

**THE ROLE OF POLITICAL CONCEPTS IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE
LABOUR PARTY 1987-1997**

ALEXANDER LANDAU

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**Department of Politics
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Sheffield**

January 2008

In loving memory of Tricia Landau

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my principal supervisor, Michael Kenny, for his help, guidance and inspiration throughout this research. Steve Ludlam, my second supervisor, offered invaluable feedback and encouragement at crucial junctures of the study. I would also like to express my thanks to Sarah Cooke at the Department of Politics for support and advice over a number of years. All three were very understanding when my circumstances became somewhat more complicated midway through my research. I am grateful, too, for the scholarship provided by the University of Sheffield that enabled me to avoid full-time employment for at least another three years.

I am indebted to Jo Roberts for her patience, encouragement and welcome distraction, and for proof-reading the final draft. I am also grateful to my family for their constant support and interest in my work, even when details of it were not forthcoming. This study is dedicated to my mother, who passed away during my time at Sheffield, for providing the support, care and encouragement without which I would not have started my research in the first place. I miss her enormously and hope that she would have been proud of my work.

Alex Landau

Abstract

This research attempts to provide an analysis of the Labour Party's transformation between 1987 and 1997 that emphasises ideas in this change. Founded on the notion that ideas are expressed through political concepts, the study takes concepts as its central analytical unit to highlight the presence of ideas in change. It draws on theories of conceptual change largely applied to works of political thought to suggest that political transformation is always accompanied by conceptual transformation, which in turn illustrates ideational development in such cases of change. The study seeks to document the Labour Party's application of important political concepts during the period, such as *opportunity*, *justice*, *community*, *responsibility* and *globalisation*. These concepts were applied by the Party in addressing fundamental issues within its political approach, such as the distribution of resources in society, the inter-relationship between its members, and the changing context within which such responses must be framed. It is suggested that the changing application of the concepts in addressing such elements of Labour's broader approach – as evident in official Party documents, and the articles and speeches of its leading members – represented an important ideational element in its changing trajectory during the decade in question. As such, the research frames a narrative of Labour's development that highlights an evolution of ideas in the Party's attempt to adapt its approach to an ever-changing context. The contention is that such an evolution accompanied Labour's altered approach throughout the period, and that this ideational element is often overlooked, underplayed or misrepresented by the existing literature in accounting for this transformation. It is suggested that only by understanding the presence and nature of this ideational development can a complete account of the changing Labour Party be framed, something which can be achieved by charting the evolutionary nature of its conceptual usage during the period in question.

Contents

1	Literature Review	1
2	Theoretical Framework	26
3	Equality	57
4	Fraternity	97
5	Contextual Change	139
6	Analysis	171
7	Conclusions	192
	<i>Endnotes</i>	200
	<i>Bibliography</i>	201

1. Literature Review

Introduction

The transformation of the Labour Party, from its defeat in the 1987 election to a landslide victory a decade later, constitutes one of the most remarkable British political developments in recent times. It entailed changes not just in the Party's electoral fortunes and internal organisation, but also in its political approach and the policy informed by this. In the countless interpretations of Labour during this period, along with the multitude of studies and comments attempting to ascertain precisely what ideological label can be attached to the Party at a given juncture, there has been much interest in how the process of transformation in its approach should be accounted for. As such, accounts of Labour's policy trajectory from 1987 to 1997 have embraced a variety of positions, including: a focus on the electoral motivations of the changing Party; the notion that it was simply returning to its familiar post-war position from an extreme location in the early- and mid-1980s; the suggestion that it was fundamentally re-working its position in light of changing economic and political circumstances; and an attempt to incorporate elements of all these explanations and more. This study hopes to add to the debate concerning the way in which the Labour Party transformed its policy programme so dramatically during the decade in question, and in the process address broader issues concerning the interpretation of political change. The contention here is that narratives of Labour's transformation tend to neglect the role of *ideas* in its changing approach to policy, and that when accounts do give credence to ideas in the process of change, this tends to underplay or misrepresent the nature of this influence.

This study therefore seeks to illustrate that the Party's development from its defeat in 1987 to its landslide victory a decade later entailed a prolonged and consistent embrace of ideas, prompted in part by reconsiderations of the most judicious approach for the Party to achieve its policy goals, rather than merely straightforward electoralism or an unthinking return to a past positions. The way in which this study attempts to illustrate this importance of ideas is by examining Labour's language during the period in question, looking specifically at its changing application of important political concepts. While a specific and detailed account of why such an approach might be so

appropriate in illustrating the role of ideas is covered in the next chapter, the fundamental premise of this research is that political concepts are understood to be the expression of key political ideas, with their changing application by the Party therefore representing a change in its ideas. As such, this study seeks to trace the Labour Party's changing approach through changes in the way in which it articulated important political concepts – such as *opportunity*, *justice*, *community*, *responsibility* and *progress* – in addressing fundamental political questions. While one or two other studies have looked at the Labour Party through its transformed articulation of specific political concepts, this is not treated explicitly as a vehicle for the expression of ideas in understanding political transformation, nor subject to extended empirical examination (for example, Freedon, 1999a; 1999b; Bevir, 2000a). Therefore, by building on a small but insightful trend in this specific way, it is hoped that an account of Labour's transformation can be constructed that highlights an ideational development so often overlooked in accounts of the Party's changing approach.

It is suggested that applying theories of conceptual change to the language of the Labour Party might potentially provide an insightful and novel addition to the existing literature on its development between 1987 and 1997. By using conceptual approaches, it is possible to afford importance to considerations such as electoral expediency, while nevertheless illustrating the significance of an ideational development accompanying these in understanding the Party's change. Indeed, by suggesting in this way that ideas are of a constant significance (rather than pertinent at one stage rather than another), such approaches point to an *evolution* of ideas, whereby previous ideational approaches are built on, informed by the changing political context. Accounts of Labour's development in this period give much attention to such a context informing policy positions, but in a way that sees this as the catalyst for electorally expedient actions rather than for the development or revision of existing ideas. As such, what might be seen as significant *ideational* events within the period, such as the Policy Review, the inception of the Commission on Social Justice (CSJ) and the birth of 'New Labour', are largely viewed as material, electorally-motivated occurrences. Similarly, while many, if not most, accounts of Labour's transformation see it as a single process, perhaps with a number of staging posts, the notion that this change could be informed by an evolution

of ideas appears to be completely overlooked in favour of a focus on successive attempts to make the Party electable once more. The application of conceptual approaches, by providing a descriptive account of change that still takes seriously the structural and material forces shaping this, might provide a novel account of the period in question which, in highlighting the significance of an evolution of ideas in response to broader electoral imperatives motivating the Party's changing approach, itself offers an important interpretive angle neglected in other accounts of change.

This chapter, in reviewing accounts of the Labour Party's changing policy direction between 1987 and 1997, seeks to illustrate the way in which the role played by ideas is a factor that is largely overlooked or underplayed in accounting for policy transformation. As such, only *narratives of Labour's change*, rather than *ex post facto* ideological audits seeking to define or label the Party's position after 1997, are considered. The accounts are reviewed specifically with regard to the role that each attaches to ideas in this process of change. As such, the groupings are very broad, and each contains a diverse spectrum of narratives. However, reviewing the literature specifically with regard to ideas best achieves the aims of illustrating the importance of an ideas-centric approach to the Party's change and identifying problems with accounts that neglect this aspect of Labour's transformation. One consequence of this neglect is that interpretations of the changing Party covered in this review do not tend to frame their accounts with regard to their coverage of ideas and the role these played in the Party's transformation. As such, it should be emphasised at this juncture that the organisation of this review reflects the specific concern of this thesis, rather than an attempt to place the accounts reviewed within interpretive groups that the authors themselves would necessarily see as defining their work. Nevertheless, approaching the review in this manner is an instructive way to distinguish between academic explanations of what was a complex and nuanced process of change while illustrating the addition to the literature potentially provided by this study.

The first section reviews the area of the literature perhaps furthest removed from an ideational narrative of change – accounts that seek to explain the Party's development entirely with reference to short-term electoral expediency. Thus, sources that draw on strategic theories of party competition are initially considered, including:

those framing a relatively straightforward Downsian account of Labour's development; those offering developments of, or variations on, this theme; and finally those explicitly criticising the Labour Party's ideational weakness in framing an electorally-driven narrative. The second section is concerned with literature that offers something of a multi-dimensional narrative in accounting for the Labour Party's change: that is, those sources which attribute some – often much – importance to electoral strategy, but nevertheless contend that other factors, such as the role of internal debate, also played a discernible role, however insignificant, in the Party's altered trajectory. The third section covers the literature that goes further than such 'hybrid' approaches, specifically looking beyond a dominance of electoral dynamics in asserting instead that internal factors such as ideas and ideological heritage played a significant role in this change, but only in the latter stages of the period in question. It is then suggested in the concluding section that the accounts within each of the sections underplay the consistent importance of evolving ideas in accompanying the Party's change throughout the period in question.

Electoral accounts

Downsian explanations

Most, if not all, accounts of Labour's transformation between 1987 and 1997 draw to some degree on electoral factors as a motivation for this. Indeed, it is undeniable that successive election defeats ensured that the imperative of regaining office became increasingly important to the Party's operation. However, a significant proportion of the literature views such electoral considerations as the overwhelming, or at the very least the defining, factor informing the process of change. Such accounts often take as their starting point the spatial theory of party competition framed by Anthony Downs, entailing a positioning of the Party in the centre ground of the ideological spectrum to appeal to the fixed preferences of the median voter (Downs, 1957). In spite of his own reservations concerning such an account, Andrew Hindmoor provides a useful illustration of the general logic of Downsian explanations of Labour's changing approach in the 1980s and 1990s (Hindmoor, 2004). Such logic, Hindmoor suggests, starts with the assumption that Labour lost the elections of 1983 and 1987 having

abandoned the median voter in pursuit of a set of left-wing policies that did not reflect the preferences of much of the electorate. 'It regained electoral respectability when Neil Kinnock used a formal review of policy undertaken in the aftermath of the 1987 defeat to jettison left-wing policies and move Labour back towards the median voter. Labour nonetheless lost in 1992 because it had not moved far enough. Reborn as New Labour in 1994 the party romped to easy victory in 1997...by ditching many of its remaining policies and moving further to the right' (Hindmoor, 2004, p. 6). A more succinct account still of Labour's Downsian strategy is provided by Pippa Norris, who states: 'The most plausible explanation of why Labour moved centre-right is that, in accordance with...spatial theory [of electoral competition], it rationally adopted an electoralist strategy to gain the votes of 'Middle England' after 18 years in the opposition wilderness' (Norris, 2001, p. 42).

Colin Hay provides an interesting analysis of Labour's transformation in the context of this study (Hay, 1999). In spite of suggesting that 'we ignore the realm of political ideas at our peril', and emphasising the importance of ideas elsewhere in his writing, Hay nevertheless establishes 'the political conditions, motivations and perceived exigencies of Labour's modernisation and the Downsian logic of political convergence that they have served to consolidate' (Hay, 1999, p. 36, p. 105; see for example, Hay, 2002). In discussing the Labour Party's preference-accommodating electoral approach prior to 1992, Hay asserts: 'The basis for Labour's renewed appeal to the electorate' was 'to appeal to the pre-formulated sensitivities of the electorate, viewed as a fixed constraint to which policy appeals must be oriented' (Hay, 1999, p. 67). To this end, the expansion and professionalisation of the Labour Party's strategy for campaigning and communications allowed the Party in the late-1980s to gauge voter preferences when revising policy (Hay, 1999; see Hughes and Wintour, 1990). By 1997, the Party had at its disposal a 'highly sophisticated' range of practices for measuring public opinion and revising policy accordingly. 'A more distinctly Downsian strategy could scarcely be imagined' (Hay, 1999, p. 96). Hay qualifies his account of Labour's approach to party competition by suggesting that such strategy can be used only to *describe*, rather than *explain*, the Party's actions during the decade in question. This distinction enables Hay to assert that the conditions under which Labour adopted a

seemingly Downsian strategy were 'in fact largely ideational and contingent', given that it came to accept many of the assumptions informing such an approach (Hay, 1999, p. 94). Indeed, Hay suggests that Party strategists were in all likelihood unaware of the specific Downsian psephological model, ironically drawing directly on the marketing and research assumptions on which such an economic theory of party competition is founded. Labour was therefore 'acting Downsian' while perhaps not 'thinking Downsian' (Hay, 1999, p. 101). This nevertheless suggests that considerations of party competition – whether consciously Downsian or not – were of foremost importance to the Party's approach at this time.

The central place of electoral strategy in understanding Labour's approach, albeit in a less explicitly-Downsian guise, is similarly discussed by Andrew Thorpe who, like Hay, emphasises the increased refinement and importance of such strategy following defeat in 1992, and specifically under Blair's leadership in 1994 (Thorpe, 2001). While acknowledging that the process of Party transformation was a long one, Thorpe suggests it was carried 'further than ever before' under Blair, whose strategy was 'to ensure that the party did nothing to put off the voters who were now disappointed with the Conservative government for which they had voted in 1992' (Thorpe, 2001, p. 228). Thorpe discusses the use of focus groups which 'market-tested' Labour's policies, implying that it was for this reason that the majority of Labour's more contentious pledges were dropped. Indeed, on the occasions that Blair seemed to be adopting a relatively radical position, for example with a series of high-profile references to stakeholding early in 1996, this was swiftly dropped once its potential as a stick with which to beat Labour became apparent. Paul Norris believes that, in moving away from stakeholding, Labour missed a clear opportunity to forge a new direction in British politics (Norris, 1999). This failure to attempt to set a 'new hegemonic agenda' was proof that the Party 'was catering to existing ideas rather than seeking to build support for new ones' (Norris, 1999, p. 35). The result of this, according to Kevin Davey, was the courting of a diverse and unstable coalition of support, a manifestation of the 'party's attenuated pluralism...based on a set of compromises imposed by a short term objective: political office', which itself was the product of 'the long-term repositioning of the party in the media and in the political marketplace' (Davey, 1996,

p. 76). Davey contends that the outcome was little more than a 'temporary political formation' composed of a 'growing coalition of interests that new Labour has amassed [which] remains tactical, temporary and pragmatic' (Davey, 1996, p. 76).

Beyond Downs

While such commentators appear to frame a relatively straightforward Downsian account of preference-accommodation, others provide a more nuanced, but no less defensive, account of the Labour Party's apparent transformation from 1987. The narrative provided by Richard Heffernan agrees with that of Hay, for example, that Labour's transformation constituted a subscription to the dominant ideological agenda as part of the 'politics of catch-up', yet nevertheless rejects a purely Downsian account of preference-accommodation (Heffernan, 2000). Heffernan states: 'If parties do not always react by adjusting their appeals in line with electoral attitudes *à la* Downsian theory, they do respond to an altered set of parameters bounding the competitive ideological space as shaped by a successful (party) competitor' (Heffernan, 2000, p. 174). Thus, Heffernan believes that Labour adjusted its appeals not in line specifically with the fixed preferences of certain groups of the electorate, as much as with the received political wisdom of the time, thereby responding to a transformed ideological environment shaped by the success of the Thatcherite Conservative party. With preference-shaping administrations such as the Conservative government of the 1980s there is, of course, a significant overlap between the electoral and the ideological spheres, as Heffernan himself concedes: 'A gradual acknowledgement of an alteration in [Labour's] electoral environment went hand in hand with the perception of a shift in the ideological climate of British politics, the one reinforcing the other' (Heffernan, 2000, p. 177). Heffernan is suggesting therefore, in seeking to explain what he perceives to be Labour's Thatcherite accommodation, that while voters do influence parties, parties also influence voters and, crucially, parties influence other parties too (Heffernan, 2000). Thus, while questioning the efficacy of a purely Downsian approach, Heffernan is nevertheless accounting for Labour's development in terms of a passive reaction motivated by the dynamics of party competition.

