar.

Clear-cut answers to the implied questions here are hampered by the sheer heterogeneity of occupations usually thought of as 'routine white
collar'. Thus if we think of just three such occupations, draughtsmen, laboratory assistants and clerks, Hill (1981: 212) suggests that draughtsmen have a low degree of autonomy but levels of pay significantly above those of manual workers, while for laboratory assistants the reverse applies. And while much debate has surrounded the thesis of the 'proletarianisation' of clerks (often thought of as the quintessential low-level white-collar occupation), they make up only a part of the white-collar labour force. A further problem is created by the argument that the significance of occupational categories depends on the past and future work histories of those in the category (Stewart, Prandy and Blackburn, 1980) and by the closely related issue of the gender composition of the white-collar labour force. Thus Goldthorpe (1980) points to the frequency of promotion out of clerical work and on this basis discounts the significance of any growing similarity in the nature of routine white collar and manual labour. However, he draws this conclusion from an all-male sample and it is now well established that "one of the most important factors sustaining the relatively high rates of male promotion out of clerical work is the fact that women, who comprise over 70 per cent of all clerks, do not get promoted" (Crompton and Jones, 1984: 3). What we can say is the following.

1) While it is true that mechanisation in the office was once an adjunct to clerical labour "rather than... transforming it altogether" (Giddens, 1983: 100), since the 1970s as a result of computerisation, the principles of task fragmentation and control have increasingly been applied to low-level office work thus tending to impoverish the work situations of certain low-level office workers (Hill, 1981; Counter Information Services, 1983; Crompton and Jones, 1984). Because the computer contains all the information necessary for the coordination of work, "clerical work in computerised
offices mainly involves feeding information into the computer and then acting on its instructions. Even the collection of information is highly routinised because clerks must follow strict procedures which allow no discretion, in order to prepare data in the appropriate form" (Hill, 1981: 38). At the same time, because computers centralize information, senior personnel can direct more thoroughly and co-ordinate a wider range of the organisation's activities with the result that they gain in authority and discretion. To the extent that technological advances allow a reduction in discretion and closer monitoring of the work of office employees along lines that factory workers are already familiar with - job fragmentation, measurement of output, pacing of work by the machine - it is reasonable to assume that differences in the work situations of employees so affected and those of manual workers will continue to decline; for "As office employment and wage costs have soared, the price of office automation equipment had been falling by about 10 per cent per year... In government and service industries such as banks and insurance firms, the office wage bill is a full three-quarters of total costs" (Counter Information Services, 1983: 66). It is therefore safe to say that the work situations of some low-level office employees are closer to those of manual wage-labourers than to those of the middle class and that this process may affect wider layers of office employees in the future.

2) In terms of income, the most significant break in the distribution occurs within the white-collar category as a whole - between those officially classified as "managerial" and those classified as "clerical and related" - rather than between the latter and manual employees. On the contrary, there is considerable overlap in the earnings of these two groupings and this overlap is accentuated by the existence of particularly
low-paid clerical occupations (such as check-out operators, receptionists and typists) in which there is a heavy concentration of women. In terms of 'fringe benefits' - such as sickness and occupational pension schemes, strictness of controls over time-keeping and attendance etc. - on the basis of a survey carried out in 1968, Wedderburn and Craig (1974: 145) suggested that "the big divide in employment conditions still falls between operatives or manual workers on the one hand, and non-manual grades, staff and management on the other". However, they also noted that there was "differentiation within the non-manual strata. It is small in respect of traditional fringe benefits, but there is a discernible break in respect of other items like period of notice, choice of holiday time and disciplinary measures" (1974: 145). Moreover, they also suggested that some employers were beginning to commit themselves to an extension of staff conditions to manual workers in the hope, thereby, of winning greater worker compliance (1974: 159-60). It may be, therefore, that in the meantime, manual wage-labourers have succeeded in winning improvements in their own conditions, thus narrowing the traditional distinction between themselves and routine white collar workers in respect of fringe benefits.

3) In terms of the remaining aspects of the market situation of low-level white-collar employees - degree of job security and opportunities for

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4. The New Earnings Survey 1987 (HMSO, 1987) gives average weekly earnings for full-time male managerial staff (including those whose pay was affected by absence) of £264.30. Male employees in "clerical and related" occupations earned an average of £180.20; those in "materials processing" (including foremen) £184.90 and those in "processing, making, repairing" etc. (including foremen), £200.40. By contrast, full-time female receptionists earned an average of £106.10, check-out operators £94.10 and typists £125.40.
upward mobility—their position is by and large more akin to that of the middle class than to that of manual wage-labourers, but there are important exceptions. Thus, as far as opportunities for upward mobility are concerned, I have already noted how the promotion prospects of male clerks are significantly enhanced by the fact that large numbers of women do not get promoted (which in its turn may be accounted for by the fact that women are often prevented from acquiring “promotable characteristics”… notably post-entry qualifications, long, unbroken service, and the ability to fulfill requirements to be geographically mobile) (Crompton and Jones, 1984: 4). On the issue of promotion more generally, I agree with Richard Brown (1982) that if occupation is to be a meaningful reality in class terms, ideally we need to take account not only of current occupation but also of work history, and that therefore it may be difficult to justify excluding from the middle class young routine office employees for whom their current job is just the first step on a ladder leading to an eventual managerial or administrative position. But while acknowledging this difficulty, I would also argue that the significance of promotion can be over-emphasised: among clerks at least, the promotion prospects of young men who remain in clerical employment are sustained not only by women but also by the substantial minority who leave clerical employment for manual jobs (Crompton and Jones, 1984). Stewart et al., (1980: 55) cite evidence that such leavers may amount to between a quarter and a third of men who start their working lives as clerks. Moreover, with the current recession, it may be that promotion opportunities decline: alternative employment opportunities for those wanting to leave are no longer as freely available as they were once upon a time and any compensating expansion in the
proportion of available senior positions may be assumed, because of the self-same recession, to be unlikely.

While it is difficult to draw firm conclusions, the evidence suggests, then, that there are no stronger grounds - in terms of market and work situation - for regarding the position of white-collar workers who are not professionals, managers or administrators, as being closer to the middle class rather than to the working class. This is sufficient reason for excluding them from the middle class for what it implies is that even if there is something of a gap between them and the working class, at the very least this gap is no larger than the one separating them from the middle class proper.
2.5. Summary and conclusions

To sum up, then, in the remainder of this research I intend the term 'middle class' to refer to that group of professional, administrative and managerial employees which Goldthorpe (1982) refers to as the 'Service Class', and which Heath et al., (1985) call the 'Salariat'. From here on I shall use the terms 'middle class', 'service class' and 'salariat' interchangeably. The nature of their employment contracts gives them market and work situations which set them off from other categories of workers - whether blue- or white-collar, and for the purposes of a study of political behaviour, this justifies considering them as a separate class: they have relatively well-paid and secure jobs and thus have "a vested interest in the preservation of the social order that gives rise to this advantaged position" (Heath et al., 1985: 15). The working class, on the other hand, consists of skilled and un-skilled manual workers whose common class location likewise derives from their sharing market and work situations which give rise to expectations for political behaviour: unable to improve their lot individually, they must look to collective action either through trade unions or government intervention. Operationally, the two classes consist of classes I and II and VI and VII of the seven-fold schema set out by Goldthorpe (1980).

As I said at the beginning, I do not pretend that the class schema I have chosen to work with is superior in all respects to others which have been proposed or that I have satisfactorily resolved its own problems; however, as Wright (1985: 98) points out, "at some point in any process of concept formation, it is necessary to suspend the pre-occupation with conceptual coherence and logical refinement and forge ahead in order to actually use the concept theoretically and empirically". What I do claim is
that as compared to the two other widely used approaches I have talked about, it is more useful for investigating the phenomenon I have chosen to analyse, i.e. vote: it is not founded on a conception of class as a uni-dimensional hierarchy and its location of class boundaries is, as a consequence non-arbitrary. At the same time, the theoretical justifications for such placement furnish reasons why we might expect class to be related to vote (whether or not such reasons are themselves well-founded is another matter).

We have now arrived at a definition of what it is to be 'middle class' suitable for an investigation of the class-interests model outlined in chapter 1 in that it explicitly takes postulated interests as the criterion of class-placement: on the basis of their market and work situations, members of the salariat are assumed to have a vested interest in the preservation of their privileged positions and thus to vote Conservative. On the basis of our definition, therefore, we proceed in the following chapter to investigate the class-interests model further by examining the extent to which middle-class Labour support can be explained in terms of a factor popularly thought to be implied by the model, namely, altruism.
CHAPTER 3: The altruism thesis

3.1 The 'altruism' thesis

Table 3.1 shows how middle- and working-class voters divided between Labour, Conservative and other parties at the seven general elections between 1964 and 1983. The class basis of voting is clear: in 1964, for every Labour voter within the middle class, there were three Conservative voters; in the working class the situation was an almost exact reflection, with approximately three Labour voters for every one Conservative. Nineteen years later - although the absolute level of class voting (the proportion of middle- plus working-class voters voting for their 'natural' class party) had declined (from 65.5 per cent to 51.5 per cent) - in the middle class there were almost four Conservative voters for every Labour voter; and inspite of the fact - as is all but unanimously agreed - that the 1983 election was a disaster for Labour, still, there were almost two Labour votes for every one Conservative vote within the working class.

It is basic facts such as these which provide the 'material foundation' for that widespread view of British voting behaviour according to which - to recall our basic starting point - class-structuring of the vote is a consequence of: 1) the parties' promoting different class-interests; 2) voters' awareness of this fact; 3) voters' casting their votes accordingly. As I have said, as well as being widespread among voters,¹ this view constitutes the implicit starting point informing much British voting research. It is something which emerges clearly in the 'altruistic middle-

¹. I give supporting evidence for this assertion in chapter 8.
TABLE 3.1
Class and Vote 1964 - 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 1974</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1974</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


class Labour voter' thesis which, as I shall now argue, as a consequence
gives a totally unsatisfactory account of middle-class Labour voting.

As its title suggests, the altruism thesis asserts, quite simply, that
much ('much' rather than 'all': I will explain why in a moment) middle-class
Labour voting can be explained in terms of an 'altruistic' orientation to
politics on the part of these electors. (Rallings, 1975; Jary, 1978). And,
it has to be said, in terms of how 'altruism' is understood in ordinary
discourse - as behaviour which involves the sacrifice of one's own advantage
for the sake of that of another or others - the thesis has a good deal of
prima facie plausibility: if middle- and working-class interests are promoted by the Conservatives and Labour respectively, voters know this, and are actually motivated by such awareness, then it would seem to follow—almost as a matter of logical necessity—that middle-class Labour voting is altruistic in nature.

One would therefore think that the most appropriate research strategy was to set about trying to demonstrate the truth of the above three premises. Instead, both Rallings and Jary—the main exponents of the 'altruism thesis'—content themselves with a much simpler approach (and this is where the issue of 'much' rather than 'all' comes in). What they do is to take a number of basic indicators of 'affluence' and to argue on the basis of these that middle-class Labour voters consist of two distinct political and social types: on the one hand, a grouping which in terms of the relevant indicators is described as being "marginal" to the middle class as a whole—and whose Labour support is, therefore, supposedly instrumental in character—and on the other, a much better-placed grouping (in terms of the same basic indicators) whose situation differs little, if at all, from the rest of the middle class and whose Labour support is thus presumed to be altruistic in nature.

Now the obvious point to make in this connection is that to the extent that our authors provide no direct evidence for the existence of altruistic and instrumental orientations but simply infer these from 'social background' data, their analysis is weak from the start; in addition to which, however, it may also be doubted that the inferences themselves are particularly sound: Why should we believe 'altruism' to be the prerogative of wealthy Labour supporters? A wealthy Conservative could appeal to long-standing elements of his party's philosophy to argue that his voting choice
too is motivated essentially by a concern for others. (One thinks, here, of the views of those, such as Ian Gilmour, whose outlooks can be traced back to Disraeli's conception of 'Tory Democracy'). Of course one might retort that the Conservative's claim is just a cover, or justification, for a choice which is in fact self-interested in nature. But what if we have reason to think that the Conservative genuinely believes what he says? Thus we see how unilluminating the 'altruism thesis' actually is: it is quite likely that all kinds of people voting for all sorts of different parties think that their choice is the right one from the point of view of others' welfare, and it doesn't seem to get us very far to attach the label 'altruistic' to the voting choice of this or that particular group in preference to others.

Exponents of the altruism thesis have never made it clear exactly what it is they are claiming. Perhaps what they see as being distinctive about altruistic voting is not simply that in deciding how to vote the voter thinks mainly or even exclusively about the implications of his choice for others, but that he also sees his choice as simultaneously involving the sacrifice of his own advantage. It might then be that whereas this is felt to apply to the wealthy Labour voter, the wealthy Conservative cannot be said to be altruistic because although he genuinely believes that the welfare of others is best served by his party, he is also well aware that the Conservatives are the better bet from the point of view of his own interests. Alternatively, it might be that the former case and not the latter is regarded as exemplifying altruism because although both individuals think their voting choice will benefit others, only the former
is altruistic in an objective sense. However this may be, now that we have pointed out some conceptual difficulties with the altruism thesis, we can take a closer look at the actual evidence on which it is based.

As we have seen, Railings and Jary contrast the 'altruistic' with an 'instrumental' middle-class Labourite. An initial question to ask is, 'What are the criteria of distinction that they use to separate out the two types?' - for the results of both authors may turn out to have been an artefact of the class schema they were using (basically, a simple blue-collar/white-collar distinction). With this schema it is almost inevitable that two types of middle-class Labour voter will emerge: defining as 'middle class' everybody from company chairmen to routine filing clerks, almost the only way in which two types would not be discernable is if Labour support were entirely concentrated in one end of such a 'middle class' or the other.

2. Altruism can be objective or subjective. A course of action is subjectively altruistic when, whatever may in fact be the outcome, a person, overriding consideration of his/her own advantage, undertakes it because he/she thinks it will benefit others. But, as Brian Barry (1978: 31) notes, behaviour can be objectively altruistic even though the person concerned does not explicitly think of it as such. Suppose that when asked, a person gives as his or her motive for joining a trade union the belief that 'union membership pays' and that when probed on what s/he means by this replies that the workers at his/her plant are better off as a result of the presence of the union than they were before the latter got itself established. This is an altruistic reply regardless of what the individual thinks about the matter since the union provides a public good - "that is, a benefit which cannot be deliberately restricted to certain people such as those who helped bring it into existence" (Barry 1978: 24). In these cases (as where, for example, the union successfully negotiates a pay rise which applies to all members of the shop, union members or not), to maximise his/her own benefit, a person should not contribute to the union at all since (provided there are reasonably large numbers involved) s/he will get the benefits of the union's activity regardless of his/her own contribution. In other words, his/her own contribution is so unlikely to make the difference between the provision and non-provision of the benefits of unionism that, in Olson's (1965) famous words, s/he has an incentive to 'free ride'. He or she who, inspite of this, contributes, is therefore behaving altruistically in an objective sense.
Indeed Jary implicitly acknowledges this since he takes as his basic criterion of distinction between the two types membership of market research categories Cl on the one hand, and AB, on the other. Then, in order to convince us that we really do have two distinct social types here he tells us that, "The greater incidence of low income... coupled with low levels of owner-occupation and greater tendency to working-class subjective identity among [Cl] provides clear support for the 'marginality' hypothesis in connection with this group" (Jary 1978: 138). This is not so much to provide convincing evidence for two types of middle-class Labour voter as to make the more or less analytic statement that Labour voters in category Cl are less affluent than those in category AB.3

Rallings makes the much more useful distinction between those who are subjectively middle class, on the one hand, and subjectively working class on the other,4 and then shows how, again in terms of various indicators of 'affluence', the former are in a much better position than the latter. Subjective class identity is a more useful basis of distinction since unlike the one used by Jary it is not logically inherent in the nature of the groups being identified. However, Rallings' analysis is not without its own problems. Firstly, if it turns out (as seems quite likely) that the

3. The statement is more or less analytic in that the categories are largely defined in terms of income and life-style.

4. I should perhaps explain that in British voting research 'subjective class', or 'subjective class identity' is defined as the individual's own, 'private' perception of the class to which he or she belongs. It is usually measured by questions of the sort: "Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to any particular class?" and (if the response is anything other than "middle class" or "working class"), "If you had to make a choice, would you call yourself middle class or working class?"
subjectively working class come predominantly from the C1 category (Rallings too bases his analysis on the market research schema) then we are back with Jary's problem of simply restating, this time in disguised fashion, that some middle-class Labour voters are better off than others. Secondly, the subjectively middle/subjectively working class distinction is, like Jary's much less subtle distinction, used to support a particular theory of class-deviant voting. Since, argues Rallings, as compared to the subjective middle class, the subjectively working class are sociologically so much closer to the (objective) working class than to the rest of the middle class, it is only those in the former grouping, the presumed 'altruists', who should 'really' be seen as class-deviant voters. However, if it turns out that the subjective working/subjective middle class distinction describes a similar divergence in terms of basic social variables also among other parties' supporters, then much of the potential of the same distinction (and thus of the two types of Labour-voter thesis) as a vehicle for explaining middle-class Labour voting is dissipated.

This is what in fact happens. Taking middle-class respondents to the 1983 British Election Study Survey (BES), table 3.2 reports, among those voting for each of the three major parties, the proportions of the subjectively middle class and the subjectively working class having favourable positions in terms of each of six 'affluence' indicators. Apart from the obvious point that an 'affluence gap' delineated by subjective class identity does not turn out to be confined to Labour voters alone, the data enjoins scepticism of the 'two types of Labour voter' thesis for two further, somewhat less obvious, reasons.

Firstly, the thesis might still stand if it could be shown that although existing in other party groupings also, the subjective class distinction
marked a greater degree of polarisation among Labour voters. In other words, if differences between the subjectively middle, and the subjectively working class are much greater for Labour’s than for other parties’ voters, then we still have grounds for arguing that it represents a worthwhile, and potentially fruitful, distinction. However, this does not prove to be the case, as an examination of odds ratios reveals. Odds ratios here allow us to quantify the relative sizes of the gaps between the subjectively middle and subjectively working class within each party grouping on each of the variables in the table. For instance, looking at the first two columns of the table we can see that the odds of a subjectively middle class Labour voter having use of a car as compared to a subjectively working class Labour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party:</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Alliance</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective class:</td>
<td>M.C.</td>
<td>W.C.</td>
<td>M.C.</td>
<td>W.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of each group where:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household owns/has use of one or more cars or vans</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In household with private health insurance</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remained at school until age 18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had further education</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is owner-occupier</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has telephone</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BES, 1983.
voter are 92 to 67. From the fifth and sixth columns of the table we can see that the corresponding odds among Alliance voters is 94 to 85. If, then, we divide these odds (i.e. if we divide 92/67 by 94/85) in order to obtain the odds ratio, we get a result of approximately 1.25 : 1 (or more simply 1.25). It is easy to understand that an odds ratio of 1 : 1, (or simply 1.0), would indicate that the subjective class difference was (relatively) no larger in the one party grouping than in the other. What we are looking for, then, are significant departures from 1. Calculating the full set of odds ratios for the Labour-Conservative, Labour-Alliance and Labour-Other combinations on each of the six variables produces the result - as the reader can verify for him- or herself - that only in terms of the insurance variable is the subjective class divide within the Labour grouping larger by more than a half (i.e. odds ratio of 1.5 or more) than the corresponding divide in the other groupings. On each of the other variables the odds ratio works out at pretty close to unity (the mean odds ratio across all variables excluding insurance is 1.08) and in terms of the schooling variable the subjective class divide is narrower for the Labour than for the other groupings (i.e. odds ratio less than 1.0). The evidence for two radically distinct species among Labour voters, species which are not equally to be found in other areas of the electoral terrain, does not, then, seem to be particularly compelling.

Secondly, even more serious is the argument that, given the kind of data under examination, talk of two distinct types is in any case suspect whatever the results of the above analysis might have been. To describe something as a distinct 'type' generally implies that it has a number of characteristics which allow us to distinguish it from other types and by virtue of which it is the type that it is. The above data, however, actually
tell us very little about the possible existence of types in this sense. All
they show are *proportions* within given categories possessing different
attributes and tell us nothing about the extent to which these proportions
overlap.\(^5\)

I would argue that to know very much about the existence of types, we
need to have recourse to a much more sophisticated statistical technique.
This would be one that takes account not just of a number of variables
singly, but rather, one which is capable of throwing some light on the
groups which emerge when – stating it in formal terms – the values of a
sample of cases are taken for a number of variables *in combination*. The
technique which seems to be most appropriate for this task is *cluster
analysis*. Technical details of the technique are to be found in Appendix 1;
here an intuitive description will have to suffice.

The purpose of cluster analysis has been concisely stated by Everitt
(1974: 1):

> "Given a sample of \(N\) objects or individuals, each of which is measured
> on each of \(p\) variables, devise a classification scheme for grouping the
> objects into \(g\) classes. The number of classes and the characteristics of
> the classes to be determined".

\(^5\) For example, the 33 per cent of subjectively working class Labour voters
without access to a private means of transport may not be at all the same
people as the roughly similar proportion without ownership of their own
dwelling. Indeed, to take the opposite case, it is a straightforward matter
to verify that, taking the transport, further education, housing and
telephone variables, and given complete overlap among all four, as many as
35 per cent of the subjective working class might have favourable positions
on all four while given maximum possible lack of overlap among the
subjectively middle class, we would obtain a corresponding figure of only 63
per cent. In this case it would not be possible to claim with any great
degree of justification that the subjective class distinction was indicative
of different groups that were particularly homogeneous within themselves.
The classes are not defined *a priori*. Rather, it is of the essence of clustering techniques that they 'search' a data set and bring to light for the investigator the presence among the individual cases or entities of groupings which are not immediately evident. By applying to the data mathematical models embodying the principle of numerical taxonomy, cluster analysis opens the possibility of discovering groupings (clusters) of entities that are similar, not just in the simple sense apparent from the data we have examined above, but rather in terms of cases' composite values on variables. As such, cluster analysis is a two-step process. The first involves the calculation of similarities or distances between entities (on the basis of their composite values on the input variables); the second the application of an appropriate criterion by which to appraise such similarities for the purpose of organising the entities into groups. Our input variables were the six indicators we used above, our aim being to see to what extent the clusters we found could be distinguished in terms of the differing subjective class identities of their members.

We first performed an initial run using a hierarchical agglomerative method - average linkage between groups. The similarity measure we chose was the simple matching coefficient (for reasons explained in Appendix 1). Our choice of the average linkage method was dictated by the simple fact that of two other highly popular hierarchical agglomerative methods - single linkage and complete linkage - average linkage seemed to be the best 'half-way house': a major problem with single linkage is that it has a tendency to chain, or to add cases one by one at low levels to large clusters formed at higher levels so that, for the two-cluster solution, say, one may obtain the trivial result of having one cluster containing one case and another cluster containing all the others. Complete linkage, by contrast, "has a tendency to
find relatively compact, hyperspherical clusters composed of highly similar cases" (Aldenderfer and Blashfield, 1984: 40).

The results we obtain from our analysis are probably best presented by means of a 'scree curve' such as the one in figure 3.1. This plots the

**FIGURE 3.1**  
**Middle-class Labour voters 1983**  
Simple matching coefficient: within groups average linkage
number of clusters implied by the dendogram emerging from our test against
the 'fusion coefficient' or similarity level at which various clusters are
amalgamated with other clusters. The advantage of the scree curve is that it
provides us with a somewhat more formal basis for determining the number of
clusters present than mere visual inspection of the dendogram output: unfortu-
nately, as Aldenderfer and Blashfield (1984: 53) point out, "determining
just how many groups are present in the results of a clustering study... is
among the as yet unsolved problems of cluster analysis". With hierarchical
methods (such as the one we have used, for example), where all clusters can
ultimately be subsumed as members of a single 'overall' cluster, the obvious
question to ask is, "At what point do we 'cut' the dendogram to reveal the
'correct' number of groups?" Though not ideal, the scree curve provides us
with a less than totally arbitrary means of confronting this problem.

Essentially, what we are looking for are points at which the curve gets
noticeably flatter. A marked flattening of the curve between any two points
suggests that there has been a large decrease in the level at which cluster-
merging takes place and hence "that no new information is portrayed by the
following mergers of clusters" (Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984: 54-5)

Looking at figure 3.1 we can see that the only major flattening of the
curve occurs between the five- and four-cluster solutions. Certainly, any
evidence for the presence of two groups in the data is, on this test at
least, very thin indeed. Infact, deciding on the two-cluster solution has
the consequence that we obtain a very large cluster with 83 cases, together
with a very small one containing the remainder (19); and while the latter
cluster is fairly homogeneous in terms of the subjective identity of its
members (17 are subjectively working class) the same cannot be said of the
former (49 are subjectively working class, 34 subjectively middle class).
Things do not improve very much when we examine what appears to be the more 'natural' solution - the division into five clusters. Here we retain one very large group (80 members) and find the remainder of the sample divided as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Subjective M.C.</th>
<th>Subjective W.C.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the results of our test, then, we find little evidence to support either the view of middle-class Labour voters as divided into two distinct types or the view that whatever types do exist can be adequately differentiated in terms of subjective class identity.

Finally, in order to obtain confirmation of our finding we decided to repeat our initial run but using different clustering methods. This final step is essential since we need to provide evidence of the reliability of our results: since different methods applied to the same set of data can, and do, produce different results, we cannot be satisfied with the outcome of a single run on its own; or, to look at things from the opposing angle, if there really are two distinct groups present in our data then this should be apparent across a number of different methods even though some one particular method might fail to bring the structure to light.

The alternative methods we used were single link clustering, complete link clustering and average linkage between groups. Only the latter came anywhere near to providing reasonable evidence for the presence of the two groups we have been searching for. Examination of the scree curve for the results obtained with this method (figure 3.2) indicates an appreciable change of gradient between the two- and one-cluster solutions and the degree
of overlap between subjective class identity and cluster membership seems

FIGURE 3.2
Middle-class Labour voters 1983
Simple matching coefficient: between groups average linkage
reasonable: for the two-cluster solution a clear majority of the subjective middle class were to be found in one cluster, with a clear majority of the subjective working class in the other. The precise figures were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective class identity</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, a 'perfect solution' would display a one-to-one correspondence between subjective class identity and cluster membership and we are very far from attaining this. The single linkage method, as might have been predicted, failed to come up with any obvious clustering at all, while complete linkage resulted in even less of an overlap between cluster membership and subjective class identity than did average within-groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective class identity</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our general conclusion must, therefore, be that the 'two types of Labour voter' thesis remains, at best, unproved. True, things might have been different had we included other indicators in our set of variables, but unfortunately, other than talking in vague, general terms about differences in levels of 'affluence', proponents of the thesis give us no guidance on this point. Moreover, arguments about the effects of including this or that variable do not really lend much weight to the case; on the contrary, if the inclusion or omission of particular variables really can have such dramatic effects, this does not say much for the robustness of any particular results we might obtain.
Set against the background of the previous two chapters, the analysis reported in the present chapter allows us to summarize our argument to this point as follows: for the reasons set out in chapter 1, we have good grounds for being just as interested in non-support, as in support, for Labour within the middle class, that is, in the extent of middle-class support for the party. Because it is assumed that middle-class individuals are more advantaged by periods of Conservative government than by periods of Labour government, it is felt that the middle-class Labour voter's party support is probably explicable in terms of an altruistic orientation to politics, from which it follows that an answer to our question is to be sought in terms of the extent of altruistic orientations within the class. The 'altruism thesis', however, is wanting: no direct evidence for an altruistic orientation is provided and the evidence for the existence of the type which is supposed to be being altruistic is doubtful. If altruism is regarded as a subjective phenomenon, then even if good evidence for it were provided, however, it is not clear how much it would tell us. Only if it is shown that presumed altruists are also voting altruistically in an objective sense does their behaviour become at all interesting; and, in the context of the middle class and Labour, this involves showing, at the very least, that middle-class individuals are better off if they withhold their support from the party. This assumption, untested by the altruism thesis, is the matter that we turn to in the following two chapters.
CHAPTER 4: The effect of Labour in office 1974 - 1979

4.1 Introduction

In modern Britain, the bulk of the middle class are much better placed than the working class. For the reasons that I discussed in chapter 2, a fundamental distinction between a working- and a middle-class working life is that the latter represents a career, whereas the former simply represents a job (Roberts et al., 1977: 29). This fact is directly reflected in three privileges which are denied to the working class but which the middle class has long taken for granted: opportunities for upward mobility, pay and fringe benefits. The first is intrinsic to the notion of a career while the second is consequential not only (or even mainly) in terms of overall differences of level, but in terms of its pattern over the life-cycle. "How often do casual references to the working and middle classes provoke rhetorical reminders of dockers who earn more than school-teachers...?" (Roberts et al., 1977: 20). The fact is that while middle- and working-class earnings have always shown some overlap rather than this being a new phenomenon, the former rise continuously throughout the working life whereas the latter normally peak when the full adult rate for the job is attained and then decline with advancing years and diminishing physical powers. Thus while there may be a considerable earnings overlap among employees early on in their working lives, it is likely that among the over forty-fives "there is hardly any overlap at all" (Roberts et al., 1977: 29). Having reached their earnings peaks, working-class individuals can only expect the real value of their earnings to rise if their occupational group as a whole achieves an advance or if there is economic growth. Rising middle-class earnings provide a cushion against the threat to economic circumstances represented by the child-rearing phase of the life-cycle whereas the
working-class individual will be under pressure to maximise earnings by working overtime and perhaps by tolerating shift work. While income levels within the working class are related to the length of the working week, such an association is likely to be much weaker or non-existent in the middle class. In short, while the working-class employee may attain a certain degree of affluence, "he is visibly obliged to earn it" (Roberts et al., 1977: 29). But even if his pay reaches middle-class levels, his overall remuneration is still likely to be less: "It is now widely recognised that 'pay' is just one element in the executive's total returns from employment. Other elements can include pension rights, health insurance, use of company vehicles, meals and entertainment, and it is not unusual for the total value of these 'fringe benefits' to account for more than a third of the overall compensation package" (Roberts et al., 1977: 30-1). What is perhaps less widely recognised is the importance of this largesse for tax-avoidance purposes. But if this perhaps describes the situation of only a minority of middle-class employees, it should be pointed out that working-class employees are less likely to be able to choose their own holiday times, more likely to be subject to pay deductions for lateness and less likely to be allowed time off with pay for personal reasons (such as, to see the doctor). Finally, it hardly needs mentioning that working-class individuals are more likely to be subject to authority than to exercise it to any degree, more likely to be made redundant and more likely to fall into poverty in old age. The middle-class/working-class divide is therefore a real one.

But if the middle class occupies a position of relative privilege within the existing social and economic order, the Labour Party has never posed a threat to that order. By this I mean that the party has never attempted to challenge, let alone replace, the market as a distributive mechanism, and that is, to organise or even move towards, a society which is
governed by principles of distribution other than those stemming from the free sale of labour power in exchange for wages and salaries. To anyone thinking back over the 1964 and 1974 governments, (with their histories of cuts in public expenditure - in 1976 on the direct instructions of the IMF - , incomes policies, and such events as In Place of Strife), and even the 1945 government, (for which the nationalization of ailing industries essential for the overall process of capital accumulation was seen mainly, if not entirely, in terms of 'efficiency' rather than any extension of democracy), so much will be obvious. What it implies, however, is that the assumption that it is economically rational for the bulk of middle-class voters to withhold support from the Labour Party becomes a moot point - particularly when it is suggested (see for instance, Le Grand, 1982) that such traditional Labour aims as increased welfare state expenditure, for example, are actually of greater benefit to the middle class than the working class. This is an issue we shall take up in the following chapter.

The starting point for this chapter is that while it is obvious that the Labour Party has not threatened the basic contours of the existing social and economic order, and if this is in itself a reason for perplexity at its lack of middle-class support, it could however be that the party has failed to mobilize the middle class behind it because of an indulgence in "ghetto politics". Borrowing the term from Esping-Andersen (1985), (though he uses it differently), I use it to mean the espousal and implementation of sets of policies of benefit to manual workers only and a concomitant failure to pursue policies capable of building solidarity among citizens whether middle or working class. The possibility that this may have been so derives from Esping-Andersen's (1985) theory of the conditions necessary for the electoral success of social-democratic parties in general.
In what follows I shall examine Labour’s economic performance and attempts at social reform the last time it was in office (i.e. between 1974 and 1979) in the light of this theory. The following section fleshes out this theory in a little more detail and explains why we have chosen the period 1974 to 1979 for examination. Subsequent sections examine Labour’s activities in the fields of incomes policy, welfare benefits and taxation, and finally, the influence of the trade unions on its activities. The evidence I have suggests that owing to the economic context within which the party had to operate, Labour’s measures were not indeed conducive to the creation of a broad inter-class electoral constituency according to the tenets of Esping-Andersen’s theory. But my evidence also suggests that to the extent that Labour departed from this ‘optimal’ strategy, it did so in ways that were detrimental to the living standards, not so much of the salariat, but of workers. I therefore conclude that the idea that Labour fails to win support in the salariat because it is economically biased against it has, (at least for the period we are examining), little to recommend it. But there is a further important consideration, and it is this: that regardless of the impact of Labour’s policies, the salariat might still be expected to vote for the party if it were the case that it has been worse off, or not significantly better off with alternative governments. In other words, logically, the party’s attractiveness to the middle class cannot be a function of what it does alone, but at the very least must be viewed in the light of what it does as compared to what its opponents do. Such an analysis constitutes the substance of the next chapter.

4.2 The ‘ghetto theory’

Esping-Andersen’s ‘ghetto theory’ starts from the electoral arithmetic of class-divided societies pointing out that to rely on the votes of workers only would be to deprive social democracy of parliamentary majorities. From
there the theory basically revolves around the idea that the fortunes of social-democratic parties (given their basic ideals and aspirations) depend on their capacity to espouse and implement policies that build solidarity among citizens, whether middle or working class, while avoiding those that divide them; and in terms of the middle-class support issue with which we are concerned, the party must avoid measures based on zero-sum conflicts which are bound to leave the middle class as the loser. In concrete terms this means that social-democratic parties must project themselves not as "class parties" but as "wage-earners' parties" by espousing welfare reforms that are a) universal and b) generous. Reforms, in other words, must apply to everyone regardless of their private means and must be economically attractive even to the better off. The first condition is necessary to ensure the avoidance of conflict breaking out "between those who pay and those who receive" (Esping-Andersen 1985: 33): in systems of progressive taxation where middle-class individuals pay larger proportions of their incomes in tax than working-class individuals, non-universal, means-tested benefits imply that the former pay for welfare expenditure without getting any entitlements in return. The second condition is necessary in order to eliminate incentives to seek individualistic, private-market solutions (such as occupational pensions, private health care and schools). Together the two requirements amount to the attempt to maintain a broad social solidarity essential for the creation of a large social-democratic electoral constituency. An essential condition for the success of the whole strategy is economic growth: generous and universalistic welfare provision inevitably requires heavy tax burdens so that there is an ever-present danger of anti-tax revolts. The problem is eased somewhat where economic growth and full-employment "ensures a large and growing income pool to tax" (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 35).
It seems clear from the writings of prominent Labour politicians in the post-war period, (see Poore, 1985, part 4), that the party's leading spokesmen are aware of the need for the strategy which Esping-Andersen advocates - at least that part of it which relates to economic growth. Unsurprisingly so: in periods of economic growth it is relatively easy to implement reforms because everybody can be better off without anybody having to be worse off. Redistribution can take place in a non-zero sum manner.

The period from 1974 to 1979 provided a severe 'testing ground' of Labour's ability to implement the whole strategy, for first of all it had to get the growth on which the strategy depended: the economic conditions that the government found on entering office were severe. Inflation stood at 15 per cent; unemployment was rising, and 1974 ended with a record balance of payments deficit of £3,323 million. In these conditions, attempts at reform were likely to undermine cross-class solidarity inasmuch as with a non-expanding cake, they could not benefit some without hurting others.

Nevertheless, in its 'social contract', which was the central pillar of the manifesto presented at the February election, the party's leaders believed that they had found the key to economic recovery: in exchange for a variety of economic and social reforms, the unions were to deliver self-imposed wage restraint; this would help to bring down inflation which in its turn would improve Britain's export competitiveness and thus the balance of payments. In this way, welfare was felicitously seen as the key to economic recovery.

As Harold Wilson had told the 1972 Labour Party Conference: "there can be no road to national agreement, national unity, on a policy for dealing with inflation and unemployment except on the basis of social justice" (quoted by Coates 1980: 15).

As I hope will be clear from the following discussion, I want to argue that, as shown by economic developments from 1974 on, far from what the
Newell, James (1991), Labourism, Ideology and the British Middle Class
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/5299

framers of the Social Contract believed, Labour was faced with the classic dilemma which Przeworski (1985) and others have pointed to, namely, that attempts to pursue reform were actually inimical to the very economic efficiency necessary to sustain them in the first place. In such circumstances, so far from the government succeeding in achieving universal and generous welfare reforms, it had to restrain demands for reforms. And, as I shall show in the following two sections, the main group to shoulder the burden of such restraint was not the salariat but workers. Finally, in section 4.5, I shall describe the role of the unions in helping to engineer acquiescence to that restraint - against the common view that the Labour government was the trade unions' 'captive'.

4.3 The impact of incomes policies

The government began to give effect to its social-contract strategy as soon as it entered office: there was an immediate freeze on rents in both the council and private housing sectors, price controls, and subsidies on bread, milk and butter. At the same time, the Government began negotiations with the trade unions for what the Queen's Speech euphemistically referred to as an "orderly growth of incomes on a voluntary basis" (quoted by Coates, 1980: 9). Yet such negotiations were insufficient to curb the growth in the rate of inflation which continued to rise before reaching a peak of 30 percent in the summer of 1975. A large part of the problem here lay in the previous government's incomes policy which was allowed to continue in force until its due expiry date in November 1974, and which provided for automatic wage increases in line with increases in the retail price index. At the same time, as a consequence of its first budget, the government found itself faced with the first of many paradoxes related to the basic dilemma I have mentioned above: to pay for the aforementioned reforms, higher corporation taxes and national insurance contributions, and increases in the prices
charged by the nationalized industries were imposed on the manufacturing sector. Yet this was likely to mean that increased investment, which the government took to be the long-term solution to both inflation and the balance-of-payments deficit would not be forthcoming and indeed the government's own survey of business intentions suggested a fall in the level of investment of between 7 and 10 per cent for 1975 (Coates, 1980: 22). On the other hand, the alternative of financing social expenditure through further taxes on incomes was likely to alienate trade union leaders and thus undermine the social contract on which the whole of the government's strategy was based in the first place.

In the third quarter of 1974, earnings were increasing at an annual rate of 25.5 per cent. This was caused by a weakness of confidence in the pound (which increased the cost of imports) which in its turn was a consequence of the balance-of-payments deficit. The government was caught in a vicious circle: balance-of-payments deficits, a weakened pound (it depreciated by 20 per cent in the three years to the end of 1974) and higher import costs led to increased prices (in December 1974 the retail price index was 19 per cent higher than it had been a year before). This in its turn undermined the unions' willingness to limit pay claims. But, faced with higher wage costs, firms were less able to export (in the third quarter of 1974 the volume of exports was 5 per cent lower as compared to the same period in 1973) with the result that the balance of payments was further weakened - and so on. As I have said, the essence of the government's strategy on entering office had been "that wage demands would moderate as its side of the social contract was felt at shop-floor level" (Coates, 1980: 60). However, already with the November budget the government had been forced to retreat from some of its commitments, (in an effort to increase the level of investment and exports, price controls had been eased and
subsidies on public-sector prices abolished) and, against the background of a run on the pound in June and July 1975, the first of a series of wage restraint policies was introduced. The impact of these policies from the point of view of the middle and working classes was very different.

The first policy ran for a year until 1976 and provided for maximum increases of £6. Those earning over £8,500 p.a. were to get nothing. "...the policy was [thus] presented as being of benefit to the low paid who would gain larger percentage increases through the flat rate formula" (Pond, 1980: 97). An estimate of the 'low paid' as a proportion of full-time manual wage earners in the 1970s would probably result in a figure of about 33 per cent. An analysis of how the policy affected the low paid therefore, is also an analysis of how it affected significant proportions of the working class. The policy did not improve the relative position of low-paid workers at all: the £6 was a maximum to be achieved through collective bargaining, yet an important reason why workers are low paid in the first place is that they lack bargaining strength. Secondly, many did not get the full £6 because some of the Wages Councils, (designed to protect those working in industries where collective bargaining is especially weak), refused to grant it, and the government had no legal power to force them to do so. Thirdly, the £6 could not be added to basic rates in the calculation of overtime pay so that many found themselves working at overtime rates less than their

1. That is, approximately a third of full time manual men and women had gross weekly earnings of around £55 or less in 1977 (calculated from New Earnings Survey 1977, London: HMSO, tables 66, 68, 74, 76). The figure of £55 reflects the conventional definition of poverty in terms of Supplementary Benefit (SB) levels: "The Low Pay Unit estimated that a married couple with two children would have needed a gross wage of approximately £55 a week in 1978 to be left with a net income... equivalent to what they would receive if dependent on the inadequate subsistence standard of SB" (Pond, 1980: 85-6).
basic pay. "This helped to depress the earnings of lower-paid manual workers, more dependent on overtime pay than their white-collar counterparts" (Pond, 1980: 97). Meanwhile, the largest percentage increases were achieved by managerial and professional groups: between April 1975 and April 1976 they had increases which averaged 22 per cent whereas manual men registered 17 per cent (Pond, 1979: 69). The most probable reasons for this state of affairs were 1) the fact that the incremental increases normal among managerial and professional groups were allowed to go ahead on top of the pay-policy supplement; and 2) that many took advantage of the possibilities for phoney upgrading and job changes offered by non-manual employment (Pond, 1979: 71; 1980: 98).

Subsequent incomes policies "exhibited a clear trend from a formal commitment to protect the low paid to a desire to re-establish differentials" (Pond, 1979: 67): the £6 policy was replaced in August 1976 by a stage 2 policy which limited wage increases to 5 per cent or £4 whichever was the greater. A sop was given to the low paid in the form of a specification that there were to be minimum increases of £2.50. Finally, all pretence to protection of the low paid was abandoned one year later when stage 3 of the policy imposed straightforward limitations of 10 per cent. An analysis of New Earnings Survey data for the years 1977 and 1978 reveals that in all but one case, managerial and professional groups received increases that were well above the limits of both stages 2 and 3 of the policy: see table 4.1. It is true that the same analysis shows that manual earnings did not stay within government guidelines either; however, for the former groups the figure must to some extent underestimate the true size of

increases owing to the existence of the sort of fringe benefits I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter: official earnings figures can only reflect fringe benefits to the extent that they are taxed, and very few of them are. It is therefore difficult to avoid the conclusion that the increased popularity of company largesse during the 1970s was because of its value as a way around incomes policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation group</th>
<th>Percentage increase over previous year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial (general management)</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and related supporting management and administration</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and related in education welfare and health</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary, artistic and sports</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and related in science, engineering, technology and similar fields</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial (excluding general management)</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While, as I have said, the government's entire economic strategy was premised on the compatibility of economic efficiency with high levels of welfare provision, it's basic dilemma was that the two were in fact...

3. "14.5 per cent of managers were entitled to medical insurance in 1969, but by 1977 this had more than doubled to 38.8 per cent. Similarly, under half (49.7 per cent) of managers had sole use of a company car in 1969 but this proportion had increased to almost two thirds (63.8 per cent) by 1977. At the higher executive levels, the importance of the company car has become an almost universal benefit... In addition to these common benefits, a number of others have emerged since 1970, according to the BIM [British Institute of Management] survey of company practice published in 1974: accident and travel insurance, general loan facilities, company canteens and restaurants, share incentive schemes, widows' and dependents' pensions, increased luncheon voucher entitlements, cash discount cards..." (Pond, 1979: 74).
incompatible. In particular, though a crucial component of its social contract for the achievement of trade union wage restraint, its welfare programme was a major contributory factor to the very inflation which such restraint was designed to contain. Moreover, inasmuch as inflation undermined confidence in the pound, (falls were particularly sharp in 1976 with sterling reaching a record low of $1.57 at the end of October), the government was forced to raise interest rates in an effort to persuade holders of sterling not to sell; already in July 1975 the Bank of England’s minimum lending rate had been increased to 11 per cent and on 7th October 1976 rose to a record 15 per cent in the wake of a fresh run against the pound which had been building up since the beginning of September. The problem then was that such high interest rates would squeeze out all but the most profitable investment and indeed, gross fixed investment in manufacturing industry fell by an unprecedented 8 per cent in 1975 and in 1976 by a further 5 per cent.\footnote{Calculated from \textit{Economic Trends Annual Supplement} 1979, table 52, London: HMSO.} Here then was another paradox for the government to handle: it required industrial wage-discipline in order to keep exports price competitive and to maintain confidence in the pound; and yet unable to generate that investment and hence growth which would fund government spending without greater taxation or borrowing. It was therefore forced to cut back on programmes vital to the sustenance of industrial wage discipline in the first place.
Given the government's economic difficulties and its consequent need to cut public expenditure, it could hardly have been expected, owing to the costs that would have been involved, to pursue a welfare programme that was comprehensively solidaristic in Esping-Andersen's terms, namely, the provision of benefits that are universalistic and generous. Yet, though the government did not pursue such a programme, continuing with the traditional Beveridge principles of selectivity, i.e. making available only certain benefits for certain contributions; and though these benefits—aimed at the relief of misfortunes most likely to occur to working-class individuals—were relatively protected from the impact of expenditure cuts, we cannot conclude from this that the salariat must have been economically 'stung' by Labour; for among other things, government expenditure on the benefits of the traditional welfare state have to be viewed in conjunction with the impact of tax allowances "which are equivalent in terms of revenue forgone to direct government expenditure" and many of which (such as mortgage interest tax relief, superannuation and life assurance) are of greatest value to the better off. In the following section we shall first describe the basic contours of British welfare provision and then show how these were influenced by the activities of the Labour government. Thirdly, setting these activities alongside the action taken in the field of taxation allows

an assessment of the relative gains and losses sustained by the middle and working classes.

4.4 Welfare and tax benefits

In emphasising the importance of the "institutionalisation of solidarity" and thus of state policy as a condition of social-democratic electoral success, Esping-Andersen argues that this requires entitlements to be universal and generous. In concrete terms this apparently means "the eradication of differentiated entitlements, means-tested and targeted benefits, individualistic insurance schemes and 'self-help' principles. Reforms must avoid situations in which collective services breed discontent between those who pay and those who receive". (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 33).

Although he does not furnish any further detail, it is difficult to think that this can mean anything other than welfare provision with the following characteristics: in the situations they are intended to cover, e.g. unemployment or sickness, benefits must be available automatically, independently of the individual's private means. They must not be tied to any specific number of contributions and must be provided for as long as unemployment, sickness or whatever persists. Crucial to the maintenance of solidarity is the way benefits are financed; that is, it is difficult to see how the taxes or contributions designed to cover their provision can be levied on a progressive basis unless at least some benefits, e.g. pensions, are earnings related as opposed to flat rate; for otherwise the potential for tax revolts, for conflict between those who mainly finance welfare on the one hand, and those who mainly receive it on the other, will persist. British welfare provision diverges sharply from these standards.
The basic framework of the present system was laid down by the famous 1942 Beveridge Report. Essentially, this established flat-rate contributions to a compulsory insurance scheme - national in its coverage and administered centrally by government - "entitling contributors to equal benefits paid without means test" (Deakin, 1987: 42). Generally, benefits were subsistence level and tied to a certain specific number of contributions. This latter condition meant that while the scheme covered the industrially disabled, the congenitally disabled - because unable to work and therefore to make any contributions - were left out (Field, 1981). Nor were all benefits paid as long as need lasted; in particular, unemployment and sickness benefits were paid for only a limited duration after which claimants had to rely on means-tested National Assistance. Free school meals, which it had originally been intended to provide universally, were also subject to a test of means and the universal nature of the scheme was further limited by the fact that family allowances were not paid in respect of the first child.

From the beginning, therefore, the scheme's capacity for creating inter-class solidarity was weak and on the contrary had "the potential for stimulating an explosive politicization of equity issues" (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 165), in particular as a result of the low level of benefits and the remnants of means testing: with regard to the first point, though they still had to pay national insurance contributions, the better off were naturally uninterested in the meagre pensions and sought to make provision for their
old age by means of private schemes. With regard to the second point, the extent to which the scheme had in fact abolished means testing would depend on subsequent social and economic changes such as the level and average duration of unemployment, for example. Thus with the return of recession in the 1970s and the concomitant growth in the numbers of the long-term unemployed, those who were dependent on means-tested National Assistance (called Supplementary Benefit from 1966) because they had exhausted their unemployment-benefit entitlements trebled. This situation, coupled with the necessary growth of tax burdens to finance the unemployed, brought with it the - one is tempted to say "inevitable" - tax revolt, or the revolt of those who, being the principle bearers of the tax burden on account of their incomes, were also the ones precluded from eligibility for means-tested benefits: "Recurrent surveys on the general issue of the public's preferences as between reducing taxation, on the one hand, and spending more on the social services on the other showed up to the late 1970s a rising majority in favour of tax cuts". "...a high level of concern about social

6. "The provision of company pensions advanced rapidly in the years up to 1967. In 1936, 2.6 million workers were members of company pension schemes. This total jumped to 6.2 million by 1953, rising to 8 million three years later. By 1963 the total had topped 11.1 million and the numbers of workers in company pension schemes reached an all-time peak of 12.2 million in 1967" (Field, 1981: 138).

7. It has been estimated that taking account of dependants, for one reason or another "by 1979, 5 million individuals had their level of income determined by the supplementary benefit levels" (Fiachaud, 1980: 181).
security and hostility towards claimants was a common feature of attitude surveys. Golding and Middleton, whose *Images of Welfare* helpfully brings together a good deal of evidence from the late 1970s, report that the majority of their own sample felt that benefits were too generous and too easy to obtain" (Deakin, 1987: 80-1). Finally, that other indicator of shifts of opinion - the ballot box - registered spectacular by-election losses for Labour after 1976 and the Conservative victory in 1979 on a promise to "roll back the frontiers of the state".

Nevertheless, to the framework of welfare provision described above, Labour introduced three reforms that were of at least a minimally solidaristic nature and thus, potentially, of interest to middle-class people - a new pensions scheme, benefits for the congenitally disabled, and changed provision for the maintenance of children. The first measure was designed to replace flat-rate pensions by earnings-related pensions according to the following formula: in exchange for contributions of 6.5 per cent of earnings, pensioners would get a basic, flat-rate component plus an additional component of 1.25 per cent of earnings above the basic level, up to a limit of seven times this level, for each year of earnings under the scheme, thus providing a supplement of 25 per cent in 20 years. The scheme was thus solidaristic inasmuch as while it meant that the lower-paid would get a higher percentage of their earnings than the higher paid, it offered something for everybody: instead of low, flat-rate pensions in exchange for contributions proportional to earnings, (which the higher-paid could claim penalized them because they paid more but got the same), now each would get a pension more closely related to what s/he had contributed. At the same
time, it served to eradicate status differentials: those on three quarters of average earnings would receive 50 per cent of earnings, those on average earnings 44 per cent, and those on one-and-a-half times the average, 38 per cent. 8

The second measure introduced three new non-contributory, non-means tested benefits for disabled people. In this way, the gap in the universality of the Beveridge scheme that I mentioned above went some way to being plugged in that those who had never been able to work and thus make contributions could now receive benefits. On the other hand, the generosity condition was not satisfied in that benefit levels were fixed at below Supplementary Benefit rates.

Thirdly, provision for children was reorganised in that family allowances and child tax allowances were replaced by a system of child benefits. Again, this can justifiably be described as a solidaristic measure: family allowances as I have said, were not paid for the first child - thus excluding about two-fifths of parents (Lister, 1980: 187) - and they were effectively subject to means testing in that they were taxable. The new child benefits, by contrast, were tax free and paid in respect of each child. Again, however, it was not possible to describe the new benefit as

8. Moreover, for those who were members of occupational pension schemes, (about half the employed population), the reform had the added attractiveness that, provided their occupational scheme was at least as good as the state scheme, they could choose to contract out of a part of the latter and receive reduced benefits in return for a reduced level of contributions.
generous: when compared with the combined value of family allowances and child tax allowances, it provided a level of child support in 1979 less than that achieved in the mid-1950s and only met a part of the actual costs of maintaining children (Lister, 1980: 196-7).

Labour’s activities in the field of welfare, then, fell a long way short of what Esping-Andersen argues is required for social-democratic class formation and inter-class solidarity. But it is difficult to argue from this that by comparison with workers, middle-class people got a raw deal from the government in welfare terms, for if welfare means public expenditure on income maintenance, then alongside the provision of traditional cash benefits we have also to include tax benefits, and from an analysis of Labour’s activities in this field it emerges that over the government’s life-time “policy towards taxation developed into a means of increasing post-tax differentials between different sections of the community” (Pond, 1979: 66). (N.B. If one is unfamiliar with how the British tax system operates, the following discussion may be a little hard to follow. Before going further, therefore, the reader may wish to refer to the simplified description of the system which I give in appendix 3).

Table 4.2 shows, for each budget during the Labour government’s lifetime, the percentage changes in the most widely claimed allowances as compared to the percentage increases in the retail price index since the last budget’s presentation. From the table one can see that, excluding the additional personal allowance for single parent families, in none of the Labour budgets before the last two were the principal tax allowances increased sufficiently to compensate for inflation. In 1977/78, there were
substantial increases in all allowances and more modest ones in the 1978 budget.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single person's allowance</td>
<td>-7.7</td>
<td>-12.3</td>
<td>-13.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married person's allowance</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-9.9</td>
<td>-8.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child allowance (for child below 11)</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child allowance (for child aged 11 - 16)</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child allowance (for child aged 16 +)</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age allowance - single person</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>-16.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age allowance - married couple</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>-13.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parents' additional allowance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


When we take into account simultaneous changes in the basic rate of income tax and changes in VAT, we can draw the following conclusions. As part of the first budget in March 1974, the basic rate was increased by 3 percentage points, but there were no substantial changes in the level of VAT. Given that changes in the basic rate have effects broadly proportional to income, the effect of the above change combined with the two increases in allowances that were below the rate of inflation may have been to increase the tax burden more on those with lower than with higher earnings and thus more on workers than on members of the salariat. Of course this conclusion must be tentative for it does not take account of the global impact of all measures taken together: for instance, two other important measures in the March 1974 budget were a lowering of the level of unearned income at which investment income surcharge applied and the placing of a ceiling of £25,000 on mortgage interest tax relief - both measures more likely to affect...
middle-class people than workers. Moreover, as stated in the Chancellor's budget speech, it was certainly the government's intention that "everyone who enjoys an income somewhat above the average must expect to have to make some contribution through taxation to the cost of the essential measures intended to protect the living standards of those who earn less than the average".

In the case of the following year's budget the evidence is more clear cut. By the time that budget came, the economic climate had changed and the Chancellor was worried about the 'excessive' wage increases that had been the norm the previous year. The basic rate of tax was increased by two per cent and (as can be seen from the second column of Table 4.2), the personal allowances were increased by much less than the amount necessary to offset inflation. The tendency of these measures to shift the tax burden (though now higher for everybody) down the income scale and thus towards workers was added to by a more than three-fold increase in the rate of VAT from 8 to 25 per cent on a wide range of consumer goods.

By the time the 1976 budget was presented, the shift in the government's priorities from using the tax system as a means of redistribution to a concern over differentials was clearly apparent. The Chancellor said: "The threshold for higher rate tax has been eroded by

9. "The immediate effect of excessive wage settlements is to increase private consumption, with damaging effects on the balance of resources in the economy which the government must seek to remove by increasing taxation".
inflation so that it now lies between one-and-a-half times and twice average earnings. Unless I adjust it this year, the numbers subject to higher rate tax will rise from $1,300,000 in 1975-6 to $1,900,000 in 1976-7... the counterpart of action on fringe benefits must be some reduction in the income tax burden, particularly on middle managers in industry who have seen their net pay severely reduced in real terms over recent years by inflation and the incomes policy of successive governments." Consequently, there was an increase of £500 in the threshold for higher rate tax, while increases in tax allowances - as proportions of gross income of greater value to workers - still stayed below inflation. The only aspect that workers could console themselves with was a reduction in VAT from 25 to 12.5 per cent on consumer goods.

The apogee of the government's concern for the welfare of middle management came with the budget proposals of March 1977. Each of the higher rate tax thresholds was raised by an average of 17 per cent (as compared to an increase in the retail price index since the previous budget of some 16 per cent), while it was proposed to allow the basic rate threshold to fall by yet another increase in allowances below the rate of inflation. In addition, there was to be a 2 per cent cut in the basic rate of income tax - a measure which is of greater absolute value the greater one's income. The Chancellor made it clear that the greatest beneficiaries of his proposals would be "those in the area of middle management" and he sought to justify

the proposals by saying that he "felt it necessary this year to concentrate relief where it is most needed"[1]. In the event, as the Finance Bill containing the budget proposals made its way through Parliament, two Labour backbenchers managed to force through two fundamental amendments: one was that the money set aside to reduce basic rate tax by 2 per cent, should be used to increase the personal allowances still further, the other linked the main personal allowances to the retail price index so that in future they would automatically rise by at least the rate of inflation unless the Chancellor obtained specific Parliamentary approval to the contrary. The effects of this latter amendment can be seen by looking at the figures in the last column of table 4.2 which shows increases in allowances above inflation at the 1978 budget. This budget again, however, also increased the higher-rate thresholds, this time by an average of 12 per cent. The retail price index since the previous budget had risen by 9.4 per cent.

Before concluding this section on tax and welfare benefits, we should mention a further two that are of particular value to members of the salariat. The first is mortgage interest tax relief which, by allowing house-purchasers to offset building society interest payments against their marginal rate of income tax, is of greater benefit in absolute terms the

higher the rate of tax to which one is subject. Unfortunately, though official figures are available for the 1970s showing the breakdown of house-purchasers by socio-economic groups, the latter do not overlap exactly with the salariat and workers as we have defined them in chapter two. However, we can get at least an approximate idea of the relative benefit derived by this inegalitarian arrangement by noting that from the 1983 survey data which we shall be examining in chapters 8 and 9, it is apparent that some 85 per cent of the salariat were, as owner-occupiers, in that year entitled to claim mortgage interest relief as compared to 47 per cent of workers. The most important point to note, however, is that mortgage interest relief provides house-purchasers with the added advantage that it mitigates the effects of increasing tax rates. Under Labour, the basic rate of tax rose from 30 to 33 per cent in 1974, before reaching a peak of 35 per cent between 1975 and 1977; house-purchasers would have been subject to decidedly lower proportional increases in their average tax rates up to 1977 than non-purchasers.

12. For example, if we assume a 10 per cent rate of interest and a basic rate tax of 25 per cent, then a basic rate taxpayer with a £10,000 mortgage obtains a reduction in his tax liability of 25 per cent of 10 per cent of £10,000 = £250. A taxpayer with the same sized mortgage, faced with a marginal rate of tax of 40 per cent would obtain a reduction in his tax liability of £400.

13. This is easily seen. Assume that two individuals both earning £3,000 and both claiming the married person's allowance which in 1974 was set at £65. One has a mortgage of £10,000 on which he pays 10 per cent interest. The

(Footnote continues on next page)
Secondly, it is necessary to mention National Insurance contributions which, because compulsory, are in effect a form of direct taxation. Two points need to be made in connection with them. Firstly, already regressive by the way it was structured,\textsuperscript{14} National Insurance was allowed by Labour to become even more so as a result of specific adjustments made to it. This can be seen from table 4.3 which shows that not only were percentages paid in National Insurance contributions higher the lower the income at any given point in time, but that over the period, the disparity actually grew slightly. To this should be added, secondly, that the 1974-9 Labour government did nothing to stem a long-term trend whereby welfare benefits have increasingly become a service paid for by recipients themselves rather than by any affluent taxpayers: Field (1981: 93) shows that the proportion of expenditure on welfare benefits covered by National Insurance contributions rather than general taxation rose from 39 per cent in 1949 to

(Footnote continued from previous page)

first therefore has a taxable income of £3,000 - £865 = £2,135; the second a taxable income of £3,000 - £865 - £300 = £1,835. 30 per cent of the first individual's taxable income gives him an average tax rate of £640.5/£3,000 = 21.4 per cent; the second pays 18.4 per cent. When the tax rate increases to 33 per cent, \textit{ceteris paribus}, the first individual sees his average tax rise to 23.5 per cent (i.e. +2.1 per cent), the second individual to only 19.9 per cent (or +1.5 per cent).

14. Its regressiveness is essentially due to the fact it is levied as a fixed proportion of earnings up to a given limit. Because no further contributions are payable in respect of earnings above this limit, this fact essentially converts a proportional tax into a regressive one.
60.5 per cent in 1978; our own analysis of national income accounts revealed that for the period 1974-9 as a whole, National Insurance contributions accounted for an average of 67.0 per cent of expenditure on welfare benefits.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{cccc}
(1) & (2) & (3) & (4) \\
Half median earnings & Median earnings & Twice median earnings & Three times median earnings \\
\hline
1975/76 & 5.5 & 5.5 & 3.1 & 2.1 & 60.8 \\
1976/77 & 5.75 & 5.75 & 4.0 & 2.7 & 69.0 \\
1977/78 & 5.75 & 5.75 & 4.0 & 2.6 & 77.1 \\
1978/79 & 6.5 & 6.5 & 4.4 & 3.0 & 87.9 \\
\end{tabular}
\caption{Percentage of income paid in National Insurance contributions by level of earnings (£s p.w.)}
\end{table}

Note: figures for median earnings relate to the earnings of full-time adult male employees (all occupations).

Therefore, if it can plausibly be argued that much of Labour's past unpopularity stemmed from it's being seen as the party of high taxation, the evidence we have examined makes it difficult to sustain the popular myth that it has been tax-unfriendly to the salariat in particular. Nor, though it failed to pursue a solidaristic welfare policy that could tie the welfare and happiness of the salariat to the continued existence of a social-democratic welfare state, could it be concluded from this that its welfare measures were biased against the salariat.

4.5 The trade unions

I now turn to the question of the trade unions. As I have said, Labour is often perceived as being 'too captive' to the unions, and there is no doubt that this has damaged it electorally particularly among the salariat where, in spite of the growth of white-collar unionism in recent years, union membership continues to be a minority attraction. Yet far from the exercise of power over Labour, the most distinctive feature of the unions' relationship with the government during the seventies was the way they acted as loyal allies helping to enforce a restraint which was neither of their making nor to their liking. So if the union connection has damaged Labour electorally, we need to explain such damage not so much in terms of an actual wielding of power by the unions, but in terms of people's perceptions of such wielding. There are four aspects to the Labour-union connection which seem to sustain the view of a party captive to the unions: 1) the fact that Labour was born with the explicit intention of its founders that it would act as the trade unions' voice in Parliament; 2) the party's financial dependence on the unions; 3) the unions' constitutional dominance of the party's decision-making organs, and 4) the Labour leaders' visible willingness, or better desire during the seventies, to involve union leaders closely in policy-making, and gain the latter's cooperation in the

16. During the sixties and seventies surveys regularly showed majorities thinking that the trade unions had "too much power" and that they should not have close links to the Labour Party (Butler and Stokes, 1974; Särlvik and Crewe, 1983). There is evidence that its links with the unions cost the party votes in at least four elections: those of 1959, 1970, February 1974 and 1979. For details see Crouch (1982: 189) and Crewe (1982: 9-49).

17. Among respondents to the 1983 British Election Study, for example, 29 per cent of the salariat were union members.
implementation of policy. To conclude this chapter I will elaborate on each
of these points in turn before subjecting them to a critical examination.

1) Labour's origins. Labour differs from other western European social-
democratic parties (with the exception of the Belgian) in that it was an
outgrowth of the trade-union movement rather than the other way round:
"Elsewhere socialist parties forged trade-union movements out of the
congeries of craft societies and similar bodies which were springing up with
industrialization" (Crouch, 1982: 175). In Britain, by contrast, Labour owed
its origins in 1900 to a growing feeling within an already-existing trade-
union movement that, owing to an employers' anti-trade union offensive on
the one hand and the Liberal Party's unwillingness to adopt working-class
candidates on the other, independent parliamentary representation was
necessary in order to promote the legislative action that would be needed if
their existing rights were to be defended. Hence, at its founding conference
the new party defined its policy in terms of "a readiness to co-operate with
any party which for the time being may be engaged in promoting legislation
in the direct interests of labour...", and reserved seven of the twelve
seats on its executive for representatives of the trade unions. Such trade-
union dominance has continued down to the present day.

2) Labour's financial dependence on the unions. As compared to social-
democratic parties elsewhere, Labour is a very weak party in organisational
terms: its membership is low, it has few full-time officials and a meagre
'infrastructure' in terms of premises and facilities. In such a situation it
is heavily dependent on the unions' financial backing. This takes three main
forms: the provision of personnel and premises (until a few years ago the
party's national headquarters were located in a building rented from the
Transport and General Workers' Union); special donations for the conduct of
election campaigns, and most importantly, the regular fees paid by affiliated unions according to the number of their members who have not contracted out of that portion of their dues which the unions set aside for their political funds.

In fact, Labour's rules allow unions to affiliate to the party on the basis of the number of members the unions choose to declare as paying the political levy, and it is by no means unusual for unions to decrease, from one year to the next, the number of their members declared in this way in order to save on their affiliation fees. This brings us to the third aspect, for the number of affiliated members a union declares also determines its voting strength at the party's annual conferences. This is the famous 'block vote': delegations from the unions, Constituency Labour Parties and other affiliated organizations have one vote assigned to them for every 1,000 (or part thereof) of their affiliated members; but there is no provision for the splitting of such votes: all of an organization's votes must be cast either one way or another. This means a) that voting at Conference cannot reflect any division of opinion within each organization and b) that the unions, with by far the largest number of affiliated members, can completely swamp the rest. 18

Fourthly, in addition to these 'constants', the particular circumstances of the British economy and industrial relations between 1968 and 1979 gave rise to the impression that the unions were actually exploiting their formal

18. The unions account for some 80 per cent of all Conference votes, and indeed the five largest unions can outvote all of the other 49 unions, the 548 Constituency Parties and the other affiliated organizations put together! (Kavanagh, 1982: 212).
power over the Labour Party, described above, to a considerable degree—first because of the unions' active role in the development of policy in consultation with the party's leaders during the years of Opposition (1970-74); and secondly because of the party leadership's desire, once in Government again (1974-79) to win and maintain union cooperation in policies of income restraint by offering consultation on policy and the trading of concessions. Three aspects in particular of the government's relations with the unions served to sustain an image of the unions' dictating government

19. In detail, the situation was this: owing to a decline in international competitiveness, on the one hand and processes of 'wage drift' on the other, by the end of the 1960s, British capital was facing a major 'profits squeeze'. In 1969, the then Labour government attempted to respond to this problem by proposing legislation designed to control the unofficial strikes thought responsible for wage drift. This, however, inevitably led to conflict with the unions and the proposals had to be abandoned. At the same time, other government attempts to reform industrial relations (through incomes policies and an insistence on productivity deals as conditions for increases) fuelled a pattern of resistance which brought a new generation of left-wing unionists to the leadership of the largest unions. Hence, when the Labour Party was in Opposition between 1970 and 1974, the unions were in a strong position potentially to force the adoption for the next election, of "a more left-wing programme than many in the parliamentary leadership favoured" (Minkin, 1978a: 338): for, on the one side, the hand of left-wing union leaders was strengthened by an unprecedented upsurge of industrial militancy against the Conservative government's (1970-74) even more drastic attempts to reform industrial relations, and on the other, Labour's Parliamentary leadership, looking back on its past failures, was determined to reach an agreement with the unions on wages which would avoid the electorally damaging conflict and estrangement of the last years of the previous government. The outcome was the quid pro quo of the Social Contract which I mentioned earlier in the chapter and which was largely the result of the discussions of a new Liaison Committee consisting of representatives of the Parliamentary Labour Party, the National Executive committee and the unions: owing to the fact that the Parliamentary leadership on this committee was 'squeezed' by the relative unity of policy-outlook between the unions and the National Executive committee, "It was the ex-Ministers who had to accommodate... to initiatives many of which were coming from the trade unions... In the end the new compact embodied most of the claims of the trade unions... while giving very little in the way of specific commitments on pay restraint" (Minkin, 1978a: 337-8).
policy. One was the government's willing and speedy introduction of legislation of fundamental importance to the unions' principal concern of the defence of wages and conditions of work. 20 Secondly, major decisions were at times made conditional upon union support. 21 Thirdly, the unions were allowed to shape the detail, and to police, the early stages of incomes policy to a high degree. The policies which emerged in 1975 and 1976, for example, were "in a form devised and defended by the Transport Workers' General Secretary" (Minkin, 1978a: 348). In short, "union leaders were consulted often, regularly, and at an early stage in the development of policy... in a way that blurred the public's sense of whose responsibility that policy was" (Coates, 1980: 57-8).

Against these very real but misleading factors, the first point that needs to be made, one from which much else follows, is that rather than politicians, union leaders are primarily representatives of organized labour

20. There was the repeal of the Conservatives' Industrial Relations Act and their statutory wage-control legislation, the introduction of an Employment Protection Act, and the creation of a number of interventionist agencies in the labour market, in the design and running of which the trade unions played a prominent part. Among other things the Industrial Relations Act (1971) created a Code of Industrial Relations Practice which banned unofficial and unconstitutional strikes together with 'secondary' action. Unions were made responsible for the actions of their members under the Code and were only allowed to retain their immunity from civil damages if they complied with these requirements. The Employment Protection Act (1975) enabled workers to seek redress from employers through industrial tribunals for unfair dismissal, and provided time off with pay for union and public duties and for job-seeking after notice of redundancy. Of the agencies of labour-market intervention, the most prominent was the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, a tri-partite entity for the adjudication of labour disputes.

21. The most prominent of these decisions were budgetary changes: in both 1976 and 1977 the Chancellor made the unprecedented announcement that he was prepared to make income-tax reductions if union agreement to further rounds of wage restraint "enabled [him] to implement them".
involved in bargaining relationships over industrial issues. This means that, the period between 1970 and 1974 notwithstanding, union leaders are usually content to leave policy initiatives in the hands of the Parliamentary leaders for they are well aware of the damaging electoral consequences likely to derive from the impression that the party is being run by particularistic interest groupings. Note that this is not a just a 'contingent' matter of unions refraining from using a formal power which is actually available to them to use should they so wish, but a genuine limitation on their power, for "a major functional imperative" for the Labour Party is the winning of electoral support (Minkin, 1978b: 463) in competition with another party, the Conservatives, known to have a generally hostile attitude towards trade unionism. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that "[o]bservers seem agreed that union financial contributions have never been made an issue in disputes between unions and party, such as that over the 1969 Industrial Relations Bill" (Crouch, 1982: 178).

Fear of the Conservative Party always seems to act as a powerful break on any attempts one might otherwise be able to detect, by union leaders to challenge their Parliamentary colleagues in the Labour Party. Thus, between 1970 and 1974, while it is undoubtedly true that the unions "began to play a more positive role in the formulation of Party policy" than was customary, there were real constraints on such a role: the unions' overriding concern was to achieve repeal of the Conservatives' industrial relations legislation and this considerably strengthened the hand of the Labour leadership against
radical policy proposals. Because the principal concern of unions has to do with immediate, defensive issues relating to the wages and conditions of work of their members, it is the maintenance of Labour as a viable electoral force and thus party unity which is ultimately paramount from their perspective: it simply is not in the unions' interest to attempt to push policies to the point of defeating the party leaders where they oppose them, for such action poses too great a risk to party unity.

If we look again at Labour in office from 1974 we can note that though it is true that the government conceded to the unions the right to participate in the detail of policy-making in many areas, nevertheless, the unions did not have the power to determine the substantive drift of that policy in the first place. This is very clear if we look at the area of incomes policy. As we have seen, the first two stages of the policy were implemented in a form devised by the Transport Workers' leader and the Chancellor publicly traded budgetary policy for union agreement to successive rounds of the policy. Yet the initiative to introduce that policy in the first place came from the government not the unions, and the latter supported each instalment reluctantly, feeling that there was no alternative. As the TUC General Secretary, speaking of stage 1 of the policy put it: "Those who challenge the policy as distinct from those who just don't like it - and I don't like it - have really got an obligation of putting forward an alternative and telling us very clearly what they would do if they reject the policy" (quoted by Coates, 1980: 66). More generally,

22. "This was most critically evident with regard to Harold Wilson's successful opposition to the NEC's '25 companies' proposal" (Panlitch, 1979: 58).
"the period of Labour Government saw a fall in all the indicators which excessive trade-union power might have been expected to raise". (Coates, 1989: 91).  
In the light of facts such as these, it was clear 1) that what union involvement in policy-making actually meant was the enjoyment of a set of procedural rights rather than any effective control over the substantive issues on the agenda of the consultation process; and 2) that rather than any excess of union power, what needs to be explained is how and why the union leaders came to act as loyal allies of the government, helping to restrain rank-and-file militancy for as long as they could through three years of wage restraint, falling living standards and mounting unemployment. In politics "publicity is never a good index of influence" (Coates, 1989: 92-3) "The visibility of the activity of the unions is no guide to their power" (Coates, 1983: 61).

4.6 Conclusion

Drawing the several strands of this chapter together, we conclude as follows. From its activities in the fields of incomes policies, welfare benefits and tax legislation, the last Labour government did not succeed in

23. "The seasonally adjusted figure for unemployment in Great Britain in February 1974 was 549,000. By September 1977,... it was 1,378,000; and it was still in the region of 1.3 million in May 1979. The real living standards of the employed fell by 5.5%, 1.6% and 1.1% in the three years 1974/5, 1975/6 and 1976/7, and though they recovered slightly in 1977/8 (by 9% overall) the average male worker, married with two children still had 'a real take-home pay in September 1978 which was £3.50 less than in 1974, and about £1 less in terms of real net weekly income (that is, taking account of increased transfer payments in 1977/8)' (Panitch 1986, p.119). The distribution of personal wealth actually moved away from the working class between 1974 and 1979" (Coates, 1989: 91).
creating the conditions necessary for what Esping-Anderson calls "social-democratic class formation", i.e. a cross-class electoral constituency favourable to Labour. Its failures in this regard were, however, at the expense of workers, not the salariat. Labour's failures were due to the fact that its attempts at reform prevented it from realizing the growth necessary to sustain reform in the first place. As a result, in the end, the government was driven to having to discipline its own working-class constituency through its 'special relationship' with the unions, something which, paradoxically, only served to reinforce a widespread view of Labour as the 'creature' of the unions. The fact that Labour was biased against workers rather than against the salariat suggests that if anywhere, the determinants of support for the party amongst the latter need to be sought in perceptions of bias and hence in the sort of ideological factors that we shall be considering later on. Before turning to this issue, however, we need to consider another possibility, namely, that the salariat fails to support the Labour Party because it is in fact better off with the Conservatives. It is to this possibility that we turn in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 5: The policy outputs of the 1974 Labour and 1979 Conservative governments compared

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to assess whether the salariat was better off in material terms as a result of Labour incumbency between 1974 and 1979 or as a result of the Conservatives' period of office from 1979 to 1983. Put simply, we are asking, "For the middle class, do parties make a difference?" We are asking this because one of the failings of the 'ghetto theory' as an explanation of middle-class electoral behaviour is that it draws conclusions about the effects of the Left party's policy outputs in isolation whereas logically, such effects can only be a function of what the Left party does as compared to what its rivals do.

We have chosen the 1974-9 and 1979-83 governments for comparison because for a valid assessment of relative performance we need two governments of approximately equal duration and faced with similar overall economic contexts: both unemployment and inflation, to take the most visible indicators, were comparatively high for much of the lives of the two governments. Our analysis could of course be updated beyond the first Thatcher administration; then, however, we would be faced with the methodological problem of having to assess what would have happened had Labour been in office during these years.

Finally, if our analysis suggests that parties may not make a difference for the salariat, then we have to look for the conditions under which they will vote Labour elsewhere than in actual policy outputs; and, if the salariat persists in thinking, in spite of evidence to the contrary, that it fares better with one party than with the other, then we have to look for the source of such beliefs elsewhere too. The chapter is divided
into four sections apart from the 'Introduction' and 'Conclusions': section 5.2 compares the overall economic performances of the Labour and Conservative governments. Finding that the Conservatives did worse than Labour in this connection, we conclude that middle-class antipathy to Labour — and corresponding support for the Conservatives — must (in 1983 at least) have been inspite of rather than because of the latter’s economic record, and so in section 5.3 we consider an alternative possibility, namely, that what might matter is, rather, changes in the salariat’s personal economic conditions. Section 5.4 considers the impact of government spending in two areas which, both logically and in terms of its own assessment, are of particular concern to the salariat: the universal services of education and health. Finally, section 5.5 considers the area of civil liberties and opportunities for democratic participation.

5.2 The governments’ economic records

In the previous chapter we saw that though we could find little evidence of solidaristic policy outputs on Labour’s part, in crude economic terms the salariat seemed to have done better, or less badly, than workers as a result of Labour’s measures. But what might matter is not so much particular and detailed policies, (which are normally incompletely understood anyway), but the parties’ general economic performances. After all, it is a politician’s old adage that the electorate in general rewards governments for imprecisely defined ‘good times’ and punishes them for ‘bad ones’, and though apparently simplistic, this rule of thumb seems not to be lightly dismissed, for as Alt (1979: 113) observed in 1979, “the correlation between economic decline and weakening of electoral allegiance to the major parties in the period since the Second World War is too apparent to be overlooked”. Butler and Stokes (1974) observed that it would be surprising if a government’s popularity were not related to its economic

Newell, James (1991), Labourism, Ideology and the British Middle Class
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/5299
record and indeed it has been shown that economic variables explain significant movements in government popularity around a basically cyclical pattern (see Alt, 1979, chapter 6 for a discussion of this literature). An important factor in Labour’s unexpected loss of the 1970 General Election was widely thought to have been the last-minute publication of adverse balance-of-payments figures (Butler and Pinto-Duschinsky, 1971) just as the Conservatives’ heavy defeat in 1945 was in no small measure attributed to high pre-war unemployment totals. Yet in terms of the issue of middle-class Labour support, it seems to me that any attempt to seek its determinants in the general area of a link between voting and governments’ economic management must come to terms with an awkward fact which I shall now describe, namely, that as compared to what happened during Labour’s term of office, the most remarkable feature of the Conservatives’ economic management was the gargantuan size of the recession they managed to generate.

As is well-known, the Conservatives’ election appeal in 1979 involved a self-conscious break with the Keynesian-corporatist style of economic management which had tended to dominate the approaches of governments since the war. Specifically, the appeal was dominated by three themes. There was to be a reduction of inflation through control of the money supply; revitalization of the economy was to follow from public-expenditure cuts and the release of entrepreneurial initiative consequent upon tax cuts; and there was to be lower unemployment. On this, the Conservatives made a particular point of the level of unemployment at the time of the campaign, with posters proclaiming that “Labour isn’t working”. In the event, this claim turned out to be more true of the Conservatives, for by 1983 employment had more than doubled to 3.5 million and although the government claimed that the rise was due to world recession and as such beyond its
control, this could be challenged by noting that between 1979 and 1982, unemployment rose from 5.0 per cent to 8.9 per cent in the seven major industrial countries (US, Japan, Germany, France, UK, Italy and Canada), but rose from 5.7 to 13.3 per cent in Britain (Keegan, 1984: 203). Industrial production fell by a fifth between 1979 and 1981 "with no signs of recovery in... 1982 and the merest glimmer during the spring of 1983" (Keegan, 1984: 201). Such a fall was absolutely unprecedented, for as Peter Holmes (1985: 22) points out, "Between 1929 and 1932, industrial production only fell by 10%". During the government's first year of office, inflation accelerated from 10.1 per cent to 21.9 per cent. It then took two years to come down from its former level and fell below this only during the government's final year of office. By 1983, prices were on average 50 per cent higher than they had been in 1979. Overall, tax cuts failed to materialize: "The OECD estimate that total taxes including National Insurance contributions rose from 34.7% of GDP in 1979 to 39.1% in 1982. The previous Labour government had brought the levels down from a previous high point of 36.5% in 1975" (Holmes, 1985: 26). Viewed in the light of what the Conservatives claimed in 1979, such a situation was dismal, for while it represented a further stage in Britain's economic decline, at the latter year's election the very essence of the Conservative appeal had been that only the radical break with the post-war Keynesian-corporatist style of economic management which they were offering could reverse the decline, and that indeed such a style of economic management had been one of the main factors contributing to decline. How, then, did the above situation come about?

Most commentators (see, for example, Keegan, 1984; Riddell 1983; Holmes, 1985) are agreed that crucial factors were the promise, made during the heat of the election campaign, to honour the findings of the Clegg comparability commission on public-sector pay set up by the previous
government, and the decision to redeem the lower tax pledge by a reduction in the basic rate of income tax to 30 per cent in the first budget. In order to finance the reduction, Value Added Tax had to be increased - from 9 to 15 per cent - and this combined with the Clegg awards, (which increased the public-sector wage bill by 25 per cent in a year), was a major factor provoking the rise in inflation to 21.9 per cent the following year. As part of the attempt to control the money supply the budget also raised the Bank of England's Minimum Lending Rate from 12 to 14 per cent, a rate which rose to a record 17 per cent in the autumn. The trouble was that such rates helped to raise the foreign exchange value of the pound and this, together with a rise in private-sector wage costs, (in large measure provoked by the public-sector increases mentioned above), helped to undermine industry's export competitiveness. To make matters worse, the 1980 Budget helped to ensure that home demand would remain weak through its adoption of a tight fiscal policy: as part of an effort to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement, which the government took to be the main determinant of monetary growth, the budget proposed public expenditure cuts and a rise in personal taxation. Output and employment thus fell sharply during 1980; yet the tight fiscal policy was maintained in 1981 as rising unemployment pay and lowered tax receipts threatened the borrowing requirement. The pressure was kept on the following year and "manufacturing output remained virtually flat throughout 1982" (Keegan, 1984: 176). By the election of June 1983, it was difficult to disagree with Keegan's (1984) assessment that whatever the contribution of extraneous factors, Britain had suffered its worst recession since the 1930s in large measure because it had been engineered by Mrs Thatcher's Economic Experiment.

Not least because there is ample room for disagreement among professional economists themselves as to what causes what, any comparative
assessment of the Labour and Conservative governments is bound to be controversial. Nevertheless, nearly all the 'real' indicators suggest a stronger (or at least less weak) economic performance between 1974 and 1979 than between 1979 and 1983. Real personal disposable income — "the best yardstick for average living standards" (Riddell, 1983: 72) — rose by 8.7 per cent during Labour's term of office but by 3.5 per cent under the Conservatives.¹ Gross Domestic Product in 1983 was less than one per cent up on its 1979 level whereas between 1974 and 1979 it grew by 11 per cent.² Seasonally adjusted unemployment in the United Kingdom rose from 2.3 per cent during the second quarter of 1974 to 5.0 per cent during the first quarter of 1979. From then until the second quarter of 1983 it more than doubled rising to 12.1 per cent.³ Only in terms of inflation and productivity was performance under the Conservatives better — but even here the result one gets depends on the angle one chooses to take. Thus, if one is willing to examine claims in the government's own terms, (accepting that inflation was accelerating in 1979 and that therefore one should take the peak of inflation), one may note that inflation was reduced from 21 to just under 4 per cent. On the other hand, the retail price index was 50 per cent higher in 1983 than it had been in 1979. Output per person employed rose by 8.7 per cent between the first quarter of 1979 and the second quarter of 1983 (as compared to approximately 5.5 per cent during Labour's term of office)⁴ but some of these productivity gains "simply [came] from the

closure of the least efficient plants with no changes in the working practices of the remaining ones" (Holmes, 1985: 31).

So in terms of trying to account for electoral support in terms of effectiveness in managing the economy, the period between 1974 and 1983 poses an acute problem, for if it is true that the Conservatives are often perceived as being more competent economic managers than Labour, and if it is true that this was a major factor contributing to the latter's electoral defeat in 1983, then the real question that demands explanation is how the Conservatives got away with it. In this connection, a widespread view among commentators at the time, a view confirmed by opinion-poll findings, was quite simply that the Conservatives had managed to convince large sections of the public that they were not to blame (on this see Butler and Kavanagh, 1984): repeated themes of Conservative propaganda were that unemployment was due to the world recession, that there was No Alternative to Conservative policies, and that recovery was just around the corner. As

5. Such perceptions played a major role in the explanations of working-class Conservatism advanced by Nordlinger (1967) and by MacKenzie and Silver (1968), for example. Note, however, that Särvik and Crewe (1983: 153) found that in 1979, when a nationally representative sample was asked about the two parties' competence in terms of unemployment and inflation, "Labour came out markedly better than the Conservatives with regard to inflation and only marginally worse than the Conservatives with regard to unemployment".

6. See, for example, Miller (1984).

7. "A comparison of elections in the seventeen Western countries which alternate between two sides or two broad coalitions found twice as much turnover in the recession years of 1979-82 as there had been in 1975-78. And the best predictor of a government being dismissed were the joint trends in inflation and unemployment - what the Americans called the 'misery index'. In other countries higher levels of inflation and unemployment did seem to turn the electorate against the government of the day. In 1983, in spite of the fall in inflation, the high unemployment rate meant that the government still presided over a misery index of 188" (Butler and Kavanagh, 1984: 12-14).
Riddell (1983: 234) put it, "Most fascinating - and most frustrating to Opposition politicians - has been the extent to which Thatcherism has altered popular expectations of Government responsibility for economic problems". Thus according to a Marplan poll in April 1981, only a fifth blamed government policy for unemployment rather than some other factor such as 'international competition'. Another Marplan poll carried out in 1983 found that less than a third thought unemployment affected Britain more than other industrialized countries; just over a quarter thought the government was 'mainly' to blame; only a third thought that Labour could deliver on its claim to be able to reduce unemployment to its 1979 level in five years (Riddell, 1983: 234).