Steven Fielding offers a further narrative that rejects conventional accounts of both preference-accommodation and preference-shaping in explaining the Labour Party's altered trajectory, while still framing it predominantly within the confines of electoral considerations (Fielding, 2003). Labour's development from 1987 is placed by Fielding in the context of the Party's historical approach to electoral strategy. He asserts that Labour's move rightwards in appealing to middle-class voters 'was consistent with an approach established in 1918 which proceeded from neither preference-accommodation nor preference-shaping but from what is here described as an 'accommodate-to-shape' strategy' (Fielding, 2003, p. 85). Fielding believes that Labour historically has attempted to extend its support among the middle classes while entrenching working-class support. Such a strategy, while apparently necessitating a preference-accommodation approach, in fact was founded on the assumption that to shape people's preferences a party had to first take seriously their concerns (Fielding, 2003). Consequently, Fielding feels it wrong, for example, to conceive of Kinnock's response to Thatcherism purely as accommodation. For Labour to lead the voters, it first had to ascertain their preferences and subsequently guide them incrementally towards the Party's preferred position.¹ The necessity of this two-stage approach, Fielding notes, was painfully borne out by the abject strategy of the Party between 1979 and 1983. Kinnock began the process in 1987 with the Policy Review, which accepted more than ever the function of the market, to allow voters to take his Party seriously (Fielding, 2003). Fielding states that, under Blair, the strategy (as outlined in a document by moderniser Giles Radice) seemingly adopted was one of clear preference-accommodation. At the same time, however, it was claimed that Labour need not abandon its key policies; in fact, it was suggested that only through adopting an accommodating course could the Party win support for such measures. As such, Fielding asserts, strongly identifying with the individual gave Labour's collectivist case more credibility, assuaging fears that this would be at the expense of much of the electorate (Fielding, 2003).

Any ideas?

One or two accounts of Labour's transformation not only frame a narrative emphasising the importance of electoral considerations to the Party's changing course, but at the same time actively refer to a real scarcity of ideas within this process. This is evident in the account of Eric Shaw who refers, specifically from 1994 onwards, to 'sustained efforts to woo... "Middle England", the fulcrum of "New Labour's" electoral appeal' (Shaw, 1996, p. 197). Shaw asserts that the modernisers' strategy 'derived from market research, as interpreted by professional communicators from the Shadow Agency who shared their perspective not by any searching scrutiny of the dynamics of social change or systematic empirical analysis' (Shaw, 1996, p. 197). Indeed, it is asserted that there was a real reluctance to entertain a great deal of analysis about the Party's conception of society 'since it raised questions about the validity of their political strategy'. This strategy 'was the essentially defensive one of winning the electorate's trust and confidence in its ability to govern and to manage the economy effectively' (Shaw, 1996, p. 198). Shaw displays a real scepticism of the ideas that Labour under Blair presents as informing their changing approach. Regarding the Party's emphasis on community, Shaw asserts: 'Perhaps sensing a vacuum, modernizers have attempted to add communitarian themes to the individualistic ones' (Shaw, 1996, p. 228). This is a sentiment echoed by Sarah Hale, who refers to 'the myth of New Labour's communitarianism' in the context of 'an ideas vacuum at the heart of the party' following the Clause Four revision (Hale, 2006, p. 3). More generally, Shaw says of the Party's ideology: 'What has been interpreted as a return to ethical socialism in reality reflects the tendency of "New Labour" to accommodate to establish modes of thought' (Shaw, 1996, p. 228). Shaw sees this pragmatic approach to the engagement with ideas, motivated by electoral expediency rather than rigorous societal analysis, as presenting fundamental contradictions at the heart of the Party's approach.

Leo Panitch and Colin Leys provide another narrative of Labour's development that twins an essentially electoral account of ideology change with a fairly withering account of the Party's ideational capacity (Panitch and Leys, 1997). Once again alluding to the Party from the mid-1990s, the authors suggest that the adaptation of Party policies was governed by a number of specific strategic considerations: 'First, the next

election *must* be won at all costs. This meant catering to voters' existing ideas, rather than seeking to build support for new ones. Moreover, the electorally crucial ideas were those of voters who must be won back to Labour, not those of voters who...would vote Labour in any case' (Panitch and Leys, 1997, p. 241). Such a strategic approach offered a new perspective to the evolution of Labour ideology which had began under Kinnock, in part because it had different intellectual foundations: 'There were probably fewer intellectuals in the Blair leadership team than at any previous time in the party's history...Nor was New Labour indebted to any conspicuously original or creative thinkers outside the ranks of the leadership' (Panitch and Leys, 1997, p. 242). Instead, the Party drew on the proliferation of 'think-tanks' such as the Institute of Public Policy Research, Nexus and Charter 88. Yet such institutions are presented by the authors as having less influence on Party direction than is often assumed. As a consequence, the authors suggest that the Party under Blair, 'having distanced itself from most of Labour's "traditional intellectuals" (now largely dismissed as "old Labour")', had few deep intellectual foundations of any kind' (Panitch and Leys, 1997, pp. 244-5). As such, Panitch and Leys suggest that Blair's call for a future Labour government to replicate the appeal of the 1945 administration needed to acknowledge that his Party lacked important elements possessed by Atlee's government, such as a coherent reformist project founded on ideas 'distilled by several generations of socialist thinkers' (Panitch and Leys, 1997, p. 250).

The account provided by Dennis Kavanagh is interesting given that, in providing a general picture of an electorally-driven Party transformation, it touches on a number of different points emphasised more narrowly in similar narratives reaching a similar conclusion (Kavanagh, 1997). For example, Kavanagh discusses the strategies constructed with the goal of appealing to non-Labour voters, using opinion polling and focus groups to identify the concerns and locations of target voters. In doing so, he alludes to Hay's notion of the Party 'acting Downsian', in stating: 'In its search for voters, Labour became more like a commercial firm in a competitive market, operating as an "electoral professional organisation"...or a "catch-all" party' (Kavanagh, 1997, p. 221). Furthermore, Kavanagh also alludes to the thesis of Richard Heffernan in attaching importance not simply to the impact of a search for the Downsian median

voter, but also to the ideology of Thatcherism itself. Given the dominant Thatcherite paradigm of the time, Kavanagh asserts that, in the Party's policy change, '[w]hat was crucial was Labour's acceptance in the rethinking of the new macro-economic priorities' (Kavanagh, 1997, p. 225). Finally, this hegemonic dominance of Thatcherism is related to a further point Kavanagh makes, similar to that made by Shaw, and Panitch and Leys in particular, concerning the relative dearth of ideational initiative at the Labour Party's disposal: 'For all the effect of the centre-left think-tanks such as the Institute of Public Policy Research, Demos, or Charter 88, there was nothing comparable to the impact of the New Right and their advocacy of markets, deregulation, monetarism, and contracting out of think-tanks of the 1970s' (Kavanagh, 1997, p. 225). As such, Kavanagh reproduces Elliot's quotes of the same year, that 'it is hard to find one area where Labour is setting the agenda' (Elliott cited in Kavanagh, 1997, p. 226).

Multi-dimensional explanations

Analytical models

A number of accounts interpreting the Labour Party's changing course between 1987 and 1997 place an important emphasis on the role of electoral expediency, yet still maintain the significance of other explanatory factors as well, perhaps constituting cases of what Steve Ludlam refers to as 'non-essentialist' or 'multi-dimensional' views of Labour's modernisation (Ludlam, 2000, p. 266). Ludger Helms presents a useful analytical model of such a hybrid explanation of party change (Helms, 1999). Drawing on the work of Wolfgang Muller, and Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, whose studies concern explanations of *organisational* change within parties, Helms asserts that the various explanatory devices constructed can be used to explain *policy* changes too (see Muller, 1997; Harmel and Janda, 1994). Helms therefore asserts that the trajectory of party policy direction could theoretically be explained with regard to a number of different catalysts, such as changes in the external party environment, internal party stimuli such as a reordering of party faction influence, or a change of leader (Helms, 1999). It can therefore be seen that Helms' approach provides a clear blueprint for accounts which might draw on external influences such as the dynamics of electoral competition, but also consider valid other factors such as the changing ideational

environment within a party. Indeed, Helms' own assessment of the Labour Party's transformation prior to 1997 reflects this: the author asserts that a number of different factors (both external and internal) did appear to play a role in stimulating the Party's process of reform. Helms deems the electoral dynamics and leadership change at various junctures to have played an important role in this process, while suggesting that a change in the Party's dominant faction was less significant in explaining change (Helms, 1999). Helms' work is one of a number of accounts seeking to move beyond a narrative of electoral pragmatism in explaining Labour's development between 1987 and 1997.

Michael Kenny and Martin Smith together adopt a similarly self-conscious multi-dimensional approach to the Labour Party's change, by identifying different 'analytically-separable dimensions' of its political behaviour in the mid-1990s, and critiquing what are perceived as 'uni-dimensional' accounts of Party change (Kenny and Smith, 1997; 2003). In practice, this entails moving a step away from electoral considerations and exploring more explicitly the potential influence of ideas on the Labour Party's developments. The authors believe that viewing Labour's development merely in terms of maximising votes reveals little about the internal processes and conflicts that accompanied the revised approach. 'To some extent, Labour was responding to its perceptions of the preferences of voters; but it was doing so in the context of internal policy arguments, the party's organizational structures, the changing economic and social situation, and its own ideological history' (Kenny and Smith, 1997, p. 225). As such, Kenny and Smith emphasise a number of different constraints and choices (of which the electoral dimension constitutes but one) in accounting for Labour's transformation. Thus, the authors attach great significance to the changing economic environment – as internalised by the Labour hierarchy – in motivating the Party's changing approach: 'One of the most important impulses behind Blair's programmatic changes stems from his and others' perception of Britain's recent economic fortunes, and, more generally, the influence of various accounts of its comparative economic decline' (Kenny and Smith, 1997, pp. 228-9; 2003). This has forced Labour to rethink its approach, entailing a 'context-dependent analysis' alongside an articulation of the Party's 'traditions of thought'. As such, Labour's

development cannot be understood without reference to the 'selective mobilization' of various intellectual and ideological strands of British politics (Kenny and Smith, 2003, p. 72, p. 73). It is this rethinking of traditional ideas in a new context that is deemed to be key: 'Changing the party's instincts and values in accordance with [the] new political economy is a central element within Blair's Project, and possibly the most neglected dimension of his politics' (Kenny and Smith, 1997, p. 229).

Hybrid accounts of change

While not doing so quite as explicitly as Helms, or Kenny and Smith, other accounts offer a narrative of change that alludes to a number of contributing factors in explaining Labour's changing approach. A prominent example of this is the analysis of Stephen Driver and Luke Martell, the central thesis of which is that the Party under Blair can be seen as a product of Thatcherism, but has nevertheless taken politics and policy-making beyond this, and is as such 'post-Thatcherite' (Driver and Martell, 2002; 2006). First discussed is the electoral factor, as the authors contend: 'The political imperative to seek power drove the Labour Party to present itself to the electorate in ways voters would find attractive', particularly 'those in marginal seats that Labour had to win to form a government. By the late 1980s, this is where the party headed' (Driver and Martell, 2006, p. 19). Driver and Martell subsequently suggest that linked to such a tale of electoral expediency is the notion, held by the Party's modernisers, that voters being courted by Labour were inhabiting 'new times', and therefore reflected fundamental societal changes. As such, in pursuing them, Labour was acknowledging the transformed nature of society: 'The modernization of Labour in this way can be seen as an attempt to rethink Labour's social democratic political economy to address new times' (Driver and Martell, 2006, p. 22). The ideological element of such 'new times' was the hegemonic influence of Thatcherism, which served to catch the public's mood in a changing world through connecting popular anxieties with an effective critique of the social democratic state. Consequently, Labour's position in the mid-1990s was in part prompted by this hegemony of New Right ideas, but was more of a pensive response than is suggested by Heffernan or Kavanagh, for example. Driver and Martell state: 'Many on the Left in British politics entered a period of introspection – about

what worked, what didn't and why', a process which saw 'Labour rethink the ideas and policies of social democratic governance and political economy' (Driver and Martell, 2006, p. 24).

The analysis of Martin Smith also alludes to different explanations for Labour's altered trajectory but seeks to provide a more explicit connection between these (Smith, 1994; 2000). In accounting for the Party's transformation both up to 1994, and from 1994 onwards, Smith is clear that, while electoral imperatives played a motivating role, of some importance was the desire to rework traditional priorities and goals of the Labour Party in response to a changing political and economic context (Smith, 1994; 2000). Indeed, Smith succinctly alludes to the range of dynamics informing the Party's transition post-1994, asserting: 'The essence of Blair and New Labour is an attempt to...end electoral decline; reduce the potential for party conflict; and to provide an ideology which can retain some of Labour's historical commitments to social justice without alienating the middle income support necessary for electoral victory' (Smith, 2000, p. 143). Smith's account, perhaps more than other narratives, attempts to link together these electoral and ideational factors in the Party change. Thus, while it is asserted that understanding Labour's electoral failure is a prerequisite for comprehending the Party's reincarnation in the mid-1990s, the nature of this renaissance, though in a significant way electorally-motivated, manifested itself in ideational ways which appear to rule out straightforward electoralism as an overarching explanation. For example, the Party's electoral strategy by the mid-1990s required a conciliatory approach that itself necessitated a rethinking of the dichotomous nature of traditional boundaries such as individual and community, market and state, wealth creation and social justice. Smith states: 'In all these areas, Blair believes that it is possible to turn these apparently antagonistic relationships into dependent relationships and in this way build a coalition of support that is based on both sides of the class/ideology debate' (Smith, 2000, p. 158). Therefore, for Smith, electoral expediency required a coherence and credibility made possible only by a rethink of core political ideas, rather than merely an accommodation of the dominant approaches of the time.

A further hybrid explanation for Labour's development is provided by Paul Anderson and Nyta Mann, who are keen to assert that the Party's journey was very

much an evolutionary process that started under Kinnoek and saw Blair retain much of the policy positions inherited in 1994 (Anderson and Mann, 1997). In terms of motivating such an evolution, Anderson and Mann initially point – as do Driver and Martell, and Smith – to electoral considerations: ‘Since the mid-1980s, Labour has defined its politics less in terms of what it believes ought to be done (and what it should persuade the public to support) than by what market research says is popular’ (Anderson and Mann, 1997, p. 386). The authors discuss the importance to Party policy formation of focus groups comprised of target voters, with many policy shifts deemed explicable with regard to their impact on popular opinion. As such, a tough rhetorical position on crime, repudiation of the commitment to nationalisation, redistributive taxation and benefits and the marginalisation of trade unions were all, among other policies, ‘to a large extent the products of shameless calculations of potential gains’ (Anderson and Mann, 1997, p. 386). However, Anderson and Mann are keen to assert that emphasising electoral considerations alone – which is something the authors suggest that Labour’s traditional Left chose to do in presenting change – provides an unsatisfactory account of the Party’s changing policy and ideology direction. They illustrate this by suggesting that ‘Labour’s abandonment of Keynesianism was not simply a means of proving to target voters and the City that Labour took a responsible attitude to economic management...it was also a rational response to the failure of the French socialists’ expansionist experiment 1981-3 and the implosion of the Lawson boom’ (Anderson and Mann, 1997, p. 387). Furthermore, the authors suggest that more recently Labour was right to highlight the significance of an increasingly globalised economy in framing the contemporary operating context, reinforcing the non-electoral considerations motivating the Party’s approach to policy (Anderson and Mann, 1997).