As I shall argue in the remaining chapters, it is indeed these sorts of perceptions - which I shall define as ideological beliefs - which can help us towards a greater understanding of voting in general and middle-class support for Labour in particular. But for the moment we need to consider another possibility; for, if it seems difficult to get much mileage from an analysis of the governments' performances in terms of overall economic management, what might matter are changes in voters' own personal circumstances.\(^8\) Certainly, much stress has been laid on such factors in attempts to account for increasing support for the Conservatives among certain groups of workers at recent elections.\(^9\) So, let us examine what happened to the personal material circumstances of the salariat under the

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8. While the two will obviously be linked, they need not be linked in any straightforward 'one-to-one' manner. Although the economy in general may be in decline, this does not preclude the simultaneous prosperity of particular groups.

9. See, for example, Crewe (1983a).
Labour and Conservative governments, to see whether we can get any explanatory clues to their alignment.

5.3 The personal circumstances of the salariat

The best indicators from the point of view of the salariat will be real earnings growth, interest-rate movements and tax changes. The importance of the first and last of these are obvious; the importance of the third derives from its influence on housing costs in the form of mortgage repayments, an item which we can safely presume will be the largest item in the budgets of most middle-class households.

The principal source of information on yearly earnings movements in Britain is the New Earnings Survey. It does, however, have the drawback from our point of view that its occupational categories do not correspond in any straightforward and obvious way to the class definitions we are using. Because of this we are forced to adopt the expedient of looking at what happened to average real earnings among non-manual workers in general - a category which, it will be remembered, is larger than the one we have chosen to define as the middle class or salariat. Since we are concerned with changes over time, the accuracy of the picture we get depends on the extent to which the year-on-year average is 'artificially' pulled up or down by divergences in the earnings movements of those 'in' and those 'out' of the salariat. Table 5.1 shows changes in real gross earnings among non-manual men aged 21 and over. 10 It has been drawn up by deflating official figures

10. Confining our attention to men should also help to improve accuracy since men are less likely to be in the routine white-collar occupations excluded from the salariat; and those that are in such occupations are more likely than women thence to be promoted to a middle-class job. (On this, see Crompton and Jones, 1984). Hence, it is reasonable to assume that among men the earnings of the salariat and routine white-collar workers will move together.
showing increases in money incomes against the general index of retail prices.

**TABLE 5.1**

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We can see that in terms of real earnings the salariat does seem to have done significantly better under the Conservatives than under Labour: over the five Labour years of 1974 to 1978, real earnings actually decreased slightly - on average by 0.1 per cent per year; during the five Conservative years (1979 - 1983) earnings increased by an average of 2.7 per cent per year.

Of course such differences may be of little consequence if there are simultaneous changes in direct taxation such as to offset increases in gross earnings. We have already remarked on the Conservatives' failure to reduce the tax burden in global terms; there was, moreover, a sharp increase - from 6.5 to 9.0 per cent between 1979 and 1983 - in the National Insurance levy, a form of income tax in all but name. When we take account of such changes together with changes in the basic rate of income tax, we get the results given in table 5.2. This shows income tax and National Insurance
contributions as a percentage of the gross earnings of the full-time, non-
manual men that were the subject of the previous table.

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Sources: author's calculations

If, to adapt the title of Rose's (1984) book, one wanted evidence for
the thesis that parties do not make a difference, the figures contained in
table 5.2 would surely provide some of the best such evidence. In their
manifesto for the 1979 election the Conservatives had declared that they
would "cut income tax at all levels". In fact, from the above figures, the
lower tax promise was unfulfilled in the case of the salariat (and direct
taxes were actually increased for those on below-average earnings [Riddell,
1983: 71-2]): averaging the above figures out, direct tax took 32.2 per cent
per annum of the incomes of non-manual men during the Conservative years as

11. On the assumption that they are single persons claiming only the single
person's allowance. Again, as what we are concerned with are changes over
time this is not an unreasonable assumption to make: if we had focussed on
another category, such as those able to claim the married man's allowance,
we would have got very similar results owing to the tendency of tax
allowances to change together.
compared to 32.9 per cent during the Labour years. Indeed taxes rose steadily throughout the Conservatives' term so that by 1983 they were higher than when Labour left office!

Table 5.3 below shows the percentage rate of interest received on mortgage advances by the building societies (which provide some 70 per cent of all advances for house purchases (Lansley, 1979)). Again, we have already remarked that interest rates tended to be relatively high under the Conservatives - as part of the attempt to control the money supply - and this fact is reflected by the figures in the table which show that whereas mortgage interest rates averaged 10.7 per cent under Labour, they averaged 12.8 per cent under the Conservatives. Together with the failure to reduce income tax, these rates obviously need to be offset against the higher real earnings between 1979 and 1983 which we noted above. All in all then, it is difficult to believe that, if he had had reference solely to changes in his personal material circumstances, the average member of the salariat could possibly have been aware that a change of government had actually taken place in 1979.

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<td>Rate</td>
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</table>

5.4 Education and health provision

Aside from general economic prosperity and personal economic well-being, another thing we are told the salariat wants as much, if not more, than anybody else is the preservation of the universal welfare services such as health and education. Thus, although there is evidence that Thatcherism has succeeded in reducing economic expectations as we noted above, there is precious little evidence that it has succeeded in bringing about widespread conversions to its economic values, if by this is meant cutting back on social services provision. Polls have consistently shown that when asked whether they favour cutting taxes even if this means a reduction in services, or the reverse, those favouring the former option are outnumbered by the latter (see table 5.4). And even at the height of the anti-tax revolt at the end of the seventies (see previous chapter), respondents seemed to make a definite distinction between spending on the (universal) health service — which continued to be thought desirable — and spending on welfare benefits (Deakin, 1987: 80-1) — which were thought to have "gone too far" (Särlvik and Crewe, 1983: 172). Moreover, such results appear to be independent of class with the higher socio-economic groups as much attached to the maintenance of services as the lower groups (Bosanquet, 1984: 74-104). This is hardly surprising, for not only does universal provision minimise the conflict between those who pay and those who receive as Esping-Andersen (1985) points out, but the higher socio-economic groups actually receive greater benefit from the services as Le Grand (1982) points out. From an analysis of the patterns of expenditure on education and health between 1974 and 1983 it is apparent that if these were the only two areas
that counted, it would have been more rational for the salariat to support Labour than the Conservatives during this period.

TABLE 5.4
Thatcherism's Economic Values: Taxes versus Social Services

Question: "People have different views about whether it is more important to reduce taxes or keep up government spending. How about you? Which of these statements comes closest to your view?"
* cut taxes, even if this means some reduction in government services, such as education health and welfare
* things should be left as they are
* government services such as health, education and welfare should be extended, even if it means some increases in taxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>month/year</th>
<th>cut taxes</th>
<th>no change</th>
<th>extend services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/78</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1979 election)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/79</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/80</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/81</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/82</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/83</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1983 election)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/83</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/84</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/84</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/85</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/86</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/86</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/86</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/87</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/87</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Crewe (1988: 38)

As far as education, firstly, is concerned, both parties in their manifestos for the elections of the period paid lip service (obviously) to the need for "higher standards in education" but the Conservatives explicitly took the line that, as Sir Keith Joseph told the 1981 Conservative Party Conference, "More money does not necessarily mean higher
standards*. Yet support for proposals to spend more on education and thus a vote for Labour is rational for the salariat: despite Sir Keith's view, there is presumably some relationship between levels of spending and the quality of educational services. In a society characterized by formal equality of opportunity, i.e. where access to desired positions depends to a significant extent on educational qualifications, an important means by which the salariat perpetuates, inter-generationally, its position of privilege is via its well-known ability to corner for its children more than their proportionate share of the necessary certificates. Education is therefore important to the salariat. Moreover, since education is a universal service financed out of taxation, the salariat has an incentive to ensure that it is of a quality comparable with what is available for private purchase as otherwise it has to bear the added expense of educating its children privately while continuing to pay for the provision of educational services it does not use. All other things being equal, therefore, rationally, the salariat ought to support the party with the better record on educational expenditure. To see which party this was between 1974 and 1983, we need over-time data showing real expenditure per pupil/student.12

12. Focussing on overall expenditure is no good because e.g. increases over time may reflect demographic changes rather than increasing generosity on the part of governments.
### Table 5.5

Real expenditure per head in primary, secondary and university sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,975</td>
<td>3,050</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-16</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>1,069</td>
<td>1,011</td>
<td>1,012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: Figures for the years 1974/75 are at constant, 1980 Survey prices. Figures in brackets are index numbers where 1979/80 = 100. * = figures unavailable.

From the figures in Table 5.5 it is apparent that during Labour’s term of office, real spending per head increased in every sector apart from the post-compulsory secondary sector. The increase was greatest in the primary sector (+13 per cent) and least in the university sector (+2 per cent). (Incidentally, thinking back to Esping-Andersen’s (1985) theory of solidaristic policy outputs, this changing pattern of expenditure was appropriate given a desire to promote greater equality in a non-zero sum manner: increases were relatively greater in those sectors (the primary and compulsory secondary) where, according to Le Grand’s (1982) calculations, the bias in expenditure towards the higher socio-economic groups appears to be least marked). Under the Conservatives, expenditure on primary and secondary school children continued to increase so that by 1983/4 it was some 9 per cent higher in each sector. In these sectors, therefore, there appears to have been a steady improvement in the level of provision over the whole period regardless of which party was in power. Where the Conservatives
had a significantly worse record than Labour was in the higher and further education sector as ministerial pronouncements, conference speeches and so on made it clear that the government's policy towards the sector [was] conditioned primarily by its overall desire to cut public spending" (Gosden, 1985: 120). Thus the public expenditure White Paper published in November 1979 sought a reduction of £100 million in spending on higher education while a cut of between 8 and 9 per cent in university spending announced by the Treasury in 1981 involved a gradual reduction, of approximately 17 per cent, in the numbers of academic staff. And all this took place as the demands on the higher education system of the large birth cohorts of the early to mid 1960s continued to be felt. Since the further and higher education sector is the one where the concentration of resources on the offspring of the salariat is at its most marked, (see Le Grand, 1982 ch. 2), reductions in expenditure will have affected the latter most heavily.

As far as health provision is concerned, here too, on rational grounds one would expect high levels of support among the salariat for the National Health Service (NHS) and, all other things being equal, support for the party with the better record on funding the service. And, as with education, the logic of favouring the NHS derives from its character as a universally provided service: as such, the salariat tends to make disproportionate use of the NHS (Le Grand, 1982) and, unless the quantity and quality of service is maintained for a given level of taxation, the salariat has to face the added expense of seeking private-market solutions. It is perhaps not very surprising to find, then, that alongside the extensive poll evidence showing large-majority support for the NHS among the public in general, (see Bosanquet, 1984; Crew and Särlvik, 1983; Rose, 1983), support for the
principle of universal health provision is particularly high among the highest social classes (Bosanquet, 1984: 84).

As with education, governments' records on health provision are logically assessed in terms of real expenditure in relation to some indicator of demand, i.e. per capita expenditure: for instance, a small improvement in the overall volume of spending represents no improvement if there is an offsetting increase in the number of elderly in the population - "a group which places particularly heavy demands on the health care system" (Robinson, 1986: 13). Though such estimates are lacking, there are a number of surrogates readily available, (ones which are probably more meaningful in terms of people's routine experience anyway). These are shown in table 5.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hospital services</th>
<th>Family practitioner services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ratio of average daily occupation of beds to nos. of medical, dental, professional and technical staff</td>
<td>% cost of prescriptions paid for by patients (1974=100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons on hospital waiting lists (000s)</td>
<td>Patients dispensed per doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>5.0 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>4.2 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>3.8 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>3.7 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>3.4 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>3.2 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>3.1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>2.9 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>2.8 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>2.6 : 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the figures, the level of real inputs does not appear to have depended on which party was in power in any obvious way: within the hospital services sector, waiting lists (column 1) followed an upward trend throughout the whole period, while the ratio of staff to patients followed a downward one (column 2). The conclusion one draws from these figures depends on whether one focuses on levels or on changes. Thus, for example, while the average number of persons on hospital waiting lists was lower under Labour (635,000) than under the Conservatives (718,000), the increase between 1974 and 1978 (from 553,000 to 716,000) was larger than that between 1979 and 1983 (726,000 to 743,000). What is certain is this: 1) from columns 4 and 5 it is apparent that under the Conservatives the sick were expected to bear a larger proportion of the costs of health care themselves. This in part reflected higher prescription and dental charges. Prescription charges in particular rose by 550 per cent between 1979 and 1983. 2) Before losing office, Labour had planned for a growth in the overall volume of health spending in the early 1980s of 2 per cent per annum. Although the Conservatives retained this growth, Robinson (1986: 14) suggests that less than 1 per cent of it was not accounted for by additional demand. Moreover, higher prescription charges and National Insurance contributions accounted for an increasing proportion of this growth in line with the government's explicitly stated intention that more of the cost of the health services be financed by contributions and charges. Such increases can be considered as amounting to cuts in all but name.
5.5 Non-economic social policies

Before concluding this chapter we must consider one final area of policy in which the salariat is often thought to have a particular interest. This is the area covering, roughly speaking, civil liberties and opportunities for democratic participation. Ever since the early studies of authoritarianism it has been known that higher-status groups have a greater propensity to adhere to norms of tolerance and to express democratic attitudes; Inglehart (1971) suggested that there was a link between "formative affluence" and the degree of priority accorded to such values as democracy and freedom of speech; and it was apparent from the 1983 British Election Study data which we shall be analysing in subsequent chapters that, for example: a large majority of the salariat (76 per cent) believed that revolutionaries "should be allowed to hold public meetings"; 57 per cent disagreed that "the police should be given more power" and only a tiny minority (11 per cent) were prepared to accept the statement that "attempts to give equal opportunities to women" had "gone too far". When asked whether they thought the government "should or should not give workers more say in running the places where they work", two thirds replied in the affirmative.

The relatively greater emphasis apparently given by the salariat to 'liberal' social policies is hardly surprising: they enjoy greater economic security than workers and have greater cultural and material resources with which to exploit the policies to their advantage. But if this is the case, what is surprising is that they should support the Conservative Party, for the free-market, neo-liberal project - "[Thatcherism] was never... only a set of policies... [but] a radically novel political formation" (Hall, 1988:
83) - embarked on from 1979 entailed, as Gamble (1979: 1-25) pointed out, that such a project went hand in hand with a more coercive, more authoritarian state. The reason is, as Barry (1988: 146) points out, that if left to themselves people tend to pursue their interests through collective action "- in trade unions, tenants' associations, community organizations and local government, for example". But such organizations undermine the basis of the market order. Trade unions in particular reduce mobility and freeze the pattern of employment whilst the pattern of demand is shifting (Gamble, 1979: 14). The activities of the other organizations, through lobbying and the institutions of representative democracy, mean that governments are tempted to intervene in the smooth working of the market in order to deliver on promises and thus retain votes. It is therefore necessary to use centralized coercion to force people to compete individually. But it is not only in the sphere of collective action that the application of central power is necessary, for the free market carries with it the ever-present danger of anomie and degeneration. The free marketeers are thus obliged to wage a campaign against the 'permissive society' in the sphere of personal morals and values too. Norman Tebitt made clear the logic of this when he declared:

"I know that at the front of that campaign for a return to traditional values will be the Conservative Party: for we understand as does no other party that the defence of freedom involves a defence of the values which make freedom possible without its degeneration into licence" (quoted by Whitaker, 1987: 19).

If there is a paradox between the free economy and the coercive state, it is at most a conceptual one as is apparent from Marquand's (1988: 168-9)
observation: the growth of welfare spending which took place in the 1960s "did so, at least in part, because women were beginning to rebel against... their role in the family, and because it was therefore becoming necessary for the state to pay people to perform the caring services which women had previously performed for nothing. If that is so, [the Conservatives'] wish to reassert 'Victorian values' and to bring women back into the home where they will once again perform those caring services without payment... is an essential part of the economic programme, one of the aims of which is to contain the ever-mounting cost of social welfare" (my emphasis).

Much of the evidence necessary to give empirical substance to the above falls outside the period we have been examining: the attacks on local autonomy through restrictions on councils' revenue-raising powers and the abolition of the (Labour-controlled!) Metropolitan Councils; greater powers for the police to detain suspects and prevent freedom of movement; the banning of trade unions in certain 'sensitive' areas - all these took place after 1983. However, beginnings were made before that date, and before ending this chapter I should just like to give them a brief mention.

In chronological order, there were four such beginnings. 1) In 1979 a Protection of Official Information Bill proposed to allow prosecution for the unauthorized transmission of certain categories of official information on the certification of a minister that such transmission was "likely to cause serious injury to the interests of the nation", and such certification
would be "conclusive evidence of that fact".  
In 1980, new immigration rules ended the automatic right of entry of husbands or fiancées of women settled in the UK, providing among other things, that entry would not be granted where the parties to the marriage had not met; government denials that the rules were racist ignored the fact that there was a tradition in Asian families of marriages arranged by the parents.  
3) In 1981, the Environment Minister (responsible for local government) announced that any council proposing to spend above limits approved by his department would have their central-government subsidies cut to a degree such that local ratepayers would have to finance twice the additional spending should the council concerned persist with its plans.  
4) The 1981 British Nationality Act revoked the principle of *jus soli* whereby any person born in the United Kingdom was entitled to the country's citizenship.

### 5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we have tried to examine the actions of the 1974 Labour government and the 1983 Conservative government, from the point of view of the salariat, in the fields of economic management, education, health and 'civil rights'. The aim has been to determine whether, if members of the

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13. What stopped the Bill in the end was not a change of mind on the part of the government "but the simultaneous publication of Andrew Boyle's book *The Climate of Treason*. The facts disclosed in the book forced the government to admit that it had done a deal with a well-placed former Soviet spy who had later become Keeper of the Queen's Pictures and received a knighthood. Under the new Bill Boyle would have been liable to a jail term for publishing his book. In the circumstances the government could only withdraw its Bill" (Leys, 1983: 286).
salariat were all, so to speak, 'rational utility maximisers', we could come up with firm evidence as to which party they ought to vote for. Our conclusion is that the evidence does not point unequivocally - to put it no more strongly than that - in any one direction. It certainly does not, however, point away from Labour.

Any comparative assessment of government performance such as this one is unlikely to command universal assent - least of all from the politicians themselves. But what our evidence does suggest is that in voting for the Conservatives rather than for the Labour Party, large numbers of the salariat may be voting against their interests - whether in terms of the government measures research tells us they actually want, or in terms of the measures rationality leads us to expect them to want. How can we explain this?

In this chapter (as in the last) we have focussed almost exclusively on what the parties do (or have done); but we may expect what the parties say (i.e. their policy positions, regardless of whether they then actually implement them) to be of at least equal importance. In general, people will vote on the basis of their perceptions of what the parties say and do as these relate to what they want. But what people want will to some significant extent depend on their perceptions of what is and what is possible. For instance, while I might have day-dreams about it, I do not in any serious sense 'want' to buy a Maserati because I know that it is economically unfeasible; while I cannot possibly want that which I do not know is. If, therefore, parties are successful in influencing peoples' perceptions of what is possible and what is - that is, their descriptive and
explanatory beliefs - they may reasonably expect to benefit electorally. The
question then becomes, 'What is the precise mechanism which translates such
beliefs into votes?', and this leads us directly on to our ideological
type of voting to be developed and tested in the next four chapters; for
in suggesting that the voter's choice can usefully be analysed as the
outcome of his ideological beliefs, I advance a definition of ideology as
descriptive and explanatory beliefs having normative implications for
action. It is to the derivation and analysis of this definition that I now
turn.
CHAPTER 6: Ideology and voting - theoretical issues

6.1 Introduction.

In this chapter we seek to analyse and defend in detail the hypothesis set out at the end of the last chapter, namely, that voting can usefully be seen as the outcome of the ideological beliefs held by the voter. For reasons which we shall set out in the second and third parts of this chapter, the content of voters' beliefs can usefully be analysed in terms of beliefs about themselves, beliefs about society and beliefs about the parties. For the moment, we need to explain what we mean by 'ideology', such are the confused and shifting senses in which the term has been used by diverse authors. Only then, (in part 6.4), will it be possible to set out the grounds on which we anticipate finding that voting is an ideologically determined act, for clearly, these grounds will partly depend on what definition of 'ideology' we choose to adopt in the first place.

6.2 Ideology defined

Ideology is a difficult concept to define, its meaning controversial. The following discussion is thus of necessity somewhat lengthy. Although it is not the purpose of this work to resolve the problems surrounding the bewildering array of diverse uses among social scientists, in view of the existing chaos, I shall seek to present and defend my own conception by adopting a methodological procedure similar to the one advanced by Durkheim in The Rules of Sociological Method. That is, faced with phenomena about which we may, initially at least, have little systematic knowledge, Durkheim suggests that we begin by conceptualizing phenomena in terms of those properties that are external enough to be immediately perceived (Durkheim, 1982: 75). Proceeding thus allows the formulation of concepts which are
precise enough to be theoretically useful. I shall adopt a similar attitude in approaching the task of arriving at a satisfactory conceptualization of ideology in the sense that, just as initial concentration on the most superficial characteristics of a phenomenon is designed to allow the avoidance of "the confused and shifting terminology of popular thought" (Giddens, 1971: 90), so I propose to try to overcome the problem constituted by the confused and shifting senses in which the term 'ideology' has been used in the literature by starting with the most simple propositions and successively examining what each of them entails - by starting 'from the bottom', as it were, and 'working up'.

Such an approach, I would argue, implies that determining the nature of ideology must be seen as an essentially philosophical task, by which I understand, with Adams (1989), an exercise in conceptual analysis. And, I would argue, it is only by adopting a philosophical approach that we can show ideology to be a form of thought distinctive in kind from other forms of thought for "[i]t is only logical characteristics that can determine the nature of any ideas and distinguish one kind of thinking from another" (Adams, 1989: 10). The reason for insisting on the need for a definition of ideology as a distinctive kind or form of thought is that such a definition is likely to have greater scientific utility. For instance, the so-called "end-of-ideology" writers 1 clearly operated with a conception of ideology...

1. By the "'end-of-ideology' writers" I mean those scholars in Europe and America during the 1950s who developed the theme, in one form or another, that concomitant upon "the growth of bureaucracy and 'affluence' in western industrial society" it was possible to discern a "reduction in the appeal of...

(Footnote continues on next page)
that equated it with beliefs which they regarded as 'extreme', 'totalitarian', or which involved a commitment to radical change. In conceiving of ideology thus, the writers in question give us no clues as to the advantages to be gained in restricting the concept in this way other than their own values and preferences. Thus we have yet another stipulative definition which any other writer may choose to agree with, or not, as s/he prefers. If it be accepted that the inability to agree on the definition of concepts in this way impedes the advancement of science, the preferability of a definition couched in terms of logical characteristics lies in the fact that precisely because it is based on a logical analysis, it represents an attempt to get agreement among practitioners. But before proceeding to the task of building up our own definition, the first task must be to assess the weaknesses and potentialities of those that are already on offer. A convenient place to start will be Marx's theory of ideology for it was his that started the modern debate over the meaning of the concept and which to a large extent still dominates it. 2

(Footnote continued from previous page)


2. It has become a commonplace to observe that the absence, in Marx, of an unambiguous statement of his theory makes any attempted reconstruction hazardous. Nevertheless, I believe that among those who have taken the trouble to analyse in detail what Marx himself (as opposed to Engels or anyone else) wrote, there is in fact a fair degree of consensus, at least in terms of essentials, as to what Marx had in mind. See, for example, Larrain, 1979; Larrain, 1983; Parekh, 1982.
Marx's concept of ideology is embedded in a broader theory about the formation of ideas. Marx asserts, against idealism, that consciousness is not independent of material conditions, and against Feuerbachian materialism, that it is not a passive reflection of a given, external reality. Rather, social reality must be conceived of as practice, as the product of "unceasing sensuous labour and creation" (Marx and Engels, 1970: 63). If reality is produced by their practice, human beings can only form ideas about the world "inasmuch as this reality is practically constituted. It is by practically producing and transforming reality that human beings come to know it. They do not contemplate it as already formed; they represent it as they construct it" (Larrain, 1983: 22). If ideas are an expression, in consciousness, of human practice, such expressions can either be adequate, or else inadequate and distorted. For Marx, it is in the inadequate and distorted character of certain ideas that the specificity of ideology lies.

Because practice is necessarily social, it gives rise to a set of objectively existing institutions and social relations which, despite having been produced by human beings themselves, escape their control and dominate them. "For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape" (Marx and Engels, 1970: 34). It is this "limited material mode of activity" which gives rise to ideology for "if the conscious expression of the real relations of these individuals is illusory, if in their imagination they turn reality upside-down, then this in its turn is the result of their limited material mode of activity and their limited social relations arising from it" (Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 1976, quoted by Larrain, 1983: 23). However, not all the
ideational products of a limited mode of activity are ideological. Those products are ideological which misrepresent or hide societal contradictions. Since "it is only through the reproduction of contradictions that the ruling class can reproduce itself as the ruling class" (Larrain, 1983: 28-9), "the ideological hiding of contradictions necessarily serves the interests of that class" (Larrain, 1979: 47). As an example in this connection, Marx frequently cites the writings of those whom he called the 'vulgar economists'. These, in assuming, for example, that capitalist relations of production were "the relations in which wealth is created and the productive forces developed in conformity with the laws of nature" (Marx, 1955: 105), (and therefore, that the capitalist mode of production was "the absolutely final form of social production instead of... a passing historical phase of its evolution" (Marx, Theories of Surplus Value, 1968, quoted by Parekh, 1982: 100)), thereby implicitly asserted that all attempts to overturn existing social relationships are bound to fail and that it is useless to believe that by acting together human beings can consciously take control of their circumstances and influence the course of history.

Marx's theory contains a number of valuable insights and has certain elements that are worthy of being appropriated and developed. As it stands, however, it has to be rejected because even if it were possible to overcome the notorious difficulties of determining by empirical means what a person's 'interests' are, one would still be faced with the problem that the relationship between any given set of ideas and the class interests posited by Marx is not empirical either. In other words, it would still be open to any two observers to disagree as to what class interests actually were implicitly served by a set of ideas they were investigating. What we can take from Marx is the suggestion, implicit in his approach, (one that I
shall come back to), that the ideological status of beliefs be made to depend on their being "the sort of ideas they are, through some essential, not merely contingent feature" (MacCarney, 1980: 40). To see this, consider another of the 'vulgar economists' assertions frequently criticised by Marx, namely, the belief that the relationship between employer and worker is "a voluntary relationship between two equal and independent individuals" (Parekh, 1982: 111). Marx regards this and similar beliefs as ideological in that, by emphasising the formal freedom and equality which labour shares with the capitalist, it implicitly obscures the extent to which the worker is dominated by capital - a consequence of the reality that his freedom to change employer "makes no difference to the fact that he cannot live without selling himself to one of them" (Parekh, 1982: 111). The grounds on which Marx asserts that such beliefs are ideological thus have to do with what he takes to be implicit in such beliefs, that is, with the fact that there is an "intelligible inner connection between forms of consciousness and the class interests they serve" (MacCarney, 1980: 40) - or as I have said, through an "essential, not merely contingent feature". Therefore, it is not that, as is commonly thought, ideology is a set of ideas determined by class interests (or, in other words, that ideology is a set of ideas that have a genetic relationship to class interests); still less that all beliefs which serve class interests are ideological. In maintaining this position, Marx avoided a major problem which afflicts more modern conceptions - one which may be illustrated by jumping ahead several decades and considering, briefly, the suggestions of Carl Friedrich (1963).

For Friedrich, "Ideologies are action-related systems of ideas. They typically contain a programme and a strategy for its realisation, and their essential function is to unite organizations that are built around them..."
The ideas an ideology contains are as such action-related and may or may not be very true or appropriate; what makes them ideology is their function in the body politic. The ideology is a set of ideas which unites a party or other group for effective participation in political life" (1963: 89). Friedrich then objects to Parsons' use of the term wherein ideology is extended to cover any "general system of beliefs held in common by the members of a collectivity..." (Parsons, 1951: 349): "...since the terms 'belief system' and 'value system' are common coinage which they refer to, there is no sense in also calling them ideology..." (1963: 89-90).

There are several points that can be made in connection with Friedrich's view. For instance, he is right to object to the extension of ideology to cover phenomena already designated by other terms for such "'superfluous coextensiveness'... represents an intolerable waste for the economy of language and clarity of thought" (Sartori, 1969: 398). But it is not clear that Friedrich's own analysis offers much clarity of thought either. At first we are given to understand that ideologies are programmes and strategies; but then it is empirically incorrect to say that they "unite organizations that are built around them" for they may with equal likelihood divide as well as unite as the Alternative Economic Strategy, canvassed by the left of the Labour Party in the 1970s, bore witness. A few sentences later we are told that any ideas can be ideological: "what makes them ideological is their function in... [uniting] a party or other group for effective participation in political life". But this will not do either. Indeed no definition that designates "a particular function or functions as the quintessence and distinctive quality of ideology" will do for the simple reason that "these functions are not unique to ideology" (Sainsbury, 1980: 17). In other words, identifying ideology in terms of function guarantees
failure in identifying it as a qualitatively distinct form of thought - yet as we have explained above, we do want to see it as conceptually distinct in this way.

Friedrich is on more potentially fruitful ground when, a page earlier, he asks us to consider, "for example, the statement from the Declaration of Independence that 'all men are created equal'. This statement", Friedrich continues, "...is most distinctly ideological, not because it is either true or false, but because it receives its significance from the implication it carries: hereditary privileges are bad and should be abolished, and a society without such privileges is good and should be established" (1963: 88-9, my emphasis). This very important suggestion, echoing the point I made in connection with Marx, is one I shall come back to later on. For the moment, however, we shall consider a writer who consciously seeks to supercede Marx, one who has had a considerable influence on non-Marxist social scientists who have had a view of ideology, namely, Mannheim.

If the 'end-of-ideology' writers operated with a definition of ideology so narrow that "much of what social scientists generally identify as ideological... simply have to be ignored or called something else" (La Palombara, 1966: 7), Mannheim may be taken as an example of one who has a definition so broad "that ideology loses all specificity as a concept" (Larrain, 1979: 100). Mannheim accepts, with Marx, the inseparability of thought from human social practice: it is "in the context of collective action [that] we first discover the world in an intellectual sense" (1976: 3). Firstly, knowledge does not arise out of mere contemplation, but out of efforts to modify the surrounding world of nature and society, for thought "requires a volitional and emotional-unconscious under-current to ensure the continuous orientation for knowledge..." (1976: 28). Secondly, because
the effort to change the world "is from the very beginning a cooperative process of group life" (1976: 26), knowledge is irreducibly social. Therefore, "[i]n accord with the particular context of collective activity in which they participate, men always tend to see the world which surrounds them differently" (1976: 3). From this Mannheim draws two conclusions: 1) that modes of thought cannot be adequately understood as long as their social origins are obscured" (1976: 2); 2) the social character of knowledge presupposes a set of shared meanings. Such shared meanings constitute the 'world-view' (or Weltanschauung) of the group.

Mannheim then sets himself the task of analysing the historical determinants of changes in the meaning of the term ideology, arguing that it has developed "from a particular conception to a total conception, and from the special formulation of the latter to its general formulation, that is, the sociology of knowledge" (Larrain, 1979: 108). At the origin of the concept, Mannheim claims, lies what he calls a 'debunking' tendency in modern thought, namely, the attempt to discredit opponents by showing that their ideas are a function of unconscious or unacknowledged motives. Accordingly, the particular conception "is implied when the term denotes that we are sceptical of the ideas and representations advanced by our opponent. They are regarded as more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of the situation, the true recognition of which would not be in accord with his interests. These distortions range all the way from conscious lies to half-conscious and unwitting disguises..." (1976: 49). With the breakdown of the medieval-theocratic monopoly on ways of interpreting and explaining the world, intellectual conflict reached such a pitch that antagonists sought "to annihilate not merely the specific beliefs and attitudes of one another, but also the intellectual foundations upon
which these beliefs and attitudes rest" (1976: 57). Accordingly, whereas "the particular conception of ideology designates only a part of the opponent's assertions as ideologies... the total conception calls into question the opponent's total Weltanschauung (including his conceptual apparatus) and attempts to understand these concepts as an outgrowth of the collective life of which he partakes" (1976: 50). According to Mannheim, it was the Marxian proletarian movement which first used total ideology as a weapon to assail the ideas of adversaries, but there was nothing "to prevent the opponents of Marxism from availing themselves of the weapon and applying it to Marxism itself" (1976: 67). With this step one moves from the special to the general formulation of the total conception of ideology - the formulation that is used by the analyst "when he has the courage to subject not just the adversary's point of view but all points of view, including his own, to the ideological analysis" (1976: 69).

Mannheim thus appears to believe that ideology has essentially to do with false or invalid beliefs. Now, it also seems that not only does Mannheim believe that the social origins of thought (ideological or not) are relevant for an understanding of thought, but also that the social determination of thought has a bearing on its validity. For instance, towards the end of Ideology and Utopia he says that "the analyses characteristic of the sociology of knowledge are by no means irrelevant for the determination of the truth of a statement" (1976: 256). Mannheim argues that a sociological (as opposed to immanent) interpretation of thought does not deny its validity or reject immanent interpretations as irrelevant; rather, a sociological interpretation limits the absolute scope of validity of thought. As Larrain (1979: 107) comments, "Mannheim cannot conceal the pains he takes to separate himself from relativism. Yet he does not dispel
the danger”. And, one might add, no wonder — for to do so he would have had to specify the conditions under which the social determination of thought will affect its validity.

The upshot of this is as follows: if the social determination of thought impairs its validity, and if ideology is thought which is invalid, then all thought is ideological. In this way, the term loses all specificity as a concept. Referring to nothing in particular, the term cannot explain anything (and Mannheim is, incidentally, caught up in the Cretan paradox, i.e. "'All Cretans are liers!', said the man from Crete").

Having considered just three writers, we are already in a position to make some preliminary statements about what ideology is and is not. Firstly, for all three writers, (and, we would suspect, for virtually everyone who has written on the concept), ideology has to do with ideas and/or beliefs. Secondly, it is necessary to engage with the view, held by both Marx and Mannheim, that ideological beliefs are in some sense erroneous or distorted. For Mannheim, the distortion involved would appear to be one of ‘propositional incorrectness’, that is, that ideological beliefs are either

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3. "...in the strict sense ideas are thought of, they typically belong to the more self-conscious dimension of discourse, to reasoning and theorizing... beliefs can be defined as 'ideas that are no longer thought', to signify that beliefs are idea-clusters that routinize the cost of decisions precisely because they are taken for granted" (Sartori, 1969: 401). In what follows, however, I shall use the terms interchangeably. This is for linguistic convenience and because I do not think, as does Sartori, that ideology should be confined to beliefs alone.
empirically false or logically invalid. For Marx, the distortion involved is different: ideological beliefs are "not mere illusions in the sense of logical or cognitive errors, but have a basis in reality itself" (Larrain, 1983: 12). That is, if ideas are rooted in practice and if ideology conceals contradictions, then this must be due to some characteristic of practice itself. In fact, Marx argues that practice has a double character: in the case of capitalist economic practice, for instance, this character is constituted by the sphere of circulation, on the one hand, and of production on the other. The surface level of circulation reveals the opposite of what goes on at the more essential level of production so that capitalist ideology, being rooted in circulation, necessarily conceals the contradictory reality of production. At the level of circulation, the apparent equality of exchange relations is visible for all to see; thus at this level, capitalist and worker meet under conditions of freedom and equality in that they exchange their commodities voluntarily and exchange equivalent for equivalent — thus concealing the fact that the worker's exclusion from the instruments of production means that he is forced to sell his labour power if he wants to stay alive. Ultimately, therefore, the kind of distortion involved in Marx's conception of ideology is, I believe, of a normative or evaluative character: rooted in phenomenal forms, ideology hides what goes on at the level of 'real' or 'essential' relations; but if

4. Of course, a large number of writers since Mannheim have defined ideology in these terms. In an interesting article published in Acta Sociologica in 1971, Huaco (1971: 245-55) argues that most usages by contemporary sociologists can be logically reduced to a two-factor conception of ideology involving a role element and a falsity element; that is, a conception of ideology as a set of false beliefs that fulfill some socio-cultural purpose or other.
we ask by what criteria they are the 'essential' ones, in the final analysis it is difficult to see how the answer could be other than that they are the relations which, were they not hidden by ideology, would allow the worker to 'correctly' perceive what Marx (evaluatively) asserts is in his interests. However this may be, I can see no scientifically legitimate reason for allowing the ideological status of beliefs to depend, either wholly or in part, on any of the three kinds of distortion (i.e. on empirical, logical or normative distortion - which I take to be exhaustive): to claim that ideological beliefs are distorted in a normative sense involves the investigator in an entirely arbitrary value judgement, while to say that they are distorted in a logical or empirical sense is to make an unsupported claim to epistemological privilege. To avoid such a position one would have to admit to the likelihood of his own assertions also being distorted - but then he would risk being caught up in the Cretan paradox. Accordingly, on my understanding of the term, there is no necessary implication that ideological beliefs are distorted; for "No more than scientific studies of religion ought to begin with unnecessary questions about the legitimacy of the substantive claims of their subject matter ought scientific studies of ideology to begin with such questions" (Geertz, 1964: 71).

Thirdly, however, I agree with both Mannheim and Marx in retaining a close link between ideas and social practice:

"...consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life process... men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their actual world, also their thinking and the products of their thinking" (Marx and Engels, 1970: 47).

Because we believe ideology to be a distinct form of thought, that is, a distinct way of understanding the world, we believe that ideology probably
originates, but is in any case inherent in, a distinct form of human social practice. That practice is politics. This assertion we shall attempt to justify below in section 6.4. For the moment we have arrived at the position that ideologies are ideas and beliefs that are inherent in politics and that may or may not be distorted in some sense.

To get beyond this position we may begin by noting that for many writers the concepts of values and prescriptions have been taken to be important determinants of the ideological status of beliefs. For instance, Adams (1989: xiii) argues that ideology is "a form of moral understanding built upon conceptions of human nature", while for Geertz (1964: 71) "ideology names the structure of situations in such a way that the attitude contained toward them is one of commitment... By objectifying moral sentiment through the same devices that science shuns, it seeks to motivate action". For Plamenatz (1970: 75-6) ideology "is like a fable by Aesop or La Fontaine; it is on the face of it a tale, though a tale that points a moral... what makes the tale ideological is that his audience, consciously or unconsciously, draws a moral from it"; while (Sainsbury, 1980: 8) asserts: "Without the ethical, evaluative component there is no ideology". Let us take these suggestions seriously then and see how the notions of values and prescriptions might be deployed in order to arrive at an understanding of ideology as a logically distinct form of thought.

If ideology is to be such, then the relationship of values and prescriptions to it cannot be a contingent one. For example, Plamenatz's suggestion that what makes tales ideological is that audiences draw morals from them is by itself insufficient - for at different times and in different places audiences may draw morals from any kinds of tale with the implication that what is ideological given time and place \( t_{1|p_1} \) may not be so
given time and place $t_p^2$: essentially we are back with the problem of functional definitions mentioned above. If ideology is to be a form of thought distinctive in kind from other forms of thought then the ideological status of ideas must depend on their "being the sort of ideas they are, through some essential, not merely contingent feature" (MacCartney, 1980: 40) - and this means that values and prescriptions must be inherent in ideological beliefs without the latter being reducible to the former. For if ideological beliefs are so reducible, (that is, if they are no more than values and prescriptions), then we are back with the problem of 'superfluous coextensiveness' - also mentioned above.

A clue as to a possible way forward is offered by Sainsbury (1980: 8) when she suggests that

"It is normative ideas in the sense of stipulating 'oughts' and moral goodness, which form the core of ideology... But ideology is not just notions of how things ought to be but also of how things are. Prescriptions are based on both conceptions of what is desirable and views of reality".

If Sainsbury's observations are correct (we certainly have no grounds for believing that she is particularly far from ordinary usage of the term ideology), and if the latter is to refer to a qualitatively distinct form of thinking, we are now in the position that ideological beliefs must somehow describe, evaluate and prescribe - all at the same time!

Adams' (1989) analysis suggests how this might be done. He first of all notes that it is possible to identify a class of concepts "which appear to combine both descriptive and evaluative elements; and this rather odd duality has logical consequences" (1989: 39). Secondly, in order to see what these consequences are, he invites us to consider the concept of a weed:

"Let us imagine two people living side by side who are both gardeners. One is a lady who grows mint. She loves the taste of it, the look of it, the smell of it, and she rejoices to see it flourish. Her neighbour
loathes the stuff and is forever tearing it out as it spreads persistently and anarchically across their common boarder, threatening to ruin his neatly-ordered husbandry. He insists furiously that mint is a weed; she, equally furiously, insists that it is not. This is clearly not the kind of argument that can be settled. Within gardening weeds are bad things: they are what gardeners pull up. What counts as a 'weed' is relative to what any gardener wants to grow" (1989: 40).

The point is that the concept 'weed' combines the descriptive and the evaluative. On the descriptive side we may say that strictly speaking, it is non-referential as is shown by the case of a person who refuses to count anything as a weed and is happy to let anything grow. On the other hand, the limits set by the concept of a plant show that there are actually things in the world to which the term can refer according to public criteria for its application. On the evaluative side, whatever else they might be, wholly evaluative concepts like 'goodness', 'badness', 'beauty', 'ugliness' and so on are concepts which have no corresponding independent feature of reality to which they can refer and hence are concepts for which the criteria for their application are infinitely variable. Thus, the evaluative nature of the concept 'weed' is shown by the unsettles ability of the dispute between the two gardeners.

There is a whole class of concepts such as 'weed' of which 'terrorist', 'murder', 'hooligan', 'democracy', 'exploitation', 'slave-labour' and so on may be cited as examples. Whatever the extent of their descriptive content, it is their evaluative nature that determines their logic for there is no decision procedure whereby one set of evaluative beliefs can be shown to be true or false, superior or inferior: hence the endless disputes over the 'true' meaning of terms like 'democracy' and 'exploitation', why a 'terrorist' for one is a 'freedom-fighter' for another, and why slogans like "Abortion is murder!" are accepted by some and rejected by others.
Building on Adams' analysis, it seems to be the case that when concepts such as these are embedded in propositions about the world, the propositions necessarily have prescriptive implications; or - in terms of Plamenatz's analogy of ideology as a tale - that it is through their deployment of these simultaneously descriptive and evaluative concepts that ideological tales point morals. To see this, consider the Conservatives' oft-repeated assertion that "High income tax makes people less willing to work hard". Since 'hard work' is something good, the assertion implies that all other things being equal, one must oppose that which diminishes 'hard work', i.e. high income tax. That the assertion necessarily implies this, and not just in the subjective estimation of the person uttering it becomes apparent when one reflects that evaluative terms like 'hard work' are terms "upon whose meaning or significance all users of the English language must agree if they are to be able to communicate with one another, e.g. all users of English must agree that atrocity is something bad, that people of good will is something favourable, and so on, if they are to communicate" (Osgood, Saporta and Nunnally, 1956: 47).