Beyond an electoral emphasis

While so-called ‘multi-dimensional’ accounts highlight the unsatisfactory nature of explanations *solely* discussing electoral factors, some narratives go further in looking beyond any emphasis on such factors when accounting for the Labour Party’s change, thus creating a clearer niche for the potential role of ideas in this process. Indeed, such accounts appear to present Labour’s position in the mid-1990s as primarily explicable

with reference to a fundamental reconsideration of Party ideas in light of the changes made to society. Interestingly, however, such accounts tend to frame the role of ideas as becoming important in this way only after 1994 and Blair's acceptance of the Labour leadership, rather than from 1987 or earlier. Indeed, whether explicitly stated or the logical extension of coverage of a new-found embrace of ideas under Blair, the received wisdom appears to be that, certainly during Kinnock's leadership tenure (and to a degree that of Smith), the role played by ideas in determining the Party's approach was at best overshadowed by electoral considerations, and at worst barely perceptible. This might well be because, as Mark Wickham-Jones asserts, Labour's 'electoralism' in framing policy under Kinnock followed a phase in the Party's history during which it 'took little interest in the popularity of its policy proposals' (Wickham-Jones, 1995, p.700). Irrespective of the extent to which a comparison with Labour's previous ambivalence regarding electoral strategy informs accounts of Kinnock's tenure, however, the general view of narratives in this section is not merely that ideas articulated under Blair were simply more resonant or of greater salience or impact than those under Kinnock. Rather, the underlying assertion is that the importance of ideas in the final three years of Opposition, regarding the Party's need to adapt to a changing context, could be juxtaposed with an approach in the preceding years that was manifestly less willing to embrace change and reconsider the Party's position in light of this.

Inside accounts

Good examples of accounts suggesting that large-scale interaction with ideas occurred after 1994 are, perhaps unsurprisingly, those emerging from within Blair's Labour Party itself.² For example, the 'inside account' provided by Peter Mandelson and Roger Liddle claims that 'New Labour is a new type of politics' yet one founded 'on a bedrock of left-of-centre values and instincts' (Mandelson and Liddle, 1996, p. 17, p. 18). Indeed, Mandelson and Liddle locate the Party under Blair in Labour's historical socialist values and ideas by distinguishing between the socialisms of the Marxist school and the ethical school, suggesting that with the reform of Clause Four in 1995, the Party once and for all repudiated statist socialism in favour of the ethical strand.

They suggest that Blair's Labour Party went further than merely advancing the cause of ethical socialism, however, by crucially updating it for the irrevocably changing world of the global economy. 'Our special claim is that the practical application of our values to present-day problems is necessary – not just a cosy extra or an optional add-on – because without it the modern world simply cannot prosper' (Mandelson and Liddle, 1996, p. 30). A similar narrative concerning an updating of Labour's traditional ideas is provided by Party MP Tony Wright, particularly regarding the revision of Clause Four (Wright, 1997). Wright asserts: 'The reason why it was so important for Labour's renewal process to involve a review of Clause Four...was that it obliged the party to rediscover what it stood for and believed in. In having done this for itself, it made it better able to communicate it to others' (Wright, 1997, p. 26). For Wright, therefore, as for Mandelson and Liddle, the updating of the Clause enabled Labour to define for both itself and for others precisely what the Party now stood for and how this was appropriate and necessary for a changed world.

New Labour, new ideas

Implicit in accounts suggesting that the necessary change of Clause Four and the inception of 'New Labour' was representative of a Party fundamentally seeking to reconsider its approach, is the notion that its immediate predecessors had not sought to do this with sufficient rigour. David Marquand offers an account that is explicitly dismissive of the role of ideas under Kinnock, while relatively sanguine about ideational motives under Blair (Marquand, 1999). Marquand says bluntly of Kinnock: 'He was not an intellectual, and had never had much interest in ideas' (Marquand, 1999, p. 217). Explaining Kinnock's own move away from the Labour Party's 'soft' Left, Marquand asserts that Kinnock's socialism was a set of values unthinkingly inherited rather than a well-considered belief system. As a consequence, the object of the Policy Review was not to mobilise a constituency behind a collection of principles, but rather to construct a programme for a set of constituencies. Compared to the revisionism of the 1950s and 1960s, then, given that the Review was not 'rooted in coherent social analysis of compelling moral vision, it was a curiously unquestioning and unhistorical younger brother' (Marquand, 1999, p. 219). Marquand alludes, however, to increased

ideational impetus under Blair. While clear that his Party abandoned not only socialism but social democracy also, Marquand rejects the notion that Labour under Blair merely stood for the continuation of Thatcherite neo-liberalism through other means. Like Thatcherism, Labour's approach 'is for individual achievement, not collective action, but it has a radically different conception of the forces that empower achievers', differences which concern the role of state intervention in training for example, and the embrace by Blair and the Party of the ideas of influential American writer Robert Reich (Marquand, 1999, p. 234). Thus, underneath the individualistic, competitive society is 'a highly interventionist, indeed *dirigiste* workfare state, which would have warmed the cockles of Beatrice Webb's heart' (Marquand, 1999, p. 235).

The account of Tudor Jones is another narrative that only affords a real significance to ideas in Labour's transformation from 1994 onwards (Jones, 1996). Indeed, Jones' coverage of the Policy Review and its aftermath presents a picture of overarching pragmatism, suggesting that 'the lack of a central philosophical theme could be explained in terms of the primary importance which [Kinnock] constantly attached to the prize of electoral victory' (Jones, 1996, p. 129). Following Smith's brief tenure, it was under the leadership of Blair that Jones believes ideas became important in charting the Party's direction. Indeed, Jones discusses how Blair, in numerous speeches and articles written in the early-1990s, had identified the key areas of ideological revision he deemed desirable for the Party. Jones refers, as do Mandelson and Liddle, to the ethical socialism apparently characterising Blair's ideational approach, asserting: 'For Blair...modern socialism consisted not in a particular form of economic organisation, based on public ownership but rather in a collection of values such as community and mutuality' (Jones, 1996, p. 136). The communitarian elements in Blair's philosophy are thus treated by Jones very differently to their relatively cynical coverage in the accounts of Shaw and Hale respectively, who both refer to the pragmatic filling of a 'vacuum' created by Blair's excessive individualist focus (Shaw, 1996; Hale, 2006). Importantly, in Jones' account Blair's ideas are not merely treated as incidental to Party change, but as actively driving it: Blair 'was not concerned with developing his position purely on a level of abstraction. Instead it was increasingly presented by him as the theoretical basis of a major part of...[his plan] to rewrite Clause

IV' (Jones, 1996, p. 139). Once again, this contrasts with accounts of Clause Four's revision – for example the one provided in the narrative of Gerald Taylor – suggesting that 'the aim was substantially electoral, presenting the Clause as being an electoral handicap' (Taylor, 1999, p. 22).

While not explicitly suggesting that Labour's embrace of ideas in motivating change occurred solely after 1994, Mark Bevir's account of the Party's developing ideology certainly alludes to such a conclusion (Bevir, 2000a). The general argument is that the Party's position should not be compared with 'reified' (or as he suggests in a subsequent account, 'objectified') ideologies such as social democracy or liberalism; rather, it should be traced historically as a recasting of socialism in order to meet specific problems such as inflation, or the changing composition of the working class. It was a response to such developments, Bevir insists, that required the Labour Party to alter its principles (Bevir, 2000a; 2005). As such, the change in Labour's approach is considered with reference to the changing nature of the concepts of *citizenship*, *social justice* and *community*. This is done in a way that emphasises the wider context of such change: 'Properly to explain New Labour's ideas, we must provide an account of...a historical process' (Bevir, 2000a, p. 284). In spite of this historical angle, however, Bevir's study overwhelmingly refers to the transformed application of the concepts from 1994 onwards (with repeated reference to the account of Mandelson and Liddle). Indeed, it is asserted: '*New Labour* has brought a great concern with choice to the socialist ideal of social justice, a greater concern with duty and responsibility to the socialist ideal of citizenship, and a greater concern with competition and materialism to the social idea of community' (Bevir, 2000a, p. 298, emphasis added). The implication of this is that the revision of the Party's approach and its ideas in the context of such a changing context is effectively presented as occurring only after Blair gained leadership of the Party, a conclusion similar to that reached by both Marquand and Jones.

Revisionist tendencies

The notion of recasting the Party's approach in response to transformed external circumstances draws – explicitly or otherwise – on Labour's revisionist tendency to adapt traditional goals to the ever-changing context within which these must be

achieved. It is perhaps with reference to such a tradition that writers tend to afford the Party's engagement with ideas any credulity from 1994 onwards only. As seen above, Marquand is particularly scathing about the revisionist approach to policy under Kinnock, as is Jones, in spite of generally celebrating the revisionist tradition of the Labour Party (Marquand, 1999; Jones, 1996; see Ludlam, 2000). However, there is a greater willingness to consider revisionism under Blair in a similar light to the thought of Anthony Crosland and those influenced by it. As Raymond Plant suggests when comparing the Party's approach under Blair with Croslandite revisionism: 'Of course, one would not expect continuities in terms of means, since the whole point of revisionism is that means have to be changed in light of changed circumstances' (Plant, 1999, p. 28). This point is reinforced by David Lipsey, who simply states: 'Revisionists revise. Since Crosland, there have been some obvious and important changes to the world' (Lipsey, 1999, pp. 14-5). Specifically, Lipsey believes that it is the way in which Labour under Blair seriously interacted with such changes in transforming the Party's approach (perhaps in a way that, under Kinnock, it did not), which links its approach with Croslandite revisionism: 'Given the pressures on the modern politician, I think it is remarkable how much rethinking has gone on about the fundamentals by New Labour. We may not agree with its conclusions. But the activity of rethinking is absolutely revisionist, absolutely Croslandite' (Lipsey, 1999, p. 15). Thus, the affinity deemed to exist between Labour in the mid-1990s and the Party's revisionist tradition concerns the role of ideas rather than the ultimate policy location, with the Party under Kinnock considered to have bypassed the former despite adopting a stance far more akin to that held by the Party in Crosland's time.

David Coates offers a similar role to ideas, and the specific function that they appear to play in the distinction between means and ends for the Party under Blair (Coates, 2000; 2005). Labour, by 1997, is presented as having reformulated the Party's traditional values into ways of delivering these suitable for the modern age, much of which is attributed to Blair: 'As Harold Wilson had done a generation before, Tony Blair understood his task as party leader as one primarily focused on...the clarification...of a distinct and alternative vision of Britain's future to that canvassed by Labour's political opponents' (Coates, 2000, p. 2). As such, Coates believes that the

Party's approach of old goals achieved with new methods 'reflected more than the electoral pressures that had built up over four unsuccessful general election campaigns. It also reflected intellectual realignments by the party's leadership prior to 1997' (Coates, 2005, p. 33). Coates identifies two such shifts as being particularly significant: a wholehearted adoption of a neo-liberal comprehension of the global economy and its impact; and an openness to new growth theory. Well before gaining office, then, the Labour leadership's understanding of how economic and industrial (if not social) policy would be recast was clear: 'By the time of the 1997 election campaign, there was a discernible coherence to much of what New Labour was by then promising, a coherence rooted in a distinctive understanding of how modern nations supposedly worked' (Coates, 2005, p. 35). Labour's 'coherent' message in 1997 – that a dynamic economy required a developed civil society – provided the Party with a confidence in its cause that it had lacked in 1992 or 1987 (Coates, 2005).

Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides specific and nuanced accounts of the motivations behind Labour's transformation between 1987 and 1997. The way in which these narratives have been organised here perhaps reflects only the broadest interpretation of their various features and merits. This notwithstanding, by grouping the accounts specifically with regard to the role attached to ideas allows the potential problems of each account to be identified and, in turn, enables the benefits of an ideas-centric study of the Party's transformation proposed undertaken in this research to be subsequently illustrated. Those accounts suggesting that electoral strategy alone can provide an adequate explanation of changes in the Party's policy position perhaps frame the most straightforward narrative of the period. Such accounts afford little significance to the vigour with which new ways of addressing traditional centre-left concerns were embraced by Labour. As such, to view fundamental reviews of the Party's approach merely as exercises in electoral positioning appears to do the Party and its leading members a considerable disservice, and frames an excessively cynical narrative of the period. Certainly, the analysis of the preferences of the electorate inspired by market-research techniques does suggest an important role for electoral strategy; yet this in no

way suggests that it must have been the exclusive, or even the dominant, motivation in changing the Party's position on a number of issues. Indeed, testing preconceived stances on target voters as opposed to simply using such voters' views as a determinant of policy positions is the difference perhaps between a party which, while clearly not in a position to shape the preferences of voters, is adopting a relatively, rather than absolutely, defensive approach.

Given such grievances with purely electoral accounts of Labour's transformation, those narratives which embrace a multi-dimensional approach certainly address the inherent problems of excessive simplicity or cynicism that generally compromise purely electoral accounts of the Party's changing approach. Indeed, attaching some importance to a contemplative policy approach alongside defensive accommodation certainly appears to provide a more realistic and credible account of Labour's transition between 1987 and 1997. However, such an approach can still be seen as problematic, in part because the accounts still tend to attach a dominance – sometimes implicitly – to electoral expediency, ensuring that the role of ideas is at best briefly alluded to along with various other factors, rather than expanded on and given an important interpretive role. Therefore, while considered relevant by authors of multi-dimensional accounts, the role of ideas is nevertheless subject to some neglect or underdevelopment in the final analysis. For example, little mention is made of the specific nature or relative importance of such ideational motivation for change. Furthermore, in a number of the more explicitly multi-dimensional accounts, there is a tendency to allude to the role of ideas as part of a broader thesis specifically highlighting the complexity of party change, something which these authors (rightly) feel is overlooked by purely electoral accounts. As such, the role of ideas on occasions appears to be drawn on as much as an illustration of such an interpretive approach and the efficacy of this, as on its own merit. The result is, once again, reference to ideas without the elaboration or development necessary to attach to them any great significance.

Those accounts which do seek to take seriously the role of ideas, not merely as part of a multi-dimensional interpretation but as a dominant interpretive element in its own right, are nevertheless not without potential shortcomings of their own. As shown

above, each of the accounts appears to attach a significance to ideas under Blair's leadership, but not that of Kinnock. This would not be problematic should such accounts have presented the transformation of the Party as starting in the early 1990s, or at least seeing this time as a significant break in the process of change as, for example, Taylor does in describing the Policy Review and its aftermath as a time of 'renewal' and post-1992 as a period of 'modernisation' (Taylor, 1997). However, most of the accounts affording credulity to the role of ideas under Blair but not Kinnock claim that the Party's changing policy approach was a process starting prior to 1994, with the general consensus being that the inception of the Policy Review in 1987 constituted the starting point for the evolution of policy. As such, to view the process in general as a broadly single entity (albeit with a number of different phases and protagonists), but to assert that the motivation behind this is substantially different in its early stages (when it is presented as essentially electoral) to its later stages (when ideas are understood to have played a role) appears somewhat counter-intuitive. Furthermore, regarding the comparisons of the respective policy reforms under Blair and Kinnock with the Party's revisionist tradition, it appears unconvincing to suggest that under Blair Labour successfully separated means from ends in a quintessentially Croslandite manner, while asserting that Kinnock's own revisionism was a pale imitation of that of Crosland and his contemporaries in the 1950s and 1960s.

Tellingly, it appears that such accounts appear to subscribe to the story of the Labour's change constructed by the Party itself in the mid-1990s which, while alluding to the importance of reform under Kinnock, emphasised above all else novelty in Labour's policy approach from 1994 onwards in seeking to distinguish it from previous positions. Indeed, it should be noted that an important element in the narratives that afford a significance to ideas under Blair, as well as those that are quite scathing of Labour's ideational input at this time, is a judgment – tacit or otherwise – being passed by the authors on the Party's changing trajectory. Those who perhaps laud the achievements of Blair and his colleagues, in transforming the Party sufficiently to place it in a position to attain Office after so long in the electoral wilderness, appear to be relatively positive about the role played by ideas in this development (for example, Mandelson and Liddle, 1996; Wright, 1997; also Jones, 1996; Lipsey, 1999; Coates,

2005). Conversely, those deeming the Party's position by the mid-1990s to constitute something of a betrayal of its traditional aims and values explicitly suggest that ideas played little or no role in an exercise in cynical electioneering (for example, Hay, 1999; Heffernan, 2000; Panitch and Leys, 1997). It therefore appears that such different accounts of the same process appear to some degree to constitute appraisals of the destination reached as much as dispassionate interpretations of the journey itself.