To take another example, consider the above-mentioned slogan "Abortion is murder!". That this necessarily carries the implication that abortion must be opposed is apparent when one reflects on what the term 'murder' actually means. Aside from its legal definition which is something quite different, in ordinary usage it refers to a kind of killing - and therefore has a descriptive content for there are public criteria for the application of the term 'killing'. But it also has an evaluative component, for murder is precisely wrongful or unjustified killing. It is illogical to ask whether murder is something good or bad because it is bad by definition. We might disagree on what is to count as murder but we cannot disagree on its badness
for otherwise, in using it in a conversation with each other, neither of us would know what the other meant. The necessary implication of the slogan "Abortion is murder!" is thus a consequence of the inherent badness of the term 'murder' together with the fact that to argue over whether one should oppose badness and support goodness would simply be logically incoherent.

It is these kinds of belief, then, that make up what I understand by the term 'ideology'. When a person thinks in ideological terms s/he has "what appears to be a descriptive account of the world but one which points in a certain moral direction and from which prescriptions can be drawn" (Adams, 1989: 42). In concise terms, ideology consists of descriptive and explanatory beliefs that have normative implications for action. This definition, I would claim, incorporates most, if not all, of what was said to be essential to ideology in the definitions given above: it recognizes that ideology "is a form of moral understanding" (Adams); that it objectifies moral sentiment (Geertz); that it points a moral (Flamenetz); and that "Without the ethical, evaluative component there is no ideology" (Sainsbury). My definition is, therefore, I believe, rooted in ordinary usage; at the same time it attempts, dare I say, to make ordinary usage logically coherent.

In order to flesh out our view of ideology in greater detail, we need to take seriously Adams' suggestion that in the case of ideological concepts, concepts in which the evaluative and descriptive are fused, it is the evaluative that determines their logic. For instance, ideology is often thought of as something held with passion or commitment. Thus, Giovanni Sartori (1969) in his discussion of the concept even goes as far as to make such features part of the defining characteristics of ideology: ideology indicates a particular state, or structure, of political belief systems...
[Such belief systems are] based on i) fixed elements, characterised by ii) strong affect and iii) closed cognitive structure" (1969: 400, 405). Now one could argue that strong affect and cognitive closedness are not characteristics of ideology but of the way ideology is believed because as sets of statements or propositions, ideology does not have cognitions or emotions. My guess is that Sartori would respond to this criticism in the following way: that since ideology is an "ambitious term", one that belongs to the concepts that are supposed to have broad and farreaching causative significance" (1969: 400), one of criteria by which we must judge a suggested definition is its explanatory potency. There is no such thing as a belief that is not held by someone somewhere so that beliefs are necessarily held with some degree of affect or openness/closedness. Using ideology as an explanatory variable while neglecting how it is believed is likely to undermine its explanatory value: those who are cognitively open and low on affect are unlikely to be aroused to action. Now as an empirical statement, we may agree with this: clearly it is more than likely that the effectiveness of ideology will depend on "the mentality on the one hand and ideological passion on the other" (1969: 403). Unfortunately, we did not have the data to measure these factors so we do not know to what extent they might have influenced the relationship between ideology and voting analysed in chapters 8 and 9. But the question is whether these factors may legitimately be regarded as constitutive of ideology as Sartori so regards them: essentially, for Sartori ideology is any political belief system that is held in a certain way. This definition has a very arbitrary feel: we are not told on what grounds the term ideology should be reserved for specifically political beliefs (and indeed what counts as a political belief is likely to be infinitely variable across time and space) nor are we told
exactly how cognitively open or low on affect a person has to become before his thinking can cease to be legitimately considered as ideological.

However this may be, I believe that the conception of ideology I am arguing for can account for the cognitive closedness and high level of affect that do in fact tend to be associated with the assertions of certain 'ideologists'. Consider the Marxist notion of 'exploitation', for example. Ultimately, this is founded on the notion of 'exploitation', and the important point to note here is that this is a concept with a relatively high level of negative evaluative content. (Who would seriously attempt to undertake a reasoned defence of 'exploitation' on any generally accepted meaning of the term?). Now it is precisely this high evaluativeness that explains why certain Marxists of the kind we have all come across will cling with such passion to such assertions as 'All social change is ultimately to be explained in terms of class conflict' - and why s/he will tend to be cognitively closed, for the point about values is that they are beyond the reach of empirical evidence. Thus, if we point to a particular instance of social change that is not self-evidently the result of class conflict we will be told that we are being superficial and that the change is 'ultimately' the result of class conflict. If we then say that the change took place during a period in which there was no apparent class conflict of any kind, we will be told that conflict was there only it was 'latent'. Hence the intractability of many ideological disputes and why, when we witness two ideological disputants in action we often have the strong sensation that they are simply talking past each other; for in a very real sense they live in completely different worlds:

"The Liberal enters the factory of a commercial firm and sees factory owner and workers in an economic relationship freely entered into in a free market and so he is seeing the good society in action; while the Marxist observing the same situation sees exploitation and
dehumanization. Their disagreement is not of the sort that can be settled; there is simply no procedure for settling which is right; their views are irreconcilable and incomensurable. To hold a view like this is not a matter of proof or evidence. You either see the world that way or you do not" (Adams, 1989: 91).

These reflections raise the question of the relationship between ideology and science - another issue much discussed in the literature: for instance, "Talcott Parsons... argues that 'deviations from scientific objectivity' are the 'essential criteria of an ideology'" while Erikson would appear to regard the two as compatible, defining ideology as "an unconscious tendency underlying religious and scientific as well as political thought" (Huaco, 1971: 247). My own position, as might be imagined, is that while ideological thinking may give rise to scientific propositions, it cannot itself be scientific. Thus the belief "High income tax makes people less willing to work hard" could be the basis of an empirical investigation, but to be so, the concept of 'hard work' would have to be shorn of its evaluative content. That is, it would have to be specified what, for the purposes of the investigation, was to count as 'hard work', thus making it a falsifiable concept. But then it would no longer be an ideological concept for it is the evaluative aspect that makes concepts ideological and in principle, the evaluative is unable to be the subject of tests of falsifiability.

Plamenatz's analogy of ideology as a tale reminds one that the concept is usually thought of as referring not just to sets of beliefs but to structures or belief systems. In other words, to talk about 'an ideology' (as opposed to 'ideology' without the article) is to talk about sets of beliefs that hang together in some determinate way. Here it may be simply stated that this study is not addressed to the possible influence of
ideologies in this sense (i.e. as discrete belief structures in some sense) but to the influence of particular, recognisably ideological beliefs and, as we shall see in chapter 8, to the influence of 'ideological closeness' to parties. Nevertheless, to provide a complete account of ideology it behoves one to give some indication at least, of how beliefs might relate to one another. Seliger's (1976) analysis, for example, is incomplete on this score. He tells us that he conceives ideologies qua belief systems "in regard to the kinds of statement... that are used in any political argument or belief system whatever their specific content" (1976: 99); and then says that such statements "are composed of moral prescriptions, technical prescriptions, implements and rejections" (1976: 102). We are then told that moral prescriptions are central to the system. But to say that moral prescription is 'central' is not an account of structure and, despite his claims to the contrary, Seliger's list of components remains just that.

To avoid straying into areas that are not directly pertinent to the aims of this study, I shall be brief. The notion of belief system implies that a change in one element will result in a change elsewhere in the system though there are several possible compensatory changes that could actually take place. "In such an instance, the element more likely to change is defined as less central to the belief system than the element that, so to speak, has its stability ensured by the change in the first element" (Converse, 1964: 208). Central, in this sense, to a fully-developed ideal-typical ideology, even if only implicitly, will be a conception of human nature for, the essence of ideological concepts is that they fuse the evaluative and the descriptive, and, whatever else they might be, values have to do with what is good or bad for humanity as such. They therefore "stem directly from that ideology's account of essential human nature" (Adams, 1989: 98). If
'freedom' or 'equality', for example are values, it is because human beings cannot express their essential humanity without them - and this makes us aware that implicit in the ideology's conception of human nature is a conception of the 'Good Society', for the good society by definition is nothing other than the society which embodies the values inherent in the account of human nature: if humans require 'freedom' in order to flourish, so the good society is one characterised by freedom etc. If ideologies are explanatory as well as descriptive systems of belief, then they must explain why the present world fulfills or falls short of the ideal. They will therefore contain an account of the present state of the world and how we might realise the ideal world. The whole system is bound together by the evaluative content of ideology: the good society is the social expression of the values inherent in the ideology's description of essential human nature, while these same values also determine the nature of the account of the present world that is offered. "This is because the world that an ideological theory explains is not the world as such but the world as evaluated, and what is explained is what is deemed significant in terms of the values of the ideology and its version of ideological man" (Adams, 1989: 101). Finally, it is because the value content of an ideology allows one to infer prescriptions that the ideology also contains an account of how to achieve the ideal world.

The conception of ideology described above provides the basis, we believe, for undertaking what is commonly thought to be the principal task of a theory of ideology, namely, "to examine the ways in which 'meaning' or 'ideas' affect the... activities of the individuals and groups which make up the social world" (Thompson, 1984: 73) - that is, to analyse the functions or effects of ideology. Such a task will be undertaken in section 6.4, for
there, as explained in the introduction, we shall set out the grounds on which we anticipate finding that voting is an ideologically determined act. For the moment we need to analyse another kind of belief, one which we see as being closely bound up with individuals' ideological beliefs, namely, their beliefs about themselves - about who they are and what they are. At least three writers (Althusser, 1977; Therborn, 1980 and Egzeworski, 1985) in analyses involving the influence of ideology on political behaviour have pointed to the importance of individuals' beliefs about themselves.

6.3 Social identities

Although analytically distinguishable, beliefs about oneself are inherent in other sorts of belief. For example, having beliefs about the parties most likely to fulfill one's interests, entails having beliefs about who and what one is. This must be so because to have beliefs about one's interests implies having beliefs about one's situation, but one cannot have beliefs about one's situation in the absence of some kind of belief (however imprecise or unconscious) about one's social identity. This is not just a contingent matter of fact but is intrinsic to the idea of having beliefs about one's situation. No sense can be given to a question about an individual's situation where we are not told (or already know) in advance, what social identity to use as a frame of reference; for it is his social identity which determines, both for the individual himself and for others, what aspects of his situation are to be considered relevant in answering questions about it.

Social identities are not unchanging, either in space or in time. In the abstract an individual may with equal truthfulness describe himself as a worker, a Labour Party member, a husband, an Englishman or a father; but which of these identities is salient to him will depend on the particular
circumstances in which he finds himself at any given moment. Moreover, changes in the individual's ideological beliefs through time may lead him to accept or reject (permanently or otherwise) certain identities (e.g. as devout Christian or Communist militant) and vice versa. Generally, we expect there to be reciprocal influence between a person's ideological beliefs and the identities a person accepts for him- or herself.

Building on the work of Althusser, Therborn (1980) has thoroughly explored the issues of the constitution, operation and implications of social identity, or what he prefers to call the 'subjectivity of a person', "his/her acting as a particular subject in a particular context" (1980: 15). The constitution of human subjectivity must be conceived "as a social process of address or 'interpellations' inscribed in material social matrices" (1980: 7). This at once points to the close connection between social identity and ideological beliefs that we have argued for. The constitution of human subjectivity is simultaneously a process of subjection and of qualification:

"The amorphous libido and manifold potentialities of human infants are subjected to a particular order that allows or favours certain drives and capacities, and prohibits or disfavours others. At the same time, through the same process, new members become qualified to take up and perform (a particular part of) the repertoire of roles given in the society... subjects also become qualified to 'qualify' these in return, in the sense of specifying them and modifying their range of application" (1980: 17).

Individuals, then, act on the basis of their subjectivities, and while any given individual has several subjectivities that might be activated, s/he will act on the basis of the one that is most salient to him/her given the particular circumstances in which s/he finds him- or herself. Subjectivities, therefore, are similar to ideological beliefs in that they
too are amenable to being 'tapped' as means of influencing individuals' behaviour in the course of political and social conflict:

"For example, when a strike is called, a worker may be addressed as a member of the working class, as union member, as a mate of his fellow workers, as a long-faithful employee of a good employer, as a father or mother, as an honest worker, as a good citizen, as a Communist or an anti-communist, as a Catholic, and so on. The kind of address accepted - 'Yes, that's how I am, that's me! - has implications for how one acts in response to the strike call". (Therborn, 1980: 78; my emphasis)

This point has been taken up by Adam Przeworski (1985) and applied to an analysis of the electoral strategies (and the presumed results of these strategies) of social-democratic parties - although in principle the reasoning could be applied to parties in general.

Przeworski's thesis is that "in the process of electoral competition socialist parties are forced to undermine the organisation of workers as a class" (1985: 3). From the context it is clear that 'the organisation of workers as a class' means the collective action of workers which results from their common acceptance of the social identity of 'worker' rather than some other identity: "Unless workers are organized as a class, they are likely to vote on the basis of other sources of collective identification, as Catholics, Bavarians, women, Francophones, consumers and so forth" (1985: 12). Przeworski defines workers "in a narrow way, as manual wage-earners employed in mining, manufacturing, construction, transport and agriculture, persons retired from such occupations and inactive adult members of their households" (1985: 104). Given this definition, Przeworski then argues that workers have never constituted a majority in the class structures of advanced capitalist societies and that this has confronted socialist parties with a peculiar dilemma: "If a party is to govern alone, unburdened by the moderating influence of alliances and the debts of compromise, it must obtain some specific proportion of the vote, not much different from 50
percent" (1985: 24). Electoral systems thus impose on socialist parties the need to appeal to voters other than workers, but this in its turn means that the parties are precluded from mobilizing "people qua workers but as 'the masses', 'the people', 'consumers', 'taxpayers' or simply 'citizens'..." (1985: 27). The upshot of this is that "social-democratic parties [have] never obtained the votes of four-fifths of the electorate in any country... Moreover, they cannot even win the votes of all workers... in Belgium as many as one-half of the workers do not vote socialist (Hill, 1974: 83). In the United Kingdom, the Labour Party lost 49 percent of the working-class vote in the 1979 election". Why? "Class shapes political behaviour of individuals only as long as people who are workers are organized politically as workers... By broadening their appeal to the 'masses', social democrats weaken the general salience of class as a determinant of political behaviour of individuals" (1985: 26-7). Therefore, "As a pure party of workers [social democrats] cannot win the mandate for socialism, but as a party of the entire nation they have not won it either" (1985: 27).

This theory contains certain questionable assumptions, in particular 1) that a statistical association between class and party necessarily requires an awareness of class on the part of individual class members, and 2) that such awareness, where it exists, must inevitably lead workers to vote socialist (and presumably, the bourgeoisie to vote for some right-wing party). Clearly, the applicability of this assumption depends on the significance that acceptance of one's status as a 'worker' (say) has for the individual concerned, and one can easily imagine a situation in which a worker, precisely because he is aware of his status, is induced, à la the deference thesis, to vote Conservative.
On the other hand, unless one is prepared to maintain that the meanings individuals attach to their social identities are entirely arbitrary, it does seem reasonable (given that meanings are socially, not individually, constructed) to suggest that acceptance of the identity of 'worker' will in most cases also involve acceptance of certain associated connotations which are more conducive to support for the Left than for the Right. For while there may be some individual differences of emphasis on the meaning attached to different identities, as Roberts et al. (1977: 36) have noted in connection with class: "To regard oneself as middle class necessarily implies an awareness of the existence of subordinate strata, while identification with the working class implies that the main division in society of which individuals are conscious separates those like themselves from more privileged classes" (Roberts et al., 1977: 36).

As far as the first assumption is concerned, of course the presence of a statistical association between (analytically defined) classes and parties cannot be taken as evidence either that class members are aware of their status or that such awareness is an important determinant of their behaviour; nevertheless what is important from our point of view are the two other claims implicit in Przeworski's argument, namely, a) that parties' appeals do involve trying to make certain social identities salient for voters and b) that accepting such identities does exert an influence on voting choice.

This brings us to the final part of this chapter in which we set out the grounds on which we anticipate finding a causal relationship between people's ideological beliefs and social identities on the one hand, and their voting choices on the other.
6.4 Parties' appeals

These grounds rest on the following propositions. 1) Given our understanding of the nature of politics and of parties, ideologies, with their conceptions of human nature, the good society and so on, will be inherent in political activity at the élite level. This being so, it is natural to suppose that 2) parties will also couch their appeals to the electorate to a large extent in terms that are recognisably ideological. It is, moreover, 3) rational for the parties to do so. 4) Individual voting behaviour is an effect of parties' appeals.

1) Whatever else it might mean, the term 'politics' "implies the pursuit of policy - i.e. a somehow interconnected sequence of projects of action" (Seliger, 1976: 99) bearing on the conscious shaping of social change, i.e. on whether "certain forms of social organization will be defended, abolished, reconstructed or modified" (Seliger, 1976: 99). This being the case, parties, as organized groups for the pursuit of policy are bound to have ideologies as I have defined the term. This "must be so because there are no policies which are conceived and executed without some relation to ideals that embody moral judgements in favour of the justification, emendation or condemnation of a given order" (Seliger, 1976: 99).

To give force to my argument it will be worth while setting out, briefly and by way of example, the system of beliefs that constitutes the ideology of the Labour Party. Since - as has been pointed out time and again - "the medley of political ideas proposed and fought over within the confines of the Labour Party" (Foote, 1985: 6) stem from diverse, often conflicting sources, to identify certain common themes that nevertheless underlie the works of Labour's thinkers - themes which hang together well enough to be regarded as the network of descriptive and explanatory beliefs which
constitute the ideology of 'Labourism' - will be a particularly telling and instructive exercise.

At the centre of an ideology, I have said, lies some conception of human nature. For Labour, humanity, instead of being naturally self-regarding is naturally compassionate, social and cooperative. This nature is, however, in danger of being corrupted by the Conservative "philosophy of selfishness" (Kinnock, 1987: 3) and "devil-take-the-hindmost individualism" (Foot, 1983: 5). Humanity requires freedom in order to flourish and, as the term is understood by Labour, this requires the reduction and eventual elimination of economic inequality, for wealth allows its possessors "to buy their way into private health care and into wider housing choice"; those who have not had such "good luck [are] deprived of the right to control and influence their own destiny. Unless they have that right, real democracy and freedom must be a mirage" (Kinnock, 1979: 3). The Good Society is thus one characterised by 'social justice' and 'greater social equality', by "the better provision of services and benefits in the field of health, education, housing, transport, family allowances, unemployment benefits, pensions and so on" (Miliband, 1983: 107). But "[t]his is in no sense a 'class' proposal..." for "[t]he first principle of the Labour Party... is the securing to every member of the community... all the requisites of healthy life and worthy citizenship" (Labour and the New Social Order, p.5, my emphasis). Accordingly, Labour's view of the present world (the third element of an ideology) is that it is characterised by the absence of these things, as is shown by the "flagrant disparities of income, wealth and power" (Jenkins, 1972: 17). These pose an increasingly serious threat to social harmony. Rejecting the role cast for the working class by Marx, Labourism argues, consistently with its view of human nature, that socialism
"marks the growth of a society not the uprising of a class. The consciousness which it seeks to quicken is not of economic class solidarity but one of social unity and growth towards organic wholeness. The watchword of socialism, therefore, is not class consciousness, but, community consciousness" (MacDonald, Socialism and Society, 1908, quoted by Popester, 1976: 47). This raises - fourthly - the question of Labourism's prescriptions concerning how the good society is to be achieved. As a society matures and individuals grow wiser, "socialism... [will] gradually come to be accepted by all sane men" (Panitch, 1971: 189). Therefore, the achievement and operation of socialism is "a matter of educating people to use Parliament in behalf of economic freedom and equality; a matter, in other words, of combining the ends of socialism with the means of parliamentary democracy (Dahl, 1947: 877), for the state machine in neutral. The task for Labour's leaders is thus to "preach the principles of socialism on which the Labour Party was founded and explain the application of these principles to current social, economic and international conditions. This means a primary emphasis on putting the needs of the mass of the community before the interests of those with a monopoly hold on economic power, be they financiers, multi-national corporations or unions controlling key sectors of the labour force" (Mackintosh, 1972: 483). Extra-parliamentary, unconstitutional action is illegitimate for "government by sit-in, confrontation and defiance of the law only aids those with special positions of power in the community and is utterly at variance with the social-democratic belief that priority goes to those with a just case established by open debate and the process of representative government" (Mackintosh, 1972: 483-4).
2) If the above analysis be accepted; if, that is, it is correct to argue that ideology does in fact 'perform the function' of mobilising support for a party's standpoints among its members and activists and of underpinning the party's aims in general, then as I have said, it is reasonable to suppose that parties will also couch their appeals to the electorate in terms that are recognisably ideological. Moreover, 3) it is in the parties' interests to do so for, to the extent that ideological beliefs are not just evaluative but also descriptive and explanatory, then, since parties are dependent on the 'political market' for their survival in office, it is highly rational for them to attempt to control the terms of this dependence by manipulating popular perceptions as far as they can. To see this, consider the following example. As I suggested in the previous chapter, one of the most widely commented upon aspects of ministerial speeches, government policy pronouncements and Conservative propaganda in general from 1979, was just how successful it all was in changing popular perceptions of government responsibility for economic problems. Success in such an endeavour was of particular importance in 1983: in 1979 the Conservatives had come to office promising a conscious break with the Keynesian-corporatist style of economic management that had characterized the approaches of governments of both persuasions in the post-war period. One of the principal intellectual foundations underlying this approach was that in the techniques of demand management, governments had a set of instruments available with which they could ensure full-employment and stable prices - so much so that at a certain point it became a politicians' adage that no government could hope to win an election with unemployment much over 2 per cent. Since they had presided over the largest increase in unemployment over any four-year period since the 1930s, the Conservatives
had to make the idea that government intervention cannot produce desirable economic outcomes stick.

4) Our fourth postulate is that individual voting behaviour is an effect of the parties' appeals. While we cannot 'prove' this proposition directly, again, there are good a priori grounds for taking it to be a reasonable one. For while parties are not the only source of voters' political information and what the parties do say does not, in most cases, reach the voters directly but is usually filtered through the mass media of communications, nevertheless "most voters make their only direct political decisions" ultimately on the basis of parties' pronouncements (Budge and Farlie, 1983: 22). In other words, it is parties which set the terms of political debate: and as voters are called upon to decide not between different individual policies but between competing whole (party-defined) packages, their choices are essentially structured for them by the parties. This means that it is unreasonable to suggest that parties' appeals have no influence over voters and highly plausible-to suggest that they have quite a lot of influence.

If the above analysis is at all reasonable, it is now necessary to argue that parties do in fact appeal to the electorate in the terms in which we have suggested. To conclude this chapter we shall flesh out in a little more detail our theoretical reasons for expecting the parties to behave in the way we have suggested and then adduce empirical evidence to suggest that such expectations are fulfilled. Our theoretical expectations, as we have said, revolve around the constraints of party competition.

Budge and Farlie (1983) argue that parties' pronouncements are fruitfully seen "in terms of varying emphases on policy areas" whereby, during the course of a campaign, parties "devote most attention to the types of issue which favour themselves... and give correspondingly less attention
to issues which favour their opponents" (Budge and Farlie, 1983: 24). The rationale for such party strategies is that politicians assume that within general policy areas (e.g. taxation), electors identify the parties with particular, generally favoured, policies (e.g. reduced income tax) so that when a given area becomes salient it will attract a net inflow of votes to the party having the (generally) favoured policy in that area. It is therefore in the interests of parties to avoid mentioning policy areas which favour rivals and to stress as much as they can those favouring themselves. It is the gaps within this approach which direct attention to the role of ideology in parties' appeals.

Clearly, as Budge and Farlie recognise, parties cannot avoid all reference to areas which favour rivals: if the basic assumptions of Budge and Farlie are correct, then it will pay parties to do all they can to make those areas which favour themselves central topics of mass media discussion and comment during the course of the campaign; and, to the extent that they are successful in this rivals will have to respond if they are not to lose credibility (and thus even more votes). Budge and Farlie's image of party competition as essentially a case of parties talking "past each other" rather than engaging in "a direct confrontation of opposing policies" (1983: 24) thus needs to be toned down. However, the important question for our purposes is 'How do parties go about formulating their responses?'

Since they have policies which are favoured less than those of their rivals, the most reasonable supposition seems to be that when the relevant policy area becomes prominent, parties attempt to limit the potential damage to their standing by having recourse to exactly the sorts of ideological statement we have illustrated above. Sticking with the example of taxation: if Conservative promises to cut income tax become prominent, then a rational
strategy for Labour would be to argue for the existence of a link between tax levels and welfare-state provision, arguing that lower taxes will have to be paid for by a lower level of provision.

But apart from the question of responding to the strong points in a rival's case, as Budge and Farlie point out (1983: 24), party leaders are very well aware which policy areas favour themselves and which favour rivals, so it is reasonable to assume that they will attempt to anticipate the effects of unfavourable areas becoming prominent, by advancing counter arguments to their rivals' policies in the party manifesto. Such arguments are likely to be of two kinds: direct attacks on rivals' policies or attempts to draw attention, within the policy area, to 'problems' which their rivals have perhaps overlooked. Attempts to link tax and welfare would be an example of the first kind of argument while Budge and Farlie's advice (1983: 135-6) on how the Conservatives would most rationally deal with the area of social services constitutes an example of the second:

"...whatever has significant and continuing effects cannot be consistently ignored... Because of the large percentage of the national product consumed by [social services] as well as their immediate effects on the lives of most of the population, the Conservative party cannot avoid mentioning them: to omit them altogether might constitute a more effective way of drawing them into the election than discussing them with reference to incidental waste and inefficiencies which go some way to neutralising the pro-Labour effects they might otherwise have on voters".

Whichever kind of argument is deployed, however, it will be ideological in nature.

It is not easy to give precise, quantitative evidence for this claim. This is partly due to the sheer variety of ways in which parties attempt to communicate with electors during the course of any given campaign. For example, one can immediately think of the manifesto, press advertising, campaign speeches, television interviews, party political broadcasts and so
on. To analyse all of these even for a single campaign would be a formidable task. One is, therefore, forced to be selective while precisely stating the criteria of one's selection.

I have chosen to analyse reports from The Guardian on party leaders' pronouncements made during the course of the 1983 campaign. It seems more appropriate to analyse newspaper reports of party leaders' pronouncements rather than the pronouncements themselves, because (unless they are reported or made on television or radio) it is through the press that most electors will come into contact with them. Of course The Guardian is not very widely read as compared with other mass-circulation dailies, but in 1983 it devoted more column inches to election coverage than any of the other national dailies (Butler and Kavanagh, 1984: 180). This means that if there is any ideological content at all to leaders' pronouncements, this fact should emerge clearly from Guardian reports and to correspondingly lesser degrees for other papers depending on the extent of their election coverage. We will concentrate our attention on the three most prominent issues in the 1983 campaign.

These were: unemployment, defence and Labour's economic policy (Butler and Kavanagh, 1984; Ranney 1985) and this is reflected in The Guardian's election coverage. I examined all articles5 which reported leaders'6 pronouncements between the tenth of May (the day after the election was announced) and the seventeenth of May. The problem of unemployment was

5. Includes background articles but not evaluative material (leaders, opinion columns, diaries and letters).
6. i.e. members of Parliament of ministerial (or shadow ministerial) rank or above.
mentioned in 57 per cent of these articles as was defence policy. Labour's economic policy was mentioned in 37 per cent of the articles. Articles in which none of the three issues got a mention amounted to only 20 per cent and moreover, in the vast majority of cases, it was clear from the text that where they were mentioned they were not just peripheral aspects, but central themes of the article concerned. (Sometimes this was obvious from the article's title as in, for example: 'Hestletine attacks Foot on defence' (13.5.83), or 'Borrowing is way out of rut says Foot' (17.5.83)).

On defence, the relative amount of emphasis devoted to this topic as it emerges from The Guardian articles works in the way Budge and Farlie's theory predicts: of 17 articles mentioning defence, four mention Labour leaders' pronouncements on the topic as compared with eleven mentioning Conservative or Alliance pronouncements. (Two mention both Conservative and Labour pronouncements). Until the end of the second week of the campaign, when ambiguities in Labour's manifesto began to be noticed, the Conservative party and the press clearly believed that Labour's defence policy was one of straightforward unilateranism. Given that there was a mass of evidence showing unilaterism to be widely unpopular (Butler and and Ravanagh, 1984: 282), it was perfectly rational for Conservative strategists, in line with Budge and Farlie's theory, to try and highlight the theme. As for unemployment, this follows a similar pattern: Labour leaders' pronouncements appear in nine articles as compared with five for the Conservatives and four for the Alliance. In view of record levels of unemployment and the politicians' old adage that voters reward governments for favourable economic conditions and punish them for unfavourable ones, this pattern of emphasis was only to be expected; so again, Budge and Farlie's theory is
supported. Labour's economic policy was mentioned by Labour leaders in five articles, by Conservative leaders in three and by Alliance leaders in four.

As I have said, providing quantitative evidence for an ideological content to parties' appeals is difficult. By the nature of the case it is difficult to apply rigorous content analysis techniques; at first sight the most obvious thing to do would be to count the number of sentences or phrases that are ideological and then express these as a proportion of the non-ideological content of an article. However, very often the ideological content of a message lies not in single sentences or phrases which can be mechanically separated off from the non-ideological, but in the message as a whole. Single sentences or phrases cannot therefore be designated as ideological or non-ideological in isolation from the context in which they appear. For example, in a speech reported in The Guardian of the thirteenth of May, 1983, Michael Hestletine said: "For 40 years Michael Foot has opposed all his own leaders". On its own, this sentence is non-ideological because it carries no particular normative implication for action. However, it appeared in a speech in which Michael Hestletine was attacking Labour's defence policy and when the relevant article (which I quote in full below) is read as a whole, it is apparent that two ideological beliefs are being communicated: 1) that the banning of nuclear weapons would leave Britain vulnerable to a Soviet attack, and 2) that such a policy would cause job losses. These beliefs are clearly ideological in my terms: since hardly anybody would welcome either war with the Soviet Union or job losses if these can be avoided, the implications for defence policy are obvious.

"The Tories launched their election campaign yesterday with a powerful attack on Labour's non-nuclear defence policy. Speaking at the Scottish Tory Party Conference in Perth, the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Hestletine, singled out Mr Michael Foot for special attack."
"Labour's one-sided policies", he said, "would tip the balance of power towards the Soviet Union". It would encourage the Americans to believe that Europe will not defend itself "and thus dangerously raise the risk that the Soviet Union might be tempted towards the military adventurism in Europe that Nato stopped in the 1940s.

"Clement Atlee knew this, Harold Wilson knew this, Jim Callaghan knew this. For 40 years Michael Foot has opposed all his own leaders. He was wrong then as he is now".

Mr Hestleline said that Labour had carried its proposition to the limits of absurdity by writing to the Kremlin to ask for "a piece of paper" in support of their policy.

"The time to establish Russian intentions is before you announce that you will reduce your own defences, not afterwards.

The shrewdest, most calculating chess players in the world would know how to deal with the opponent who offered his queen defenceless and exposed.

"Labour's alternative to the policies which have kept the peace for 40 years is a non-nuclear policy under which all existing nuclear bases and weapons on British soil would be removed.

"How do they conceive that keeping the Americans out of their bases here, which are a vital and integral part of the US nuclear shield over Europe, could have any other effect than to shake Nato to its foundations?"

It was the Labour Party itself which had changed. "Year after year we have watched the hard left grasp power in Labour Party conference after Labour Party conference".

If a non-nuclear policy were adopted, he said, the job losses would be enormous in Scotland. Their policies would destroy nearly 200,000 job losses would be enormous (sic) leaving aside the cuts in the armed services.

"All those who are so free with their willingness to abandon our commitment to the Trident system, which is Polaris's successor, might spend a little of their time explaining the consequences not just for our defence policy, which is crucial, but also for the loss of jobs".

This article reveals a further interesting characteristic - both of ideology and of the Conservatives' attack on Labour: implicit in, and underpinning, the specific belief linking the possession of nuclear weapons with British security is the more general belief that the Soviet Union desires to invade the West. (Otherwise why worry that "Labour's one-sided policies", as Mr Hestleline puts it, "would tip the balance of power towards the Soviet Union"?) In a speech reported in The Guardian the day following the appearance of the above article, the Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym made the point explicit: "The starting point must be that the Soviet Union poses a
unique threat to the security of the West. We must maintain our ability to counter that threat..."

It is therefore not surprising that in replying to this attack, one argument deployed by Labour was a straightforward (if rather muted) denial of the belief underpinning the Tories’ case in the first place. The Guardian reports Michael Foot as having said in a BBC interview that:

‘... he knew enough of Russian negotiating tactics to tell when they were talking sense and to discriminate. "When the Russians say, for example, they do not want to achieve nuclear superiority over America, I believe it, yes". They knew what a crushing burden it imposed on their economy, he said’ (The Guardian, 15.5.83).

A second argument deployed by Labour involved drawing attention, along the lines suggested earlier, to problems which the Tories had overlooked, i.e. the problem of international arms control agreements. From the same article:

‘One reason why Labour opposed both cruise and Trident was that, as Nato itself said a few years ago, cruise would make verifiable arms control agreements “well nigh impossible”’.

And:

‘Deploying cruise missiles in Britain would make disarmament much more difficult to attain, he said. By adopting a unilateral policy, Britain’s example would assist in getting intelligent international negotiations going” (‘Foot warns of end to industry in Britain’, The Guardian, 14.5.83).

Each of these arguments can fairly be described as ‘ideological’ as I have defined it. I have said that ideology consists in descriptive and explanatory beliefs having normative implications for action. It is therefore basic to my understanding of ideology that values and prescriptions are not, in and of themselves, ideological. Rather, prescriptions are dependent upon ideological beliefs in the sense that people’s views on what should be done depend on their beliefs about what is and what is desirable/undesirable. For example, if a person expressed the
belief that the government should reduce immigration, we would not be at all
surprised, (given the nature of current public discussion of the issue), if
he sought to defend his view with some argument to the effect that the
presence of immigrants reduces job opportunities for native-born people. A
person who says that the government ought to reduce income tax will
probably, when pressed, seek to justify her view with some variation on the
theme that "High income tax makes people less willing to work hard". But
while prescriptions are dependent on ideological beliefs, what this last
example illustrates is that ideological beliefs tap values (in this case
'hard work'). What we showed when discussing this example earlier was that
it was by virtue of drawing on this value that the statement "High income
tax makes people less willing to work hard", could be described as having
normative implications for action. Michael Foot's argument to the effect
that Labour's defence policies would assist arms control agreements works in
a similar way: since the achievement of arms agreements is considered to be
a desirable state of affairs, linking it to "a unilateral policy" implies
that Labour's policies in this regard should be supported. (Of course while
Foot's view that "adopting a unilateral policy... would assist in getting
intelligent international negotiations going" is neither a descriptive or an
explanatory belief as it stands, it can easily be recast in these terms, for
it expresses a belief to the effect that, 'There is a positive causal
relationship between our policy and international negotiations'). The belief
that the Soviet Union poses a threat to the West implies the course of
action which Mr Pym makes explicit (i.e. that "We must maintain our ability
to counter that threat" and thus oppose Labour's policies) by drawing on the
negative evaluativeness involved in the notion of a 'threat'. And finally,
since every assertion to the effect that X is Y entails the possibility that
X may not be Y, Mr Foot's denial of Mr Pym's claim is ideological for exactly the same reason that Mr Pym's assertion is ideological.

Let me briefly describe the parties' pronouncements in the other two areas prominent in the 1983 election. On unemployment, it might have been enough for Labour to point to the facts of the government's record: the enormous increase in the level of unemployment since 1979; the government's inability to provide forecasts for future levels - and so on. However, many surveys testified to widespread acceptance of the government's claim that responsibility for this state of affairs lay elsewhere, which meant that although "[m]ost published polls showed that unemployment was easily the most important issue" (Butler and Kavanagh, 1984: 281), Labour would have to do far more to shake what it called this "mood of pessimism". So, in the same BBC interview reported above, Mr Foot astutely forged a link between unemployment and tax cuts: 'if Mrs Thatcher got unemployment up to 4 million, "you can kiss goodbye to tax cuts"'. 'Her policies needed tax increases to pay for the mass unemployment of four or even five million people, he said' (Foot says unemployment rules out Tory tax cuts', The Guardian, 16.5.83). Earlier, referring to inner city riots, Mr Foot had tried to forge a link between unemployment and crime: "If we have unemployment on this scale in the next four years, who is going to say how many Toxteths and Brixtons there are going to be"' ('Foot warns of end to industry in Britain', The Guardian, 14.5.83). Highlighting unemployment inevitably turned a spotlight on Labour's proposals to tackle it and unfortunately for the party, its rivals were successful (according to the polls) in sowing widespread doubts about their credibility. The Conservatives claimed that Labour's plans for expansion would lead to higher inflation, while Dr Owen, for the Alliance claimed that they would "create national bankruptcy within
months... There would be a run on the pound, a balance of payments collapse, and within months Mr Foot would be kneeling before the IMF to bail him out" ('Labour's £11 bn jobs plan savaged', The Guardian, 17.5.83).

Let us now turn to the proposition that parties also appeal to the electorate by attempting to make certain social identities salient rather than others.

To argue this case we must first re-emphasise the degree to which identities are bound up with wider sets of beliefs for this fact bears on the kind of evidence that can and must be adduced to show the existence of these identities. Social identities never exist 'in isolation', but both entail certain beliefs and contingently imply yet others. Some social identities, for example, are embedded in images of the entire society, as with the identity of 'citizen' or 'Briton', which tend to be found as part of "a universalistic, classless image of society, composed of individuals-citizens, whose interests are basically in harmony" (Przeworski, 1985: 101).

Similarly, to promote the identity of 'worker' is to point to the existence of a class, and hence to a grouping with particular claims. In certain cases, as in politics, this in turn tends to imply an image of society, not as a harmonious whole, but as split into classes having different, if not competing, interests.

Przeworski (1985: 101) calls these two identities and associated societal images the 'particularistic' and the 'universalistic' visions of society and argues that such 'visions' are the principal competing ones in the politics of any capitalist society. He further argues that owing to the
peculiar electoral dilemma of social-democratic parties the latter are continually forced to undertake strategic reversals in terms of the visions of society they promote:

"SPD returned to an emphasis on class in 1905; Swedish Social Democrats temporarily abandoned their attempt to become a multi-class party once in 1926 and then again in 1953; the Norwegian Labor Party emphasised its class orientation in 1918; German young socialists launched a serious attack on the Mittelklasse Strategie a decade ago; conflicts between an ouvrierist and a multi-class tendency today wrench several parties" (1985: 28).

For conservative (or bourgeois) parties it is rational—particularly when the opposing socialist party is promoting a particularist vision—to try to impose upon the electorate the universalistic vision of society (thus making salient for the voter the identity of individual citizen). The reason is that because of their de facto control over economic resources capitalists, unlike workers, are not particularly dependent on the political system for the realization of their claims; yet promotion of the particularistic vision tends to undermine the legitimacy of such claims: "to impose upon the entire society the image of a society divided into classes, each endowed with particularistic interests" involves showing "that capitalists are also

7. As a reminder, the dilemma is this: the more social-democratic parties couch their appeals in universalistic terms, the less they are able to mobilise workers, while the more they rely on the class image of society the less they are able to mobilise 'class allies'; social-democratic parties cannot win elections on the basis of workers' support alone, but the more they are able to mobilise the support of 'workers' allies', the less likely they are to be able to mobilise workers.

8. "Capitalists are able to seek the realisation of their interests in the course of everyday activity within the system of production. Capitalists continually 'vote' for allocation of societal resources as they decide to invest or not, to employ or dismiss labour, to purchase state obligations, to export or to import. By contrast, workers can process their claims only collectively and only indirectly, through organizations which are embedded in systems of representation..." (Preworski, 1985: 11).
a class, whose interests are also particularistic and opposed to other classes". Therefore, "capitalists cannot represent themselves as a class under democratic conditions and do so only in a moment of folly".

On Przeworski's account, therefore, we would expect to find that in analysing their appeals the Conservative Party consistently emphasised a universalistic vision with Labour, more schizophrenically, giving a varying amount of emphasis to the particularistic and universalistic visions - both over time and in different parts of single pronouncements (such as the manifesto).

In fact the straightforward opposition between particularistic and universalistic visions is somewhat too simple in that it combines two analytically independent dimensions. Thus an emphasis on class need not necessarily imply a conflict view of society as basically fissured; nor is there any necessary relationship between a universalistic view and a conception of society as essentially integrated. This gives us four possibilities:

**Visions of society**

The units of society

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In terms of this four-fold schema, I am suggesting that while in their pronouncements they acknowledge class, Labour leaders tend to operate with
an image of society as basically integrated and cohesive. This is due to the conditions under which parties hoping to form governments through parliamentary elections normally have to operate: in a system of parliamentary democracy, a party winning an election and thus staffing the government, will be unable to secure recognition as a legitimate government unless it recognises interest groupings - even those allied with the losing party - and unless it remains, at least to some extent, open to such groupings' views. Under such circumstances, as Panitch (1986: 57) points out, the conception of the social order a party projects must (whatever its leaders' privately-held views) essentially be one of integration. It may recognise the existence of conflict in society but it cannot suggest that this is a natural or a desirable state of affairs.

The whole area of societal images is highly problematic for the Labour Party because even though it must, at the level of leaders' pronouncements, reject the idea of class conflict, it is difficult for it to deny altogether the sheer existence of class divisions owing to its links with the trade union movement: "...trade unions are still predominantly working-class organisations which cannot deny what their members experience at their place of work... [i.e.] an individual's membership of a class in terms of his lower position in the production process" (Panitch, 1982: 57). This however leaves Labour vulnerable to the charge from the Conservatives that it is interested in only one part of the community while the Conservatives take account of the interests of the whole community when formulating their policies. We therefore expect the vision of society projected by Labour to be the one described by the second row and the second column of the above four-fold schema.
As before, a problem is to decide whose pronouncements and what pronouncements are to count in drawing conclusions about the images of society and social identities projected by a party. We decided to use the published writings of M.P.s: "These are more considered statements, less bound by the events of the day, than other forms of expression (Scarborough, 1984: 65-6) so that if the parties really do project certain images and identities over time rather than just on the odd occasion, then it should be possible to discern them in this material. And continuing with Scarborough's suggestions (although we are here carrying out a fresh analysis), we delineate the images as ideal types; that is we present our judgement of the form the writings would take were they to be condensed into a single, coherent statement.

What emerges in fact is that the Labour Party is not quite so schizophrenic relative to the Tories as Przeworski's hypothesis suggests, but nor does the universalistic-integrated vision of society projected by the Conservatives take just one form. This is because the Conservative Party houses two (not necessarily compatible) ideologies, what other writers have called the Tory and the neo-Liberal.

For the Tory, the essence of politics consists in securing order among individuals defined in terms of their community affiliations - for part of man's "essence is society": man is "a social animal who can attain his full stature only in groupings greater than himself" (Patten, 1983: 7). Of these groupings the spontaneous focus of individuals' public affections is the nation. The nation provides "the underlying unity of all classes of Englishmen, their ultimate identity of interest, their profound similarity of outlook" (Hogg, 1947: 31). Within the nation "Man is equal in two ways: he is equal to his fellows in the eyes of God and he is equal as a citizen -
one man's vote counts as much as the next man's" (Patten, 1983: 12). What is not distributed equally is ability and good fortune. This produces "social inequalities and social inequalities in turn produce a class system... Some sort of class structure is inevitable; there has been no developed society without one" (Patten, 1983: 12). Therefore, while not denying the existence of classes the Tory argues that underlying them "is both a national unity and a social unity which makes all men brothers" (Clarke, 1950: 10). This is both an empirical and a normative belief: country is the most deeply-rooted "of all the natural relationships which command affection" which means that an analysis of politics which treats as ultimate the class differences "upon which Socialists love to dwell" is necessarily "superficial" (Hogg, 1947: 32). It is a normative belief in the sense that patriotism, being "the only condition upon which democracy or any other system of free government can be made to work" - is therefore a duty. "Conservatives see in Socialist insistence on class consciousness, or loyalty to trade unionism or socialism" a divisive force which could "destroy free government" (Hogg, 1947: 34-5). The Tory, therefore, while acknowledging the sheer fact of class, argues that it is not and should not be of any importance:

"The Tory party today is anti-class, and therefore anti all self-conscious and imposed definitions of class, especially those foisted onto people by Marxist intellectuals and those which bully people into believing that they are caught up inescapably in some great struggle of interests which does not in fact exist" (Howell, 1980: 7).

When we turn to neo-Liberal ideology we find not so much a downgrading of class as its denial altogether. Unlike the Tory for whom "Man and his community are inseperable" (Waldegrave, 1978: 90), the neo-Liberal believes that the community constitutes simply a set of conditions and circumstances which each person "interprets and takes into account in making choices" (Letwin, 1978: 62). In a community of autonomous individuals, then, social
harmony is the natural consequence of each pursuing his own ends: "self-interest is as likely to be enlightened as any politically-motivated state bureaucracy" (Biffen, 1978: 159). The neo-Liberal sees two consequences following from this line of thought. One is that "self interest is the first duty which a man owes to his community" (Joseph and Sumption, 1980: 21), the second that "The function of the State is to give the fullest possible scope to the free development of the individual" (Eden, 1955: 71): "Full moral growth of the individual only arises when he is able to make his own decisions on how he will educate his children, where he will live, the schemes of health, pensions and insurance provision he will take up for his family" (Boyson, 1978: 187). Property ownership and the "hope of substantial reward" (Joseph, 1976: 61) are "rational ends in themselves" (Joseph, 1976: 69). Their unfettered operation will of course lead to inequality; but this is "Indispensable to freedom" and individuality - "The fewer the individuals with independent resources the greater the dominance of government" (Joseph, 1976: 78) - and has nothing to do with class - which is merely a residue "from the bitternesses and antiquities of the nineteenth century" (Peyton, 1978: 173) - for a free society is an open and mobile society.

For Labour, (as we have seen), humanity, instead of being naturally self-regarding is naturally compassionate, social and cooperative. This nature is, however, in danger of being corrupted by the Conservative "philosophy of selfishness" (Kinnock, 1987: 3) and "devil-take-the-hindmost individualism" (Foot, 1983: 5). Therefore, it is the task of the Labour Party, "In place of the politics of envy, [to] put the politics of compassion; in place of the politics of cupidity, the politics of justice; in place of the politics of opportunism, the politics of principle" (Jenkins, 1972: 22). For there are structural impediments to each person's
realizing himself fully and no person has 'freedom' in any practical sense who is subject to economic deprivation: wealth allows its possessors "to buy their way into privileged education, into private health care and into wider housing choice"; those who have not had such "good luck [are] deprived of the right to control and influence their own destiny. Unless they have that right, real democracy and freedom must be a mirage" (Kinnock, 1979: 3). Class differences, which are grounded in inequality in the distribution of wealth, not only deny the reality of freedom, they threaten social harmony by creating "feelings of frustration, envy and resentment" (Crosland, 1964: 125) which lead to "collective manifestations of discontent" constituting "a direct incitement to social antagonism" (Crosland, 1964: 135). In a world in which the traditional bonds of habit, status and deference are rapidly dissolving, flagrant disparities of income, wealth and power... pose an increasingly ominous threat to social peace" (Jenkins, 1972: 17), for "the profit motive creates a selfish, violent society" (Heffer, 1972: 386). Such a situation demands determined government intervention, for the manifest unfairness which still disfigures society, "without constant correction, feeds strongly upon itself" (Jenkins, 1972: 12). The image of society projected by Labour, then, is one which, while highlighting the injustices of class, sees society as basically integrated: "Sceptical of the Marxist doctrine of inherent conflict, the Labour Party has tenaciously assumed that British people can be persuaded by an act of collective conscience to subject economic power to public authority and to civilise the conflict inherent in social change" (Crosman, 1963: 56).

6.5 Summary

Set out schematically, in this chapter we have argued the following: 1) Human thinking is rooted in humanity's need to master the world. This being
so, inherent in politics as a particular kind of practice is ideology as a particular kind of thinking: having to do with the conscious shaping of social change, political activity is guided by sets of ideas and beliefs embodying normative judgements about whether existing arrangements should be abolished, defended, reconstructed or modified. Ideologies are descriptive and explanatory beliefs having normative implications for action. Their effect is thus to mobilize support for given standpoints and underpin the aims of political groups. However, 2) individuals' ideological beliefs both depend on and influence the social identities they accept for themselves: rejection of the identity of 'Christian' is likely to undermine a belief in God, just as rejection of a belief in God reduces the likelihood that one will continue to think of oneself as a Christian. 3) Parties appeal to the electorate in ideological terms and by attempting to make salient certain social identities rather than others. 4) Because this is so, it would be injudicious to assume that such factors have little or no role to play in electoral choice.

An analysis of the nature and extent of this role constitutes the subject-matter of the next three chapters.
CHAPTER 7: The data

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we set out what we understand by ideology and the grounds on which we think it may influence voting. These grounds amounted to the claim that the parties' appeals are to, to a large extent, couched in ideological terms, something which in its turn was seen as being a product of the constraints of party competition. In this chapter we describe the nature of the evidence we shall bring to bear to show that ideology does in fact influence voting.

7.2 The data

The data we have used is drawn from the British Election Study survey (BES) for the General Election of 1983 and from the British Social Attitudes survey (BSA) for 1985. We have based our analysis on these data sets for both practical and theoretical reasons. As far as the first is concerned, at the time the bulk of the research was undertaken (between 1985 and 1988), 1983 was the most recent year for which BES data was available. Data for previous elections could also have been analysed, but this would have made the task of operationalizing class even more time-consuming than it already was. Of course the peculiarities of any one single election can always affect one's results, but as explained in our concluding chapter, we actually feel that the 1983 data provide the opportunity for a rather severe

1. As explained in section 7.5, our operationalization is based on the 1980 Classification of Occupations - which can be applied to both our data sets: analysis of data prior to 1983 requires a separate class operationalisation in terms of the 1970 Classification.
test of our hypotheses and that in any event, whatever disturbing effects there might be are to some extent controlled for by our simultaneous analysis of the BSA data. 'British Social Attitudes' is an annual, national, random-sample survey organised under the auspices of Community and Planning Research and having as its aim the measurement and explanation of stability or change in British public attitudes, values and beliefs. Inclusion of the BSA data allows us to test for the influence of parties' ideological appeals in a somewhat more rigorous fashion than would have been permitted by inclusion of the conventional election-study data alone. For if parties' ideological appeals have any lasting effect on allegiances, then this should be apparent in non-election years as well as in the immediate aftermath of campaigns (which is when the election surveys are taken).

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the main items and indices to be employed in the analysis reported in the following two chapters. In choosing items from our data set our principal problem was of course to find items suitable for the measurement of our independent variable, 'ideology'. This follows from the problem our study is addressed to - 'Under what conditions will the middle class vote Labour?' - and the specific hypothesis we think can throw light on it: that the more voters hold ideological beliefs which are favourable to Labour, the more likely they are to support the party. The decision as to what constitute the most appropriate indicators of ideology can only be made on the basis of a detailed conceptual analysis of what exactly is entailed by our theoretical definition.

7.3 Indicators of ideology

This, it will be remembered, was that ideology consists of descriptive and explanatory beliefs having normative implications for action. There are
two major components to this definition - ideology as descriptive and
exploratory beliefs and ideology as beliefs having normative implications
for action - and we shall deal with each of them in turn.

As far as the first component is concerned, we believe that it is
possible to construct a typology of three kinds of belief. Rokeach (1969: 113) has defined a belief as "any simple proposition, conscious or
unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being
preceded by the phrase, 'I believe that...'" A descriptive belief then
becomes a proposition whose content describes "the object of belief as true
or false, correct or incorrect"; for example, 'The sun rises in the east'.

This allows us to distinguish clearly descriptive beliefs from two other
basic kinds of belief: those that are wholly evaluative and those that are
wholly prescriptive.

Evaluative beliefs are ones which describe their objects as in some way
good or bad. An example would be, 'I believe that Labour's social policies
are atrocious'. That this sentence evaluates 'Labour's housing policies' as
something bad, and not just in the subjective estimation of the person
uttering it, becomes apparent when one reflects that evaluative terms are,
as I said in the previous chapter, terms "upon whose meaning or significance
all users of the English language must agree if they are to be able to
communicate with one another, e.g. all users of English must agree that
atrocities is something bad, that people of good will is something favourable,
and so on, if they are to communicate" (Osgood, Saporta and Nunnally, 1956: 47).

Prescriptive beliefs are ones which advocate a course of action or state
of existence as being desirable or undesirable. Clear examples (drawn from
the 1983 BES data) would be, 'I believe that "people who break the law
should be given stiffer sentences" (q42e), or 'I believe the government should "give workers more say in running the places where they work" (q40b).

Given this three-fold classification of types of belief, then, our first task was to 'weed out' all those items embodying beliefs which were either wholly evaluative or wholly prescriptive in nature. As regards the latter type, in most cases this was no problem, although in a few cases some careful thought was required. Thus, items of the 'government should', 'people should' etc. variety were particularly numerous in the data sets and quickly ruled out. Another set of questions asked respondents to say whether they thought a number of social changes had "gone too far", "not gone far enough" or were "about right". We reasoned that a person who replied that, e.g. "government spending on education" had "not gone far enough" (q45d) was clearly advocating more spending, so these questions were ruled out too. A third set of questions asked respondents to choose from among a number of government actions those that seemed "most desirable" to them. These questions could almost seem evaluative in nature, for to choose e.g. "maintaining order in the nation" (q22) as the most desirable action is presumably also to evaluate it as something good. On reflection, however, it can be seen that this is not necessarily the case, for the desirable-undesirable, good-bad dimensions need not coincide: a course of action or a state of existence can be thought to be desirable or undesirable either in and of itself, or because of its instrumental value. This is most easily seen if we refer to the example of "stiffer sentences" (q42e). A person who believes that it is desirable that "people who break the law be given stiffer sentences" may do so not because s/he believes 'stiffer-sentence-giving' to be something good, but because s/he sees it as a necessary evil
for (say), the maintenance of public order. However this may be, this third kind of question was also excluded on the grounds that it was asking respondents to advocate courses of action as desirable and was therefore prescriptive in nature.

The problem then became how to identify items tapping specifically ideological beliefs. I have argued that the distinctive feature of ideological concepts is that they fuse the evaluative and the descriptive. On this basis we arrived at our operational criteria for identifying the ideological items by means of the following process of reasoning. Consider the following items drawn from our data sets:

1) "Please look at this card. People who are convinced that we should nationalize many more private companies will put a tick in the last box on the left, while those who are convinced that we should sell off many more nationalized industries will put a tick in the last box on the right... people who hold views that come somewhere between these two positions will tick a box somewhere [in the middle]... First the Conservative Party. [Please] put a tick in the box that you think comes closest to the views of the Conservative Party. Now... please put a tick in the box that you think comes closest to the views of the Labour Party" (BES, 1983, q.36b/c).

2) "On the whole, do you think the Conservative government handled the Falklands dispute very well, fairly well, not very well, or not at all well?" (BES, 1983, q.25a).

3) "Benefits for the unemployed... discourage people from finding jobs" (Agree/disagree?) (BSA, 1985, q.72).

The first item simply asks the respondent to indicate her perception of the relative positions of the two parties. It asks her to express a belief that is wholly descriptive in nature inasmuch as it invokes no value and has zero evaluativeness. The second item, on the other hand, asks the respondent to express a belief that is wholly evaluative in nature in the sense that the belief makes no claims for itself over and above what it is: it is nothing more than a value judgement, for to handle something 'well' means
precisely to hand something laudably. The third item is different, for it asks the respondent to agree or disagree with what at first sight appears to be nothing more than a simple assertion about the state of the world — about what exists as a matter of demonstrable fact. But the assertion is more than just this, for to suggest that benefits discourage people from looking for work is also to express an unfavourable view of benefits.

Now consider the second part of our definition of an ideological belief, namely, that it is a belief having normative implications for action. It must first of all be noted that all beliefs are predispositions to action, i.e. they induce action in appropriate circumstances. While this is obvious in the case of evaluative and prescriptive beliefs, it even holds for descriptive beliefs which have no evaluative or prescriptive content whatsoever:

"Consider, for example, my belief, 'Columbus discovered America in 1492'. The behavioral component of this predisposition may remain unactivated until I am one day leafing through two history books to decide which one to buy for my young son. One gives the date as 1492 and the other as 1482. My belief will predispose me, other things equal, to choose the one giving the 1492 date. I am 'pro' the 1492-book, and 'con' the 1482-book" (Rokeach, 1969: 114).

But while all beliefs lead to some action when they are suitably activated, not all beliefs imply action: in and of itself, 'Columbus discovered America in 1492' tells me absolutely nothing about how to act; it only tells me how to act when it is combined with particular circumstances. By contrast, descriptive beliefs which are ideological, point to action independently of the specification of any particular circumstances. This they do by invoking a value as part of their content. By a 'value' I mean, following Rokeach (1969: 124), an abstract ideal, positive or negative, pertaining to modes of conduct or terminal goals — what Lovejoy (1950) calls generalized adjectival and terminal values. Some examples of ideal modes of conduct are
to seek truth and beauty, to be clean and orderly, to behave with sincerity, justice, reason, compassion, humility, respect, honour and loyalty. Some examples of ideal goals or end-states are security, happiness, freedom, equality, ecstasy, fame, power and states of grace and salvation. Consider the descriptive belief, "Large numbers of people these days falsely claim benefits" (BSA, 1985, q.71a). This suggests action in and of itself - that something should be done to stop the false claiming of benefits' (e.g., one could either argue that the claiming of benefits should be more tightly controlled or (say) that the motivation to claim falsely can be eliminated by raising living standards among the population of potential claimants). The belief has this effect by invoking the negative value of falsity.

We thus arrive at the position that an ideological belief can be operationally defined in terms of its conformity to the following criteria:

1) that it is a descriptive belief;

2) that it invokes a (positive or negative, adjectival or terminal) value as part of its content.

Thus, 'The sun rises in the east' is not an ideological belief, "Benefits for the unemployed... discourage people from finding jobs" (BSA, 1985, q.72), is: both are descriptive; the first however, invokes no value and has zero evaluativeness, whereas the second evokes the negative value of 'discouragement' and evaluates negatively 'benefits for the unemployed'.

While an ideological belief's implying some kind of action ('that something should be done about it') is independent of circumstances, the particular course of action implied by an ideological belief does depend on circumstances. Therefore, no general rules can be laid down concerning the specific courses of action implied by ideological beliefs other than the following: in the context of an election, for the ordinary voter, the
problem is to decide which party to vote for. The relevant course of action implied by the beliefs s/he holds is therefore party choice. The impact of these beliefs on the direction of choice depends on what the parties are saying and offering. So, to give a simple example, in an election in which the Conservatives are promising to reduce income tax, an elector who holds the belief that "High income tax makes people less willing to work hard" (BES, 1983 q.34a) is more likely to vote Conservative than one who does not subscribe to the belief. Or - to give another example - a person who in 1983 agreed that "If you want to cut crime, cut unemployment" (BES, 1983 q.42a) is expected to be more likely to vote Labour at that election than one disagreeing with the statement, for as we saw in the previous chapter, part of Labour's 'campaign message' was precisely that the two were related.

7.4 Ideology indices

As described in the next chapter, as well as being measured by single items which conform to the criteria we have arrived at on the basis of the above conceptual analysis, ideology (or what I shall call 'ideological closeness' to a party) is also measured in terms of two indices. These indices simply assign a score to respondents according to the number of items they are willing to endorse, and are thus intended to show respondents' composite positions in terms of various individual items taken together. As always in these cases, a major problem is to decide where along the index to place the dividing lines. Unless the criteria for such placement are explicitly stated, results obtained with the index can mislead, as is the case, for example, when percentage differences (Gaifman, 1969: 427-37) are employed as measures of association. Two (related) problems arise here: one can usually increase the apparent impact of a index by disaggregating it or increasing the number of its categories; this is
because, as explained by Galtung, percentage differences are computed for the categories that correspond to the extreme values of the independent variable. For the same reason, in analysing (as we shall want to do) the relative importance of two independent variables, the one with the larger number of categories has a built-in advantage so that any comparison between the two may not be particularly meaningful.

We decided to divide our indices into three categories in such a way that as near as possible to a third of respondents fell into each category. Trichotomizing the indices seemed to be the best (or at least, the least unsatisfactory) procedure because of the line of reasoning advanced by Galtung (1969: 391): "First of all, with two values only, it is impossible to know whether a positive correlation between x and y is of the first, second, or third of the following types:"

A

B

C
There may be a tremendous difference in interpretation, as we can see from a simple example: the horizontal axis represents ideology from 'left' to 'right', the vertical axis represents proportion voting Conservative. "Dichotomies would have blurred the differences between these diagrams completely" (Galtung, 1969: 391). As regards a possible division into more than three categories, not only may it be true that social science theory is at present unable to discriminate effectively "between all the different shapes that can emerge from an analysis based on more than three values of the variables" (Galtung, 1969: 391), but, as explained above, we did not want to advantage ideology unduly in a comparison with other variables that could not take on as many possible values. We decided that the three categories should be of approximately equal size for two reasons: one was to guard against the possibility of getting such small numbers in certain categories that comparisons across the categories (e.g. in the proportions voting for a given party) turned out to be statistically meaningless. A second reason is that we need "a simple and parsimonious principle that does not tempt us to fix the cutting points so that higher correlations are obtained" (Galtung, 1969: 392).

Such a frankly empiricist approach is subject to a number of objections. Since these are rather detailed, instead of interrupting the flow of the discussion at this point, I have chosen to confront them at some length elsewhere: the reader should refer to appendix 4 for this discussion.

7.5 Operationalizing Class

The class model we have chosen to work with will be operationalized on the basis of responses to appropriate questions asked in the 1983 BES survey and the BSA survey for 1985. Each of these data sets contains codes giving, for each respondent, his or her Occupation and Employment Status (ES) in

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terms of the 1980 Classification of Occupations (OPCS). In each case, these two basic pieces of information are then combined to derive class by reference to a look-up table.

The 'contents' of the middle- and working-class categories were described in theoretical terms in chapter 2. Operationally, the classes correspond to the schema presented by Goldthorpe in his Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain (1980). Goldthorpe's schema has seven classes. What I am calling the middle class consists of Goldthorpe's classes I and II, while the working class consists of his classes VI and VII.

Having discussed the criteria by which we will choose items for the measurement of ideology, described how we shall divide up our 'ideology indices' and how we shall operationalize class, we are ready to proceed to the data analysis. The results of this analysis constitute the raw material for the discussion of the following two chapters.
CHAPTER 8: The relationship between ideology, social identities and voting

8.1 Introduction

I want to find an answer to the question, 'Under what conditions will the British middle class vote Labour?', and I have two explanatory variables: what I call 'ideology' and 'subjective identities'. So, what I am trying to find out, then, is whether the two variables I have discussed do indeed make themselves felt in party choice in general, (as theory says they should), but more particularly, given the focus of my thesis, whether they will help us to account for the likelihood of voting Labour, rather than for some other party, within the middle class.

This chapter is divided into five sections. Section 8.2 examines whether there is a raw association between 1983 vote and particular beliefs that constituted much of the substance of parties' appeals at that time. Finding that there is a positive association, the remainder of the chapter is devoted to exploring it in more detail: section 8.3 tests for an association between 'ideological closeness' and party support, while section 8.4 takes up the question of the effects of subjective identity on vote. With this analysis completed, we are then in a position to carry out the testing which is necessary to find out whether our raw associations are spurious and explicable in terms of some other factor, are independent of it, or perhaps actually explain its effects. Such testing we carry out in section 8.4 in the case of subjective identity and in our penultimate chapter in the case of ideology.
8.2 The raw (bivariate) association between 1983 vote and particular ideological beliefs.

In the British general election of 1983 the most prominent issues were unemployment, defence and Labour's economic policy. This, as I argued in Chapter 6, is reflected in the distribution of media coverage devoted to various topics, and it is also reflected in the issues the electors themselves thought were important to them in deciding about voting. Thus, for example, of the 1983 BES sample, 57 per cent mentioned unemployment or defence as being the "most important" issues in deciding about voting, while 35 per cent of the sample mentioned one of the two as being the "next most important". Fully 79 per cent rated one of these two single issues as being first or second in importance.

In response to unemployment, the Conservatives reiterated the theme which they had been constantly asserting since 1979, namely, that whether unemployment is high or not depends not on government action but on the real wage trade unionists insist upon. As well as being a natural concomitant of the New Right thinking which became increasingly influential in the party following the Conservatives' double electoral defeat in 1974, since they had presided over the largest increase in unemployment over any four-year period since the 1930s, it was highly rational for the Conservatives to insist on the idea as I remarked in Chapter 6: given that parties are dependent upon the 'political market' for their survival in office, they will obviously attempt as far as they can to control the terms of this dependence. As an attempt to reduce electoral expectations, the above idea may be seen as one important means by which the Conservatives were attempting to achieve such control. Indeed the Conservatives rejected the idea that government intervention could result in desirable economic outcomes in general, arguing...
on the contrary, that economic growth was inhibited by government intervention and in particular by public expenditure which "crowded out" employment and investment from the market sector: "Government strategies and plans cannot produce revival, nor can subsidies". "Attempting to do too much, politicians have failed to do those things which should be done... We must concentrate on what should be priorities for any government" (Conservative Manifesto, 1979). That the Conservatives had considerable success in reducing expectations in this way can be adduced from the results of opinion polls and surveys. For example, a Warplan poll in April 1981 found that "only a fifth of the public blamed the government for the high level of unemployment; most looked to the unions and the international recession as major causes" (Kavanagh, 1987: 293). A BBC Gallup survey in June 1983 found that 48 per cent of voters agreed that "Governments can't do much to create prosperity" (although this proportion subsequently fell somewhat - to 41 per cent according to an October 1985 Gallup survey).

Researchers working on the 1983 BES survey asked respondents three questions directly related to the above issues. Respondents were asked whether they thought that "British governments nowadays can do very little or quite a bit to reduce unemployment?" and to "improve the standard of living?" They were also asked whether they agreed, disagreed or were not sure about the statement that "Much of our unemployment has been caused by trade union leaders". If different parties are associated in voters' minds with different ideological appeals and if these appeals are expressed in party choice, then there should be a positive correlation between ideology and voting; in the present context we would expect those endorsing the above statements to be more likely to vote for the Conservative Party than those not endorsing the statements. This is indeed the case.
Looking at Table 8.1, we can see that in both the middle class and the working class those who believe that the government can do "very little" to reduce unemployment are much more likely to vote Conservative than those who believe that the government can do "quite a bit" and the relationship is particularly strong in the working class where the pessimists are more than twice as likely to vote for the party than are the optimists (45.4 per cent as compared with 22.6 per cent). In the middle class this particular belief has a particularly strong effect on the likelihood of voting Labour: 5.3 per cent of pessimists voted for the party as compared with 21.1 per cent of the optimists - an almost four-fold difference. It seems to be the case that if middle-class people in 1983 felt that they had little reason to support Labour on other grounds, then acceptance of the Conservatives' arguments about unemployment (and corresponding scepticism of Labour's plans) gave them virtually no grounds for supporting the party whatsoever.

Table 8.1

1983 vote by belief in governments' ability to tackle unemployment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>41.6 (197)</td>
<td>82.1 (23)</td>
<td>70.1 (192)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>37.3 (177)</td>
<td>10.7 (03)</td>
<td>24.5 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>21.1 (100)</td>
<td>7.1 (02)</td>
<td>5.5 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The party had claimed in its manifesto that it could reduce unemployment to below a million in five years.
The situation is somewhat different concerning a belief in the government's ability to improve the standard of living. Although in the expected direction, the relationship with Conservative support is weaker, and for the working-class sample chi square is not significant (table 8.2). The largest difference is again in the middle class between the extent of Labour support among optimists and pessimists (18.3 per cent as compared to 6.2 per cent, an almost three-fold difference). That this difference is larger than the corresponding difference in the working class might be explicable as follows: while confidence in the efficacy of government action simply reinforces an already-existing pro-Labour predisposition in the working-class individual, for the middle-class individual it provides a positive reason for falling in behind the self-professed party of government intervention. The generally weaker relationship between this belief and party than between the (more specific) belief in governments' ability to tackle unemployment and party is probably explicable in terms of most people's believing that living standards are at least more likely to rise with their own, rather than with one of the other parties in office. In other words, however little they may feel governments in general can do to raise living standards, it is unlikely that many voters feel that a party

### Table 8.1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Quite a bit %</th>
<th>Don't know %</th>
<th>Very Little %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>22.6 (141)</td>
<td>39.5 (15)</td>
<td>45.4 (127)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>21.6 (135)</td>
<td>23.7 (09)</td>
<td>16.4 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>55.8 (349)</td>
<td>36.8 (14)</td>
<td>18.6 (107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p < 0.0001; for W.C. p < 0.0001

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.
they don't support could do better in this respect than the one they do support as otherwise much of the rationale for going out to support their preferred party in the first place would presumably be lost. (And indeed we find that those who did not vote or voted for other than one of the three major parties are more likely to believe that the government can do little to raise living standards).  

The third question relating to the issue of responsibility for economic outcomes was the one which asked respondents to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statement that "Much of our unemployment has been caused by trade union leaders". As I have indicated, this idea was implicit in much New Right thinking, and, in view of the Conservatives' well-known hostility to the trade unions we should expect it to be strongly related to support for the party. Tables 8.3 gives the figures. Attributing responsibility for unemployment to trade union leaders is strongly related

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 8.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1983 vote by belief in governments' ability to improve living standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Quite a bit %</th>
<th>Don't know %</th>
<th>Very little %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>50.4 (278)</td>
<td>66.7 (20)</td>
<td>58.5 (113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>31.3 (173)</td>
<td>20.0 (06)</td>
<td>35.2 (58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>18.3 (101)</td>
<td>13.3 (04)</td>
<td>6.2 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

2. 74 per cent of major-party voters thought the government could do "quite a bit" to improve living standards in 1983 as compared with 69 per cent of non-voters and minor-party voters. (Chi square significant at the 5 per cent level).
TABLE 8.2 (continued)

Working class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Quite a bit %</th>
<th>Don't know %</th>
<th>Very little %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>28.0 (203)</td>
<td>36.1 (13)</td>
<td>37.2 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>20.6 (149)</td>
<td>16.7 (06)</td>
<td>18.9 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>51.4 (373)</td>
<td>47.2 (17)</td>
<td>43.9 (79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p < 0.001; for W.C. p > 0.1
Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

...to Conservative voting in both the middle and the working class and as before, within classes the impact is greatest on the likelihood of voting for the party (Labour or Conservative) with minority support within the class.

As we saw in chapter 6, in 1983, Labour based its non-nuclear defence policy on the argument that Britain's possession of nuclear weapons constituted a threat to peace rather than helping to maintain it. Labour also attempted to shake widespread resignation concerning unemployment levels by trying to create a link between the latter and a concern over crime rates. Accordingly, the 1983 BES researchers asked respondents whether

TABLE 8.3

1983 vote by belief in unions' responsibility for unemployment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Not sure %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>70.9 (248)</td>
<td>48.0 (48)</td>
<td>35.6 (116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>23.1 (81)</td>
<td>38.0 (38)</td>
<td>39.3 (128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>6.0 (21)</td>
<td>14.0 (14)</td>
<td>25.2 (82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newell, James (1991), Labourism, Ideology and the British Middle Class
European University Institute

DOI: 10.2870/5299
### TABLE 8.3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Not sure %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>45.6 (186)</td>
<td>23.5 (28)</td>
<td>16.1 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>21.1 (86)</td>
<td>23.5 (28)</td>
<td>18.4 (76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>33.3 (136)</td>
<td>52.9 (63)</td>
<td>55.2 (270)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for W.C. $p < 0.0001$; for W.C. $p < 0.0001$

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

they agreed or disagreed with two propositions central to Labour's campaign:

"Having nuclear weapons makes Britain a less safe place to live".

"If you want to cut crime, cut unemployment".

Exactly as before, we find that there is a positive relationship between ideology and voting - in the present case between agreeing with Labour's arguments and support for that party. In both the middle and the working class, those agreeing with the statements are more likely to vote Labour than those disagreeing (tables 8.4 and 8.5). Again, we find that within a given class agreeing or disagreeing with particular statements has a much larger impact on the likelihood of 'class deviant' voting than on 'class congruent' voting. Thus, while agreeing rather than disagreeing with Labour's position on nuclear weapons increases the likelihood of support for the party almost five times within the middle class, within the working class, the same effect is less than two-fold (71.8 per cent of those agreeing with Labour's position supported the party as compared with 38.7 per cent of those disagreeing). Similarly, while disagreeing with Labour's position on the relationship between unemployment and crime increases the likelihood of a Conservative vote by about 50 per cent within the working class (39.2 per cent of those disagreeing with Labour's position support the
Conservatives as compared with 26.1 per cent of the 'agrees'), within the same class, agreeing rather than disagreeing with Labour's position increases the likelihood of support for the party from 46.6 per cent to only 52.0 per cent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Safer %</th>
<th>Don't know %</th>
<th>Less safe %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>65.1 (110)</td>
<td>51.2 (42)</td>
<td>24.0 (49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>27.3 (130)</td>
<td>37.8 (31)</td>
<td>41.2 (84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>7.6 (36)</td>
<td>11.0 (09)</td>
<td>34.8 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>476</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Working class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Safer %</th>
<th>Don't know %</th>
<th>Less safe %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>39.2 (224)</td>
<td>22.4 (15)</td>
<td>14.0 (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>22.1 (126)</td>
<td>28.4 (19)</td>
<td>14.3 (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>38.7 (221)</td>
<td>49.3 (33)</td>
<td>71.8 (216)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>571</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p < 0.0001; for W.C. p < 0.0001

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

A convenient way of summarizing the differential impact of ideological beliefs on 'class-deviant' as opposed to 'class-congruent' voting is by a table of odds ratios (see appendix 2). The larger the odds ratio, the larger the impact. Take the issue of governments' ability to reduce unemployment for example: Within the middle class, to agree with Labour's position
TABLE 8.5
1983 vote by belief in a relationship between unemployment and crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Not sure %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>45.6 (241)</td>
<td>60.3 (35)</td>
<td>71.4 (132)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>36.2 (191)</td>
<td>31.0 (13)</td>
<td>20.0 (37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>18.2 (96)</td>
<td>8.6 (5)</td>
<td>3.6 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Working class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>Not sure %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>26.1 (173)</td>
<td>38.9 (28)</td>
<td>39.2 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>22.0 (146)</td>
<td>20.3 (15)</td>
<td>14.2 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>52.0 (345)</td>
<td>40.3 (29)</td>
<td>46.6 (95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p < 0.0001; for W.C. p < 0.01
Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

Increases the likelihood of supporting the party rather than some other party more than agreeing with the Conservatives' position increases likelihood of support for that party; within the working class on the other hand, the opposite relationship holds. Looking at table 8.6 we can see that in almost every case the effect of ideological beliefs is greater on 'class-deviant' than on 'class-congruent' voting. Thus in all cases but one, the odds ratios (showing the impact of agreeing with a party's position) are larger for middle-class Labour and working-class Conservative support than for middle-class Conservative and working-class Labour support.

All this suggests that within any given class ideological beliefs are a more essential underpinning of support for the 'class deviant' party than of support for the party having the largest share of support. In other words, while disagreeing with the party having the largest share of support within
TABLE 8.6
Odds ratios for influence of beliefs on likelihood of support for Labour and Conservatives within middle and working classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can governments do very little or quite a bit to reduce unemployment?</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>*4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*2.86</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can governments do very little or quite a bit to improve living</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>*3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standards?</td>
<td>*1.44</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much unemployment has been caused by trade union leaders</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>*8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*4.2</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear weapons makes Britain a less safe place to live</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>*6.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*4.06</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you want to cut crime, cut unemployment</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*1.86</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note on how to read the table: the figures in the table show the relative effect of agreeing with the two parties' positions on support for each party. Take the belief concerning governments' ability to take unemployment (first row of table): among M.C. people who thought the government could do very little, the odds of voting Conservative rather than Labour or Alliance in 1983 were 192 : 82 (from table 8.1), while the corresponding odds among M.C. people who thought the government could do quite a bit were 197 : 277. The ratio of these odds works out at 3.3 : 1 - which is the figure given in the table. Performing the same calculation for the odds of voting Labour rather than some other party among M.C. people gives a figure of 1.6 : 1. We can therefore conclude that within the M.C., agreeing with Labour on unemployment increases the likelihood of supporting the party rather than some other party more than agreeing with the Tories increases the likelihood that one will support that party.

Your class may not be sufficient to make you abandon the party, being in positive agreement with the 'opposite-class party' is relatively more essential to induce you to support the party. The principal effect of ideology thus seems to be that it overrides other, class-specific, factors rather than being a strong determinant in its own right.

8.3 An index of 'ideological closeness'

To examine the relative impact of ideology further, it will be useful to construct an 'ideology index' in terms of which each respondent is given a score reflecting the number of items he or she is willing to endorse. In
this way we can get an idea of the extent to which individuals' support for a given party is determined by their overall degree of 'ideological closeness' to that party. The items included in the index are the ones we have analysed above plus the item, "High income tax makes people less willing to work hard". The items are set out below with the Conservative mode of response in parentheses:

"British governments nowadays can do very little to reduce unemployment" (Agree).

"British governments nowadays can do very little to improve the standard of living" (Agree).

"Much of our unemployment has been caused by trade union leaders" (Agree).

"Having nuclear weapons makes Britain a less safe place to live" (Disagree).

"If you want to cut crime, cut unemployment" (Disagree)

"High income tax makes people less willing to work hard" (Agree).

I should emphasise that while the above statements constitute the items in what I am choosing to call an 'ideology index', the latter is not intended to be an attitude scale in the conventional sense. Attitude scales attempt to combine individuals' responses to a number of particular attitude statements in order to place people on a continuum representing a more general attitude such as authoritarianism or radicalism, for example. This means that adequate steps must be taken to ensure unidimensionality of the scale, or in other words, to ensure reasonable confidence that the scale items successfully tap the one underlying attitude of interest rather than a number of different attitudes.
These considerations are not particularly relevant in the present context, however. That the above items really do measure 'ideological closeness' is true in virtue of how we have defined the concept. The fact that we cannot demonstrate that ideological closeness is a single continuum, does not invalidate its utility for we regard ideological beliefs as being 'primary' in the sense that other kinds of belief are dependent on the former rather than the other way round. (Ideological beliefs combine descriptive and evaluative components; therefore prescriptive beliefs, for instance, are dependent on them in the sense that one's beliefs about what ought to be done are based on his beliefs about what is and what is desirable). This being so, we would not even know what some underlying single dimension, one even more fundamental than the particular items making up our index of ideological closeness, might actually be. 3

We have already seen that there is a (varying) degree of association between particular ideological beliefs and party support. We think that the ideology index provides a better guide to the impact of ideology on voting

3. Factor analysis of the six ideology items suggested that they were two-dimensional:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor loadings for ideology items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain is safer with nuclear missiles</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade union leaders cause unemployment</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High tax makes people less willing to work hard</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments can do little to reduce unemployment</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments can do little to raise living standards</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced unemployment cuts crime</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total variance explained, 48.2 per cent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Varimax rotated factor loadings from principal factoring with iterations with communality estimates in the main diagonal.
for whereas each single item refers to simple agreement or disagreement with given ideological positions, the ideology index is intended to take account of the composite effect of a respondent's positions on all the items taken together. In this way the effects of one-sided responses ought to be reduced.\(^4\) Armed with this index we can assess the effect of ideology relative to other factors in the determination of electoral behaviour. In addition we want to examine, as we shall do in the following chapter, the way in which the effects of ideology are mediated through structural channels, that is to say its origins; in the following section we shall examine an important concomitant.\(^5\) But first we examine evidence concerning the uncontrolled influence of ideological closeness.

If electors identify the two major parties ideologically and if electors express their own ideological views in party choice, then there should be a positive correlation between our ideology index and voting. This is indeed the case. In both the middle and working classes those who are ideologically closer to Labour (i.e. score low on the index) are disproportionately Labour in terms of their reported vote at the 1983 general election. Likewise those

---

4. The degree of association between vote and particular ideological beliefs considered in isolation can hardly be taken as a reliable index of the impact of ideology on party support since some voters will be out of line with their party on some one particular belief, while agreeing on all the rest. e.g. in 1983 there were undoubtedly some Conservatives in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

5. For each item the Conservative mode of response scored 2, the Labour mode of response 0, and don't know 1. For reasons explained in chapter 7, and dealt with at length in appendix 4, the index was dichotomized in such a way that approximately a third of respondents fell into each category. This gave us the following cutting points: 0 - 4 = Labour; 5 - 6 = Intermediate; 7 - 12 = Conservative.
who are ideologically closer to the Conservatives (i.e. score high on the index) are disproportionately likely to support that party (see table 8.7).

To get some idea of the strength of the relationship between ideology and vote we calculated Goodman and Kruskal's Tau. While bearing in mind that statistical 'explanation' and theoretical explanation are not the same thing, Tau has the appealing property that its value has an intuitively graspable meaning in that it can be interpreted as the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that is 'explained' by the independent variable (Reynolds, 1977: 52-55). Taking only Labour and Conservative voters in each class and working on standardized data (to avoid the confounding effects of skewed marginal distributions), 6 gives Taus of 0.194 for the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 8.7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideological closeness, class and 1983 vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Working class | Ideology score | Average per cent |
| Vote | Con % | Int % | Lab % | |
| Conservative | 52.2 (141) | 31.7 (96) | 12.4 (46) | 30.3 |
| Alliance | 16.3 (44) | 24.8 (75) | 19.1 (71) | 20.1 |
| Labour | 31.5 (85) | 43.6 (132) | 68.5 (251) | 49.3 |
| Total % | 100.0 | 100.1 | 100.0 |
| N | 270 | 303 | 371 |

6. The categories of the independent variable were percentaged.
middle class and 0.159 for the working class. These figures are higher than the much smaller values which are obtained when Alliance voters are included and the analysis repeated on the resulting 3 x 3 tables. This is what one would expect, however: since there is more 'ideological distance' between the Conservative and Labour Parties than between either of them and the Alliance, ideology discriminates more between the likelihood of Conservative or Labour voting at given 'ideological levels' than between voting for one or other of the three parties.

The relative unimportance of ideology as a determinant of vote within the working class is what one would expect if widely accepted explanations for the steady erosion of working-class Labour support over the past few decades are to be believed. According to these explanations, since the 1950s, labour-intensive heavy industry has been declining and capital-intensive light industry and the service sector has been expanding. This has led to a decline in the incidence of traditional working-class communities in which Labour support was unreflecting and solidaristic rather than the reflection of agreement with the party's policies. Working-class voting is now more instrumental in nature. In these circumstances, so the argument runs, Labour has lost the 'protective clothing' (Crewe, 1982: 38) of psychological attachments among traditional supporters and the Conservative Party has managed to wean away working-class voters with policies designed to appeal to their immediate economic self-interest. The relative

_7. A calculation of odds ratios for the different parts of the 3 x 3 tables showed that the strongest relationships (in both the middle and working classes) involved those in the 'Labour' and 'Conservative' ideological categories in terms of whether they voted mostly Labour or Conservative._
unimportance of ideology as a determinant of working-class voting is, thus in fact fully compatible both with arguments that suggest a 'new instrumentalism' and with those that seek to minimise the latter, suggesting that Labour voting is still to some extent based on the influence of solidaristic pressures operating through working-class neighbourhoods.

That said, from the Tau figures, ideology would seem to be of little importance in both the working and the middle classes, for the possible values of Tau range from 0 to 1, equaling 0 in the case of statistical independence and 1 under strict, or implied perfect association (Reynolds, 177: 53). However, we would argue that on their own, the figures do not justify such an interpretation, because as we noted in our last chapter, we can alter a variable's impact simply by shifting its boundaries. (This is easily seen: if we divide the ideology index into three equal parts in terms of the range of possible scores rather than the distribution of actual replies, we obtain Taus of 0.412 for the middle class and 0.226 for the working class). Disaggregating the index completely and employing the measure suggested by Galtung (1969: 427-37) indicates that ideology accounts for 76 per cent of the variation in 1983 vote in the middle class and 69 per cent in the working class.

Several studies have suggested that Liberal voting provided "a transit point in shifts of party allegiance and also a more palatable means of protesting against one's own major party than voting for the other major party" (Jessop, 1974: 146). Jessop found in his study that there was "a tendency for middle-class 'radicals' and working-class 'traditionals' to be disproportionately Liberal in party choice". Our own study partially supports these findings in that in the middle class, at least, those tending towards the left end of the ideological index were more likely to vote
Alliance in 1983 than those tending towards the right end. We can therefore partly concur with Jessop's conclusion that as well as providing a transit point and a 'safe' protest, voting for the centre party/parties also seems to provide "a means of alleviating conflict between socio-cultural commitments and class voting norms" (Jessop, 1974: 146).

Another way of looking at the influence of ideology on partisanship is by looking at the relationship of the former to party identification. Since the latter is more stable than vote over time, evidence as to a strong relationship would suggest that the association between ideology and political behaviour is due to something more than chance. As Table 3.8 shows, the relationship is in the expected direction and is as strong as that between ideology and actual vote at the 1983 election. Thus, in the middle class, those at the Labour end of the index are just as likely to identify with Labour as with the Conservative Party while those at the Conservative end are twelve and a half times as likely to identify with the Conservatives as with Labour. Similarly, in the working class, whereas more than three quarters of those at the Labour end of the index identify with the Labour Party, only two fifths of those at the Conservative end identify with Labour.

A further indication of the effects of ideology can be discerned from data on vote changes. Although 1983 was a particularly bad election for Labour, in the middle class, of those with a Labour ideology and who reported having voted Labour in 1979, about two thirds (61 per cent) repeated their vote at the subsequent election. Among 1979 Labour voters who were intermediate on the index, however, the swing away from the party was quite obvious: 54 per cent of these individuals did not support the party again in 1983 as compared to the 46 per cent who did. Similarly, in the
working class, the swing away from Labour among 1979 Labour voters intermediate in ideology was 32 per cent; in contrast less than 16 per cent of 1979 'Labourites' at the Labour end of the index failed to remain faithful to the party in 1983.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party identification</th>
<th>Ideology score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Con %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>74.0 (202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>20.1 (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>5.9 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Con %</th>
<th>Int %</th>
<th>Lab %</th>
<th>Average per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>387</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

It is interesting to note that again in the middle class, those at the Labour end of the index in 1983 were disproportionately Alliance in party identification as well as disproportionately Labour and that in absolute terms, those at the Labour end of the index were just as likely to identify with the Alliance as with Labour. In terms of actual vote, 1983 Alliance supporters actually outstripped Labour supporters at the Labour end of the index (table 8.7). This suggests that within the middle class, ideology was principally a matter of being for or against the Conservative party, with
Labour being seen as simply one alternative means of expressing anti-Conservatism. Having particularly high opinion-poll ratings in 1983, the Alliance may well have been seen by many middle-class individuals as a 'convenient compromise' in that while not being committed to economic redistribution, it held out the promise of a measure of 'social radicalism' on matters such as civil liberties and popular participation in government. Moreover, reforms in these areas directly benefit the middle class more than the working class, as the former have more resources (in terms of better education, being more articulate and so forth) for exploiting them.