This study attempts to provide evidence to support a narrative that avoids passing implicit judgment on the relative merits of positions held by the Party at various junctures of the period by focusing solely on the overall process of such a change in Labour's approach. This is made more straightforward by the overarching aim of this research, to show that this approach can be understood to have been subject to largely the same level of ideational input *throughout* the period in question. As such, the gradual shift in Labour's approach between 1987 and 1997 can in part be understood with reference to an evolution of ideas concerning the most appropriate way to achieve not just electoral success, but policy goals in an ever-changing external environment. This environment, of course, included the electoral position of Labour *vis-à-vis* the Conservative Party, and electoral considerations did therefore clearly play an important role in prompting Party change. However, it also included the changing political and economic context of the time. As such, key ideational initiatives – the increasing irrelevance of nationalisation, the importance of coupling attempts at increasing social justice with the achievement of economic efficiency in the context of an increasingly internationalised economy, the need to tailor collectivist approaches to an increasingly prevalent climate of individualism – were evident during the Policy Review and built on at subsequent stages of the period as the external environment itself continued to evolve. Important staging posts during this period – the Policy Review, the CSJ, Clause Four revision and the construction of 'New Labour' – all constituted an internalisation of policy debate and construction which sought to reconsider political ideas in light of a changing world. The result, it is suggested, was a changing Party approach that must be understood with reference to an evolution of ideas alongside any short-term electoral considerations.

Such an evolution will be illustrated by showing how such ideas are expressed in the Labour Party literature and speeches between 1987 and 1997 through the application of political concepts. The specific application of such concepts represents the ideas behind the way in which Labour addressed fundamental political questions, such as the organisation of resources within society, the inter-relationship between its fellow members, and the external environment which shapes the possibilities and boundaries of the application of political ideas to realisable policy positions. The next chapter explains the theoretical significance of concepts to the expression of ideas, and how conceptual change can be considered indicative of ideational change. In showing how the language transformed over the period in question, it is suggested that the approach of the Party also manifestly changed. Crucially, however, it is suggested that this conceptual change was one of evolution, with ideas expressed through such concepts, and informing this process, themselves subject to a gradual development. Indeed, conceptual change, by its very nature, is evolutionary in character, ensuring that using concepts as a central analytical unit in appraising the Labour Party's development therefore offers an interpretive approach that highlights the continuities and subtleties of this change. This incremental account of Labour's transition between 1987 and 1997, encompassing important junctures throughout the period, from the Policy Review through to the inception of 'New Labour', identifies a gradual progression of ideas that constituted an important, yet often neglected, feature of Labour's development, in accompanying the Party's changing approach alongside its increasingly focused quest to end its time in Opposition.

2. Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The opening chapter suggested that existing accounts of the changing Labour Party between 1987 and 1997 tend to underplay, overlook or misrepresent the role of ideas in explaining this process. The contention, therefore, is that there is the potential for an addition to the literature on the Party during this period with a narrative that takes seriously the significance of ideas throughout the decade in question. This chapter seeks to show how this expression of ideas can be illustrated by using conceptual theories to examine the Party's transition. Specifically, it will illustrate how the changing use of important political concepts can be understood to represent the changing expression of ideas, and how these concepts relate to, and inform, broader political approaches. It aims to do so by first expounding major contributions to the theory of conceptual usage and its change, then showing how this relates to broader (non-linguistic) political change, and finally illustrating how the role of ideas is fundamental to such theoretical approaches. In doing so, it is hoped that a framework can be constructed for the subsequent chapters to provide a narrative of ideational evolution through examining the changing use of concepts in addressing important political questions, a conceptual transition that can be understood as informing the Labour Party's changing approach during the decade in question.

The opening section first looks at the nature of political concepts and their relationship with ideas. This will suggest how a conceptual approach in general might be appropriate to illustrate the importance of ideas, and more specifically how the study of conceptual change might be a useful way of examining the presence of ideas in political change. Following this, some important theoretical contributions to the study of conceptual change are introduced, each of which addresses different elements of the process of change in lieu of a single comprehensive account of conceptual change theory. Thus, the notions of how and why such change occurs, the internal process of conceptual transformation and the broader framework governing altered uses are each considered in turn. The aim of this research, however, is not simply a consideration of Labour's changing language but an illustration of the importance of ideas in interpreting

the Party's political change. As such, attention is then turned to the way in which the respective conceptual theories are distinctive from other analytical approaches in conceiving conceptual change and wider political change as constitutive to one another. The specific way in which this facilitates a fundamental significance to ideas in political change is then illustrated, suggesting that a conceptual approach is a suitable medium through which to identify the importance of ideas within the Labour Party's changing ideological approach. Potential difficulties in using such theoretical approaches to study contemporary political change are then discussed, before it is suggested that such problems are by no means insurmountable, after which the concluding section suggests how this theoretical framework is to be applied in the subsequent chapters.

Ideas, concepts and conceptual change

Ideas and concepts

Given that this research seeks to illustrate the importance of ideas in a particular case of political change, and that the intended theoretical means of approaching this is by drawing on conceptual theories, it is important to ascertain at the outset why such theories might be the appropriate course to achieve this. That is, why in seeking to identify such an ideational element should concepts become the foundation of the research, as opposed to ideologies, or intellectual traditions, for example? The answer is relatively straightforward, a consequence of the nature of ideas and concepts, and the fundamental connection existing between the two. Specifically, at the heart of the research is the notion that political concepts are deployed primarily as expressions of political ideas. For example, Burns uses the term 'concept' in order 'to refer to [a] general or abstract idea, what philosophers usually call a "universal", which may be either simple or complex and which, when complex, is associated with a number of other ideas' (Burns, 2006, p. 3). Similarly, Heywood treats concepts as vehicles for the expression of ideas, asserting: 'Whether ideas descend from some eternal spiritual realm or arise from sensory experience, in order to be employed in the process of thinking they must first be developed into fully fledged "concepts"' (Heywood, 1994, p. 4). Furthermore, Freedman states that political concepts are 'complex ideas that inject order and meaning into observed or anticipated sets of political phenomena and hold together

an assortment of related notions', suggesting that the treatment of the concept as a central unit of examination entails a 'conceptual analysis of ideas' (Freeden, 1996, p. 52, p. 48). The theoretical foundation of this study, then, is the understanding that ideas relating to the political world are expressed through political concepts.

As befits something held to perform a task as indistinct as the expression of an idea, concepts themselves are by nature quite abstract and difficult to define. In one of the few philosophical studies on the subject, Peacocke notes: 'The term "concept" has by now come to be something of a term of art. The word does not have in English a unique sense that is theoretically important', while Gunnell asserts that there has been 'an inadequate treatment of the nature of concepts' (Peacocke, 1992, p. 1; Gunnell, 1998, p. 641). This notwithstanding, in addition to their role of expressing ideas, a further element of concepts subject to some consensus is their deployment not in isolation, but with reference to one another, in order to express a series of linked ideas in the form of a broader approach of some nature. For example, Farr asserts that concepts are never held or used in isolation, but are organised within 'constellations', which themselves make up 'schemes' or 'belief systems' (Farr, 1989, p. 33). Freeden, meanwhile, refers to a 'range of political concepts' existing in 'configurations' (Freedon, 1994, p. 141). Freeden understands such collections of concepts as making up political ideologies, asserting that, 'whatever else they are, ideologies are particular patterned clusters and configurations of political concepts. An ideology is hence none other than the macroscopic structural arrangement that attributes meaning to a range of mutually defining political concepts' (Freedon, 1994, p. 141). Thus, whether as part of a belief system, or an ideology, concepts can be understood to represent the expression of ideas, and to exist within broader schemes that attach to them some semblance of wider purpose and relevance.

The understanding that a concept can be applied to express an idea or number of ideas, and that it can be (and often is) deployed not in isolation but as part of a broader approach such as a belief system or ideology, attaches to it a real importance in the study of the political world in general. Heywood, for example, asserts: 'Conceptual formation is an essential step in the process of reasoning, in that concepts are the 'tools' with which we think, criticise, argue explain and analyse...Concepts are, in other

words, the building blocks of human knowledge' (Heywood, 1994, p. 5). Significantly, this notion of the concept as a fundamental 'building block' of knowledge and thought is also expressed by Freedon, who asserts: 'The building blocks of political thought are the political concepts – indicated by terms such as liberty, justice, power, and rights – that constitute its main foci' (Freedon, 1994, p. 140). It is, then, with the use of concepts that we express ideas, organise thoughts and present them in relatively coherent collections to constitute belief systems, ideologies, and even contemporary political theories, which Tully describes as 'limited and often complementary accounts of the complex uses (senses) of the concepts in question' (Tully, 2002, p. 545). Indeed, the role ascribed to concepts in the expression of ideas and theories is evident in the way in which concepts have become a central unit of analysis in the study of intellectual history. For example, Bevir asserts that, when studying the history of ideas, one can 'elucidate the logic or forms of reasoning appropriate to history through a study of the grammar of the concepts operating in the discipline' (Bevir, 2000b, p. 297). It should be clear, then, that the focus of this study is on language in terms of conceptual usage as a means of expressing political ideas in the context of broader normative approaches, not language as a rhetorical device simply to achieve (rather than articulate) political ends.

Conceptual change

Unsurprisingly given their indefinite nature, the precise meaning of individual concepts is widely acknowledged to be difficult to identify definitively. Ball and Pocock assert that politics is communicatively constituted and the concepts that are deployed to express the political world are in a state of constant flux. It is claimed that 'the words that make up the medium [of politics] have hotly contested and historically mutable meanings' (Ball and Pocock, 1988, p. 1). Indeed, Gallie considered there to be concepts that have 'essentially contested' meanings, 'concepts the proper use of which inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users' (Gallie, 1956, p. 169). In offering the idea of essential contestability, Gallie was referring to central concepts within political philosophy, such as *power*, *freedom*, and *justice*. Nevertheless, as Gray asserts, 'essential contestability is claimed for most of our moral and political concepts' (Gray, 1977, p. 337, original emphasis). Gallie's thesis serves to

highlight the potential variations in the meaning of concepts, and their fundamentally changing nature, and is a key departure point in the study of concepts in general, as Freeden notes: 'Any examination of political concepts must be indebted to Gallie's seminal notion of essentially contested concepts' (Freeden, 1994, p. 141). It can therefore be seen that: political concepts are broadly understood to represent the expression of ideas; the specific meaning of individual concepts is essentially contested; and concepts are subject therefore to a changing application.

The relationship between ideas, concepts and conceptual change guiding this study is a relatively straightforward, then. The understanding is that ideas held by political actors are expressed through the deployment of concepts. Such concepts tend to be used in articulating ideas with reference to other concepts, rather than being deployed in isolation. This serves to express a series of connected ideas, often in the form of a relatively coherent political approach (such as a belief system or ideology). The meaning of individual concepts is difficult to identify – something that is unsurprising given the ethereal nature of the ideas they are deployed to articulate. Consequently, political concepts in general can be deemed to be 'essentially contested', with fundamentally mutable meanings, ensuring that their specific connotations are liable to change. In this study, given the relationship between ideas and concepts, this change in a concept's usage is deemed to represent a change in the idea, or ideas, that it is deployed to express. Furthermore, when concepts are organised in constellations or groups in making up broader political approaches, changes in the meanings of such concepts inevitably ensures that the logic and direction of the broader approach changes as well. It can therefore be seen at this early stage that the role of changing ideas within a case of a transformed political approach might usefully be explored through reference to theories of conceptual change.

The incidence of conceptual change, and the very process itself, has been the subject of a significant body of work, largely within the study of the history of political thought. Conceptual historians such as Reinhart Koselleck and Terence Ball have sought to examine the varying uses of certain political concepts as they have entered the modern lexicon (Koselleck, 1985; Ball, 1988; see Martin, 1997). However, such approaches seek to *chart* conceptual change rather than to understand and explain its

process. Indeed, there is no single comprehensive theory of conceptual change that addresses why it happens, how it happens and the nature of such change. Rather, in order to elucidate the process of conceptual change with respect to such considerations, it is necessary to draw on the writings of a number of conceptual theorists. The work of James Farr considers the political context in which the process of conceptual change might occur, specifically drawing on the motivations of the ideologist in embarking on a process of conceptual change (Farr, 1988; 1989). A different focus is evident in the approach of Michael Freeden, who undertakes a study of the internal structure of concepts and ideologies (Freeden, 1994; 1996). Freeden dissects the individual concept to illustrate how a change in its meaning can come about theoretically, before locating it within a broader ideological approach. Finally, the work of John Pocock and Quentin Skinner considers the wider linguistic context within which all conceptual usage occurs, alluding to a framework which both facilitates, and acts as a constraint on, the process of conceptual change (Pocock, 1972a; 1972b; Skinner, 1988; 1989). These theories are manifestly different and at times conflicting; as such, the aim here is not to use them alongside one another in constructing a coherent theory of conceptual change. Rather, it is hoped that, by drawing on different conceptual approaches, this will illustrate the fundamental connection between conceptual change and political change, and in doing so afford an importance to ideas as intrinsic to both.

Farr and the occasions of conceptual change

The work of James Farr is concerned with conceptual history and change, both in historical contexts and in more recent times (Martin, 1997; see for example, Farr, 1988; 2004). Of specific interest here, however, is Farr's attempt to provide a theory of the occasion of conceptual change itself, as he attempts to understand the political dynamics of this process (Farr, 1989). Farr provides two related contentions that are important to an initial understanding of the main tenets of conceptual change. Firstly, he explicitly outlines what can be said to constitute such transformation: conceptual change can be said to have occurred when words lose their meaning, when they gain significantly new meanings, or when some words emerge for the first time (Farr, 1989). Conceptual change varies in scale too, 'from wholesale changes across an entire

constellation of concepts...to more localized changes in, say, the reference or attitudinal expressiveness of a single concept' (Farr, 1989, p. 31). The second, equally important, assertion Farr makes is that, such is the political constitution of language, whenever there is political change, there is conceptual change too. This is best illustrated by the way in which the most dramatic of political change – revolution – is likely to be accompanied by a whole range of new 'constellations' of concepts to describe the new political terrain (Farr, 1989). Nevertheless, Farr is eager to stress that conceptual change attends far less dramatic shifts in the political landscape. This is illustrated with reference to the way in which, during the 1730s, the Tories abandoned their previously pejorative use of the term 'patriotism' that allowed the Whigs to advertise their policies as uniquely patriotic, and subsequently claimed that Tories themselves were also 'patriots'. This example illustrates an important element of Farr's work, expressed succinctly in the following maxim: 'Conceptual change attends any reconstitution of the political world' (Farr, 1989, p. 30). This idea that conceptual change is evident in even the most modest of political transformation is an important aspect of Farr's work, and one that is certainly pertinent to this research.

Farr emphasises that conceptual change does not just *reflect* political change, however. Rather, he suggests that conceptual change *attends* political change, and that to understand one is to largely to understand the other (Farr, 1989). To illustrate this, Farr attempts to make a contribution to a political theory of conceptual change. This leads him to focus on the possibility that a general model of political problem-solving might constitute the basic mechanism of conceptual change (Farr, 1988; 1989). Such political problems are generally founded in the *contradictions* in or between beliefs, actions or practices within a political approach, which are all conceptually constituted features of political life. These contradictions 'are generally found not so much in the simultaneous profession of two directly and glaringly incompatible or negating beliefs [but]...emerge in the extended implications or unintended consequences of two or more beliefs' (Farr, 1989, p. 35). Indeed, such contradictions are brought to the surface by criticism – either external or the ideologist's own. In response to such criticism, 'contradictions may subsequently be resolved...by changes in belief or action or practice. As they change, so do their constitutive concepts' (Farr, 1989, p. 35).

Borrowing Skinner's term, Farr claims that 'innovating ideologists' tend to change concepts in this way, responding to contradictions or inconsistencies between prevailing beliefs and newly proposed beliefs through conceptual innovation in order to realise their political designs (Farr, 1989; see Palonen, 1997). As such, 'the chief merit of Farr's preliminary analysis is this recognition that contradiction and criticism form the principal mechanisms of conceptual change' (Martin, 1997, p. 424). It is this understanding of the conditions conducive to conceptual change, and the rationale behind the process, that is the distinguishing feature of Farr's analysis.

Farr illustrates the role played by the criticism of contradictions in explaining conceptual change with the example of *hegemony*. He asserts that, while the concept has an ancient history, the notion of general political predominance, normally of one state over another, emerged in the nineteenth century. However, 'decisive changes have come about with developments in twentieth-century Marxism, largely under Gramsci's inspiration' (Farr, 1989, p. 44). A number of contradictions associated with 'economism' were articulated by Gramsci, which holds that all political developments can be explicated by the economic interests of the ruling class. However, this led to contradictions with partisan political practice that went beyond merely economic struggle to facilitate the creation of a new consciousness among workers of what was to be a politically aspirant class (Farr, 1989). If this was not articulated clearly, however, the working class would fail to achieve the requisite consciousness for state rule given that it would not understand the degree of bourgeois control over its very ideas and ideals. Gramsci contended, therefore, that the political struggle to change beliefs and practices needed conceptual change to take place. Thus, with sufficient numbers of socialist theorists and workers willing to follow Gramsci's lead, *hegemony* changed its criteria of application, from 'the predominance of one state over one another' to 'the predominance of one *class* over another' (Farr, 1989).

Elements of Farr's account of the occasion of conceptual change – whether explicitly acknowledged as derivative of his theory or not – are evident elsewhere. Farr's work is expressly expanded upon by Robert Martin, who proposes a similarly political perspective in considering the changing application of concepts (Martin, 1997). Martin's approach also deals with contradiction as the central force in the dynamics of

conceptual transformation, yet he differs from Farr when addressing the issue of occasions of such change. While Farr suggests that the researcher's task is often to ascertain the reason why, on occasions, conceptual change fails to resolve (or even address) the contradiction identified, Martin suggests that, considering myriad contradictions are an intrinsic part of political life, the concern should in fact be why a certain specific contradiction *was* addressed at a particular time (Martin, 1997). Martin's answer to this is that a shift in relevant contexts leads to conceptual change by enabling certain criticism or by illuminating certain new contradictions. Martin asserts: 'By isolating certain contextual shifts...that intensified the relevant contradictions, we can point to the causal conditions that triggered a conceptual change' (Martin, 1997, p. 429). Similarly, Mark Bevir, drawing explicitly on the work of Thomas Kuhn and Karl Popper rather than that of Farr, offers an account of conceptual change which locates the transformation 'at the moment when agents modify an inherited web of beliefs in response to anomalies, problems, or dilemmas', a dilemma being 'a new belief which merely by virtue of the fact that one accepts it as true poses a question of one's existing beliefs' (Bevir, 2003, p. 4, p. 5). However, rather than being a political phenomenon (as with the ideologist's 'contradictions' in Farr's account), Bevir's occasion 'suggest[s] that it is a more or less ubiquitous feature of human life' (Bevir, 2003, p. 4). These variations on Farr's work further serve to distinguish the philosophical concerns with *why*, and perhaps *when*, conceptual change occurs from a notion of *how* it does so, which is considered in the next section.

Freeden and the process of conceptual change

Michael Freeden addresses the process of conceptual change as part of a wider study into political ideologies which sees him 'challenge the current predominant attitudes to ideologies' that see them 'lag in the status stakes behind the high prestige of political philosophy' (Freeden, 1996, p. 1). As seen at the start of the chapter, Freeden understands ideologies to be composed of organised collections of political concepts. In exploring this relationship, he provides a methodological insight into the process, rather than the political context, of conceptual change, addressing the specific notion of how such change occurs. An important aspect of Freeden's approach is his detailed account

of the structure (or 'morphology') of political concepts, and how this permits the concept to undergo change. Freedden asserts that 'the main political concepts – those found both in political theorizing and ideological discourse – contain both ineliminable features and quasi-contingent ones' (Freedden, 1994, p. 146). 'Ineliminable' components of a concept are not necessarily intrinsic to the meaning of the word to which they attach, but result from actual linguistic usage. It is in this respect that Freedden deliberately uses the term 'ineliminable' as opposed to 'core': concepts have components that are not ineliminable in a logical sense, but merely in the sense that 'an empirically-ascertainable cultural consensus ascribes to them some minimal element' (Freedden, 1994, p. 148). As such, to eliminate such a component would go against all understood usage of the concept. Using Freedden's example, it can be shown that the concept of *liberty* would mean little if deprived of the notion of 'non-constraint'. However, Freedden asserts that it is not possible to reduce the concept solely to its ineliminable component. This explains the presence of additional components filling categories that provide a concept with specific content and meaning. Referring to *liberty* once again, the notion of 'self-determination' represents such a component. While these additional components may be individually dispensable, they nevertheless occupy categories that might not be; thus, they are said to be 'quasi-contingent' (Freedden, 1994).

The choice of what fills each category is essentially contestable, and the specific feature chosen to fill each requisite category is contingent to general idea of the concept. The features found within the quasi-contingent zones of a certain concept may be other concepts, or narrower ideas (Freedden, 1994). Freedden asserts that these adjacent concepts and ideas are found within a number of idea-environments in which the concept in question is located. The positioning of a specific concept within such environments, and its interactions with other concepts and ideas, is central to providing the concept with its significant meaning. It is when discussing the adjacent environment of a political concept that an important distinction must be made between *logical* adjacency and *cultural* adjacency. Logical adjacency refers to necessary concepts or notions that are inevitably incorporated by any 'concretization' of the concept-in-question's ineliminable feature. Thus, the notion of 'non-constraint' logically draws in

concepts such as 'autonomy' and 'self-determination'. It therefore acts as both a constraint on the endless variety of a concept and an opening for its pluralistic nature (Freeden, 1994). The mechanism of logical adjacency is problematic in two ways, however: firstly, it will put forward a vast number of options which, if all applied, will overload the concept and deny it any coherent meaning; secondly, not every possible permutation of a concept follows logically from positing an ineliminable notion. It is in response to these problems resulting from logical adjacency that cultural adjacency acts. It serves as a brake operating within the framework of logical adjacency but, more importantly to conceptual change more generally, it allows the incorporation of elements that do not follow logically from the ineliminable component of the concept yet are regarded in ordinary usage as legitimate, if not indispensable. As such, cultural adjacency relates 'to a historical and geographical usage of ideas and of language that may either be customary or innovative' (Freeden, 1994, pp. 153-4).

The interaction, then, that a concept has with other concepts and ideas in the idea-environments in which it is located is vital to the process of conceptual change. Freeden asserts that some of a political concept's constituent parts are also part of its idea-environment since they appear simultaneously in other, external, concepts. It is therefore possible to conceive of a concept as 'turned inside out, by externalizing its so-called internal parts and treating them as free-floating units that intersect with the concept's ineliminable component' (Freeden, 1994, p. 155). From Freeden's analysis, therefore, one can begin to understand the process through which conceptual change occurs. In the first instance, an ideologist holds a concept that has an ineliminable component as its nucleus, which is devoid of any real meaning without having a number of related components attached to it. These components, within the same idea-environment as the concept to which they are attached, can be selected (and therefore deselected) by the processes of logical – and, crucially, cultural – adjacency. Changes in the components attached to the eliminable feature of a concept alter the meaning of the concept as a whole. Given that one meaning of a concept is no more intrinsically 'correct' than another (Gallie's notion of essential contestability is fundamental to such an assumption), a concept's mode of employment is subject merely to the test of acceptability to a certain number of users (in the same way that Gramsci's altered

application of *hegemony* was subject to the support of, and use by, a number of socialist academics other than Gramsci himself). It is in this sense that Freeden suggests that a concept's meaning 'has consequently to be ascertained empirically' the specific meaning of a concept (Freeden, 1994, p. 146). Using Freeden's understanding of the structure of a concept, and the features contributing to its meaning in a specific instance, it is possible to identify a process through which concepts are transformed, allowing a more rigorous methodological understanding of conceptual change.

It is important to remember that Freeden does not study concepts and conceptual change in isolation; rather, it is suggested that concepts can be understood as part of an ideology, and it is through this membership and interaction with other concepts that they gain meaning. Indeed, Freeden draws on important parallels between the structure of individual political concepts and the ideologies that they collectively form. As suggested at the start of the chapter, Freeden understands ideologies to be composed of organised concepts, in the same way that concepts themselves are made up of organised ideas or 'features' (Freeden, 1994). Where contingent components endow a concept with content and meaning, it is the adjacent and peripheral concepts within an ideological framework that endow the ideology with a specific relevance, contextualising it within a cultural setting. Such concepts are specialised and not essential to the ideology's survival; for example, a version of liberalism might establish that liberty is within its core, democracy and equality are adjacent to liberty and nationalism is to be found on the periphery (Freeden, 1994). Thus, many interpretations can be attached to ideologies' core concepts by altering the meaning of unstable adjacent or peripheral – what Ball refers to as 'sore' – concepts (Ball, 1999). Freeden mentions the reference made by Connolly to the term 'cluster concept' when discussing political concepts, but notes that it is unclear whether this denotes the internal structure of a single concept or the interconnections among a number of concepts (Freeden, 1994, p. 145; see Connolly, 1993). Connolly's term would certainly be a useful means of describing the way in which concepts invariably exist within a wider ideology in groups, or clusters, each one serving a different purpose but necessary to provide the ideology with sufficient relevance and vitality.

A second parallel drawn between the structure of concepts and ideologies is that of quasi-contingency, the notion that while non-ineliminable components of a concept may be individually dispensable, they occupy categories that might not be. Freedden states: 'Like political concepts, an ideology will have concept-categories that are both culturally and logically necessary to its survival, though the particular instances of those categories are not' (Freedden, 1994, p. 157). The specific concepts that fill these give the ideology its direction and relevance, much in the same way that ideas or other concepts fill categories within a certain concept. To understand the specific nature of an ideology, therefore, it is not sufficient to merely study one concept within a concept-category in isolation, given that political concepts 'overlap and reinforce' each other; it might be far neater if each were to occupy a distinct space, but such conceptual utopias are not the stuff of which normal human thinking is made' (Freedden, 1994, p. 151). Conceiving concepts as being used not in vacuums but with intrinsic reference to other related concepts – from which they derive both their meaning and relevance – draws on the notion that their deployment is part of a broader linguistic context of shared associations and understanding. The idea of such a context within which conceptual usage and change occurs is fundamental to the approach of influential theorists such as John Pocock and Quentin Skinner, whose work is considered in the following section.

Pocock, Skinner and the framework of conceptual change

Whereas Farr's approach to conceptual usage and change is largely philosophical, and Freedden's concerns the internal process of transformation, both Pocock and Skinner adopt a rigorously historical position (Koikkalainen, 2005). Together the two constitute the leading theorists of the 'Cambridge School' of intellectual history, developing 'an approach to intellectual history that focuses specifically on the language of political discourse, yet does not restrict itself to the text in question' (Martin, 1997, p. 416). In doing so, they emphasise the need to understand language within any society at a given juncture as being subject to a wider framework, thus emphasising the linguistic context of conceptual usage and change. As Bevir suggests, the work of Pocock, Skinner and those adopting sympathetic approaches is concerned with the placing texts in historical situations in order to counter the excessively analytical and abstract approaches to

intellectual history: 'Ideas in context – this is the crux of the approach advocated by the Cambridge School...In order to understand an utterance...we must locate it in the appropriate linguistic context' (Bevir, 2000c, p. 395). Both thinkers have applied this highly influential methodology to studies of great figures in political thought such as, among others, Machiavelli (see Pocock, 1975; Skinner, 1981).

Pocock lays a great emphasis on the notion of the paradigm articulated by Thomas Kuhn, who identifies paradigms that direct the pattern, direction, distribution and organisation of intellectual endeavour (Kuhn, 1962). Pocock asserts that such paradigms can be similarly understood to exist in political language, once some important modifications are applied to their precise structure and composition (Pocock, 1972a). Fundamental to the idea of Pocock's paradigm is the notion of 'a conceptual constellation performing a diversity of authoritative functions in the political speech of society', to which he adds the provision of 'the scaffolding for the assertion of the individual ego's identity as a political being' (Pocock, 1972a, p. 277). Consequently, the historian of political thought is likely to take as his main concern the relatively stable concepts which are regularly employed in the political thought of equally stable societies, approaching the history of political thought through the study of the regular employment of such concepts. It is through the use of such 'organising concepts' that a stable and articulate society discusses its political affairs (Pocock, 1972b, p. 195, pp. 198-9). The study of the language of any given society is therefore partly concerned with 'investigating the stereotypes of various elements in its structure and traditions with which a society conducts its political thinking' (Pocock, 1972b, p. 199). This will provide an understanding of the various paradigms operating within that society given that, as Bevir asserts, 'authors cannot break out of socially given structures, so what they can say hinges on the structures to which their communities give them access' (Bevir, 2000c, p. 396). It can therefore be understood that Pocock is providing a strongly structuralist account of the use of political language.

The work of Skinner, while concerned with the framework governing conceptual usage, is significantly less structuralist than that of Pocock. There is a conflict within Skinner's approach, less evident in Pocock's account, between the ability of the political agent to manipulate language to his own advantage, and the

general linguistic conventions to which such manipulation is inevitably subject. This conflict perhaps betrays the two dominant influences in Skinner work: the writings of J. L. Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein (see Austin, 1962; Wittgenstein, 1953). Skinner builds substantially on Austin's work, developing a speech-act theory, in which the distinction between the real and the (merely) verbal is denied, or at least questioned. Claiming that words might also constitute deeds seemed incomprehensible to 1960s mainstream political science, and Skinner subsequently 'turned a detailed use of the analysis of speech-acts in the study of politics into a polemic against both a narrower textualism and a sociological, non-linguistic contextualism' (Palonen, 1997, p. 65). Skinner asserts that any political vocabulary will contain a number of terms that are intersubjectively normative: words that not only describe but, in describing, also evaluate. Such terms are normally used to describe individual actions and to characterise the motives for which such actions can be performed. However, 'if the criteria for applying one of these terms can be plausibly claimed to be present in a given set of circumstances, this not only serves to describe the given action or state of affairs, but also to evaluate it in a certain way' (Skinner, 1988, p. 111). Skinner refers to such terms as being 'evaluative-descriptive', whose special characteristic is having a standard application to perform one of two contrasting ranges of speech-acts – that is, either commending or condemning the actions they are employed to describe (Skinner, 1988, p. 111).³ These terms are deemed to be intersubjective, however, because both the criteria for their application and their reference, and also their appraisive dimension, is a property of the words in their standard use, rather than something bestowed on them by the individual user (Tully, 1988, p. 13).

It can therefore be seen that, given the intersubjectivity of terms or concepts, linguistic conventions act to limit the ways in which language can be manipulated through speech-acts. It is here that the influence of Wittgenstein on Skinner's work is apparent: the existence of conventions is justified with reference to Wittgenstein's argument against the possibility of a purely private language, with Skinner's view of what it is to possess a concept founded on his theory of 'meaning in use' (Bevir, 1999; Burns, 2006). Wittgenstein asserts: 'If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also...in judgments' (Wittgenstein,

1953, §242, 272). For Skinner, then, the ultimate aim of the ideologist in attempting to legitimate his position is to argue that a favourable evaluative-descriptive term is being applied in the usual way, while attempting to 'drop' some of the criteria for applying it, therefore extending the range of actions it can properly be used to positively describe. The conventional limitations of this are apparent since, if too many of the original criteria are dropped, the attempt will fail as it will become too obvious that the term has undergone a change of meaning (Skinner, 1988). Palonen notes that in such cases, 'the *pathos* of the innovating ideologist remains to adapt the message to the audience, but the *logos* of his argumentation is to perform a trick', or as Skinner himself refers to it, 'a linguistic slight-of-hand' (Palonen, 1997, p. 70; Skinner, 1988, p. 115). It is clear, therefore, that 'the nature and range of the evaluative concepts which any agent can hope to apply in order to legitimate his behaviour can in no case be set by the agent himself' (Skinner, 1988, p. 117). Rather, the extent to which such concepts are available concerns the prevailing morality of the society in which the agent acts, while the extent to which they are applicable concerns the standard meaning and use of terms involved and how far these can be plausibly stretched (Skinner, 1988, p. 117).