We now turn to examine the impact on the likelihood of middle-class Labour voting of ideological beliefs of a more general kind. That is to say, we have some evidence for one election that being in agreement with the specific ideological stances espoused by the party at that time was an important predictor of whether an individual would support the party or not. Some doubt about the general role and relative importance of ideology must remain, however, to the extent that we have so far largely confined our attention precisely to the impact on 1983 vote of particular items that were salient in that election. We now need to see whether there is a more general association between ideology and partisanship through an analysis of the impact (if any) on Labour support of those ideological beliefs that are not necessarily bound up with specific election appeals. To do this we examined certain questions that were put to respondents as part of the British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey for 1985. Since fieldwork for the survey took place almost two years after the 1983 election and over two years before the succeeding one, any relationship between ideology and party support that we find is unlikely to be explicable as the result of the special circumstances surrounding election campaigns (such as heightened political awareness on
the part of electors). As before, we first of all look at the influence of individual beliefs and then go on to combine them in an 'ideology index'.

Each of the questions we examined fell into one of three categories: beliefs concerning the welfare state, beliefs concerning management-worker relations in industry and beliefs concerning the influence of class background. This gave us twelve questions altogether, each of which is set out below (table 8.9). Our judgement concerning what would be the Labour mode of response is given in parentheses (the presumed Conservative mode of response being the opposite).

As before, we calculated a set of odds ratios in order to show the relative impact of the different items on the likelihood of supporting Labour (rather than some other party) and the Conservatives (rather than some other party) in the middle and working classes; and as before, in the large majority of cases, the impact is greatest on the likelihood of middle-class Labour support. Thus, the odds ratios in column two are larger than those in the remaining columns for eight of the twelve items (marked thus: *), and in ten of the twelve (marked thus: #), are larger than those in column 1. In other words, these data confirm the view that some sort of ideological commitment is of relatively greater importance in bringing about Labour support within the middle class than it is in bringing about support for other parties within the same, or the working, class.

It is true that the relationships reported in table 8.9 are generally weaker than the corresponding relationships between 1983 vote and the more specific beliefs reported in table 8.6. Thus, whereas over half of the odds ratios in the latter table are larger than 3.0, only just over a third in the former table are so. This is only to be expected, however. Not only do we expect parties' specific appeals during the course of a campaign to have
a stronger influence on support during the course of that campaign, but the
strength of the relationship we have found will also have been affected by
the particular way in which we have measured the dependent variable. This
was done through a composite item whereby respondents were regarded as
supporters of a party if they replied 'Yes' to one of the following three
questions:
- "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a supporter of any one
  political party?"
- (if no) "Do you think of yourself as a little closer to one political party
  than to the others?"
- (if no) "If there were a general election tomorrow which political party do
  you think you would be most likely to support?"
Clearly this provides a very rigorous test of an association between
ideology and party support for it requires the former to be related to the
partisan direction not only of those who do see themselves as party
supporters (those replying "Yes" to the first question above), but also of
those who appear to be completely unattached to any political party (those
replying "No" to the second question above). In fact, when we repeated the
analysis, but among those with a party identification only (that is, among
those replying "Yes" to one of the first two of the three questions) we
found that the relationship between each of our twelve indicators and party
support was stronger. In sum, we feel that thus far, the data supports with
some force the hypothesis of an ideological influence on the likelihood of
middle-class Labour support, for in effect, it appears that the relationship
holds up even when we alter not one, but two of the conditions that might be
expected to influence it; that is, we have found it to hold not only for
support at an election, but also during a 'non-election' period, and for
beliefs which - on the basis of general knowledge of the party - we might reasonably expect to be conducive to Labour support, but which have not been explicitly tied up with a specific election appeal of the party.

| TABLE 8.9 |
| Odds ratios for influence of general ideological beliefs on likelihood of support for Labour and Conservatives within middle and working classes |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cons.</td>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large numbers of people these days falsely claim benefits. (disagree)</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large numbers of people who are eligible for benefits these days fail to claim them. (agree)</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The welfare state makes people nowadays less willing to look after themselves. (disagree)</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People receiving social security are made to feel like second class citizens. (agree)</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The welfare state encourages people to stop helping each other. (disagree)</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the whole, which of these three types of family benefits most from central government support for housing: families with high incomes, families with middle incomes, families with low incomes? (families with high incomes) | 2.77 | *3.59 | 2.15 | 1.55 |

Full cooperation in firms is impossible because workers and management are really on opposite sides. (agree) | 1.47 | *1.94 | 3.10 | 3.48 |

Management will always try to get the better of employees if it gets the chance. (agree) | 2.12 | *2.82 | 3.04 | 3.04 |

Employees need strong trade unions to protect their interests. (agree) | 8.04 | *10.79 | 7.29 | 7.32 |

A person whose parents are rich has a better chance of earning a lot of money than a person whose parents are poor. (agree) | 2.67 | *3.17 | 1.48 | 1.21 |

A person whose father is a professional person has a better chance of earning a lot of money than a person whose parents are poor. (agree) | 2.38 | *2.41 | 1.66 | 1.38 |

In Britain what you achieve in life depends largely on your family background. (agree) | 3.49 | 2.65 | 1.30 | 1.29 |

Note: for an explanation of how to read these odds ratios, see the note to table 8.6. For a fully worked example, see appendix 2.
Taking six of the above fifteen items (two from each of the three broad categories),\(^8\) we constructed what for convenience we shall hitherto refer to as a 'general ideology index'. We chose six items in order to maintain some sort of comparability with the previous index and as before we

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party support</th>
<th>Ideology score</th>
<th>Average per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>76.4 41.2 26.6</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>19.1 33.3 30.3</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>4.5 25.4 43.1</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total %**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party support</th>
<th>Ideology score</th>
<th>Average per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>46.7 22.6 12.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>16.7 13.3 16.4</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>36.7 64.1 71.5</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total %**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party support</th>
<th>Ideology score</th>
<th>Average per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>100.1 100.0 100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>90 195 207</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8. The items were:
- Large numbers of people these days falsely claim benefits.
- The welfare state makes people nowadays less willing to look after themselves.
- Full cooperation in firms is impossible because workers and management are really on opposite sides.
- Employees need strong trade unions to protect their interests.
- A person whose parents are rich has a better chance of earning a lot of money than a person whose parents are poor.
- In Britain what you achieve in life depends largely on your family background.
trichotomized the range of possible scores in such a way that about a third of respondents fell into each of the three categories. From table 8.10 we can see that in both the middle and the working classes, those having sets of beliefs which we would expect (from our discussion of ideology) to induce Labour support, are in fact more likely to support the party with the same being true of the Conservative party. The correlation is stronger for the middle than for the working class. Thus whereas ideology accounts for 44 per cent of the variation in party support for the middle class, the corresponding figure for the working class is 35 per cent. 10

Summarizing the evidence we have adduced so far, we can say that ideology does appear to have a role to play in the explanation of party support and that this is particularly so in the case of party support within the middle class. We have also found that ideology's impact is strongest on the likelihood of middle-class Labour support. It is worth underlining this point with one or two additional figures, for from tables 8.7, 8.8 and 8.10, and as we have remarked in the text, it can appear that ideology is mainly about whether or not one supports the Conservatives rather than having much influence on whether or not one then supports one or another of the two (or perhaps now, three) alternatives to that party: Alliance as well as Labour support increases as we move away from the Conservatives and towards Labour in terms of ideology, and in none of the three tables just mentioned do

9. For each item the Conservative mode of response scored 2, the Labour mode of response 0, and don't know (or "neither agree nor disagree") 1. The cutting points were: 0 - 3 = Labour; 4 - 6 = Intermediate; 7 - 12 = Conservative.

10. See Galtung (1969: 427-9) for an explanation of this notion of 'accountability'.

Newell, James (1991), Labourism, Ideology and the British Middle Class European University Institute DOI: 10.2870/5299
Labour supporters constitute a majority among those most 'ideologically disposed' towards the party. The best way of summarizing this state of affairs is by saying that an 'ideological disposition' is not a sufficient condition of middle-class Labour support. But though not 'sufficient', the data clearly indicate that it is a 'necessary' condition, and moreover, that it is relatively more necessary in bringing about Labour support than it is in bringing about support for the Alliance. Looking at table 8.7, for example, we notice that moving from the Conservative to the Labour categories of the ideology index increases the proportion voting Labour in 1983 by nine times - from 3.3 per cent to 27.8 per cent - whereas the same movement increases the proportion of Alliance voters only two-fold (from 20.1 to 42.4 per cent). If, as I claim, ideology is more essential to Labour than to Alliance-voting in the middle class, then we expect that, although low in all categories, support for the former party increases more in relative terms than it does for the latter party as we move away from the Conservative end of the ideology index. This is indeed the case: in the middle class, among those at the 'Conservative' end of the index, the odds of voting Labour rather than for one of the other two major parties were 3.3: 96.7 in 1983; among those at the Labour end, the corresponding odds were 27.8: 72.2. Dividing the second set of odds by the first gives an odds ratio of 11.28. Performing a similar operation on the odds of Alliance voting gives a figure of 2.93 - all of which suggests that ideology is indeed of special importance in explaining middle-class Labour voting. Another way of bringing out the same point is by noting the far greater homogeneity of middle-class Labour voters in terms of their ideological beliefs. Thus from the figures in table 8.7 we can see that well over three quarters (70 per cent) of middle-class Labour voters in 1983 were to be
found at the Labour end of the ideology index whereas middle-class Alliance voters were much more heterogeneous, dividing in the proportions 1:1:2 over the Conservative, Intermediate and Labour ideological categories. In the working class, just over a half (54 per cent) of 1983 Labour voters were to be found in the Labour category in terms of ideology. In 1983, Labour obtained 14.5 per cent of the three-party vote within the middle class; had members of the class all been located in the Labour category of the ideology index, the party would have obtained approaching a third of the class's vote. In 1983, whereas 19.4 per cent of the three-party identifiers within the middle class identified with Labour to varying degrees, it is likely that the party would have actually obtained more identifiers than the Conservatives had an appropriate 'ideological disposition' been the norm within the class (table 8.8).

8.4 Social identities and voting behaviour

Scores of studies testify to the relationship between subjective class identity and voting behaviour. As we indicated in chapter 3, the concept of 'subjective class identity' refers to the individual's own perception of the class to which he or she belongs and it may or may not coincide with his or her 'objective' class placement according to the criteria deployed by an investigator. While we believe we are correct in arguing, as we did in chapter 6, that, in conjunction with their ideological beliefs, individuals make their voting choices on the basis of the social identities they are willing to accept for themselves, we think it likely that of these identities, class identities will be the ones most salient for most individuals and thus the most influential in their voting decisions. The reason is simply that there is a lesser degree of fragmentation in terms of other possible bases for political choice - linguistic, ethnic, religious,
etc. - which in other countries tend to cross-cut class cleavages, and that such divisions do not in any case constitute bases of diverging ideological and prescriptive stances among the parties. The point is illustrated in table 8.11 below, which shows the relative influence on the likelihood of a Labour vote of a Protestant vs. Catholic, as compared to a middle- vs. working-class, self-identity: whereas, within the (objective) middle class, 38.9 per cent of those considering themselves Catholic and working-class supported Labour, only 5.9 per cent of those having the same religious identity but seeing themselves as middle-class supported the party. Relatively and absolutely, this is a larger difference than that which obtains when we control for class identity and allow religious identity to vary. A similar relationship holds within the objective working class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective class</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective class</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious identity</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Respondents were classified as subjectively middle or working class if they spontaneously named one of the two classes in reply to the question: "Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to any particular class?" (if "Yes") "Which class is that?"

Table 8.11 confirms the consistent finding that those who hold a working-class self-image are more likely to support the Labour Party than
those who see themselves as middle class.\textsuperscript{11} That this is so is to be explained in terms of the simple fact that large proportions of the electorate continue to perceive the parties in terms of the promotion of different class interests as we shall now show. The suggestion that the possession of a working-class self-identity increases the likelihood of a Labour vote because the party is associated with the promotion of working-class interests is confirmed by this fact: that over time, a decline in the association between having a working-class self-image and Labour support has gone hand in hand with a decline in the proportion of those mentioning its promotion of working-class interests as a reason for liking the Labour Party. (See below, page 229). In other words, a steadily growing cynicism about Labour’s ability or willingness (or both) to protect the working class, gave those who considered themselves to be working class, fewer and fewer reasons to support the party.

When asked by the investigators of the 1983 BES survey, "Which party do you think would be most likely to improve your standard of living over the next three or four years?", not surprisingly, most voters (67 per cent to be precise) named the party they reported having voted for. Any smaller proportion would have been strange indeed given the felt-emarrassment (I imagine) to most people of telling an interviewer that you voted for one party and then admitting, in effect, that you really would have been better off voting for another. Nevertheless, a significant minority, it seems, consciously did not vote for the party they thought would make them better off. Unfortunately, the 1983 questionnaire did not contain any items to

\textsuperscript{11}. For example, see Butler and Stokes, (1974), Robertson (1984)
probe whether respondents' perceptions were related to any perceived link between class and party - so that, for example, the majority of working-class Labour voters who named their own party as most likely to improve their standard of living did so because they associate it in some way with working-class interests rather than for some other reason. Some (rather dim) light can be thrown on this by introducing the questionnaire items on subjective class identity, however: if voters' responses concerning their own standard of living are influenced by beliefs associating the Conservatives and Labour with middle- and working-class interests, one would expect that: among Labour voters, larger proportions of the subjective working class will name their own party than among the subjective middle class, with the reverse relationship appearing among Conservative voters. Table 8.12 gives the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective class</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
<th>All respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective class identity</td>
<td>MC WC</td>
<td>MC WC</td>
<td>MC WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58% 64</td>
<td>86 80</td>
<td>84 81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presenting results also for the middle and working classes separately allows interesting, but otherwise hidden details to emerge. Overall, those whose subjective class identity 'agrees' with their chosen party are more likely to consider their party best at furthering their interests than those whose party and subjective class identity 'conflict'. Only among working-class Labour voters is this not true. Generally, then, the data is
consistent with the idea that people's perceptions about the parties' most likely to help them are influenced by beliefs linking parties with class interests. For example, within the Labour middle class, while 64 per cent of those who nevertheless describe themselves as working class believe their own party to be most likely to make them better off, only 58 per cent of the subjective middle class do so; and to me the most reasonable interpretation of this difference is that, being associated in voters' minds with the promotion of working-class interests, Labour is not considered a particularly good bet if one recognises one's own middle-class status. 12

At any rate, it is a pity that the 1983 survey did not carry the six questions put to respondents by previous British Election surveys, namely, "Is there anything in particular that you like/don't like about the Conservative/Labour/Liberal Party?" These questions permit a very stringent, but at the same time, highly suitable test of the hypothesis of a popular association of the Conservatives and Labour with different class interests. Since the questions are of the free-answer variety they should identify only those whose spontaneous reflection on politics includes an equation of

12. Whatever their subjective or objective class, Conservative voters are much more optimistic about what their party can do for them than are Labour voters. Undoubtedly, this has to do with the Conservatives' well-documented image of being more competent in handling the business of government than Labour (which was an important issue in the 1983 campaign in the form of charges that Labour had not thought through its reflation programme properly). The failure of the expected relationship between subjective class and party named to emerge among working-class Labour voters is odd, but to my mind reflects more the weaknesses of the data we are using than a refutation of the hypothesis linking classes and parties in voters minds. After all, the data does not give us any direct information on this but forces us to make inferences from the relationships among variables. Perhaps the terms 'middle' and 'working' class have a completely different meaning to the small number of voters in cell (5) from what the terms mean to the rest of the sample.
Labour with working-class, and the Conservatives with middle-class, interests. But of course, it does not follow that those who do not respond in these terms have no view on the matter. Consequently, whatever figures emerge for any party image, what one has is an estimate of the very least number of people thinking that way. Hence, we have a very stringent test.

"...the questions about the good and bad sides of the parties... all primarily record the views that were the most salient elements in voters' images of the parties" (Särlvik and Crewe 1983: 127). This means that we also have a very suitable test because it gives us additional information: not only can we find out who has what party image but also how salient it is.

In 1979 Särlvik and Crewe found that "49 per cent of the Labour voters gave class interests as the grounds for liking the Labour party and 40 per cent gave the same kind of reason for disliking the Conservative party" (Särlvik and Crewe 1983: 137). Labour voters who referred to class interests in reply to at least one of the two relevant questions amounted to 62 per cent. At first sight, Conservative voters were very different: only 8 per cent mentioned class interests as a reason for liking the Conservatives and only 4 per cent as a reason for disliking Labour. Those referring to class interests in reply to either or both the two relevant questions came to 11 per cent. These results broadly echoed those obtained by Butler and Stokes thirteen years previously. They found (1974: 91) that 25 per cent of their sample of middle-class Conservative voters associated the parties with different class interests as compared to 86 per cent among the Labour working class.

On their own, these figures imply that if a view of politics as the representation of differing class interests is at all widespread, it is largely confined to Labour voters, and in particular to the Labour working
class; but probing beyond these basic statistics suggests a different interpretation. In 1979, the most frequent reasons given by Conservative voters for liking their own party and disliking Labour all had to do with the Conservatives' perceived support of the free enterprise system against Labour's state control of the economy (Särlvik and Crewe 1983: 138). If we add to these those who mentioned 'nationalization' as a reason for disliking Labour and/or liking the Conservatives, Särlvik and Crewe estimate that well over 50 per cent of Conservative voters approve of their party on 'economic system' grounds while "around 60 per cent" disapprove of Labour for the same reason (Särlvik and Crewe 1983: 138). In addition, Conservatives frequently invoked their views on the trade unions when stating their grounds for liking the Conservative Party or disliking Labour. Särlvik and Crewe point out that, "Talking about the unions might be taken as just another way of talking about conflicting class interests." But so might talking about the economic system: "For example, a business man who said he liked the Conservatives because they were in favour of private enterprise would presumably not only be expressing his support for an economic philosophy; he would also have his [economic group] interests in mind" (Särlvik and Crewe 1983: 138).

In fact, the seeming reluctance of Conservatives to couch their views explicitly in the language of class is not at all surprising. For middle-class Conservatives it will to some extent reflect the fact that comment upon, or even acknowledgement of, various kinds of class differences is tabooed in middle-class circles. While for many more Conservatives it can

13. See King and Raynor (1981: 3).
plausibly be thought to reflect the influence of a traditional theme in the party's own propaganda. This, as we saw in chapter 6, in attempting to project an image of the Conservatives as a 'national' party 'above' particularistic interests, while acknowledging the sheer fact of inequality, has consistently refused to accept the suggestion that this amounts to a system of structured, i.e. class, inequality.  

That the political reflection of Conservatives (and in particular middle-class Conservatives) should be dominated by such themes is not only readily understandable, it is difficult to imagine things being otherwise. If one occupies a position of relative privilege in an economic system, one has a vested interest (both in terms of one's own individual psyche and in one's dealings with others) in refusing to admit to the operation of class forces. Talk of 'class' with its attendant notions of 'barrier' and 'cleavage' undermines the legitimacy of one's position. Hence the predominant tendency of middle-class individuals, when pressed on the matter, to describe society in 'ladder' terms - as a continuous hierarchy of positions with differing rewards (Lockwood, 1966).  

The convenient thing about ladder imagery is that to get to the top of a ladder you have to have passed over lower rungs in order to get there. Differential privilege can, therefore, be thought of as the just rewards of those who have put in the effort necessary to make the climb.

14. See McKenzie and Silver, 1968, chapter 1 for a survey of Conservative propaganda since 1867.

15. But see Roberts et al. (1977: 156-60) who present contrary evidence.
Thus, remembering what we said above about the concept of salience, when
respondents do not spontaneously volunteer to a survey interviewer an image
of politics as the representation of class interests, we should not naively
assume that this is good evidence that they do not in fact think in such
terms. In a society such as Britain, class differences are immediately and
pervasively visible in myriad subtle ways, from dress, speech and leisure
habits to patterns of residential segregation. That even those who
vigorously deny it do not see their world to some extent in class terms
seems impossible to believe. So my view would be that those Conservatives
for whom an 'economic system-' or 'nationalization-view' of politics appears
most salient can with good reason be thought of as in fact expressing a
class view of politics - only in a more covert, more 'acceptable' way.

Moving to the electorate as a whole, Sælvik and Crewe (1983: 129) found
that in 1979, in response to the like/dislike questions, 25 per cent of
their sample spoke approvingly of Labour for reasons which in some way
related the party to the defence of working-class interests. Asking
identical questions of their samples in 1964, 1966 and 1970, Butler and
Stokes (1974: 342) found that the same proportions went from 89 to 78 to 69
per cent over the three samples. Thus, even though the classification of
responses depended on the (subjective) assessments of the investigators, the
inference to be drawn seems clear: that while during the period of the 1964-
70 Labour government there was a steadily growing cynicism about Labour's
ability or willingness (or both) to protect the working class, by the end of
the 70s this had turned into widespread, if not total, disbelief. Plausible
reasons to account for this are not difficult to find: double-digit
inflation together with record levels of unemployment and the public
expenditure cuts following the 1976 sterling crisis would be one set of
factors, as would various deflationary measures be another for the 1960s.
That such 'class-interests' views of politics can explain the association
between a working-class identity and Labour-voting, as we argued above, is
suggested by the fact that at the same time as such views have declined, so
has the association between working-class identity and Labour-voting itself:
in 1963, 72 per cent of those describing themselves as working-class
identified with Labour (Butler and Stokes, 1974: 77); in 1974 and 1979, 64
and 56 per cent, respectively, did so. 16

In chapter 6, we argued on theoretical grounds that there was likely to
be reciprocal influence between social identities and ideological beliefs.
As a brief reminder, the argument was that as social constructs, subjective
identities are bound up with other sets of beliefs so that we can expect,
for example, that a person who accepts the identity 'worker' for himself, is
also likely to believe in the existence of classes having particular claims.
At the same time, changes in individuals' beliefs are likely to bring about
changes in their identities; for example, we can expect, with a certain
degree of confidence, that a person who comes to reject the view that God
made man, will, sooner or later, come to reject the identity of Christian
for himself. In the light of this, we expect to find a positive correlation
between acceptance of a working-class identity and certain associated
beliefs which we expect to be favourable to the Labour Party. Respondents to
the 1985 BSA survey were asked to what extent they thought a person's social
class 'affects his or her opportunities in Britain today - a great deal,
quite a lot, not very much or not at all?' The positive relation between

this belief and support for the Labour Party can be seen from Table 8.13a where those who believe that class has a significant impact on opportunities are more likely to support the party than those who reject this view. From Table 8.13b we can see the positive relation between having a working-class self-image and accepting that class has a significant impact on opportunities.

TABLE 8.13A
Percent Labour among the three major-party identifiers by belief in the effects of class on a person's opportunities by objective class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does class affect opportunities?</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per cent Labour:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective middle class</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective working class</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 8.13B
Belief in the effects of class by subjective class identity by objective class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective class</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjective class</td>
<td>Class affects opportunities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.2% (39)</td>
<td>50.0 (84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34.6 (54)</td>
<td>43.6 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.2 (20)</td>
<td>31.0 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33.4 (144)</td>
<td>37.8 (163)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

From Table 8.14 it appears that not only is the possession of a working-class self-identity associated with general beliefs about the effects of
class, but that, within the objective working class, it is also significantly associated with the more specific beliefs that go to make up our ideology index and which formed the 'core' of the parties' election appeals in 1983. The positive relationship, within the objective working class, between being at the Labour end of the ideology index and having a working-class identity makes it imperative to consider whether the relationship between ideology and Labour voting is spurious and explicable in terms of class identity, is independent of it, or perhaps actually explains its effects.

**TABLE 8.14**

| Ideology by class identity within the objective middle, and objective working classes |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Objective class                  | Middle Working  | Working         |
| Subjective class:                |                |                 |
| Lab                             | 40.2           | 31.9            |
| Int                             | 25.2           | 27.7            |
| Con                             | 34.6           | 40.3            |
|                                | 100.0          | 100.0           |
|                                | (214)          | (119)           |
| Chi square = 0.25               |                | Chi square = 0.004 |

Note: figures in parentheses refer to number of cases. Respondents were classified as subjectively middle or working class if they spontaneously named one of the two classes in reply to the question: "Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to any particular class?" (if "Yes") "Which class is that?"

A spurious relationship of the kind illustrated in the diagram below seems quite possible, for the ideology index taps items which were specific to the election campaign of 1983. Class identities, on the other hand, seem likely to be more deep-rooted in the individual psyche; and to the extent that parties are associated with different class interests, class identity probably has a direct effect on vote. At the same time, and precisely because of this direct effect, class identity seems likely to influence the individual's receptivity to the preferred party's ideological appeals. In
other words, the individual who votes Labour because he sees himself as working class, is by that token also more likely to accept the party’s ideological messages.

Ideology accounts for 37 per cent of the variation in Labour voting within the objective working class when subjective class identity is left uncontrolled (see table 8.7 above). Controlling for the latter reduces the proportion of variation explained to 29 per cent - but only among the subjective working class (see table 9.15 below). Among the subjective middle class, the association actually increases - to 50 per cent - thus suggesting an interaction effect: if one has consciousness of being working-class, ideological agreement makes a smaller difference to the likelihood of voting Labour. In other words, for those who are consciously working class, ideology is of less relevance, as they vote anyway for the party which they see as being 'for' their class. For the subjective middle class, on the
other hand, without a sense of identification with the class to which they actually belong, being in positive agreement with Labour’s ideological stances is relatively more necessary to induce them to support the party. Whatever the validity of this interpretation, spuriousness seems to be disposed of. In fact, when we calculate the relationship between having a working-class identity and voting Labour (arrow ‘a’ in the above diagram), we obtain a value of 24 per cent; the corresponding value for arrow ‘a’ is 17 per cent. This finding also contradicts spuriousness, because in order to explain a correlation, test variables must be strongly linked to both variables in a pair whose correlation is to be explained.

TABLE 8.15
1983 vote by ideology controlling for subjective class
(objective, working-class sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective class:</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>Int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have seen that in both classes a working-class self identity is associated with Labour partisanship; table 8.16 shows the relationship between subjective class identity and position on our general ideology index. The figures in the table make it appropriate to examine the relative importance of class identities and ideology in the determination of Labour partisanship. Since class identity is more weakly related to Labour
partisanship than is ideology, it cannot account fully for the impact of ideology: but neither is it likely that ideology will fully interpret the relationship between class identity and vote: for some people, at least, whose ideological beliefs incline them to the Conservative party will nevertheless have working-class identities which, given a persistence of class images of politics, will make them "available for mobilization by the Labour Party" (Jessop, 1974: 149).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective class:</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Id:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>38.0 (63)</td>
<td>26.8 (41)</td>
<td>27.1 (19)</td>
<td>16.9 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>27.7 (46)</td>
<td>41.2 (63)</td>
<td>41.4 (29)</td>
<td>39.4 (165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>34.3 (57)</td>
<td>32.0 (49)</td>
<td>31.4 (22)</td>
<td>43.7 (183)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.

Ideology and subjective class together account for about half the variation in Labour voting in the middle class and over two fifths in the working class (table 8.17). In the working class, ideology appears to be twice as important as subjective class identity while in the middle class ideology accounts for over two and a half times as much of the variation in Labour voting as subjective class identity. These differences must be treated with caution because with more categories, ideology is at an advantage compared with subjective class identity (Galtung, 1969: 435).

17. Whereas ideology accounts for 44 and 35 per cent of the variation in 1985 Labour support in the middle and working classes respectively, subjective class identity accounts for 16 and 25 per cent of the variation in the two classes.
Nevertheless, our expectation that both variables have independent effects on Labour voting is confirmed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology: Class id.</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>Int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Repeating the above analysis, but this time using our ideology index for parties’ positions at the 1983 election produces the result that the two variables together account for 44 per cent of the variation in Labour voting in the middle class and 57 per cent in the working class (table 8.18). This suggests that ideologies and subjective identities are perhaps less important than at first thought, for about half of the variation in each class remains unexplained by their joint effects. Class position itself still explains a third of the variation in Labour voting after the two variables have been controlled which suggests that other correlates of class may be equally, if not more, important in determining Labour voting. We shall explore several structural variables in the following chapter, but first we turn to examine the relative impact of prescriptive as compared to ideological beliefs.

18. Together, ideology, subjective class identity and class account for 73 per cent of the variation in 1983 Labour voting.
TABLE 8.18
Percentage of the three-party vote going to Labour by class, ideology and subjective identity (1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class id.:</th>
<th>Middle class%</th>
<th>Working class%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>Int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.5 Summary

To summarize the principle results of this chapter we have found that:

1) there were statistically significant relationships between 1983 vote and four out of five of the ideological beliefs salient at that election;

2) in relative terms, the impact of ideology on vote was particularly strong in connection with middle-class Labour voting;

3) when we constructed an 'ideology index', (in order to eliminate the distorting effects of responses to particular items taken in isolation), ideology retained its vigour as it did

4) when we examined its impact on party support outside the context of an election campaign (a context which could reasonably be thought to have equally strong distorting effects).

Subjective class identity, whose effects on vote can be partly explained in terms of (ideological) beliefs linking the parties with the advancement of class interests, continues to have an independent effect on party support after ideology is controlled. Together, the two variables account for more of the variation than each variable singly. As we have just noted, however, the two variables jointly are far from fully explaining the variation in voting. In the next chapter we turn to an analysis of variables drawn from previous work, and which could turn out to be more significant.
CHAPTER 9: The determinants of ideological closeness

9.1 Introduction

Students of electoral behaviour both in Britain (Crewe, 1983b; Franklin, 1983, 1985) and the United States (Pomper, 1975) have recently emphasised a portrait of voters as individuals whose electoral choices have become increasingly unpredictable (Rose and McAllister, 1986) as their responsiveness to contemporary issues has increased over time. In this view, voters are perceived as people who, if not having coherent and well thought-out philosophies, are — in opposition to previous research which had depicted voters as generally inattentive and unconcerned about political events — at least aware of current debates and concerned to express such awareness in their votes. As we shall see, these conflicting 'portraits' give rise to two hypotheses against which — inasmuch as they imply that a relationship between ideology and voting can be explained in terms of other variables — it is necessary to test our own hypothesis. Such tests constitute a natural progression from the point at which we left our analysis at the end of the last chapter and are the focus of the next section.

In addition to the two voter portraits — upon which we shall spend some time in view of the solidity of their empirical foundations — we shall also consider a number of potentially confounding hypotheses which can be drawn from a more wide-ranging literature. Such factors as social mobility, education and employment sector, (what we collectively refer to as 'background factors'), have all been shown to influence political allegiance, and they have also been suggested as variables explaining political beliefs. We therefore need to examine the extent to which they too
threaten the assertion of a causal relationship between ideology and vote. Such an analysis occupies our attention in the third section of this chapter.

While ideology withstands our attempt to refute it, it could be argued that it is still unsatisfactory in that all it shows is that 'people who think like Labour vote Labour': our argument, it might be said, is little more than a tautology. We would reject such a charge on a priori grounds inasmuch as our conception of ideology is explicitly intended to focus attention on the explanatory power of a particular kind of belief as distinct from other kinds of belief - and as distinct from other explanatory factors which are different altogether. We would, however, accept a modified version of this argument which is that an exclusive focus on the 'ideas in people's heads' leaves one simply with an amorphous mass of individuals with a particular set of dispositions. In the fourth section of this chapter, therefore, we attempt to confront this problem by showing that ideology is not something randomly distributed, but rather is socially structured in determinate ways.

9.2 Ideology vs. two voter portraits

Beginning in 1940,¹ a series of surveys of American presidential elections all pointed to an image of the 'average elector' that Pomper (1975) has neatly encapsulated by using the term 'the dependent voter'. In this section we shall spend some time fleshing out the portrait of the dependent voter, in this way showing how it gives rise to a hypothesis which

directly threatens our own, namely, that the causal flow runs in the opposite direction to the one we have postulated, i.e. from party-support to ideology rather than the other way round.

A number of interrelated features went to make up the image of dependent voters. Firstly, they lacked interest in politics. Described in terms of a variety of nouns - such as a lack of 'deep involvement' (Butler and Stokes, 1974; Campbell et al., 1960), of 'concern' (Campbell et al., 1960) and of 'political motivation' (Campbell et al., 1954) - an equally varied range of indicators all pointed in the same direction: only a third of respondents to the 1948 survey described themselves as being 'greatly interested' in that year's election (Berelson et al., 1954: 24); only 28 per cent said that they cared 'very much' about the outcome of the 1952 election (Campbell et al., 1954: 36); and in 1956, only "about a fourth of the electorate (sic) reported having talked to other people and having tried to persuade them to vote a given way" (Campbell et al., 1960: 91). The percentages reporting any form of involvement in organized campaign efforts, were smaller still. Similar findings were reported by Butler and Stokes for the Britain of the 1960s: only 16 and 17 per cent claimed, in 1963 and 1969 respectively, to have 'a good deal' of interest "in what's going on in politics" (Butler and Stokes, 1974: 451) while in terms of organized campaign efforts, what was "most notable" in 1964 was "the small number who do anything at all beyond voting in General Elections" (Butler and Stokes, 1974: 21).

The authors of the 1948 presidential survey found that, of those who thought that 'people like themselves' had 'a lot of influence on government', 47 per cent expressed a 'great deal' of interest in the campaign as compared with only 29 per cent of those thinking they had some, or little, influence. This implied that an important cause of widespread
citizen apathy was a lack of confidence about being able to affect political affairs at all, for "The conviction that things can be affected is needed to give people the energy to care" (Berelson et al., 1954: 25). Not caring, however, most voters secondly, lacked any great deal of understanding of politics. Again, a variety of aspects (such as 'accuracy of perception, 'capacity for informed judgement', 'level of political conceptualization') and corresponding indicators of the overall concept of 'understanding', all pointed in the same general direction. Thus, in 1948, only 16 per cent of that year's sample were able to correctly report the positions, for or against, of Truman and Dewey on two prominent issues on which the candidates had taken clear stands (Berelson et al., 1954: 227). Aside from questions of accuracy, in 1956, on average only three out of ten respondents showed capacity for informed judgement in the sense that, when presented with selected issues, they could offer an opinion, claimed to know what the government had been doing with respect to the issue and could discriminate between the two parties' policies in the matter (Campbell et al., 1960: 182). The authors of the same study concluded that only about 11 per cent of their sample had modes of conceptualising the political world sufficiently sophisticated to classify them as ideologues or near ideologues (Campbell et al., 1960: 249). And again, similar findings were reported by Butler and Stokes for Britain.² All in all it seemed that there was a profound disparity between the ideal 'citizen' of classical democratic theory and the 'voter' of political reality (Burdick, 1959) and it was possible to imagine

² See Butler and Stokes (1974) especially pp. 22-3 and chapters 13 and 15.
many voters as caught in a vicious circle whereby a low sense of efficacy and hence a low level of interest, inhibited the motivation to acquire the information necessary to develop a reasonable understanding of politics — which in its turn contributed to a low sense of efficacy, and so on.

Lacking any well-developed capacity for "bringing information to bear on principle" (Berelson et al., 1954: 309) and therefore for autonomous decision-making, most voters thirdly, relied heavily on the political cues and suggestions emanating from their face-to-face 'primary groups' and from 'secondary groups'. Of the first kind of group, particular emphasis was laid by the authors of the early American presidential studies on the influence of the family: "here living conditions attain a maximum of similarity and ... mutual contacts are more frequent than in other groupings" (Lazarsfeld et al., 1968: 140). In particular, the family was regarded as the most important 'transmission belt' for the influence of a particular kind of group which analytically, could be put on a par with other secondary groups, namely, parties; for in common with such groups as religious and ethnic communities, trade unions and so on, parties, apart from their formal membership, had "a form of psychological membership" (Campbell et al., 1960: 295) in the sense that most citizens appeared to exhibit a long-standing identification with one or other of them. Unless short-term factors peculiar to particular campaigns intervened, therefore, dependent voters, fourthly, would simply vote for the parties they identified with: not based on any independent assessment of the party's policy stands and their relationship to the voter's own preferences, party identification was "the most important single influence" (Flanigan, 1972, quoted by Pomper 1975: 18) on the dependent voter's electoral choice. All of this appeared to be encapsulated by the Southern voter who, after hearing a speech by Theodore Roosevelt
"turned aside all of [the Republican president's] arguments, with the incantation, 'My granddaddy was a Democrat, my daddy was a Democrat, and I'm a Democrat'" (Pomper, 1975: 18).

To be sure, voters were not so stupid that the candidates and issues of campaigns had no independent influence on them. On the contrary, in order to show that party identification really was a prior variable existing independently of the voting decision itself, the authors of the 1952 and 1956 presidential studies argued that "[a] man would still view himself as a Democrat while allowing his candidate preferences to sway him towards Eisenhower" (Budge et al., 1976: 6). Moreover, "[i]t was always recognized that party identification could change under the impact of major issues" (Budge et al., 1976: 7). Nevertheless, it was strongly argued that the predominant causal influence ran in the opposite direction - from party identification to opinion, rather than the other way round; for "If we know that [a group such as] 'the union' makes a political endorsement, we may well react positively or negatively to the candidate or issue, according to whether our sympathies lie with or against the union. The 'kiss of death' of an unpopular group endorsement describes precisely this phenomenon. Groups have influence, then, because... [they] become reference points for the formation of attitudes and decisions about behaviour; we speak then of positive and negative reference groups" (Campbell et al., 1960: 296).

The fifth characteristic of the dependent voter, therefore, was his tendency to alter his views to correspond with the positions taken by his chosen party; and this clearly raises a (for us) disturbing implication: it means that if there is a causal relationship between ideology and vote, we have to confront the possibility that the relationship runs in the opposite direction from the one we are maintaining. In other words, does feeling
oneself to be a party supporter in and of itself determine one's voting decision with this feeling of attachment in turn inducing people to adjust their ideological beliefs to conform to the positions of their chosen parties? We can test for this possibility, first of all, by examining evidence that the relationship between ideology and vote is spurious and explicable in terms of a measure of party identification. We shall first of all present the results of such an examination before commenting on them and then proceeding to an outline of the second 'voter portrait' mentioned above.

Unfortunately, our analysis is made difficult by the fact that with four levels of 'party identification' (Labour, Conservative, Alliance, other/none), three levels of 'ideology' and three levels of 'vote', each within the middle and working classes, we get a table of 72 cells and this quickly leads to categories with very few cases. This not only severely affects the reliability of our results but gives rise to cell percentages which make it impossible to calculate associations without violating the rules for such calculations (see Galtung, 1969: 427-37). We are therefore forced to collapse such a table as we have done in Table 9.1 below where party identification, ideology and vote are all measured in terms of a Labour - non-Labour dichotomy. Although the data analysis literature generally warns against collapsing tables in this manner, we will not be distorting the 'true state of affairs' too much, provided we also collapse the table showing the original uncontrolled relationship: in this way we will be maintaining a comparison of 'like with like'.

What emerges from Table 9.1 is that the collapsed version of the ideology index accounts for 20 per cent of the uncontrolled variation in Labour voting within the middle class and 31 per cent in the working class.
Controlling for party identification reduces the degree of association substantially — to 5 per cent among middle-class non-Labour identifiers, for example, and to 11 per cent among working-class Labour identifiers. The weighted average of the measures of association (Reynolds, 1977: 55-6) for each of the four contingent relationships works out at 9.6 per cent.

### TABLE 9.1A

**Labour voting by Labour ideology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>non-Labour</td>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>27.8 (82)</td>
<td>7.3 (35)</td>
<td>68.5 (254)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-Labour</td>
<td>72.2 (213)</td>
<td>92.7 (446)</td>
<td>31.5 (117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 9.1B

**Labour voting by Labour ideology controlling for party identification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party Id:</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>non-Labour</td>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>80.0 (68)</td>
<td>65.9 (29)</td>
<td>6.7 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-Labour</td>
<td>20.0 (17)</td>
<td>34.1 (15)</td>
<td>93.3 (196)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party Id:</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>non-Labour</td>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>91.4 (233)</td>
<td>79.9 (199)</td>
<td>18.1 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-Labour</td>
<td>8.6 (22)</td>
<td>20.1 (50)</td>
<td>81.3 (95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: numbers in parentheses refer to raw frequencies.

What can we conclude from the above table? Certainly, party identification appears, on the figures, to be more important in accounting for Labour voting than is ideology: the distances in percentage points between Labour and non-Labour identifiers holding ideology constant, are larger on average than are the distances between those in the two ideology categories for a given 'level' of party identification. This is true in both the middle and the working classes: in the middle class the two averages
work out at 69 and 10 per cent respectively; in the working class at 74 and 12 per cent. A closer look at the table shows that in the middle class there is clearly an interaction effect among ideology and party identification: among those without a Labour identification ideology has no impact — people vote overwhelmingly against the party; however, among those with a Labour identification, ideology makes a difference of around 17 percentage points. We have no immediately obvious suggestions to make as regards the specification of this relationship, but what we can say is that interaction is consistent with the Michigan school's emphasis on the impact of voters' reactions to political discourse independently of party identification. That is, among those with a predisposition to vote for the Labour Party anyway, ideology has quite a lot of influence in determining whether the voter will in the end be won over to the party; thus, among middle-class Labour identifiers only 20 per cent of those with the 'appropriate' ideological beliefs failed to support the party in 1983, yet this proportion almost doubled — to 34.1 per cent — among those lacking the 'appropriate' beliefs. We can conclude, therefore, that while party identification contributes a spurious component to the relationship between ideological beliefs and Labour support, it cannot completely explain it. Moreover, if the findings seem to weaken the case for a causal association between ideology and Labour voting, we can reinvigorate it again by an attack on two fronts. One involves raising queries about the validity of the questionnaire item used to measure party identification; that is to say, does the item really tap 'individuals' affective orientations' towards parties, or something else? The other attack involves arguing that even if it does, it may be that the reduced association between ideology and vote brought about by party
identification reflects a developmental sequence rather than a spurious relationship.

**Possible causal models**

**Spurious relationship**

\[ \text{PARTY ID} \rightarrow \text{IDEOLOGY} \rightarrow \text{VOTE} \]

**Developmental sequence**

\[ \text{IDEOLOGY} \rightarrow \text{PARTY ID} \rightarrow \text{VOTE} \]

With regard to the first issue, following closely the original formulation, in all the BES surveys, 'party identification' is measured by a question which runs as follows:

"Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Conservative, Labour, Liberal... etc., or what?"