While both Pocock and Skinner embrace linguistic contextualism, then, there are significant differences between the approaches of the two theorists, most evident in the respective emphases given to the causal relationship between the modes of thought and expression. Where Skinner articulates an intentionalist account held in check by conventions, Pocock is unequivocal in offering the opposite position: the paradigms within which an author functions take clear precedence over questions of 'intention' in his utterance, since only after comprehending what means he had of saying anything can what he meant to say be understood. In spite of such differences, however, the respective work of Pocock and Skinner is often treated as part of a single approach (that of the 'Cambridge School', as discussed above). This is evident in a critical response to the two authors by Janssen, who writes: 'I treat the ideas of Skinner and Pocock as kindred and closely complementary...with regard to their self-conscious, methodological writings and their historical publications' (Janssen, 1985, p. 115). The defining contextualist aspect of Pocock and Skinner's approaches, as well as their nuanced differences within this, is neatly coined by Bevir in distinguishing between

their respective work: Pocock is labelled a 'hard' linguistic contextualist; and Skinner is referred to as a 'soft' linguistic contextualist (Bevir, 1992). This serves to emphasise that, in spite of the methodological differences between the two authors' writings, they share a common notion of the existence of a linguistic framework which (to varying degrees) governs our use of language, and thus acts as both a facilitator and a constraint on the extent to which conceptual change is possible. As such, this in turn identifies important features inevitably part of the nature of such change if it is to be accepted in a given community.

Conceptual change, political change and ideas

Conceptual change and political change

The examination of when and how conceptual change occurs, and what form this might take, provides an important theoretical foundation to the study of changing conceptual usage in this research. However, as mentioned above, the concern here is not simply to examine the Labour's changing language; rather, of interest in this research is the way in which the transformed use of various political concepts represents a vehicle for, and therefore a manifestation of, evolving ideas accompanying the Party's changing approach. As such, given this assumption of a connection between conceptual change and broader political change, it is important first to ascertain the precise theoretical relationship between conceptual usage, and the external, non-linguistic, political world. One potential difficulty in using conceptual change theory is that, by its very nature, the analytical concern is specifically with the language, which in some cases can be at the expense of wider considerations, such as the social context of the change for example, and the way in which the two might be connected. Consequently, a focus on the linguistic context might ensure that little concern is evident for clarifying the relationship between linguistic, and contemporaneous material, elements. Indeed, Hampsher-Monk suggests that 'we are currently much better at talking about the history of conceptual changes within the language of politics, than we are at giving an account of how such changes might be related to any parallel history of events' (Hampsher-Monk cited in Martin, 1997, p. 419). However, the conceptual theories of Pocock, Skinner, Farr and Freedman suggest that a focus on conceptual use and change need not

be at the expense of a connection between this and wider political change. In fact, it will be shown that it is precisely this connection that makes conceptual change theories so distinctive, and an important means through which to identify the presence of ideas in political change.

The link between conceptual change and political change is explicitly stressed by James Farr, who starts from a position similar to that shared by conceptual theorists in general, that language is politically constituted and politics is linguistically constituted (Farr, 1989; see for example Ball and Pocock, 1989). Consequently, for Farr, the general temptation to understand conceptual change as the reflection of political change must be strongly resisted: 'Political change cannot be isolated in a conceptually uncontaminated way so that conceptual change could then be said to be its reflection. To understand political change is in large part to understand conceptual change, and vice versa' (Farr, 1989, p. 31). The charge by Farr is that some approaches, such as theories of historical semantics, present a picture in which conceptual change is an internal linguistic process independent of external political change. Consequently, his political theory of conceptual change is founded on an acknowledgement that political actors pursue strategic purposes in and through language, and that 'they can do such things because the concepts in language partly constitute political beliefs, actions and practices'. As such, 'political change and conceptual change must be understood as one complex and interrelated process' (Farr, 1989, p. 32). It is this complex inter-relationship between language and the wider political world that is so fundamental to conceptual approaches, something that is overlooked in other analytical approaches, and as such at times misunderstood in appraisals of conceptual theories.

The extrication of language and the broader non-linguistic context is often thought to be a problem besetting the work of Pocock and Skinner, as Martin asserts: 'The tendency of the Cambridge School's prolific leaders is to emphasize linguistic and intellectual contexts at the expense of other contexts: the social, economic and sometimes even the political contexts are slighted or attenuated' (Martin, 1997, p. 417). However, this appears to do both theorists something of a disservice. In his contribution to *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, a collection of essays on political and conceptual change, Skinner asserts at the outset that the book's primary concern is with

the very relationship between the changing political world and the changing language used to describe it. Indeed, he identifies as a crucial issue the sense in which linguistic disagreements are also disagreements about the social world itself (Skinner, 1989). The conclusion reached by Skinner is that, given the role of language in legitimating certain behaviour, 'it must be a mistake to portray the relationship between our social vocabulary and our social world as a purely external and contingent one' (Skinner, 1989, p. 22). Indeed, he goes on to assert that, while it is certainly the case that social practices bestow meaning on our social vocabulary, it is equally the case that this vocabulary helps to constitute the character of those practices. As such, to 'see the role of our evaluative language in helping to legitimate social action is to see the point at which our social vocabulary and our social fabric mutually prop each other up' (Skinner, 1989, p. 22). Similarly, Pocock asserts that the existence of linguistic paradigms ensures that individuals think through communicating language systems which help constitute both their conceptual worlds and the social worlds related to these. 'What has hitherto been rather vaguely termed "political thought" is now redefined as the exploration and sophistication of political language, and the connections between language system and political system begin to seem possible to draw' (Pocock, 1972a, p. 15).

The reason why some believe that scholars such as Skinner and Pocock fail to provide a sufficient connection between language and a wider political context may be their determination, equally evident in their respective approaches (as in the work of Farr), not to view language merely as a reflection of the wider social world. Skinner states that 'if there are indeed causal linkages between social language and social reality, to speak of the one as mirroring the other may be to envisage the causal arrows pointing in the wrong direction' (Skinner, 1989, p. 22). Similarly, Pocock asserts that adopting an approach which takes language as a starting point and works outwards does not involve starting with the assumption that language reflects social reality. 'It should be thought of as an inquiry into the process of "reflection", rather than as based on a simple mirror-object assumption concerning its nature' (Pocock, 1972a, p. 36). Furthermore, 'the paradigms which order "reality" [the extra-linguistic, social world] are part of the reality they order [and] language is part of the social structure and not

epiphenomenal to it' (Pocock, 1972a, p. 38). As such, far from suggesting that the linguistic or conceptual world should be viewed in some glorious isolation, Skinner and Pocock both seem to suggest that it is in fact constitutive of the social, or political, world, and as such not separable from it in a way that a straightforward account of one reflecting the other would require.

The focus of Freedén's work is manifestly different to that of Farr, Pocock and Skinner, concerned as it is with the internal structure of concepts and ideologies, rather examining linguistic use as a central tool of inquiry into the history of political thought. As such, little is said explicitly in his work about the role played by ideas, concepts or ideologies in broader political change. Nevertheless, Freedén suggests quite generally: 'Words and their meanings are invariably the product of the social dimensions of language, and political concepts are doubly related to a socio-historical context from which they emanate and which they look to interpret and shape' (Freedén, 1994, p. 141). This in itself alludes to the complex connection, framed more explicitly in the theories of Farr, Pocock and Skinner, between language and politics. Perhaps more specifically, however, Freedén's conclusions regarding the nature of, and relationship between, concepts and broader ideologies or political approaches, offer a direct implication that suggests, similar to the other three theorists discussed here, that conceptual change and political change, in certain situations, are inherently linked. As suggested above, Freedén asserts that, in the same way in which they are composed of organised features, concepts themselves when organised together can constitute a broader approach in general, and an ideology more specifically. As such, a change in the ideology must inevitably entail a change in the constitutive concepts – either in their individual meanings, or in their very presence within this approach.⁴ Equally, a change in the concepts themselves will entail a change in the broader ideology they compose. Thus, when political change takes the form of a change in an ideology, or political approach more generally (as it does in this research), then there is clearly a fundamental connection implied between this and conceptual change in the work of Freedén, just as there is in the theories of Farr, Pocock and Skinner.

The importance of ideas in political change

The intrinsic connection between the conceptual world and the political world framed in the theories covered – either directly or by logical implication – lays the theoretical foundations for the significance of ideas in the process of political change to be illustrated. By taking seriously the impact and influence of language and its transformation – something that is a defining feature of conceptual theories in general – such approaches can provide a vehicle through which the significance of ideas in political change can be taken equally seriously. As stated at the start of the chapter, concepts are treated here as the expression of ideas. If conceptual change attends (as a constitutive feature of) political change, then ideational change – which is logically represented by this conceptual change given that it serves as its expression – can be seen equally as a fundamental element of political change. Indeed, as befits theories that make the first connection, between conceptual change and political change, each of the accounts covered alludes to the inexorable significance of ideas (at times expressed as ‘beliefs’ or ‘principles’) accompanying political action more generally, and ideational change attending political change more specifically. Importantly for this research, such theories do not suggest that ideas *alone* must be considered in understanding political change; rather, they assert (and at times are eager to emphasise) the presence and significance of ideas even in cases of political action or change that appear to be dominated by non-ideational factors. This serves to reinforce the fundamental presence of ideas in cases of political change.

Farr’s theory provides a good example of this omnipresent significance of ideas. Although ostensibly a strategic account of conceptual change, it is nevertheless possible to identify the presence of ideas pertinent to this process. As previously stated, Farr asserts – much in the same vein as Freedman – that concepts are organised within ‘constellations’ that make up ‘schemes’ or ‘belief systems’ effectively constituting ‘theories’ that can be seen as rational attempts to solve problems generated in or between such beliefs. ‘As theorists struggle to explain or to reconstitute the world, they may propose that some of the concepts in their theories be abandoned, others conceived, or still others changed’ (Farr, 1989, p. 33). This ‘struggle’ is, for Farr, manifested in contradictions identified by criticism of beliefs, actions and practices in the political

arena. As shown earlier, such contradictions are found in the 'extended implications or unintended consequences of two or more *beliefs*' (Farr, 1989, p. 35, emphasis added). Brought to attention by criticism, such contradictions may be resolved by altering a belief, action or practice, which in turn sees a change in their constitutive concepts. In explaining conceptual change through an ideologist attempting to address contradictions in his approach in order to gain support, Farr's account undoubtedly affords significance to political interests. However, by understanding such contradictions as emerging through the implications of incompatible *beliefs*, the original necessity for addressing this approach relates to ideational, as well as non-ideational, factors. Despite suggesting that an enforced, reactive reconsideration of ideas, or beliefs, is motivated by tactical material interests, this nevertheless results in a significance attached to ideas in the transformation of the broader ideological approach. This is an illustration of conceptual change having the ability to inform political change, something Farr is keen to emphasise in his theory. Therefore, framed as addressing contradictions between beliefs, Farr's account of conceptual change undertaken by an ideologist altering his political approach can therefore be understood in terms of an accompanying ideational change, irrespective of the broader significance of this to, or impact on, political interests.

Both Skinner and Pocock discuss the relationship between ideas – or political 'principles' – in accounting for political action.⁵ In terms of the approach of Skinner and his emphasis on legitimation of untoward behaviour through language, the role of ideas or principles, rather than other interests, is something that his critics have accused him of neglecting in explaining political actions (Skinner, 1988). Skinner himself is aggrieved by such a charge, given that he refutes the implications of the general 'consensus' that principles professed in political life are but the merest rationalisations of very different motives or interests. He therefore counters the logical extension of this, the notion that ideas or principles play no role in political life, and as such do not hold any explanatory currency in understanding political change (Skinner, 1988). Skinner asserts that even if we should concede that an agent's professed principles are not genuine motives, for example when legitimating some form of untoward political action, they may nevertheless affect his behaviour. In such a situation, Skinner asserts,

it becomes desirable – essential perhaps – for the agent to override any hostile verdicts of his action, and in this way to legitimate what he is doing to those with doubts about its morality. Thus, even if the agent's professed principles may be *ex post facto* rationalisations, to suggest that they play no role in his behaviour ignores the implication that the agent will nevertheless be obliged to behave in such a way that his actions remain compatible with the claim that such ideas or principles motivated him. 'To recognise these implications is to accept that the courses of action open to any rational agents in this type of situation must in part be determined by the range of principles which he can profess with plausibility' (Skinner, 1988, pp. 116-7). For Skinner, even when not genuinely held, and professed for the purposes of legitimation, ideas or principles still play an important role in explaining political action.

Like Skinner, Pocock also takes umbrage with the notion that ideas or principles are not deemed significant in explaining action in a political context. Some historians, he suggests, 'will ask whether the individual's actions must not be understood 'more' by reference to the determining influence of the historical situation in which they were carried out than by reference to the theoretical principles on which they were said to be founded' (Pocock, 1972b, p. 191). Along very similar lines to Skinner, Pocock discusses cases when professions of principle are deemed merely to be 'propaganda' or 'rationalisations' to indicate a lack of significance in explaining action: 'But the expressions of principle happened; they form part of the action and modify by their presence its total character. They must have borne some relation to its course', and therefore an historian 'is not entitled to say that there was no such relation or that his explanation may not be modified by the construction of an explanation which includes it' (Pocock, 1972b, p. 192). Pocock, like Skinner, is keen to stress, therefore, that merely because principles or ideas are not held to carry exclusive explanatory significance does not mean that they carry no significance at all. Indeed, it is in this respect that Pocock succinctly surmises the essence of the relationship between ideas and political action or change. Alluding to principles in terms of their expression through concepts, he states: 'To deny that concepts may be isolated and shown to play a determining role in politics is not to deny that they play any whatever; yet the anti-ideological interpreter not only supposes that it is, but often has difficulty in believing

that the student of ideas in the political process is not, automatically, assigning a determining role to them' (Pocock, 1972b, p. 193). Thus, in explaining political action or change, identifying the importance of ideas is not to frame them as the sole significant factor; equally, however, the emphasis of other factors is not to assert that ideas are not a constant feature.

In the case of Freedden's approach, the role of ideas in political action or change is, once more, not addressed explicitly as it is in the approaches of Farr, Pocock or Skinner. In this case, however, the relationship between ideas and political change is perhaps even more self-evident. Again, the connection is derived from the relationship Freedden frames between concepts and broader ideologies or political approaches, in this case alongside the relationship between ideas and concepts. Given that ideas are expressed as concepts, while concepts organised together are understood to make up political approaches, a logical consequence of this is that conceptual change, which represents ideational change, will invariably occur alongside the transformation of a political approach. Thus, when the political action or change is the alteration of a political approach, there must logically be a transformation of ideas attending this. For Freedden, then, if the instance of political change constitutes a transformation of ideology or political approach, just as it necessarily must entail conceptual change, it must equally be subject to a concurrent, constitutive ideational change as well. It can therefore be understood from the theory of Freedden, as well as those Farr, Pocock and Skinner, that ideas – and ideational change specifically – must *always* accompany and inform instances of political change. Consequently, it is not possible to understand such political change without understanding the attendant ideational change.

Potential difficulties in using conceptual theories

Drawing on the accounts of various conceptual theorists, it is possible, then, without seeking to frame ideas as a causal factor in political change, to nevertheless illustrate their significance to some degree in always accompanying such change. However, a potential problem exists when using accounts of such theorists in a study of contemporary political phenomena, such as the Labour Party's changing approach between 1987 and 1997: much of the theory articulated is intended for the study of the

history of political thought, with the work of Farr, Pocock and Skinner all largely concerned with conceptual usage in past epochs. Only the work of Freedman is not specifically tailored to providing a retrospective look at language and political thought. Indeed, it might be argued that the advantages of using conceptual change theory are lost if it is applied to the present day: the way in which a historical study of the use of a concept over a long period of time emphasises the dynamism of that concept in particular, and concepts in general, for example. Furthermore, it is arguably very difficult to undertake a contemporary study which involves the consideration of context: being broadly part of the period being studied, the researcher himself is inevitably caught up in the very context under examination, making objectivity, afforded to the historian through the benefit of considerable hindsight, very difficult to achieve. These issues highlight the important question of whether conceptual change provides a suitable lens through which to look at contemporary political change.