As originally formulated, the question was designed to tap "the individual's affective orientation to an important group object in his environment" (Campbell et al., 1960: 121, my emphasis); yet in this same study, claims for the validity of the question are limited to the simple assertion that it is "[i]n keeping with the conception of party identification as a
psychological tie" (Campbell et al., 1960: 122). To the present writer at least, the grounds for this assertion are not immediately apparent, for Butler and Stokes produced evidence that in Britain, the question may simply measure current voting intention (1974: 39-47). If this is the case, then, given that as a matter of empirical fact, most voters' intentions remain stable over time, the question may be no more than one of a number of indicators of their "long term predispositions ... to vote for particular parties" (Budge et al., 1976: 9) - which says absolutely nothing about what such predispositions might be grounded in - whether affective orientations, ideological beliefs or something else. If the 'party identification' question is just a measure of voters' long term predispositions, then the substantial weakening of the relationship between ideology and Labour support after controlling for the variable is hardly surprising and the data reported in table 9.1 could well reflect a developmental sequence rather than spuriousness. Consistent with such a possibility is the observation from table 9.1 that among middle-class Labour ' identifiers', for example, two thirds had 'appropriate' Labour ideological beliefs, whereas among non-Labour ' identifiers' only one third did so.

However, let us concede the argument that the party identification question does tap long-term affective orientations to parties and ask whether there are any grounds for supposing that ideological beliefs may be causally or temporally prior to affective orientations, for if there are such grounds, we shall have good reason to suspect that our data does indeed reflect a relationship of the kind depicted above: the introduction of test factors (and the finding of a weakened association) which is what we are doing, is on its own insufficient to distinguish between spurious
relationships and developmental sequences; the two must be disentangled by appeal to other grounds.

Theoretically (logically?), the point can be made (as it has been by Robertson (1976) and Miller (1976)), that it is highly unlikely (impossible?) that, whatever degree of affect is involved in identifying with a party or group, this identification has no ratiocinative content whatsoever. As Robertson (1976: 371) puts it: "If someone whose skin is black identifies with Negroes as a group, we can presume it is by virtue of his expecting other Negroes to share a set of experiences, problems, attitudes and perhaps values". In more general terms, it seems that to identify oneself as a Jew, Catholic, Conservative or whatever, almost is (a) to have certain beliefs, (b) to be conscious of having such beliefs and (c) to assume that other people calling themselves Jews, Catholics, Conservatives, or whatever, have the same or recognisably similar beliefs. This must be so because to argue otherwise would be to suggest that identification is simply with a label.

The trouble with an argument along these lines is that it 'saves' our thesis of an ideological influence on voting simply by redefining our test variables to include ideology. Moreover, such an argument cannot count as grounds for the causal antecedence of ideology to identification, for two things that stand in a logical or conceptual relationship cannot stand in a causal and therefore contingent, relationship. It seems reasonable, therefore, to concede that to some extent electors' ideological beliefs will be a function of their prior commitments to parties (or their long-standing predispositions, party identifications - or whatever one wants to call them) and that therefore to some extent the causal sequence will run from voting choice to ideology as our data suggests. It seems that any realistic
approach must acknowledge this state of affairs, for common sense is enough to make one realize that in a world in which many people find politics remote and confusing, parties must in part be taken as guides as to what to believe. Having said that, our data does not suggest that the influence of party support is so strong as to invalidate the hypothesis of a causal relationship also running in the opposite direction; and, as has been pointed out in the literature, people's party support (or again, their partisan commitments, psychological ties, affective orientations - as you prefer) must themselves be conceived of in terms of the beliefs people hold.

We turn now to the second voter portrait - one which Pomper (1975) calls the 'responsive voter'. In this connection it is argued that what were presented as permanent truths about voters must be seen as having been heavily dependent on a period of unusual political acquiescence that was the 1950s - or more precisely, that as a result of various changes which have taken place in 1) the political arena in particular and 2) in society more generally since the 1950s, the 'dependent voter' portrait requires substantial modification. As we shall see, the responsive voter chooses his/her party in such a way that also suggests that the relationship between ideology and voting is spurious.

With regard to political change, it is pointed out that "To understand electoral competition, we must examine parties as well as voters... Voters can only choose in response to the alternatives put before them by parties" (Rose and Mc Allister, 1986: 4) - and it is then noted that from the late 1960s, the 'policy distance' separating the Labour and Conservative parties began to widen. Until that period there had been basic agreement between the parties' principal spokesmen on not only the goals of economic management...
but also the means - the famous 'Butskellite consensus'. From that period, within the Labour Party, awareness of economic decline gave the lie to claims "that modern capitalism had changed and could deliver economic growth" and the left was able to ask: "what would happen if there was no economic growth?" (Kavanagh, 1987: 147). The result of such questioning was Labour's adoption, in 1971, of a radical programme based on the Alternative Economic Strategy and promising extensive nationalization of industry. Within the Conservative Party, the self-same problems of economic decline gave rise to a new set of 'neo-liberal' policies for the 1970 election (see Kavanagh, 1987, chapter 7, for an account). Then, from 1979 in the case of Labour and 1975 in the case of the Conservatives, there were further shifts to the left and to the right respectively; many of the policies championed by Margaret Thatcher from 1975 had been foreshadowed by Mr Heath in the late sixties; disappointment with Mr Heath's 'collectivist U-turns' in 1972 meant that what for the latter had been "good if they worked", for the former tended to be regarded as good in themselves (Kavanagh 1987: 194-5).

Similarly, in the Labour Party, disappointment with governmental performance

3. In my view the term 'consensus' is ambiguous, and talk of some generalized 'end of consensus' as an explanation of changed voter characteristics obscures as much as it reveals. In particular, it conflates three different 'levels' at which consensus may be said to exist: the level of rhetoric in inter-party argument, parties' specific policy proposals and their actual enactments. There is no necessary overlap between the three. Thus we have already seen in chapter 4 that notwithstanding the contents of its February 1974 manifesto, the 1974-79 Labour government, in seeking solutions to economic decline, soon turned to answers that were similar to those turned to by a succession of post-war governments. Thus it is hardly surprising that in 1979, less than half the respondents to the BES survey thought there was "a great deal" of difference between the Labour and Conservative parties "considering everything they stand for". At 46 per cent this figure was exactly the same as the one that resulted when the same question was asked in 1964.
meant a growth of radical influence: constitutional changes in 1981 shifted internal power towards the extra-parliamentary party, and unilateral nuclear disarmament and withdrawal from the EEC were added to the list of policy commitments made at the beginning of the 1970s.

In this light it was hardly surprising if previous 'generations' of voters had been found to be uninterested in, and ill-informed about politics for voters can only choose from the options presented to them, and if these are not distinct, voters have no incentive to develop well-thought-out attitudes towards them: "One determinant of attitude formation is often taken to be want-satisfaction, which means that individuals form an attitude toward some object when it is seen as relevant to satisfying some want of theirs through direct gratification or through a perceptible increase in the opportunity for future gratification. Attitudes do not develop where the objects of these attitudes are irrelevant to an individual's opportunity for want-satisfaction. When alternative political-economic strategies are not seen as relevant to one's material position ... there is no incentive to invest in information about economic alternatives" (Alt, 1979: 13).

The more sharply-defined political-economic alternatives that were presented from the late sixties did seem to have an echo among the electorate; thus while only 32 per cent of the 1970 BES sample claimed to perceive "a good deal of difference between the parties", by 1979 this
figure had risen to 46 per cent and by 1983 to an astonishing 82 per cent. Tracing changes over time is made difficult by the fact that certain questions have not been consistently asked of all BES study samples and by changes in question wording. Nevertheless, the indicators that are available tell the same story: in February 1974 and again in 1983, respondents were asked how much they cared which party won that year's general election: 68 per cent said they cared "a good deal" in the former year as compared with 74 per cent in the latter. 62 per cent claimed to have "a good deal" or "some" interest in politics in February 1974 as compared with 53 per cent of Butler and Stokes' 1963 sample. At the four general elections between 1964 and 1974, the proportions claiming to have "a good deal" of interest in the campaign were 34, 31, 38 and 54 per cent respectively. A more interested electorate was also, apparently, a better-informed one: "Asked to name the important issues that helped them to decide how to vote, fewer than 6 per cent of respondents to a series of surveys conducted following recent elections were unable to name a second issue. Twenty years ago 40 per cent of respondents were unable to name as many as two important issues facing the country" (Franklin, 1985: 128).

4. These figures are not strictly comparable in that the 1979 and 1983 questions explicitly mentioned the Conservative and Labour parties, omitted from the 1970 question. (The exact question-wordings were: in 1970, "Considering everything the parties stand for, would you say that there is a good deal of difference between the parties, some difference, or not much difference?"; in 1979 and 1983, "Considering everything the Conservative and Labour parties stand for, would you say there is a great deal of difference between them, some difference, or not much difference?"). However, given the much lower level of support for any party other than the Conservatives and Labour in 1970, it is likely that respondents were thinking primarily in terms of these two parties when replying to the 1970 question.
A second political change which has been held to require revision of the 'dependent voter' portrait is that the parties have a) given emphasis to new issues - such as the rights of women and ethnic minorities, nuclear disarmament - which are difficult to conceptualize in terms of a 'traditional left-right economic dimension' of political conflict, and b) have taken up issues - such as EEC membership, incomes policy and regional devolution - on which there has been serious internal dissension. It is argued that, in conjunction with the new level of voter awareness and concern, the prominence of these issues has forced voters to reconsider their traditional loyalties with a resulting decline in the extent to which individuals consistently support a given party from one election to the next.

The extent to which the so-called 'new' issues really are new may be doubted (Heath, 1988); nor is it clear, however much emphasis they may have given to them, that the parties have used the issues (with the exception of nuclear disarmament) as the bases for significant positional disputes among themselves. For example, Butler and Stokes (1974: 303) documented the extensive and intense hostility felt by most people towards ethnic minorities over twenty years ago; yet in spite of the potential that thus appeared to lie in the issue, the Conservative Party has never, officially at least, taken a line that overtly smacks of racism while the Labour Party, though for example opposing the Conservatives’ 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, once in office from 1964, promptly passed, with Conservative support, "a bill restricting the entry of Indian-origin holders of British passports living in East Africa" (Butler and Stokes, 1974: 307). Other issues, such as abortion, for example, have consistently been the subject of free votes in the House of Commons (Heath et al., 1985; Heath, 1988).
What cannot be doubted however are the behavioural phenomena presumed to be consequent upon public discussion of these issues. Crewe, in particular, has documented such phenomena extensively. Of the electoral changes which he identifies, four are of particular relevance to the 'dependent voter' portrait. The first is the decline in the two-party share of both the vote and the electorate particularly after 1970: the share of the poll obtained by the Conservatives and Labour combined went from 89.5 per cent in 1970 to 74.9, 75.1, 80.9 and 70.0 per cent over the four subsequent elections, while the share of the electorate obtained by the two parties declined from 64.4 per cent in 1970 to 58.5 per cent in February 1974, falling to 54.7 per cent at the October election and 50.9 per cent in 1983 (Crewe, 1983b: 186). Of those entitled to vote at both of consecutive pairs of elections, the proportion turning out to vote for one or other of the two largest parties twice running (as opposed to switching to another party or abstaining on the first or second occasion) declined too: "from 51 per cent in 1959-1964 to 47 per cent in 1966-1970 and down again to 43 per cent in 1970-February 1974 and 42 per cent in 1974-1979" (Sarlvik and Crewe, 1983: 63). As measured by 'party identification', there has been a decline in the strength of electors' predispositions to vote for the Conservative and Labour parties: the proportion of those considering themselves 'very strong' Labour or Conservative almost halved - from 39 per cent in 1970 to 23 per cent in 1983 (Crewe, 1983b: 189). Fourthly, "Between 1954 and 1979 the proportion of voters who left their final voting decision until the campaign jumped from 17 per cent to 28 per cent, and the proportion claiming to have thought seriously of voting differently in the course of the campaign rose from 24 per cent to 31 per cent" (Crewe, 1983: 204).
From all this it has been inferred that short-term factors have been becoming significant in the voting decisions of increasing proportions of voters. Of these short-term factors, alongside governments’ records and the attraction of the party leaders, particular emphasis has been placed on what are usually referred to as campaign issues. Few authors bother to say what they mean by ‘issues’ inspite of it’s being “a highly ambiguous concept” (Butler and Stokes, 1974: 277), but most seem to have in mind policy alternatives and associated voter preferences. Examples would be: whether Britain should continue to be a member of the EEC, whether the government should spend more on pensions and social services, whether industries should be nationalized or privatized—and so on. As such, issues correspond to what, in the last chapter, we called prescriptive beliefs, and as before, this raises the possibility that the relationship between ideology and voting is spurious. For it might be that people alter their ideological beliefs to accord with policy preferences arrived at on other grounds. (For example, we might reasonably expect a person believing that s/he personally will benefit from a Conservative policy to reduce income tax, a) to favour

5. Such a definition is also the only one which is logically coherent. Butler and Stokes’ analysis, for example, is confused and confusing. On the one hand, they distinguish between issues defined in terms of alternative policies and in terms of values or goals (such as economic prosperity). On the other hand, they distinguish between, 1) issues “on which there is essentially one body of opinion on values or goals” (1974: 292 my emphasis) — of which economic prosperity is again offered as an example and which they call valence issues — and 2) issues on which parties appeal to rival bodies of opinion — which they call position issues. From the text it is clear that in making the first distinction, what they have in mind is a distinction between ends and means. What this analysis implies is that while issues relating to ends can be either valence (prosperity) or positional (equality), issues relating to means are necessarily positional (for valence issues are defined exclusively in terms of ends). This ignores the fact that there can exist consensus (or the lack of it) on both ends and means.
the policy and b) to rationalize the preference by a belief to the effect that "high income tax makes people less willing to work hard"). On the other hand, since they are usually of a higher order of generality than policy preferences, it could be that for the most part, ideological beliefs are independent of the latter. Thus, one could have a belief to the effect that nationalization is inefficient and curtails freedom and yet still express the view in reply to a survey question that "more industries should be nationalized". This is because one's expressed policy preferences will be a function not only of one's ideological beliefs, but of particular (and therefore temporary) circumstances. Butler and Stokes (1974) illustrated this phenomenon very well when they showed the decline in the proportion of their sample favouring increased social-services spending after the 1964 Labour government had increased it - presumably because "the action of the new Labour Government in putting up pensions and removing prescription charges for medicines had lessened the gap between what the average elector felt desirable and what he thought the Government was doing" (Butler and Stokes, 1974: 299).

To see whether the apparent impact of ideology can be explained in terms of voters' policy preferences or prescriptive beliefs, is independent of such beliefs or perhaps actually explains their effect, we first of all carried out a factor analysis of a set of attitude questions from the 1993 BES survey all of which asked what the government (or Britain) should do. Doing this allows us to check the relative importance of voters' overall degree of 'ideological closeness' as measured by our ideology index and their positions with regard to a number of policy preferences taken in combination. Factor analysis allows us to identify, a posteriori from the association between the particular attitude questions, a smaller number of
'dimensions' which are assumed to be broader, underlying attitudes of which the particular questions are indicators. Having 'extracted' dimensions from the data, we can then calculate a standardized score which, by acting as a kind of summary measure of voters' views with regard to each dimension, can be used as an indicator of their relative positions on the dimension. Respondents' relative positions are arrived at by using the factor-score coefficient matrix to construct a standardized factor score for each case in the sample. Each case's factor score for a given factor is simply a linear combination of the standardized values of high-loading variables (i.e. 0.3 or greater) using the relevant factor-score coefficients as weights.

Table 9.2 below sets out the five dimensions, or factors, together with the factor loadings, that emerged when we specified: 1) that the number of factors to be extracted was to be determined by the number of eigenvalues of the correlation matrix which were greater than or equal to 1.0; and 2) Varimax rotation. Following the usual convention, we only consider loadings of 0.3 or greater.

Echoing Rose and McAllister (1986), we have chosen to call factor 1 a 'socialism' factor because in a way similar to the factor they found, it links together views about the nationalization of industry, privilege in education, the powers of ordinary workers in industry and Britain's overseas military strength. Factor 1 can properly be called a socialism factor since it describes "a principle that is both economic and extra-economic, and

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6. The factor-score coefficient matrix is calculated from the formula \( F = S \cdot R^{-1} \) where \( S^T \) is the transpose of the rotated factor structure matrix and \( R \) is the correlation matrix.
TABLE 2.2  
Factor Loadings for 1983 Attitude Questions

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Socialism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should remove troops from Northern Ireland</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should negotiate Falklands</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should spend less on defence</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should abolish private education</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should be more nationalization</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers should have more say in running their firms</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should help local economies</td>
<td>0.30</td>
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<td>Britain should withdraw from EEC</td>
<td>0.44</td>
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<td>2. Civil liberties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revolutionaries should be allowed to hold meetings</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionaries should be allowed to teach in schools</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racists should be allowed to hold meetings</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racists should be allowed to teach in schools</td>
<td>0.06</td>
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<td>3. Law and order</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government should set firm guidelines for wages</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police should have more power</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Britain should bring back death penalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criminals should get stiffer sentences</td>
<td>0.06</td>
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<td>4. Welfare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government should spend more money to create jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government should redistribute income and wealth</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should spend more to end poverty</td>
<td>0.19</td>
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<td>Government should increase pensions</td>
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<td>Government should spend more on NHS</td>
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<td>Government should help local economies</td>
<td>0.30</td>
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TABLE 9.2 (continued)

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<th>Factor loadings</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Free enterprise</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should spend more money to create jobs</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should redistribute income and wealth</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should promote private medicine</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should introduce stricter trade union laws</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government should allow industry to keep more of its profits</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total variance explained, 44.3 per cent

Source: BES, 1983.

Varimax rotated factor loadings from principal factoring with iterations with communality estimates in the main diagonal.

which is closely identified with the Labour Party" (Rose and McAllister, 1986: 121). Factor 1 is similar to Robertson's (1984) 'socio-economic egalitarianism' factor but at the same time somewhat broader: by being significantly related to issues concerning Britain's overseas military role, it seems to capture a principle which goes beyond mere questions of government intervention in the economy.

Factors 2 and 3 capture different aspects of what might be regarded as degree of authoritarianism. Factor 2 has to do with a concern for the rights of minorities and tolerance of non-conformity, and we have accordingly called it a 'civil liberties' dimension. Factor 3 has to do with how the state should deal with those who abuse their civil liberties, and we have called it a 'law and order' dimension.

Factor 4 seems to capture a general, underlying, philanthropic outlook. While most of the heavily-loading items would seem to be linked, more naturally, to a socialism factor than to an additional, separate factor, the items linked by factor 4 are quite general in terms of the views they commit the respondent to. It is not unnatural to imagine that a person can have a
general commitment to a redistribution of income and wealth (say) without believing that nationalization and/or the abolition of private education (for example) are the best means of going about it. We have called factor 1 a 'welfare' factor.

What, then, is the relative importance of ideology and individuals' positions on the above prescriptive attitude dimensions in determining the likelihood of middle-class Labour support? Table 9.3 gives the evidence. To maintain comparability between the two independent variables, as before, we employed a trichotomous division whereby each attitude dimension was divided in such a way that as near as possible to a third of respondents fell into each category which we labelled 'Left', 'Intermediate' and 'Right'. As can be gathered from a calculation of the partial effects (Galtung, 1969: 431-4) of the independent variables for each subtable, ideology has an impact which is at least as strong as, and in some cases stronger than, 'policy-preference position' in both the middle and working classes. This is particularly the case with regard to policy preferences concerning civil liberties and law and order and is a highly interesting finding: on the assumption that Labour-voting is an appropriate index, it throws a question mark over the suggestions of those such as Parkin (1968) and Inglehart (1971) who have argued that a concern with non-economic, 'social' issues is the principal, if not exclusive factor involved in 'middle-class radicalism'. (Indeed we found that middle-class respondents adopting a 'right' position on the civil liberties dimension were actually more likely to vote Labour - 20 per cent - than those in the 'left' category - 17 per cent). Together, ideology and 'policy-preference position' accounted for between a third and three-fifths of Labour voting in the middle class and as much as 70 per cent in the working class. The larger impact of the welfare
and free-enterprise dimensions with respect to ideology in both the middle and working classes is probably to be explained in terms of a shorter 'causal distance' between vote and the items making up the dimensions as compared with the distance between vote and the items making up our ideology index. At any rate, it appears on the basis of our findings that policy preferences cannot explain the impact of ideology, or, in other words, that ideology continues to have an independent effect after policy preferences are controlled. Ideology therefore survives our test.

### TABLE 9.3A

Percentage Labour among the three major-party voters (1983) by ideology and position on five prescriptive attitude dimensions (middle-class sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialism</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil liberties</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law and order</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welfare</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 9.3A (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Free enterprise</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 9.3B

**Percentage Labour among the three major-party voters (1983) by ideology and position on five prescriptive attitude dimensions (working-class sample)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialism</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil liberties</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law and order</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welfare</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Free enterprise</th>
<th>Ideology:</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note on how to read the table: the percentages in each cell show the proportions 'Labour' among those having a particular combination of row and column variables. Thus, in the last sub-table above, for example, 52.5% of working-class voters who were Conservative on ideology but Left in terms of prescriptive attitude position voted Labour in 1983. Such a presentation
allows us to calculate the total and partial effects of the two independent variables. Thus, still thinking in terms of the last sub-table above, the total effect is 79.3 - 9.1 = 70.2%. The partial effect of ideology is (27.9 - 9.1) + (64.2 - 37.4) + (79.3 - 52.5)/3 = 24%; the partial effect of 'free enterprise' is (52.5 - 9.1) + (51.3 - 19.2) + (79.3 - 27.9)/3 = 43%. For an explanation of the rationale behind this approach to calculating effects see Galtung (1969: 424-37).

9.3 'Social background' factors and voting

We now examine the extent to which 'social background' characteristics explain the relationship between ideology and voting, for while many such factors - such as home ownership, union membership, employment sector, education, social mobility and so forth - have been found to be linked to party support, it has also been argued that they can explain variations in political beliefs.

Dunleavy and Husbands (1985) argue that the declining (absolute) association between class and vote can be explained in terms of the emergence of new, cross-cutting lines of cleavage based on production and consumption locations. They suggest that already existing production and consumption-sector influences on voting (which they argue for on the basis of a theory of voting behaviour whereby an interaction between social location and "dominant ideological messages" produces an awareness of the interests associated with particular locations which in turn determines vote (1985: 20-5)) have become quantitatively more important in recent years, thus fragmenting the previous class-party linkage. We therefore need to consider what happens to the relationship between ideology and vote when production and consumption locations are controlled. Dunleavy and Husbands argue that the most important of the latter are employment in the public or private sectors, housing tenure, access to private transport and state dependency (in the sense of having to rely on a state pension, unemployment pay, supplementary benefit and so forth). These four public-private
locations are the most important ones politically (i.e. more important than location in other areas such as education and health care) because they fragment the electorate most: "If 95 per cent of people consume a good or service in one way, then there is little incentive for any party to appeal to the minority 5 per cent, since the potential votes to be gained are small" (Dunleavy and Husbands, 1985: 22). In terms of the four above-mentioned locations, however, Dunleavy and Husbands argue that "the two major parties have clearly lined up on opposite sides of the conflict of interests involved" (1985: 23). To the four mentioned by Dunleavy and Husbands, we can add education and health care because although, (owing to the small numbers involved), they can have little effect on aggregate alignments, one might reasonably expect them - if Dunleavy and Husbands' theory is correct - to have significant impacts at the individual level; for surveys have repeatedly shown Labour to be the party most associated in voters' minds with defence of the National Health Service while the party has also been - if pure rhetoric is to count - 'anti-private education'.

Table 9.4 considers the impact of consumption sectors. In each case those dependent on the state for the provision of services were more likely to vote Labour in 1983 than those making provision for consumption within the private sector. Nevertheless, ideology continues to have important independent effects when each of the consumption variables is controlled and continues to account for more of the variation in Labour support. Within the middle class, for example, ideology accounts for about a quarter of the variation whereas none of the consumption-location variables, with the exception of housing, account for more than half that amount. Similarly, within the working class, ideology accounts for between a third and two fifths of the variation, whereas only housing and education account for a
fifth of the variation. Together ideology and each of the consumption-location variables account for up to three fifths of the variation in Labour voting in both the middle and working classes. There is also, in the middle class, a statistically significant correlation between the housing variable and ideology. In the following section we shall examine the extent to which individuals' ideological beliefs are a function of their social structural location.

Surveys have consistently shown that individuals mobile into a 'higher' class are more likely to vote for left-wing parties than individuals stable in that class. At the same time it has been argued that the experience of mobility is conducive to the holding of radical values and beliefs because it frequently involves frustration and blocked aspirations. As Lipset and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumption sector</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>Int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car available</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(62)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No car</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family has private</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(07)</td>
<td>(03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No private health</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(03)</td>
<td>(01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(61)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.A. rental</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newell, James (1991), Labourism, Ideology and the British Middle Class
European University Institute

DOI: 10.2870/5299
Bendix (1959: 5) put it: "'success' through high mobility (does not) necessarily result in satisfaction; often it creates yet higher aspirations and a formulated hatred for one's social position". We noted in chapter 1 that, owing to changing relative sizes of the classes during the post-war period, there had been a corresponding increase in the proportion of the middle class who were 'newcomers'; yet we also noted that the level of middle-class Labour-voting had not increased over time. This suggests that social mobility may not be so important in explaining middle-class Labour support. In the 1983 BES sample, mobility accounted for about ten per cent of the variation in middle-class Labour support whereas ideology accounted for about a third (see table 9.5). Together, the two variables accounted for almost two-fifths of the variation.

**TABLE 9.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(02)</td>
<td>(01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-range</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobility</td>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-range</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobility</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(03)</td>
<td>(01)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further education has been found to correlate with Labour voting within the middle class (Jessop, 1974), and like mobility, has also been argued to be a source of left-wing beliefs and values. Perhaps the most developed

7. 'Social mobility' here means intergenerational, rather than work-life mobility with the categories being defined in terms of father's occupation when respondent was age 14. 'Short-range mobility' means that respondents had fathers in classes III to VI of Goldthorpe's (1980) classification of occupations. The 'long-range' mobile were those having fathers in class VII of the same schema. See Heath (1980, chapter 2) for further details of the rationale behind this procedure.
statement of this thesis has been made by Gouldner (1979). He argues that post-school forms of education expose their recipients to a 'culture of critical discourse' whereby "claims and assertions may not be justified by reference to the speaker's social status" (Gouldner, 1979: 3). Rather, a cardinal principle of the culture of critical discourse is that "all claims to truth, however different in social origin, are to be judged in the same way (Gouldner, 1979: 59): a disposition to seek and speak the truth", the importance "of criticism, and of the incompleteness and contingency of the truth as it is understood at any time" all make up "the basic creed of the academic world that educators seek to impart to students..." (Bowen, 1977: 85). Truth is thus "democratized and all truth claims are now equal under the scrutiny of CCD" (Gouldner, 1979: 59). Since it is the experience of further education as such (rather than the acquisition of formal credentials, which, by being a route to advantaged jobs, may be a source of right-wing beliefs) which is postulated to have radicalizing effects, we operationalized the education variable simply in terms of whether the respondent claimed to have attended "any kind of college, university or polytechnic" after leaving school. Although there was a positive association between further education thus defined and the holding of Labour beliefs (44 per cent among the college-educated as opposed to 31 per cent among those with no college experience), further education proved unable to explain the relationship between ideology and middle-class Labour voting (table 9.6). Indeed after controlling for ideology, the relationship between further education and Labour support was virtually non-existent.

Franklin (1985) points out that one of the most important 'middle range' theoretical propositions "established in the past thirty years of careful empirical research" emphasizes "the influence of social milieu in
communicating values, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour from person to

TABLE 9.6
Middle-class Labour vote (1983) by ideology and education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(46)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(02)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No college</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(07)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

person..." (1985: 45). Otherwise known as the 'neighbourhood effect', social milieu is held to affect both beliefs and individual voting intentions through inter-personal influence mechanisms, particularly conversations with friends and neighbours (Butler and Stokes, 1974); other authors (such as Parkin, 1967) advance rather more structural explanations whereby individuals "involved in normative sub-systems which serve as 'barriers' to the dominant values of the society" will be more likely to vote Labour than those who "do not have access to such... deviant structural supports" (Parkin, 1967: 282). Either way, it is argued that those living in predominantly working-class areas, regardless of their own class, will be more likely to vote Labour, while both middle- and working-class individuals living in a predominantly middle-class area will be more likely to vote Conservative. It would therefore seem wise to examine the extent to which the relationship between ideology and middle-class Labour support might be explained in terms of social milieu.

Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient data for a rigorous test of this hypothesis for it would require finding out about the social characteristics of the district in which each respondent lives and then linking this information to his or her voting behaviour. Such a task, in turn, requires a very time-consuming analysis of Census data. Unfortunately, the alternative - that of using information on respondents' constituencies -
is of doubtful validity given that it is perfectly possible for a person to live, say, in a predominantly working-class constituency while living in a predominantly middle-class neighbourhood (Heath et al., 1985). In the absence of more satisfactory procedures, we decided to use trade-union membership and plant size as indicators of the social environment in which the individual typically moved. In particular, if the crucial factor involved in the influence of social milieu really is "deviant subcultures" as emphasised by Parkin, then these two indicators would seem appropriate ones to use given that we can reasonably suppose that union members and those working in large plants are more likely to be integrated into deviant subcultures than non-members and those working in small plants (which are likely to encourage identification with employers rather than with fellow workers).  

Table 9.7 shows what happens to the relationship between ideology and Labour support when each of these two variables is controlled. Although they clearly are related to Labour voting their effects are modest as compared to ideology. For example, while plant size accounts for 11 per cent of the variation in Labour voting within the working class, ideology accounts for 35 per cent. Interestingly, the relationship between plant size and Labour support is, in the middle class, the reverse of what theory predicts. This is the first time we have encountered a variable whose impact on Labour support is qualitatively different in the middle and working classes. As an exception to the rule, this fact lends support to the view that the more the middle class resembles the working class sociologically, the more likely it

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8. On this see Ingham (1963) and Lockwood (1966).
is to vote Labour. Together the two variables account for up to a half of working-class Labour support and up to two fifths of support within the middle class. There is also a positive relationship between both variables and ideology (with the exception of plant size and ideology in the middle class). Overall, therefore, the data supports the view that social milieu is conducive to the acceptance of ideological beliefs favourable to Labour and that even among those who are less influenced in this way, ideology predisposes people to vote for the party.

### Table 9.7

Labour vote (1983) by class, ideology and two structural variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural variable</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th></th>
<th>Working class</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab.</td>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>Con.</td>
<td>Lab.</td>
<td>Int.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TU membership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade union member</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(53)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(01)</td>
<td>(116)</td>
<td>(45)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(08)</td>
<td>(138)</td>
<td>(87)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plant size</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(05)</td>
<td>(01)</td>
<td>(73)</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(02)</td>
<td>(131)</td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>(37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>(08)</td>
<td>(06)</td>
<td>(46)</td>
<td>(36)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** non-members of trade unions includes those who nevertheless claimed to have been union members in the past. Respondents in large plants = those with more than 500 employees at place of work; medium = 25 - 499 employees; small = 1 - 24 employees.

Three further important variables have been shown to be linked to middle-class Labour support. These are the previously mentioned ones of
employment sector 9 and state-dependency together with one describing an occupational division within the middle class. Such a division is viewed in different terms depending on the author, although in practice it is likely that there is considerable overlap between the categories thus delineated. Mallet (1963) emphasizes "the growth of more specialist, technical jobs with their distinctive expertise and 'knowledge base'. These are occupations like computer programmer, systems analyst or research scientist and are sometimes termed the 'new working class'" (Heath et al., 1985: 58). Along with the two other variables, the link with Labour-voting is viewed in terms of a straightforward theory of the political self-interest of the voters concerned. Parkin (1968) emphasizes a division between, on the one hand, those involved in business and commercial-type occupations such as "banking, sales... and managerial or supervisory posts in business enterprises", and on the other hand, "those engaged in the welfare and creative professions - for example, social work, medical services,... scientific research, and so on" (Parkin, 1969: 180). Here the link between occupation and politics is seen more in terms of the distinctive sets of values and attitudes inculcated by different occupations: welfare and creative-type occupations are those "in which there is a primary emphasis upon either the notion of service to the community, human betterment or welfare and the like, or upon self-expression and creativity. Business and commercial-type occupations "on

9. Dunleavy (1980) found that there was no independent impact of employment sector on voting other than one operating through union membership. His (1985) study together with Husbands however, did show a specific sectoral effect within the middle class. (See Dunleavy and Husbands, 1985, table 6.10). Alt and Turner (1982) have argued that specific sectoral effects are confined to those having middle-class family backgrounds.
the other hand, are set in the framework of values of the business world, with its over-riding concern with profitability and efficiency" (Parkin, 1968: 180).

Table 9.8 shows the relative importance of ideology and each of the three variables. As regards the occupation variable, Heath et al. (1985: 60) argue that a division between "managers in small establishments" on the one hand, and "ancillary workers" on the other, accurately captures a basic occupational division of the kind we have discussed, and we have adopted their procedure. As regards 'state-dependency', as Dunleavy and Husbands (1985) themselves recognise, it is a concept which is difficult to measure accurately with survey data. Moreover, in any meaningful sense of the term, those who are state-dependent are by definition not middle class, so we would get no cases in that part of our sample. However, it may be that some current members of the middle class have experienced periods of state-dependency in the past so we decided to focus on this latter variable. With the data at hand, the closest we could get to an accurate measure of experience of state-dependency was through a question which asked respondents whether, during the previous five years, they had ever been unemployed "for a period lasting 13 weeks or longer'. As one might expect, ideology loses none of its vigour when each of the three variables is controlled and continues to explain more of the variation. With regard to employment sector, for example, the really important distinction is between those employed in nationalized industries on the one hand, and private industry on the other (as opposed to a simple public - private division); yet whereas ideology accounts for 26 per cent of the variation as between these two groups, the division itself explains only 14 per cent. 'Experience of unemployment' tells a similar story accounting for no more than a few per
cent of the variation after ideology is controlled. It is therefore appropriate to paraphrase the conclusion drawn by Jessop (1974: 158) from an analysis similar in methodological terms and to say that, however one seeks to interpret the influence of ideology by controlling for this or that variable, it does not prove possible to show that the relationship between ideology and Labour support is spurious and capable of interpretation in terms of some third variable.

Nevertheless, it could be that the procedure we have adopted so far underestimates the impact of 'social background' in the sense that whereas our ideology index is a composite variable composed of six items, and moreover has been trichotomized, social background has been measured by single, often dichotomous, variables. The impact of ideology is thus 'advantaged' by our measurement procedures. If the social background

| TABLE 9.3 | Middle-class Labour vote (1983) by ideology and three variables |
| Occupation | Lab. | Int. | Con. |
| Small managers | 21.4% | 20.8% | 7.8% |
| | (06) | (05) | (04) |
| Ancillary workers | 34.5% | 13.6% | 4.4% |
| | (49) | (12) | (04) |
| Unemployment | | | |
| Employed | 26.6% | 9.6% | 4.1% |
| | (62) | (17) | (08) |
| Unemployed | 38.2% | 12.5% | 4.3% |
| | (13) | (02) | (01) |
| Employment sector | | | |
| Private firm | 20.4% | 3.8% | 3.1% |
| | (21) | (08) | (04) |
| Central or local government | 28.4% | 14.5% | 2.4% |
| | (40) | (12) | (02) |
| Nationalized industry | 45.2% | 19.0% | 10.3% |
| | (14) | (04) | (03) |

Note: employment sector determined on the basis of respondents' self-descriptions. 'Unemployed' means respondent has had experience of unemployment for period of 13+ weeks within previous five years. For details of operationalization of occupation variable, see Heath et al., (1985: 68-9).
variables were to be combined into a composite item we might find that their effects outweigh those of ideology. To test for this possibility, we assigned each respondent a score from 1 to 6 according to whether s/he (i) lived in a council house, (ii) was without the use of a car, (iii) had been upwardly mobile, (iv) was a trade union member, (v) was employed in the public sector, and (vi) had had experience of further education. The resulting index is thus intended to measure the extent to which respondents have been exposed to influences and situations which theoretically and empirically, appear to be conducive to Labour voting.

What our results (table 9.9) suggest is that the influence of ideology is not outweighed by that of social background: in the middle class, 5 per cent of those with a zero score voted Labour as compared with 76 per cent of top scorers; it will be recalled from section 2 of the previous chapter, that the disaggregated ideology index accounted for 76 per cent of the variation in middle-class Labour support. In the working class, social background accounts for some 58 per cent of the variation, whereas ideology accounts for 69 per cent. Moreover, within the middle class, the correlation between social background and Labour support is not perfect as is testified to by the fact that, after rising steadily with increasing score, the proportion of Labour support suddenly doubles as we move from the penultimate to the top-scoring category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Social background, class and Labour vote 1983</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social background score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An analysis of the partial effects of social background and ideology (which we undertake in table 9.10) shows that they both have quite strong independent effects on voting behaviour. In the working class they are of approximately equal importance, together accounting for two thirds of the variation in Labour support even in their aggregated versions. In the middle class, however, ideology is more important, accounting for a third as much variation in Labour support. It is interesting to note that in the middle class the relative influence of social background on Labour support is greatest among those with Labour ideological beliefs; in the working class, on the other hand, it is greatest among those with Conservative beliefs. This is probably to be explained in terms of different class norms of voting behaviour. For the middle class the political norm is not to support the Labour Party. Those who are in ideological agreement with Labour will already be subject to cross pressures. Exposure to influences and situations conducive to Labour support will increase these pressures so that social background will account for a relatively great amount of variation in the middle class. In the working class, on the other hand, the reverse considerations apply.

**TABLE 9.10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social background*</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab.</td>
<td>Int.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(06)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*High = 3,4,5,6; medium = 2; low = 0,1 on social background index

Thus ideology does indeed have an important role to play in the determination of Labour support. We have shown a connection between ideology
and Labour support in several different tests of the relationship and however we try to interpret it in terms of other factors it persists with varying tenacity. Again, a summary of Jessop's (1974: 162) general conclusions seem to be in order: he points out that people who are predisposed to support a particular party in virtue of their general attitudes and beliefs must still be mobilized to support it rather than another party. This explains why the impact of ideology will vary from person to person according to their exact location in the overall political, economic and social structure: where people are predisposed to support a party because of their ideological agreement, such factors as "the strength of union organization, political traditions mediated through informal interaction in the residential and occupational communities" (1974: 162) and so forth will be effective in mobilizing support; conversely, where people are less exposed to such influences, their ideological agreement with a party will have a relatively smaller impact. "It is precisely because of subtleties such as these... that there can be no single explanation for electoral behaviour" (Jessop, 1974: 162). Nevertheless, the evidence presented in this chapter upholds the view that ideology has a necessary role to play in any explanation of voting behaviour.

In the final section of this chapter we shall turn our attention, briefly, to a problem which is left outstanding by the above analysis, namely, the problem of the social structural location of those with differing ideological beliefs. Two considerations make it particularly important to tackle this issue. One is that until we explore the links between social factors and ideology, we have little more than "a haphazard array of individuals with a particular set of attitudes and dispositions" (Parkin, 1967: 279). A related, but more serious consideration is that we
have given little attention to the substantive content of ideological beliefs, and this, it could be argued, brings us perilously close to the tautological. In chapter 6 we argued that since the parties themselves couch their appeals to a significant extent in ideological terms, it is reasonable to hypothesize that electors think about politics in a similar fashion: and from this we drew the conclusion that those who were persuaded by, or willing to accept, a party's ideological stands were more likely to support the party than those finding themselves in disagreement. What we did not argue was that there was a relationship between vote and some particular, given set of ideological beliefs (such as a postulated 'dominant ideology'). Thus, although we would argue that our findings are still illuminating in that they suggest a significant role for a distinct type of belief in electoral choice, nevertheless it could be argued that we have demonstrated little more than that people will vote Labour when they find themselves in agreement with Labour! Hence the importance of demonstrating that the probability of such agreement is not something which is randomly distributed, but rather is socially structured in determinate ways.

9.4 The structural determinants of 'ideological closeness'

Taking our lead from Parkin (1967; 1968), Miliband (1969), Jessop (1974), Butler and Stokes (1974), as well as a host of other writers, we would argue that the prime determinant of the beliefs an individual is willing to accept is his/her particular location within the social matrix. Individual attributes such as income, age and occupational prestige, have an influence only to the extent that they influence individuals' structural locations (for example choice of residential community as influenced by income). For voting choice cannot be a simple behavioural derivative of an individual's attributes, but rather must be the result of such attributes'
in part determining the individual’s involvement in, and exposure to, social situations and contexts in which particular political influence mechanisms are more or less explicitly at work.

This is essentially the burden of Franklin’s (1985) complaint about the ‘consumption cleavage’ approach, namely that it postulates a direct and automatic link between consumption location and political behaviour, explicitly rejecting a mediating role for the influence of interpersonal contacts (Dunleavy, 1979: 413). It is extremely difficult to demonstrate the importance of such contacts through an analysis of survey data. For example, if one showed that income had no effect after controlling for type of residential community, this might be taken as supporting evidence; but other variables – such as housing tenure, for example – can be regarded either as an individual attribute or (given the division of neighbourhoods into homogeneous types of housing) as reflecting particular social environments. What we can say is that to the extent that the influence of such individual attributes as occupational prestige and income is not an unmediated one, we have few grounds for expecting to find consistent relationships between them and ideology. This is indeed the case. Thus, from the 1983 British Election Study sample, whereas the working class was less likely to subscribe to Conservative beliefs than was the middle class, the incidence of Labour beliefs was more or less the same in both classes: 29 per cent of the working class was in the Conservative ideology category of table 3.7 as compared to 35 per cent of the middle class: the proportions ideologically
closest to Labour were 39 and 38 per cent respectively. Moreover, in the working class there was a negative correlation between skill level and ideology, while in the middle class there was no consistent relationship between occupational prestige and ideology.

Turning our attention to social structural factors, it will be convenient to divide these into two groups. The first concerns the individual’s current situation and includes housing tenure, type of occupation, trade union membership, employment sector and plant size. The second includes background or childhood factors of which we shall examine two: parental class and type of education. As regards housing, we hypothesize that those living in local authority accommodation will be more likely to subscribe to Labour beliefs than those owning their own homes. However, while there is a significant association in the middle class, in the working class the association is small and statistically insignificant (table 9.11). This interaction between class and housing tenure is probably to be explained as follows: that renting from a local authority implies residence in a working-class neighbourhood to a much greater extent than home-ownership implies residence in a middle-class neighbourhood. Therefore, those working-class individuals who have managed to buy their own homes will

10. In terms of our 'general ideology index', 18 per cent of working-class respondents were ideologically closest to the Conservatives as compared to 33 per cent of middle-class respondents; those in the Labour category comprised 42 and 33 per cent respectively. See table 8.10 above.

11. 44 per cent of skilled workers were in the Labour ideology category as compared with 37 per cent of semi- and unskilled workers. In the middle class, the proportions ideologically closest to Labour among those in Registrar General’s classes I, II and III N.M. were: 32, 40 and 37 per cent respectively; the proportions closest to the Conservatives were: 35, 34 and 38 per cent (1983 BES sample).
not necessarily have made any corresponding move to a neighbourhood of a radically different character (and this is even less likely to have been the case since the implementation of the Conservatives' policy of council-house sales). This revised hypothesis obtains confirmation from the 1985 British Social Attitudes data in terms of our 'general ideology index': in the middle class, 46 per cent of council tenants subscribed to Labour beliefs as compared to 33 per cent of owners; in the working class, however the proportions were virtually identical at 44 per cent and 41 per cent respectively.

**TABLE 9.11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>L.A. rental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total per cent 99.9 100.1 100.0 100.0
Base, N (657) (70) (450) (417)

Chi square: for M.C. \( p < 0.03 \); for W.C. \( p > 0.6 \)

In both the middle and the working classes, union members are much more likely to subscribe to Labour beliefs than non-members and former members with the reverse relationship applying to membership and Conservative beliefs. In both classes the relationships are highly significant (table 9.12). Although we regard union membership as a 'socialization variable' (to use Franklin's (1985) terminology), we need to be cautious in seeing it in these terms, for it is not clear that union members very often meet together as such; and, particularly in the middle class where it is reasonable to suppose that union membership will be more voluntary, it may be that the predominant causal influence runs from values and beliefs to union
membership rather than the other way around. In other words, people may decide upon membership in the light of their values and beliefs. Certainly the fact that (in addition to members being more likely to hold Labour beliefs), those with Labour beliefs are more likely to be members, would support such an interpretation. Another possibility, given covariation between the two, is that union membership reflects the influence of employment sector with those in the public sector being more likely to be members of a trade union than those in the private sector. When we introduced such a control, however, the relationship between membership and ideology lost none of its vigour and on the contrary, remained highly significant in both classes. Therefore, union membership does seem to have a direct influence of people's political thinking although we are hard pressed to say what the precise mechanism might be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.12: Ideology by class and union membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideaology score</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base, N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square: for M.C. p &lt; 0.0001; for W.C. p &lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turning to employment sector, we find that there is a relationship between the latter and political thought - but only in the middle class; in the working class chi square is not significant. In the middle class it is those employed by a government organization who are distinctively more likely to hold Labour beliefs (by about 50 per cent as compared with those employed in private firms) with the small proportion of those employed by
nationalized industries in between (see table 9.13). To this writer, the most plausible interpretation of these figures is this: In the working class there is likely to be relatively little variation in work situation by employment sector: wherever they are employed, they will be subject to authority with few opportunities for promotion and little to encourage anything beyond a strictly calculative involvement in work. In other words, for the working class, employment sectors will not correspond to significantly different occupational milieux. In the middle class the situation is quite different: we have already mentioned Parkin's (1968) argument that different occupational communities sustain different political and social outlooks; and there will obviously be a high degree of overlap between such communities and employment sector. Teachers and social workers, for example, whose relatively radical views have been well-established, will be employed almost exclusively by government. Hence (we would argue), the greater tendency of those employed by a government organization to be at the Labour end of the ideology index. Those employed by the nationalized industries, on the other hand, since the latter's output is marketed, are less likely to be influenced by social and political outlooks radically different from those of the private sector, and it may also be that there is considerable traffic between the two in the sense that those employed in a particular occupation in one sector find a ready market for their skills in the other.

Some evidence to support this interpretation is had when we exclude from the analysis all those employed by government who are not classified as ancillary workers by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. Of the individuals remaining (65 per cent), 84 per cent are teachers (including university staff), social workers and nurses and so easily fulfil Parkin's
criteria (discussed above) of being in a welfare or creative-type occupation. We then find that the proportion subscribing to Labour beliefs increases—from 46 per cent to 50 per cent.

TABLE 9.13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology score</td>
<td>Private Nationalized Government industry</td>
<td>Private Nationalized Government industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base, N</td>
<td>(325)</td>
<td>(81)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p < 0.01; for W.C. p > 0.2

We now turn to the last of our 'current' socialization variables before analysing the impact of prior factors. Our expectation is that there will be a positive relationship between plant size and the likelihood of holding Labour beliefs in both the middle and working classes: large plants reduce the frequency of contacts with employers while bureaucratic principles of organization, often associated with large size, involve the application of universalistic rather than particularistic criteria to work practices and the employment relationship. Both tendencies, it has been argued, encourage the holding of radical values and beliefs. Looking at table 9.14, we can see that our expectation is not fulfilled: in the working class the relationship is in the expected direction but not statistically significant; in the middle class there is a curvilinear relationship between size and likelihood of holding Labour beliefs. We thought that this might have to do with covariation between size and type of occupation reasoning that, for example,
TABLE 9.14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Working class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total % 99.9

Base, N (246) (359) (164) (241) (465) (229)

Chi square: for M.C. p > 0.1; for W.C. p > 0.1

the 'radical professions' of teaching and social work would, by the nature of the work, be disproportionately concentrated in 'plants' of medium size. However, controlling for ancillary - non-ancillary employment did not alter the situation. The most plausible explanation for the lack of expected association between size and beliefs (assuming that the theory of the radicalizing effects of bureaucracy is correct) is that it is contaminated by the effects of employment sector. Thus Hill, (1981: 28) notes that "Public service organisations... led the field in the application of bureaucratic principles... in the late nineteenth century, but these filtered through to private enterprises slowly" - and from this one might not unreasonably infer that, to the extent that bureaucracy and size are associated, this is something which will affect the private, to a greater extent than the public sector. In other words, while in the private sector there will still exist small firms governed by particularistic and paternalistic criteria, in the public sector, the early application of bureaucratic principles makes the latter relatively independent of plant size. This interpretation was supported when we controlled for employment sector (middle-class sample): in the private sector there was a strong positive association between size and Labour and Conservative beliefs (chi
square significant at the one per cent level); among those employed in
nationalized industries and by government organizations, however, there were
weak negative associations (and chi square was not significant).

We thus see that individuals' current social structural locations are
related to the ideological beliefs they are willing to accept. We have shown
that for our middle-class sample, there are statistically significant
relationships between beliefs and housing type, union membership, employment
sector and occupation type in the way that hypotheses linking the two
variables say they should be linked. The fact that this is so testifies to
the utility of exploring the impact of structural factors. Individual
attributes such as occupational prestige, by contrast, were found to have
weak and inconsistent effects.

If, then, we turn to 'background' factors, we can note, first of all,
that having had experience of further education beyond school is positively
associated with Labour beliefs and negatively associated with Conservative
beliefs in both the middle and working classes (table 9.15). The findings
are thus consistent with the postulated effects of further education
mentioned above. The fact that the relationship between further education
and holding Labour beliefs is stronger in the middle than in the working
class fits well with the idea of the political socialization effects of
social milieux: in working-class milieux individuals will be relatively
predisposed to accept Labour beliefs anyway so that the experience of
further education will have a relatively small impact; in the middle class,
where such predispositions are lacking, further education will have a
correspondingly greater effect.
From table 9.16 we can see the effects (or rather, the lack of them) of class of origin. What we can deduce from the table is that whatever might be the effects of class-of-origin on vote (see above, table 9.5) - with the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 9.15</th>
<th>Ideology by class and experience of further education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideology</strong></td>
<td><strong>Middle class</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>score</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base, N</strong></td>
<td>(396)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p < 0.001; for W.C. p > 0.3

upwardly mobile more likely to vote Labour than those for whom being middle class is a second-generation phenomenon - such effects do not appear to work through ideology; for the upwardly mobile are not significantly more likely to subscribe to Labour beliefs than the socially stable, nor are the latter significantly more likely to subscribe to Conservative beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 9.16</th>
<th>Ideology by class and father's class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Father's class:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Middle class</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base, N</strong></td>
<td>(250)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square: for M.C. p > 0.6; for W.C. p > 0.5
In spite of this, overall, the data we have presented confirms our initial supposition that ideology varies with exposure to different social-structural influences. Ideology, in other words, is not randomly distributed, which means that its relation to vote is not just a case of those who think like Labour voting Labour. Rather, while ideology influences voting independently of structural influences as we saw in the previous section, the latter also have an important influence on ideology. The overall result is that the two factors have a cumulative influence on voting, together acting to bring about an even greater degree of variation than each of them acting singly.

Having, as we see it, tied up this particular loose end, we shall set out in our final chapter what we conclude from our research by suggesting 'where and how' further research might proceed.
CHAPTER 10: Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter is divided into four sections. In section 10.2 we draw some implications from our study for future research. We suggest some directions in which our study could be elaborated and argue that future research into the nature of people's political beliefs should make greater use of qualitative techniques. Section 10.3 suggests some implications of the view of voting as ideologically determined for the nature of Labour's electoral appeals and in section 10.4 we make some concluding remarks about the study as a whole.

10.2 Summary and implications for further research

H. Daudt (1961: 94) has pointed out that if a sociological category is found to have a particular partisanship, then influences of a sociological and socio-psychological character can indeed explain the element of uniformity in the choice - "but not the political direction of the choice. An explanation will always have to be sought in outside factors, and it is probable that in the last resort, these factors will be the activities of the parties and the government in the present and the past". In the light of this, the present study can be read as an attempt to provide support for the view that in the Labour Party and the middle class, we have a case of an alignment which has been 'frozen' beyond a time at which it might have been reasonable to speak of the activities of governments, insofar as they impinge on postulated class interests, as being the principal factor behind the pronounced anti-Labour partisanship of the class. This in its turn led us to suggest that the concept of ideology might at least be one important tool for an understanding of middle-class voting with respect to the Labour
Party, and we then went on to test this supposition through an analysis of data for one election, that of June 1983.

The suggestion that middle-class diffidence with respect to the Labour Party is unlikely to be explicable as a function of differing 'interests' served by Labour and Conservative incumbency, derived principally from analyses (undertaken in chapters 4 and 5) of the policy outputs of the 1974 Labour government together with those of the subsequent Conservative government. Our evidence suggested that there was little by way of specific and concrete policy outputs to support the view that the economic and social welfare of the middle class is less well-protected by Labour than by Conservative governments. This seemed to be true in spite of the fact that our definition of what it is to be middle class has been one which explicitly takes postulated interests (deriving from market and work situations) as the criteria of class placement: in chapter 2 we argued that since they are essentially gradational, conventional definitions of class can give us little purchase on why class might influence voting. In view of this shortcoming, we argued for a conception of class which, because it had the idea of 'interests' at its heart, would be most suitable for testing the view that interests lie at the base of the middle class' anti-Labour stance.

The above analysis as a whole suggested that we had to look elsewhere for the sources of middle-class support and non-support for Labour: in chapter 6 we argued that since the parties appeal to the electorate in essentially ideological terms, it was reasonable to expect the electorate to respond in a similar fashion. In chapter 8 we carried out several tests of the hypothesis of a causal association between ideology and vote and in chapter 9 found that the relationship withstood controls for various possible confounding factors.
There is a difference between explaining aggregate political alignments and individual voting choices: to say that the tendency of this or that social category to support a given party can be explained in terms of the latter's serving the category's interests, does not imply that each individual category member is aware of the fact and acts on the basis of such awareness. Therefore it might be argued that it is a fallacy to attempt to replace interest-based explanations of (aggregate) alignments with ones focussing on ideology. Against this however, it should be noted that in the absence of a knowledge of the processes underlying individual voting decisions, it is difficult, if not impossible, to specify the nature of a category's alignment, or in other words why one should expect it to be aligned one way rather than another.

As an analysis of just one of the factors underlying the individual voting act, the present study has shown that the various ideological beliefs electors hold have some significant, independent part to play. We found that not only were particular, given beliefs related to voting, but so was the elector's overall degree of 'ideological closeness' to a party, the disaggregated version of this measure accounting for up to three-quarters of the variation in three-party support among major-party voters at the 1983 election. In addition to the raw association, we also found that the relationship between ideology and voting was independent: a number of social background factors which are known to be related to voting and which on theoretical grounds we would expect to influence the individual's ideological beliefs, were unable to interpret the raw association. In other words, while the individual's social situation does influence his beliefs, the relation of the latter to vote holds up even among those who are not influenced in this way. Moreover, the impact of ideology did not seem to be
capable of interpretation as a simple function of electors' policy preferences or prescriptive stances and it withstood a test of the possibility that the causal flow ran in the opposite direction with voters adjusting their beliefs to conform to their party-predispositions. The 1983 election offered a severe test of the hypothesis of an ideological influence on voting - at least as far as voting Labour was concerned; those who wished to unseat the government of the day had, to judge from the parties' opinion-poll ratings, not just one, but two realistic alternatives, so that the rational voter had to think tactically as well as in terms of his beliefs. Moreover, if accounts of the unpopularity of Labour's policies and it's leader are to be believed, it could be that in many cases, these influences were strong enough to overwhelm any ideological effect; after all, Labour emerged from the campaign with its lowest share of votes cast (27.6 per cent) since 1918.

Obviously, to constitute a full account of voting, the study would have to be elaborated in several directions. In the first place, while we have shown that ideological beliefs are not randomly distributed in the population but are significantly related to where the individual stands in the social structure, we have said little about how structural influences have their effects. For example, we were able to show that union members were much more likely to hold Labour beliefs than non-members, but in this case in particular, were stumped for an explanation of why this should be so bearing in mind that the majority of members rarely, if ever, attend union meetings. Secondly, we have made no attempt to establish the relative importance of ideology as compared to other factors that may weigh with voters, notably, their evaluations of candidates and leaders, their judgements concerning the performance of governments and the competence of
oppositions. Our narrow focus has been deliberate, however: concerned to provide an account which would remain as faithful as possible to the actor's own 'definition of the situation', we also wanted to show that a particular kind of belief does bear on actors' voting decisions. Accordingly, we constructed a simplified model whereby we made the 'as if' assumption that ideology was the only factor involved, thereby putting ourselves in a position to be able to show that the view of voting as an ideologically determined act can in fact be sustained empirically.

From our discussion of the nature of ideology - as descriptive and explanatory beliefs having normative implications for action - one may get an impression of voters as the unwitting play-things of politicians, whereby the former are pushed and pulled by the implications of what they believe, yet without an awareness that this is happening to them. Such a rigidly deterministic view of behaviour is not one I would wish to sustain; on the contrary, sceptical of the applicability of deterministic class-interest models to the middle class in relation to the Labour Party, we came to the conclusion that what needed to be explained was not 'class deviance', but the reasons underlying any of such individuals' political choices or none. Such an approach implied a concern with the subjective meanings voters attach to their choices and, in so far as it focuses on beliefs about what is and what is possible, ideology as I have employed it is intended to represent an attempt to come to terms with such meanings given the nature of the (essentially quantitative) data I have to analyse. This brings us back to the suggestion we made at the outset, namely, that perhaps one of the reasons why an answer to that basic question of why voters vote as they do has so far remained elusive is due to premature attempts to encapsulate individuals' manifold reasons, motives and goals in just a few concepts such
as 'deference', 'party identification' and so forth. In the light of this, it would make the suggestion that further voting research would profit from a more extensive use of qualitative approaches than has been the case hitherto.

As Bogdan and Taylor (1975: 2) point out, qualitative techniques yield descriptive data which assist the researcher in the task of understanding human behaviour from the actor's own frame of reference. The most commonly used techniques are participant observation and unstructured interviewing - which means that the data do not easily lend themselves to quantification (Rose, 1982: 108). It is perhaps for this reason that what can loosely be described as the positivist and interpretative perspectives (the one seeking quantifiable causes which determine human behaviour, the other seeking to 'understand' that behaviour) are often thought of as incompatible research traditions. In fact, the two ought to be seen as complementary: all sciences are concerned with causal explanation and generalization and at the same time, the meanings actors attribute to their actions are themselves causal components of those actions. Hence Weber's well-known dictum that the social sciences must provide explanations adequate both at the level of meaning and at the level of causality (Zeitlin, 1973). The point rather is, or ought to be, that each approach is more suitable than the other for particular goals within the overall process of research. Thus if our goal is to throw light on electors' underlying beliefs (and this surely must be a goal if we are ever to arrive at a full account of voting decisions, for such matters as issue preferences, evaluations of government performance etc. hardly 'make sense' in the absence of some account of the beliefs underpinning them) then the unstructured interview would seem to be the most appropriate technique; for, whereas the latter allows the interviewer to explore "many facets of
his interviewee's concerns, treating subjects as they come up in conversation" (Becker and Geer, 1970: 133, my emphasis), as is often remarked, the trouble with the standardized survey schedule is that the resulting data "are inevitably constrained by the researcher's assumptions about what issues are important" (Robertson, 1984: 146, my emphasis).

The distortion that may thus result can be illustrated by considering the conclusions that emerge from the studies by Converse (1964) and Lane (1959). The former was concerned with the degree of coherence, loosely speaking, in belief systems in mass publics. Somewhat tautologically, the author suggests that as one moves 'downwards' from a small élite of the politically well-informed, so the nature of political thinking becomes increasingly unsophisticated. As supporting evidence he shows, among other things, that on a number of specific beliefs, among a sample of the American electorate the degree of constraint (in the sense of being able to predict from one belief that the respondent will also hold others) is much lower than among a sample of Congressional candidates - (the élite sample). These results are heavily dependent on the investigator's judgement not only of what beliefs are salient, but also of 'what goes with what', and since he himself is a member of the political élite, show little more than that the masses do not think like the élite do. Nevertheless, he is able to conclude that, "As a cold empirical matter (!) [the claim that the beliefs of mass publics are organized] does not seem to be valid" (Converse, 1964: 228).

Lane, on the other hand, is concerned to explore working-class attitudes to status and equality and bases his discussion "upon extended interviews from ten to fifteen hours each (in from four to seven sessions) with a sample of American urban male voters". Interviews "were conducted by a schedule of questions and topics followed by conversational improvised probes to
discover the underlying meaning of the answers given" (Lane, 1959: 35, my emphasis), and at the end of it all the author is able to conclude that "the working (and lower-middle) class defences of the present order... are well organized and solidly built" (Lane, 1959: 45, my emphasis) - a conclusion which is the exact opposite of the one reached by Converse.

Unfortunately, as Robertson (1984: 236) notes, the tradition of political science study of mass ideology, the depth interview with a small sample, as brilliantly demonstrated in R.B. Lane (1962), has almost entirely died out in favour of the apparently more 'scientific' large-scale survey with fixed-format questionnaires... Such an approach would be a valuable additional way of researching election campaigns but it is very unlikely that any grant-giving body would be prepared to finance it, so complete is the orthodoxy about scientific sampling.

I am not for one minute suggesting that large-scale surveys be replaced by small-scale depth, or unstructured interviewing, for as I have already suggested, the approach one adopts depends on the particular goals s/he is trying to reach. "It is ridiculous, for example, to imagine the U.S. Census being conducted in the form of the nonstructured interview" (Denzin, 1970: 127). What I am suggesting is this: unstructured interviewing is more suitable for the construction of concepts and hypotheses which do as little violence as possible to respondent meanings and definitions whereas, given the need for large random samples, the standardized survey schedule is more suitable for hypothesis testing and the rigorous quantification of results. It would therefore be valuable if the two could be used in conjunction - one for the construction of hypotheses, the other for their subsequent testing.
10.3 Implications for the Labour Party

It is impossible to conclusively verify scientific theories. "...the best that can be hoped for is the establishment of degrees of positive confirmation" (Keat and Urry, 1975: 46) and as Popper (1972: 36) points out, "It is easy to obtain confirmations... for nearly every theory - if we look for confirmations". He might have added that this is particularly true of the social sciences: because measurement procedures are relatively imprecise (as compared to the natural sciences) and because, hence, the number of 'auxiliary hypotheses' that have to be assumed is correspondingly large, the likelihood is relatively great of obtaining 'confirmatory' results that owe less to the validity of the hypothesis one is trying to test than to the invalidity of one or more of the auxiliary hypotheses (for example, the belief, when administering a standardized questionnaire, that one is presenting respondents with stimuli that will in fact elicit the same range of meanings for each). And the reverse side of this coin is that it is particularly easy to rubbish disconfirmatory evidence by arguing that the test-procedures were not carried out satisfactorily.

To continue with Popper's argument, he asserts that the formulation of hypotheses is purely a matter of conjecture and that we can never formulate theories on the basis of inductions from observations, for among other things, observation entails interpretation and if this is so, it presupposes some already-existing theory. What all this suggests is that an investigator's political and social values or biases, loosely speaking, are likely to impinge quite substantially on the making of his case, for if hypotheses can only be arrived at through the method of conjecture, and if social-scientific theories can be defended with relative ease, the investigator, thus knowing that he can come up with some evidence to support
more or less whatever he wants, is likely to be tempted to throw all his energies into establishing support for his favourite positions. This being the case, it seems clear to this writer at least, that to assist the reader in evaluating his efforts, the investigator is under an obligation to at some point make his values explicit.

My values are such that I do not find the 'standard' view of so-called 'democratic' regimes convincing. This is the view that 'party' competition, freedom of expression and universal suffrage guarantee rough equality of influence with 'ordinary voters' and groups competing in a political market on more or less equal terms. While free elections and the suffrage guarantee a formal equality of influence, in practice the political influence which different individuals and groups are able to wield is anything but equal, for voting and elections normally take place within a total socio-economic context in which access to political and economic resources is highly unequal. I therefore agree with Miliband (1969: 175) that "Concentration on the act of voting itself, in which formal equality does prevail, helps to obscure that inequality, and [thus] serves a crucially important legitimating function". And therefore, rather than follow what seems to be an equally 'standard' concern in political research, namely, to draw out the implications of one's study for 'democratic stability', I shall instead mention briefly what I think are some implications for the Labour Party and

1. One wonders, for instance, to what extent the energy that has gone into documenting and 'explaining' the apparent decline in class-voting is motivated essentially by a dislike of class conflict.

2. See, for example, Almond and Verba (1963); Eckstein (1966); Nordlinger (1967).
the possibility of radical political and social change: since social-scientific ideas tend to become incorporated into the 'theories-in-use' which are partly constitutive of action (Giddens, 1984), social scientists might reasonably expect that their efforts will make some contribution at least, to the realization of their political and social values.

If voting is to a significant extent an ideologically determined act, then Labour can expect to gain by devoting more effort to altering the terms of public debate, for the latter are often ideological as I have defined the term and they overwhelmingly favour the Conservatives. By 'the terms of public debate' I mean certain taken-for-granted assumptions about politics and society. These assumptions form premises upon which political debate, as conducted by politicians and journalists through the media of press, radio and television, is often based. The following are some examples:

1) The Soviet Union poses a military threat to the West (Wainwright, 1987).
2) Trade-union pay claims cause inflation (Glasgow University Media Group, 1976).
3) Strikes are caused by unaffordable pay claims (Glasgow University Media Group, 1976).
4) Violent protest by Britain's ethnic minorities is caused by criminals (Bollingsworth, 1986).
5) Home-owners bear a differential burden of domestic rates (Dunleavy, 1979).

This may be considered as one aspect of media conservatism in general,
analyses of which have been extensive: it cannot be doubted that whatever the range of views and opinions expressed, there has been consistent and overwhelming hostility to anything more radical than what social-democratic parties are willing to endorse. (For example, I have yet to see representatives of the IRA, urban rioters or members of the Militant Tendency being politely asked by a BBC interviewer to put their case before the public!) As far as consequences are concerned, however, it is often argued that the media have little impact owing to the tendency of individuals, whatever their views, to seek primarily from the media confirmation of their own strongly held attitudes. This may be true, but it does not alter the basic point that “there is immeasurably more about [the media] to confirm conservatively minded [individuals] in their attitudes than is the case for ‘radical’ ones; as far as the latter are concerned [the media], in any serious meaning of the word ‘radical’ [are] a permanent exercise in dissuasion” (Miliband, 1969: 213). (One wonders, for example, what the effect would be if instead of being told that “It was another day of misery for commuters because of the railmen’s strike”, we were told: “It was another day of misery for commuters today because of management’s insistence on cutting railmen’s living standards”?)

Unless Labour is prepared to challenge the assumptions underlying such entrenched conservatism it will always be arguing from a defensive position, and thus with a major handicap, for it will already have conceded the basic premises of its opponents’ arguments in the first place. (A classic example

3. See, for example, Glasgow University Media Group, 1976, 1982; Hollingsworth, 1986; Chibnall, 1977.)
of this is given by the decision—contradicting its claims to be a tolerant 'broad church'—to expel members of the Militant Tendency. In doing so it effectively conceded the arguments of the press that the party did indeed have an 'extremist' problem. Contrast this with the recent actions of the then chairman of the Conservative Party, John Selwyn Gummer who, when the BBC screened a programme about a far-right presence in the party, 'told the media to take a running jump by threatening to take the Corporation to court!') Moreover, unless the party does mount such a challenge, many policies worth fighting for are simply not credible: what, indeed, is the point of advocating unilateral nuclear disarmament if the public is convinced of a continuing Soviet threat?—or further public ownership if the public is convinced that it is 'less efficient' than private enterprise? Writing about the Conservatives' double election defeat in 1974, Rhodes Boyson (1978: 7) pointed out, correctly from his point of view, that "It is vital that the swing back to the Conservatives comes from the public's acceptance of true Conservative principles, and not just from an anti-Labour mood". If the Labour Party really wishes to establish a strong position for itself in terms of public opinion, and therefore in terms of votes, it is essential that from its point of view it takes this advice seriously.

10.4 Concluding remarks.

No theory or investigation which purports to be scientific is original, for "while concepts are produced by the human imagination, they are not produced in a completely free and unstructured manner which makes anything possible". First they are constrained by theoretical presuppositions and second they are constrained by data gathered using such presuppositions (Wright, 1985: 20). In other words, no investigation or theory can claim to be more than a novel elaboration or development of already-existing
knowledge. If, therefore, the present study has managed to convince, the
merit is largely due to those whose work I have had the privilege to read;
if not, I would simply borrow a quotation from Anthony Heath:

"The methods we have used may involve considerable error. In self-
defence, we can only say that the magnitude of these errors is almost
certainly less than if we had simply consulted our prejudices which
seems to be the usual alternative" (Jenks, 1972, quoted by Heath, 1981:
82).
APPENDIX 1: Cluster analysis

Everitt (1974: 49-50) points out that "The majority of clustering techniques begin with the calculation of a matrix of similarities or distances between entities" and that "many clustering techniques may be thought of as attempts to summarize the information on the relationships between entities which is given in a similarity matrix, so that these relationships can be easily comprehended and communicated". This statement concisely illustrates the two basic steps involved in the typical cluster-analysis case. The first (assuming that a sample has already been selected and that a set of variables on which to measure the entities in the sample have all been defined) is the computation of the similarities among the entities; the second, the choice of some criterion upon which to appraise such similarities for the purpose of organizing the entities into groups.

One's choice of similarity measure is to some extent limited by the measurement levels of his input variables. Distance measures, such as Euclidean distance, for example, presume that variables have been measured at least at the interval level. Since we are dealing with binary variables we are in effect, limited to one of a number of association coefficients.

To see how these work, imagine two individuals each measured on ten variables where 1 represents presence of the particular feature in question, 0 its absence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data can be reduced to a 2 x 2 association table which shows the total of the presences and absences of the ten variables for both individuals, singly and jointly. For the above data this table would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In using the term 'similarity measure' I am adhering to the terminology adopted by Aldenderfer and Blashfield (1984). They use the term 'similarity measure' as the generic term and distinguish between four basic types: correlation coefficients, distance measures, association coefficients and probabilistic similarity measures. This terminology does not, necessarily, correspond to that used by other authors.

2. Euclidean distance is defined as \[ D_{ij} = \sqrt{\sum (X_{ik} - X_{jk})^2} \] where \( D_{ij} \) is the distance between cases \( i \) and \( j \) and \( X_{ik} \) is the value of the \( k \)-th variable for the \( i \)-th case.
Now, labelling each cell of the table a, b, c and d thus,

\[ \begin{array}{ccc}
 & 0 & \\
1 & a & b \\
0 & c & d
\end{array} \]

one extensively used association coefficient, the simple matching coefficient (S), can be defined as

\[ S = \frac{(a + d)}{(a + b + c + d)} \]

Like all association coefficients, its possible values range from 0 to 1 and in the above example is equal to 0.7. The great variety of association coefficients available is primarily a consequence of different answers having been given to the questions of whether or not to take account of negative matches (i.e. joint absences, or d), in the calculations and/or whether or not matched pairs (i.e. a and d) should carry twice the weight of unmatched pairs or vice versa. Another extensively used coefficient, Jaccard’s coefficient (defined as \( S = \frac{a}{(a + b + c)} \)), for example, excludes negative matches altogether.

Needless to say, one’s choice of which coefficient to use is very much dictated by what seems most appropriate in the light of the particular task at hand. In our case, firstly, exclusion of negative matches does not seem at all reasonable. It may, of course, be entirely appropriate in fields such as biology where some cases would otherwise appear very similar “primarily because they both lacked the same features rather than because the features they did have were shared” (Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984: 29); but in our case ‘absence’ does not imply absence in this absolute sense. Thus, a respondent coded 0 on the home-ownership variable is not, thereby, presumed to be homeless, but simply, to have to satisfy his housing needs by some less advantageous means than owner-occupation.

More tricky is the question of weighting. Giving twice the weight to unmatched as to match pairs will, in all cases, lower the value of the coefficient, while doing the opposite will have the contrary effect. In our case, however, we can see no intuitively obvious reasons for making either of these adjustments. Moreover, since whatever coefficient one chooses is applied uniformly to all pairs of entities, it is difficult to see how such ‘across-the-board’ adjustments can have any real effect on substantive outcomes. In the light of these considerations we decided to use the simple matching coefficient as our measure of similarity.

Once coefficients have been calculated for all possible pairs of entities in the sample they can then be organized as an N x N similarity matrix (where N refers to the number of entities) which then serves as input data for one of a number of different clustering methods which, as we have said, constitutes a particular criterion for the creation of groups. Given a similarity matrix for five entities such as the one below, one easily explicable clustering method is the single link method.
Following closely Everitt's example (1974: 9-11), the process begins by searching the matrix for the two most similar entities which are then joined to form a group. In our example, these are entities 1 and 2. This, in effect, gives us a new matrix, $S_2$, showing the similarities between the newly-formed group and the three remaining entities, where the similarity between the group and each individual entity is defined as the highest level of similarity between the latter and each individual group member.

$\begin{array}{cccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\
1 & 1.0 & 1.0 & 0.5 & 0.1 & 0.2 \\
2 & 1.0 & 0.6 & 0.2 & 0.3 \\
\end{array}$

$S_1 = \\
\begin{array}{cccc}
3 & 1.0 & 0.8 & 0.6 \\
4 & 1.0 & 0.9 \\
5 & 1.0 \\
\end{array}$

$$(12) \ 3 \ 4 \ 5$$

$$S_2 = \\
\begin{array}{cccc}
1.0 & 0.6 & 0.2 & 0.3 \\
3 & 1.0 & 0.8 & 0.6 \\
4 & 1.0 & 0.9 \\
5 & 1.0 \\
\end{array}$$

We now see that the greatest level of similarity is between entities 4 and 5 which are thus joined to form a second group leaving us with matrix $S_3$:

$$S_3 = \\
\begin{array}{cccc}
1.0 & 0.6 & 0.3 \\
3 & 1.0 & 0.8 \\
\end{array}$$

The dendogram

We now see that the greatest level of similarity is between entities 4 and 5, which are thus joined to form a second group leaving us with matrix $S_3$:

The greatest similarity is now between entity 3 and the group containing entities 4 and 5. 3 is, therefore, added to 4 and 5. Finally, at the 0.6 level of similarity, the two groups are joined to form a single group containing all five entities. The most common expression of the results of this clustering technique (as for all so-called 'hierarchical' techniques) is a dendogram, "which is a graphical display of the hierarchical structure implied by the similarity matrix and clustered by the linkage rule" (Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984: 37):
APPENDIX 2: Odds ratios

Odds ratios provide an answer to the question of how strongly two variables are related. In chapter 8, our variables are vote and ideological belief. We thus analysed how strongly agreement with a belief espoused by a party was related to vote for that party. Thus, producing a 2 X 2 table for the relationship (within the middle class) between Conservative support, and agreement with the party's position on governments' ability to reduce unemployment, we find that the odds of voting Conservative among 'agrees' are 192 to 82. Among 'disagrees', the corresponding odds are 197 to 247. Calculating their ratio

\[
\frac{192}{82} = \frac{197}{277}
\]

gives a figure of 3.292.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B: Ideological belief</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Non-Conservative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: Vote</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Conservative</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>274</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Carrying out the same operation on the relationship between Labour support and agreement with that party's position on the same issue (shown in the table below), we get the following results

\[
\frac{100}{374} = \frac{15}{259}
\]

-giving a figure of 4.617.

Since 4.617 is larger than 3.292, we can conclude that (within the middle class) there is a stronger relationship between agreement with Labour on unemployment and support for the party than there is between agreement with the Conservatives and support for that party.
APPENDIX 3: The British tax system

Taxes can be divided into two standard categories of direct and indirect taxes. Within the former category, the most important in terms of numbers of households subject to it, is the income tax; within the latter, this time using revenue raised as the criterion of importance because essentially it affects everyone, the most important is Value Added Tax. The latter is regressive in that, because it is levied as a fixed percentage of the prices of goods and services, it takes a larger proportion of the incomes of those on lower than on higher wages. This gives us a first criterion for assessing the impact of government tax measures on workers and the salaried, for, if we assume that by and large the former have lower earnings than the latter, then VAT increases will have a proportionally greater effect on workers’ earnings while the opposite will also be true.

"The present system of British income tax works on the basis of awarding allowances" – for example, the single and married person’s allowance and allowances for the maintenance of children, dependent relatives and so on – which can be set against taxable income" (Field, 1981: 17). Because allowances are always expressed as absolute amounts, increases in the average rate of tax diminish as we move from the bottom up the income scale: since the vast majority of taxpayers have never been liable to a marginal rate of tax higher than the basic rate, the marginal rate of tax is effectively constant for most taxpayers; from the constancy of the marginal rate and the fact that tax allowances are fixed amounts and not proportions of income, it follows that the average tax rate rises progressively less swiftly as income increases. From this follows the further fact that the process of wage inflation shifts the tax burden from higher to lower-income groups. Therefore, increases in, or failures to increase allowances year by year to take account of such inflation again have a proportionally greater impact on the disposable income of lower than of higher-wage households. This gives us our second criterion: we judge worker households as having

1. This is a reasonable assumption to make because although there is some overlap in the earnings distributions for the two groups, this mainly reflects the existence of some highly paid skilled workers on the one hand and middle class individuals at the start of their working lives on the other. Because middle-class earnings tend to rise over the life-cycle as career advances are made in a way that workers’ earnings do not, on average, the former will be higher than the latter.

2. For example, in 1976, the Chancellor of the Exchequer put the number of higher-rate taxpayers at 1.3 million – this out of a total working population of some 25 million people.

3. For instance, Frank Field (1977: 28) suggests that between 1955 and 1975, "the tax paid by a single person on a low wage (defined as two thirds the average) has trebled as a proportion of gross income. That paid by an average wage earner has doubled, while the high-paid wage earner (one-and-a-half times the average) has seen an increase of slightly over one half in the proportion of income paid in tax".

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European University Institute

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received proportionately greater reductions in their tax burdens to the extent that at each budget the basic personal tax allowances are raised by more than the rate of inflation, and proportionately greater increases to the extent that allowances are not so raised. Our third criterion derives from an analysis of adjustments made to the basic tax rate: “A reduction in the tax rate benefits a taxpayer in proportion to his level of taxable income (after deducting tax free allowances). The higher one’s income, the greater the [absolute] value of a reduction in marginal tax rates” (Pond, 1979: 65).
APPENDIX 4: Ideology indices

As explained in chapter 7, we decided to divide our indices into categories that were as near as possible equal in terms of the distribution of responses. However, dividing an index in this way makes any given individual A’s category-placement dependent on the replies of all the other individuals in the sample; and as a result, it can be argued, the index gives a false picture of where A actually stands vis-à-vis a ‘party’. The indices I have used are simple additive indices based on sets of statements with which respondents are asked if they agree or disagree. A Labour mode of response scores 0, 'don't know' scores 1 and a Conservative mode of response scores 2. Six items thus gives us an index running from 0 to 12, which is then divided into three categories called 'Labour', 'Intermediate', 'Conservative'. The trouble is that partitioning the index so as to get an equal division in terms of the distribution of replies means that the Intermediate and/or Labour (Conservative) categories might also contain respondents who have actually endorsed a majority of Conservative (Labour) items. In order to make the index consistent with the theoretical construct it is supposed to measure, then, these individuals should be placed in the two end categories. If this reasoning is correct then we also have a validity problem for quite obviously our results could be an artefact of the ('incorrect') criterion we have chosen for boundary-placement. It seems to me that the first objection is based on a conceptual confusion which has a ready answer. The second objection is more serious.

With regard to the first, we would argue that it arises because of the labels we have used to describe each of the three categories. That is, it does seem a misnomer to call the middle category 'Intermediate' when it may in fact also contain respondents who have endorsed a majority of Labour (and/or Conservative) items. However, given an index from 0 to 12, the only way to meet this objection would be to include in the middle category only those who score exactly 6. Only then would we obtain a perfect division between those endorsing a majority of Labour items, those endorsing an equal number of Labour and Conservative items and those endorsing a majority of Conservative items. But if instead of 'Labour', 'Intermediate' and 'Conservative', what if we decided to call the categories, say, 'Labour', 'less Labour', 'even less Labour'? (Such a procedure would be justified both by the ordinal nature of the index and by the focus of this research on the conditions governing Labour support). In this case we would have no theoretical guidelines for placement of the cutting points, for whenever we put them it would always be the case that any position to the right of another satisfied the condition of being 'less Labour' than the latter and that any position further to the right still, satisfied the condition of being 'even less Labour' than the position(s) designated 'less Labour'. Moreover, even if we stick with the original interpretation, it is not at all clear that confining the 'Intermediate' category to the '6's only represents a satisfactory solution either, in that while my indices are intended to measure 'ideological closeness', they do not have extremes that are absolutes (so we cannot make the assumption that the extremes are equidistant from the 'real' mid-point). If we were to add a couple of items, then what was the mid-point on the old index would no longer be so in terms of the new. We do not feel, therefore, that our chosen criterion of category-designation can be objected to on theoretical grounds.

Paradoxically, however, this gives the second objection even greater force for if the placement of boundaries really is, as I would argue,
arbitrary from a theoretical point of view, then it is paramount to show that our findings are independent of changes in the cutting points rather than being produced by them. The reason is that whereas one-step differences will be registered for individuals who change a little close to the divisions, such is not the case for individuals well inside the divisions. A little thought will be enough to make one realize that such changes could well be enough to neutralize or even reverse one's findings.

In the light of these reflections I decided to employ the method of replication to show that my conclusions are not affected by the way my indices are divided. That is, I decided to try to increase the degree of confirmation of my propositions by decreasing the tenability of the argument that the findings are artefacts of the method.

"It can safely be said that the main analytical tool in social science investigations is covariation" (Galtung, 1969: 395). The problem is that because covariation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for causality, in the absence of experimental data, by itself covariation tells us nothing about causal relations. Yet we do want to be able to talk about such relations. Therefore, we have to proceed 'negatively' as it were and try to show the untenability of arguments that the case of covariation in question is due to something other than causal dependence. In the language of the null hypothesis, we seek evidence which together allows us to assert that we have minimised the possibility of committing type I error. In the present case, this amounts to attempting to eliminate the possibility that the relationship between A and B is due to the fact that they are both dependent on some third variable. Given this fundamental goal of the sort of multivariate analysis we are carrying out here we can say that to carry out a successful replication means to show that the postulated direct, positive causal relationship between A and B remains tenable in the given test conditions even when we alter the way the two variables are measured. In the case of our ideology index this means that when we do the necessary testing, it needs to be the case that the covariation maintains its sign and roughly its magnitude even when we alter the way in which it is cut up. Until we have shown this, the possibility remains open that the distribution of replies over the index is such that we could obtain negative, via zero to positive correlations only depending on placement of the cutting points.

To guard against this possibility we 're-ran' the analyses reported in chapters 8 and 9 this time using ideology indices divided not in terms of the distribution of replies, but in such a way that the 'intermediate' categories were 'genuinely' intermediate in the sense of containing only those who had endorsed an equal number of Labour and Conservative items. An initial idea of the effect, or rather the lack of effect, this had can be gained by comparing table A (simply a reproduction of table 8.7) with table B (based on the new cutting points) below. From the figures in table B, it is apparent that on replication, ideology accounts for 32 per cent of the variation in voting in the middle class and 36 per cent in the working class — compared to 36 and 39 per cent respectively on the basis of the original index. Some slight weakening of the relationship in this way should be permitted, for as we have already remarked, we can easily increase the correlation if we so wish simply by disaggregating the index completely (or what amounts to exactly the same thing, shifting the cutting points such that the 'Labour' and 'Conservative' categories comprise only the 'end positions' of the index). What cannot be permitted is that the correlation changes sign. In none of the 're-run' tables was this the case, however.
### TABLE A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Ideological closeness, class and 1983 vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Ideology score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Con %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>76.6 (206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>20.1 (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>3.3 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working class</th>
<th>Ideology score</th>
<th>Average per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Con %</td>
<td>Int %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>52.2 (141)</td>
<td>31.7 (96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>16.3 (44)</td>
<td>24.8 (75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>31.5 (85)</td>
<td>43.6 (132)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle class</th>
<th>Ideological closeness, class and 1983 vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Ideology score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Con %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>76.6 (206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>20.1 (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>3.3 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working class</th>
<th>Ideology score</th>
<th>Average per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Con %</td>
<td>Int %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>52.2 (141)</td>
<td>36.9 (79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>16.3 (44)</td>
<td>23.4 (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>31.5 (85)</td>
<td>39.7 (85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases.
When we re-ran the tables showing the raw, bi-variate association between ideological closeness and various measures of party support (tables 8.7, 8.8 and 8.10), ideology accounted for slightly less variation, but only about 3 per cent less on average. Considering ideology and subjective class identity, it was not possible to show on replication that the relationship of the former to vote could be explained in terms of the latter. On the contrary, ideology continued to be more important: re-running table 8.17, for instance, produced the result that in the working class ideology was twice as important as subjective identity while in the middle class it accounted for over two-and-a-half times as much of the variation in Labour voting as subjective identity. Analogous results were obtained when we tried to explain the relationship between ideology and party support by controlling other variables: when we re-ran table 9.4 — showing Labour voting by ideology and consumption sectors — for instance, ideology accounted for between a fifth and a third of the controlled variation on average whereas none of the consumption-location variables accounted for more than a fifth. Finally, it was not possible by altering the cutting points, to reject the hypothesis of section 9.4 that individuals' ideological beliefs are socially structured in determinate ways: the higher educated and union members continued to be more likely to hold Labour beliefs than the less-well educated and the non-unionised — and so forth. The only doubt which arose concerned the sub-hypothesis set out on pages 281 — 2 above, namely, that in the middle class but not in the working class those living in local authority accommodation will be more likely to subscribe to Labour beliefs than those who own their own homes (because renting from a local authority implies residence in a working-class neighbourhood to a greater extent than home-ownership implies residence in a middle-class neighbourhood); when we re-ran our general ideology index against housing tenure, local-authority renters turned out to be more likely to subscribe to Labour beliefs than owners also in the working class.


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