In spite of such difficulties, however, there are a number of reasons why conceptual change might nevertheless constitute a viable methodology to achieve the aims of this research. In the first instance, the fundamental importance of concepts – as the expression of ideas and as the building blocks of knowledge and understanding – that lies at the centre of the theories discussed ensures a methodological rigour that could usefully be applied to contemporary uses of political language, in the same way in which it has been applied to historical uses, in order to illustrate the importance of ideas. Such a temporal flexibility in conceptual approaches is indeed confirmed by Farr's application of the conceptual history to a relatively recent political concept, that of *social capital* (Farr, 2004). Secondly, it is possible that one might establish some context of temporal change when studying Labour's changing approach even by looking at a single decade. While this certainly does not constitute the long periods over which conceptual change is at times studied on occasions in the history of political thought, it may provide a sufficiently wide window through which to examine to some degree the changing application of important political concepts by the Party. Indeed, other than conceptual histories, the theorists covered in this chapter are often concerned with the specific occasion of conceptual change, as is the case with Farr's coverage of *hegemony* (Farr, 1989). Finally, the various accounts used in the history of political

thought tessellate quite well with the important account of Freedden. The methodological concreteness of Freedden's work does not conflict with the more philosophical approaches of Farr, Pocock and Skinner. As such, the theories' common ground in placing fundamental importance on concepts as the expression of ideas affords a general approach that, relieved of its manifest historical focus, is potentially applicable to any case of conceptual usage.

A second issue that potentially undermines the efficacy of applying conceptual change theories in a study of the Labour Party concerns the issue of agency in the use of the concepts themselves. While theorists such as Farr, Pocock and Skinner discuss usage in texts authored by individual actors (the innovating ideologist, for example), in the case of the Labour *Party*, the study concerns the authorship of a corporate entity. For example, then, in this research the changing use of certain political concepts will be analysed through the examination of official Labour Party literature, such as election manifestos and specific departmental documents more limited in scope. Of course, authorship of such documents is often multiple and, more importantly, unattributed. As such, while it is certainly not the intention here to suggest that the Labour Party as a whole possesses a single shared application and expression of various important political concepts, the publication of such documents nevertheless presents conceptions of these on behalf of the Party as a coherent entity. In such cases, therefore, it is the 'official voice' of the Party that is under examination. This is manifestly different from the study of texts explicitly written by interacting and mutually influencing authors during a certain period, as often under inspection in the work of the conceptual theorists discussed here. It is suggested, however, that such an official voice must nevertheless serve the same purposes, and overcome the same difficulties, as the individual ideologist in the theories discussed: it must present a coherent political approach (particularly in self-contained election manifestos), provide a persuasive case in support of this, and address any contradictions that may exist within it.

Indeed, the reality of such documents is that, while authorship (in terms of number and identity) is indeterminate, such documents are nevertheless contributors to the presentation of a broader political approach, rather than standing alone, and as such must reflect, and conform to, this. Such an approach is, of course, to be framed (to

varying degrees) by the Party's hierarchy. In acknowledgment of this fact, therefore, accompanying these official Party documents in the research will be important speeches and papers by prominent members of the Party. By illustrating a general congruence between such individuals' own application of the concepts and those of the Party as a whole under their leadership, the way in which the anonymous corporate voice of the Party nevertheless articulates the approach of its leading lights can be demonstrated. Reference to such actors will largely be limited to the Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Chancellor; there were, of course, many influential actors within the Labour Party at any given point during the period in question, yet to undertake an examination of each individual presentation of the various concepts is beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, the input of individual leading lights within the Party is intended to supplement, add further insight into, and perhaps counteract the potentially vapid nature of, the policy documents. After all, the purpose of this research is not to document inconsistencies evident between various elements of Labour's hierarchy at any one time during the period in question. Rather, it is to trace and illustrate the significance of the changing use of important political concepts, and therefore the ideas they represent, in the transformation of the Party *as a whole* during the period in question – that is, as the Parliamentary Labour Party seeking to frame its political approach and present this to the country in the hope of gaining a mandate to govern.

Conclusion

The principal aim of the research is to build on and apply a specific approach to political change, one that illustrates and highlights an omnipresence of ideas in this process. The nature and role of concepts, and the way in which they are understood to both represent the expression of ideas and, when organised together, constitute a broader political approach, informs a study of conceptual change within the language of the Labour Party which is potentially suitable to illustrate the role of ideational evolution in the Party's development between 1987 and 1997. The theories discussed each offer a specific perspective on conceptual change, addressing different elements of the process of change. The work of Farr is concerned with the largely philosophical question of why, and informs the related issue of when, conceptual change occurs,

effectively examining the political context of change. The work of Freedman, meanwhile, looks more methodologically at concepts and conceptual change, investigating the detailed content of this process, and the wider impact this has on political ideologies. The respective work of Pocock and Skinner constitutes an historical investigation into the constraints imposed upon conceptual change by constitutive, epoch-defining frameworks governing the ways in which political actors use concepts. Thus, each of the theories used offers its own specific insight into the nature of concepts, their purpose, function and fundamental mutability. In doing so, the approaches are founded on very different assumptions and produce significantly different conclusions. Indeed, as discussed above, even the relatively similar work of Pocock and Skinner has very different epistemological and methodological implications.

Importantly, however, it is not these divergences, but what unites this collection of conceptual approaches, which is important for this research's aim of illustrating the importance of ideas in understanding political change. This common theme, which serves to distinguish them from other fields of political investigation, is the notion that language and politics are involved in a close and complex relationship. As such, it is assumed in the theories covered that conceptual change constitutes a part of, and therefore attends, any instance of political change. One consequence of this connection between the conceptual and political is the importance ascribed to ideas in political change: this is the logical extension of concepts serving to express ideas, whereby a change in the former effectively represents a change in the latter. This significant implication is evinced in the details of the theories covered, each of which shows how ideas necessarily attend political change in general, and an altered political approach of an ideologist or political actor more specifically. In doing so, conceptual approaches offer an important point regarding the role of ideas in political change: simply because other factors are evident, this does not mean that changing ideas are not attendant to, and significant in understanding, the process of such change. Of course, given their self-conscious, distinguishing methodology, which affords a central importance to concepts (and thus to the expression of ideas) in the study of politics and political change, such approaches tend to offer perhaps a greater emphasis on ideas than is advocated in this research. As such, the conceptual approaches, by illustrating the importance of ideas

and their expression through concepts, are used to inform a more qualified premise in this study.

The nature of the study

The fundamental presupposition of this research is that there was an important evolution of ideas accompanying the Labour Party's changing political approach between 1987 and 1997. The study seeks to offer a novel position on the Labour Party's transformation by suggesting that this presence of ideas can be illustrated by adopting theories largely applied to works of political thought, to trace the evolutionary application of political concepts deployed by the Party in framing its political approach. Indeed, it is an implication of such conceptual theories that ideas must *always* attend political change in this way, and must not be overlooked in understanding political change, even in cases where other interpretive elements might initially appear prominent. Thus, the position of this study is not dissimilar to a constructivist approach which, Hay asserts, starts from a recognition that political action cannot be understood without understanding the ideas held by actors, yet falls short of subscribing to a voluntarist idealism in which political outcomes can be read off largely from their ideas, desires and motivations (Hay, 2002). As such, the research aims to use conceptual approaches to illustrate an identifiable ideational evolution throughout the period in question attending the Party's effort to update its approach in the context of external political and economic change. It is therefore suggested that attempting to interpret Labour's transformation without understanding the presence and nature of such ideational factors provides an incomplete account of change.

The fact that the theories discussed in this chapter frame an intrinsically important connection between ideas, concepts and political change ensures that the study of the changing use of concepts could potentially provide an insightful ideational account of the Labour Party's changing trajectory between 1987 and 1997. A second feature that they share, meanwhile, serves to determine the way in which such an account is to be organised. Each theory treats the application of concepts not as isolated expressions of ideas or beliefs, but as part of broader groupings within political approaches: for Farr, these are 'constellations'; for Freedon they represent

'configurations' within 'idea-environments'; while for Pocock and Skinner respectively they are manifestations of the linguistic framework that underpins our very use and understanding of such terms. The concepts studied in the Labour Party documents and selected output of its leading members are therefore examined within groupings that are significant in understanding their meaning and application, with each 'constellation' or 'configuration' addressing important political issues within the Labour Party's broader political approach. Such issues relate to questions that need to be addressed by any remotely coherent political approach or ideology, and perhaps offer a particular resonance to the Labour Party and its heritage. The first concerns the distribution of resources in society; the second relates to the successful co-existence of members of society; and the third entails a consideration of the broader context within which these first two questions (and indeed others alongside them) must be addressed.

The changing way in which Labour addressed the first question which, for want of a more appropriate term, frames the Party's approach to equality, is examined with reference to the concepts of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*. Following this, Labour's approach to the second question, referred to here as fraternity, is considered through its application of *community*, *responsibility* and *family*. The final conceptual analysis, which considers the Party's changing conception of the external context, concerns the concepts of *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress*. For the sake of clarity, these nine concepts will appear in italics only when being discussed specifically in terms of their application by the Labour Party as part of this study.

It should be conceded that the expression of the first two questions as 'equality' and 'fraternity' is not completely satisfactory: both come with ideological baggage, and perhaps attach a nuanced meaning that is not quite accurate as a result. Furthermore, one might enquire why equality and fraternity are deemed here to represent political questions or 'idea-environments', while *justice* and *community*, for example, are treated as concepts. In short, both equality and fraternity might be considered important political concepts in their own right; nevertheless, it is suggested here that both are sufficiently broad – offering as many questions as answers – to be treated as representations of organising questions within a broader political approach to be subsequently addressed by other concepts. Both have constituted guiding principles of

the political left, pointing to roles as fundamental criteria to be addressed by an approach, rather than the more specific ways in which this might be done in practice. Without the issues they represent, such as the distribution of resources in society and the relationships between its members, any political approach would be incomplete, something that is perhaps less the case with the concepts themselves in this study. By illustrating the way in which Labour addressed such fundamental political questions (as well as the context in which such responses must be framed) through transformed conceptual usage, the aim is to trace a significant evolution of ideas that has accompanied the Labour Party's changing political approach between 1987 and 1997.

3. Equality

Introduction

It has been suggested so far that there has been unsatisfactory treatment of ideas in coverage of the changing Labour Party, and that a study concerned with the changing use of concepts, in representing ideational change, might provide a useful addition to the literature on the subject. This chapter seeks to apply this premise to the Labour Party's changing egalitarian approach between 1987 and 1997. The aim is to suggest that the significant modification this underwent during the period in question was informed in part by a significant reconsideration of how an appropriate distribution of resources within society should (and could) be achieved. Crucial to this recasting of egalitarian commitments throughout the period was the backdrop of a changing economic and political context within which the Party's approach to equality was to be conceived and executed. As such, it is suggested that important to the changes in this approach was an ongoing development of how such goals would best be accomplished. It is therefore argued that the changing way in which Labour went about addressing the important question of equality was accompanied and informed by an evolution of ideas as much as a defensive accommodation of the received ideological wisdom or popular public perception regarding the crucial political issue of egalitarian measures. The hope is that such an evolution will be illustrated in the following conceptual analyses, as the progression of ideas is identified through evolutionary conceptual usage.

The three concepts selected to analyse the Labour Party's changing egalitarian approach are *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*. They have been chosen on the grounds that they all make an important contribution to addressing the question of equality in general, and each informed the way in which this was approached by the Party during the period in question. The concept of *opportunity* relates intimately to the idea of equality, and articulates a concern with the interests of the many, rather than the few, in society. Indeed, for many on the moderate left, the concept constitutes the embodiment of egalitarianism – the approach to distribution of resources most desirable, and workable, in a modern mixed economy. Closely linked to this is the concept of *potential*, which expresses the possibility of human achievement that could be fulfilled

should one have the chance to do so. In this sense, it informs an egalitarian approach in the way in which it alludes to future outcomes should certain paths be followed – something which is implicit in the conception of equality itself. Finally, the concept of *justice*, a common abbreviation for *social* (as opposed to *criminal*) *justice*, is intrinsically linked to the idea of equality. Given that the achievement of some notion of equality is generally deemed to be an important prerequisite to that of *justice*, the conception of *justice* one holds largely reflects and informs the conception of equality (and vice versa). Thus, the concept serves as an excellent barometer of a Party's perspective on equality at any given time. Each concept's application by the Labour Party between 1987 and 1997 will be considered in turn – starting with *opportunity* before moving on to *potential* and *justice* – in order to examine any transformations during this period, the possible motivation behind these and what such conceptual change suggests about the role of ideas in Labour's egalitarian approach.

Opportunity

The concept of *opportunity* figured prominently in the Labour Party's lexicon throughout the decade from 1987 to 1997; it was used with almost uniform frequency during the period, and the Party attached a consistent emphasis upon it within its internal hierarchy of political concepts. This is evident from titles of Labour policy documents alone: *Opportunity Britain*, *Opportunities for All* and *Opportunity, Quality, Accountability* were published at the start of the 1990s (Labour Party, 1991e; 1991d; 1991f). Latterly, titles included *Getting Welfare to Work: Opportunities for lone mothers* and *New Opportunities for Business* (Harman, 1996; Labour Party, 1996k). As these applications suggest, the significance of the concept of *opportunity* to Labour's general approach often manifested itself in usage that was at best unspecific, and at worst quite banal. That is, some applications did not have any real content, apart from a general 'positive' intonation. Such usage alluded to a number of different meanings, yet at the same time did not have any specific implication. As such, it is important to make clear that with *opportunity* – and indeed most, if not all, the other concepts in this research – it was often the case that a number of meanings were projected in a single application. Thus, the concept's articulation at times entailed an apparently deliberate

ambiguity, to provide an uplifting yet non-committal sentiment. Importantly for this research, however, most applications of *opportunity*, while perhaps carrying more than one connotation, were more specific than these titles and slogans, with immediate qualifications – sometimes explicit, other times less so – sufficient to gain a sense of a dominant meaning in any particular instance. It therefore seems possible, in spite of such ambiguity of *opportunity's* prominent usage, and while acknowledging that single uses can have multiple meanings, to attempt to identify a change in the general trend of the concept's usage in Party output over the ten years in question.

It is suggested that there was indeed such a transformation in the way in which the Labour Party articulated *opportunity* during the period in question. Specifically, the concept seemingly became more focused in its application, evolving from a relatively general, to a more expressly economic, articulation. Initially considered is the way in which earlier applications referred to the need to increase opportunities over a broad spectrum of activities in order to construct a more egalitarian society. It is shown that, rather than necessarily being linked with a specific outcome, such applications of *opportunity* carried a general sense of personal development and fulfilment, with little prescription of how this might be achieved specifically. The way in which this was evident even in references to opportunity for employment is then illustrated, along with its further emphasis by a number of references to the opportunity for individual participation and influence, both in the workplace and in wider arenas too. It is subsequently shown how, in later Party material, applications of *opportunity* tended to be more economic in nature: in place of self-development and fulfilment, there was an explicit emphasis on economic opportunity, along with an association between *opportunity* and prosperity. The way in which such an articulation was clearly manifested in an emphasis on opportunity to work, which constituted the most prominent reference to the concept in later cases, is then considered before suggesting that it was also evident indirectly in applications of education which, alongside training, was often intrinsically linked to employment as an end product. It is concluded that this more prescriptive articulation of *opportunity* took as its starting point the economy at large, rather than the individual, as the efficiency of the country gained increasing importance in the provision of opportunities.

Opportunity for fulfilment

Looking at Party documents and speeches in the late-1980s and early-1990s, it is apparent that applications of *opportunity* were relatively open-ended. That is, rather than emphasising opportunities for specific actions, there was a more general articulation, concerning self-development and personal growth. For example, *Moving Ahead* stated: 'It is Labour's job...to forge once more a caring society; a free society, one that respects the individual and offers opportunities to grow and thrive, regardless of circumstances' (Labour Party, 1987b, p. 1). Similarly, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* asserted: 'The present government's perception of "individual opportunity" ignores the roots from which opportunity has sprung and undermines the kind of environment which democratic experience has shown promotes true individual growth and self-worth' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 26). This advocacy of a conception of *opportunity* founded on individual development was again apparent in *Opportunity Britain*, which referred to the need for 'a government determined to ensure that people have the opportunity to find and develop what is best in themselves', a sentiment also found in *Opportunities for All*, and with regard to Britain's ethnic minority communities in *The Best for Everyone* (Labour Party, 1991e, p. iii; 1991d, p. 4; 1992h, p. 2).

Linked with such references to growth and development was the connection made between *opportunity* and fulfilment. This was evident in *The Time of Your Life*, published shortly before the 1992 election, which offered 'for those who never had a first chance at further education...a 'Return to learn' scheme for people of all ages so that years of retirement really do become years of fulfilment and opportunity' (Labour Party, 1992i, p. 3). Such a conception of *opportunity* was in evidence under the leadership of John Smith, too, as suggested in *Agenda for Change*, a statement of the Party's direction after the 1992 election defeat: 'We are determined to build in Britain a society in which every individual and every family have the opportunity to achieve fulfilment, to enjoy a good quality of life, and to help make our country strong and free' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3). This was affirmed in Smith's address to the Party conference in 1992, in which he stated that the Labour Party 'was born out of the determination of ordinary citizens to play their full part in society, to claim for

themselves the opportunities enjoyed by others, opportunities of individual advancement and fulfillment that had previously been denied to them' (Smith, 1992, p. 103).

An important element of this emphasis on fulfilment was the association of *opportunity* with the concept of *potential*. The Party, in early speeches and documents, was apparently concerned with the concept of *opportunity* with regard to the realisation of each individual's personal potential. This was explicitly evident in *Looking to the Future*, which asserted: 'We want Britain to be a society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential', before stating that the Party 'will create new opportunities for individuals to develop their potential and move on to better jobs' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 29, p. 32). Similarly, *Family Prosperity* warned: 'Children who never get the opportunity to fulfil their potential become adults who cannot make their full contribution to society' (Labour Party, 1991b, p. 9). More generally, *Opportunity Britain* stated: 'We believe in the real freedom that comes with opportunities to choose, opportunity to fulfil one's potential, opportunities to exercise rights in practice and not just in principle' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 45). This emphasis on the connection between *opportunity* and *potential* was evident post-Kinnock too, as Smith stated in his 1992 Party conference address: 'The British people deserve better...All these people ask is the opportunity to prove their worth, and it is up to the government to unlock the extraordinary potential of our ordinary people' (Smith, 1992, p. 106). Furthermore, *Opening Doors to a Learning Society* claimed that 'there are essential issues that must be addressed if every one is to be given the opportunity to fulfil his or her personal potential' (Taylor, 1993, p. 1).

Such a conception of *opportunity*, relating to individual development and fulfilment, was evident in less explicit ways too. In addition to overt references to the fulfilment of personal potential, it was also apparent in many references to educational opportunity. The way in which this was often applied in early documents and speeches suggested that this was an extension of the Party's concern with personal development, rather than a longer-term investment in future national economic performance, for example. *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* asserted: 'If people are to make the most of their potential, we must dramatically increase educational opportunities, making

them more widely and more fairly available' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 49). The connection between education and personal development was also evident in *Children First*, which referred to the need 'to give educational opportunities to those over 50 who have never had them in the past' (Straw *et al.*, 1989, p. 3). Similarly, *Multi-cultural Education* asserted that 'the argument throughout this document has rested upon the notion that the extension of educational opportunity must be primarily an educational objective' (Labour Party, 1989b, p. 5). This was explicitly reiterated in Kinnock's address to the Labour conference in 1990, in which he asserted: 'Participation, access and opportunity are the keys to unlock the door to achievement – not just in economic advance, but cultural and spiritual fulfilment, for that also – indeed mainly – is what education is about too' (Kinnock, 1990, p. 131). At this stage, therefore, the notion of education was firmly connected with the Party's emphasis on the opportunity for individuals to develop and find fulfilment.

Work, influence and participation

There was, of course, a significant emphasis in the early documents and speeches, on opportunities to work. However, with references to employment opportunity early in the period in question, there was a focus on the benefits of work for the individual, emphasising notions of independence, satisfaction and achievement. For example, *Opportunity Britain* stated: 'We need to create opportunities for people to be independent. Creating new opportunities to work and reforming the taxation and social security system will help deal with the poverty trap' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 39). Furthermore, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* asserted: 'Our objective is a fully employed economy in which everyone of working age has the opportunity to take paid work. But even this is not enough...[People] need work which makes good use of their abilities, which pays a decent wage, offers reasonable security and working conditions and provides opportunities for training and retraining' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 17). Such a substantial notion of employment opportunity was also evident in *Looking to the Future*, which contended: 'Everyone should have the chance of a first-rate education and training, the opportunity to get a good job and be treated fairly, the right to enjoy good conditions at work, the prospect of enjoying retirement on a decent income'

(Labour Party, 1990a, p. 29). As such, the articulation at this stage of employment opportunity represents not simply the chance for work as such, but for fulfilling and fairly-paid work.

One manifestation of such references to employment opportunity early in the period in question not seen in later applications was the allusion to the opportunity for influence and participation in decisions affecting the individual's experience in the workplace. For example, *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* discussed the importance of ensuring that 'working men and women are offered the opportunity to acquire both a real stake in, and real democratic influence over, the industries and services in which they are employed' before asserting that 'workers must have the opportunity to participate in making decisions that influence their working lives' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 3, p. 10). *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again* suggested a way in which this might be achieved: 'Employees should have the opportunity to own collectively a significant stake in the company for which they work' (Labour Party, 1992d, p. 14). This sentiment was again evident in *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*, which stated: 'Municipal enterprises, workers' collectives, share schemes, worker co-operatives...can each contribute to the flexibility of the economy and open up opportunities for participation in the process of change' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 5). The importance of this workforce input was referred to later on in the same document, which warned: 'The erosion of basic employment rights is...reducing employee commitment and opportunities for the exercise of initiative and discretion, reducing the very quality of the labour force' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 12). Furthermore, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* alluded to 'greater opportunities for negotiation and agreement between workers and their employers', something which could be justified by the fact that 'a steady increase in the opportunities for workers to influence and participate in company decisions will go a long way to pre-empting [industrial] disputes' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 21, p. 25).

The importance of individual participation and influence outlined in early Party material extended beyond the workplace, however. There was a repeated assertion that people should enjoy greater influence and choice over issues affecting all areas of their lives in society. For example, *Opportunity, Quality, Accountability* referred to 'the

opportunity to have more say in local government with annual elections and streamlined local authorities', before asserting that local 'authorities have been a vital means of diffusing power and giving people an opportunity to be active citizens in their neighbourhood' (Labour Party, 1991f, p. 2, p. 3). More generally, *Looking to the Future* promised to 'extend the opportunities for men and women to make, for themselves, the decisions which affect their daily lives. The new laws which we will create will not increase the power of the state, but hold it back' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 39). Similarly, *Opportunities for All* stated that it is 'important that all groups within the community have every opportunity and encouragement to be involved in the democratic process', before promising that 'many people facing barriers in the formal political process will be given new opportunities to participate'. This would culminate in the Party's aim 'to create a modern constitution in which all people have the opportunities to participate fully in decisions which will shape our country's future' (Labour Party, 1991d, p. 20, p. 21, p. 25). It can be seen therefore, that an articulation of *opportunity* with regard to such notions of influence and participation, both in the workplace and outside it, reinforces the focus on the individual, be that in the guise of an employee or simply a member of society.

Opportunity and freedom

The conception of *opportunity* evident in the Labour Party's documents and speeches during the early stages of the period – outlining a relatively open-ended articulation of the concept with an emphasis on self-development and fulfilment of the individual both in and out of the workplace – pointed to a close relationship with freedom (or liberty). This conception framed the importance of *opportunity* alongside the positive conception of freedom prevalent in the Party's ideological thinking in the late-1980s⁶, while the lack of prescription or end-product in the nature of opportunities articulated pointed to an intrinsic liberty on the part of those enjoying these as a right in a just society. Indeed, this relationship between *opportunity* and freedom was referred to explicitly on a number of different occasions in early documentation. For example, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* stated: 'Collective action has always been designed to create opportunities and advance the freedom of the individual and...of the whole

community'. The same document subsequently asserted: 'The true purpose of socialism is the creation of a genuinely free society...[which] enables individuals – of every race and class – to take practical advantage of the opportunities which liberty provides' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 6, p. 55). Similarly, *Opportunity Britain* contended: 'We believe in freedom...We believe in the real freedom that comes with opportunities to choose, opportunities to fulfil one's potential, opportunities to exercise rights in practice and not just in principle' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 45). Furthermore, Kinnock's foreword to *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again* promised that a Labour government would 'mean greater freedom, security and opportunity. It will mean change for the better' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1992d, p. 8). Most explicit of all, however, was the assertion at the beginning of *Agenda for Change*, which unequivocally stated that 'Labour is the party of social opportunity and individual freedom', emphasising the twin importance of, and alluding to a connection between, *opportunity* and freedom at this stage (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3).

Economic opportunity

In applications of *opportunity* in documents and speeches later in the period, there was evidence of an evolution, from the relatively general, open-ended articulation of the concept concerned primarily with the individual, to a more contingent, economic conception focused as much on the performance and competitiveness of the economy as a whole, as on the development and satisfaction of the individual. This was evident in a number of different ways, by far the most explicit of which was the proliferation of references to 'economic opportunity'. For example, both *A New Economic Future for Britain* and *New Labour, New Life for Britain* referred to 'economic opportunities for all' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 9; 1996i, p. 10). It would appear that such an economic application of *opportunity* was a feature of Blair's tenure as leader of the Party: indeed, it could in fact be found in Blair's output earlier than this, further suggesting his influence in the concept's application along such economic lines. For example, Blair referred in *Fabian Review* in 1993, to 'stamping Labour as the Party of new economic opportunity, not engaged in a battle for territory between private and public sector' (Blair, 1993a, p. 3). Similarly in an article in *Renewal* of the same year, Blair wrote of

'the creation of a genuine partnership between public and private sector, the purpose of which is to intervene to enhance individual economic opportunity, and rebuild the economic base' (Blair, 1993d, p. 7). Furthermore, in a foreword to *Reclaiming the Ground*, Blair asserted: 'The new agenda in politics will reach out past old debates between economic ideologies of State control and *laissez-faire* and embrace different issues [such as] the development of new economic opportunities for individuals' (Blair, 1993b, p. 11).

Common in Party documents published during Blair's tenure, alongside such overtly economic applications of *opportunity*, were some more implicit, yet no less economic, references to the concept. A prominent example was the connection, frequently made, between *opportunity* and prosperity; by associating the two together, there was an intrinsically economic implication instilled in the former. This was evident in *A New Economic Future for Britain*, which stated: 'Labour will harness the energies of both the public and private sectors in a proper partnership: public working with private to ensure that the economy delivers prosperity and opportunity for all' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 10). Similarly, *A Fresh Start for Britain* included the statement: 'Labour believes that individual citizens need a strong community in order to offer the opportunity to prosper and to help when the same individuals cannot provide for themselves' (Labour Party, 1996a, p. 2). Furthermore, *Getting Welfare to Work: Opportunities for lone mothers* stated: 'Labour believes that Britain can only become a One Nation society if there are opportunities for all to share fairly in rising prosperity' (Harman, 1996, p. 2). The means of achieving this prosperity was prescribed in repeated references, in conjunction with *opportunity*, to work and prosperity. For example, *A New Economic Future for Britain* stated: 'Providing new opportunities for the long-term unemployed is...essential if Labour is to make real its commitment to offer the opportunity to work and prosper to everyone' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 35). Similarly, *Vision for Growth* asserted that Labour's 'statement of aims and values...makes clear that Labour works for a dynamic economy...and the opportunity for all to work and prosper' (Labour Party, 1996m, p. 38).

The logical extension of Labour's more economic articulation of *opportunity* was that, while those with opportunities enjoy prosperity or wealth, those without suffer

poverty and deprivation. This was a presumption consistently alluded to in Party documents. For example, *Jobs and Social Justice* referred to 'poverty and the lack of opportunity in Britain today' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 24). Similarly, *A New Economic Future for Britain* included the affirmation: 'Our belief is that attacking poverty and lack of opportunity at their source is the route to both a fairer society and a more prosperous economy' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 5). The importance of achieving such aims was alluded to by Straw, who stated: 'Poverty and lack of opportunity cause crime. But crime and disorder worsen poverty and reduce opportunity even further' (Straw in Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 5). Similarly, *New Labour, New Life for Young People* asserted: 'While poverty or lack of opportunity can never be an excuse for crime, there is a strong link between deprivation and criminal activity', a sentiment also found in *Labour's New Deal for a Lost Generation* (Labour Party, 1996j, p. 5; 1996f, p. 3). Furthermore, in his Fabian Society pamphlet, *Fair is Efficient*, Brown contended: 'Persistent unemployment and falling relative wages for poorly skilled and educated workers are the twin sources of rising poverty and lack of opportunity in Britain', before asserting that 'we must attack poverty and lack of opportunity at their source' (Brown, 1994a, p. 17, p. 25). As such, whether discussing the significance of *opportunity* through reference to the benefits of its provision, or the problems caused by its absence, there was a fundamental connection made between the concept and that of an individual's financial situation.

Opportunity to work, train and study

The most frequent way in which Labour's later economic articulation of *opportunity* was expressed was with references to employment. While explicit references to economic opportunity by Blair allude to his influence in the Party's economic conception of *opportunity* during his leadership tenure, then the influence of Gordon Brown – perhaps unsurprisingly given his brief as Shadow Chancellor – could also be seen with the Party's emphasis on opportunity for employment. Brown's introduction to *Rebuilding the Economy* asserted: 'Our basic economic goal, the fulfilment of individual potential, requires a Prosperity Agenda with policies to deliver higher living standards, long-term sustainable growth, low inflation and employment opportunities

for all' (Brown in Labour Party, 1994c, p. 2). Similarly, Brown referred in the same year to 'a new economic policy – a new economic egalitarianism – that not only empowers and enriches people with new opportunities through work but recognises that to enhance the value of labour and skills is the only sure path to modern economic success' (Brown, 1994c, p. 122). Indeed, such was the link made by Brown between *opportunity* and employment that the two almost become synonymous with one another, as he asserted: 'The tax system must encourage work and opportunity for all' (Brown, 1997b, p. 2).

This expression of *opportunity* and employment as so closely connected was evident in wider Party documentation, too. For example, *A New Economic Future for Britain* asserted that Labour wanted 'a tax system that is built around encouraging work and opportunity' before asserting: 'Tax should encourage work and opportunity and reward effort' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 66). More generally, the relatively open-ended Party slogan of the early-1990s – 'Opportunities for all' – in later documents and speeches became 'Employment opportunities for all' (for example, Labour Party, 1994c, p. 2; 1995a, p. 35; 1996i, p. 13; Brown in Labour Party 1996k, p. 7; 1996m, p. 38). Even when reference was less explicit than this, in not referring directly to employment, it was nevertheless evident that *opportunity* was relating specifically to work. For example, regarding working patterns, Brown stated in *Fair is Efficient*: 'The revolution should have opened up new opportunities for everyone', while *Jobs and Social Justice* asserted that 'part-time opportunities should be available if desired' (Brown, 1994a, p. 2; Labour Party, 1994a, p. 21). Similarly, the suggestion of who the recipients of such opportunities would be was equally illuminating, as shown in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*, which stated: 'We will provide new opportunities for the long-term unemployed' (Labour, 1996i, p. 22). Therefore, the Party's prolific reference to employment opportunity was evident in both explicit, and implicit, applications.

While Labour's economic conception of *opportunity* most frequently manifested itself in applications of opportunity to work, it is interesting to note that it was also evident less directly in other references, to educational or learning opportunity for example, which were increasingly applied in an economic, rather than a self-development, sense. This was evident in references to 'lifelong learning', for example.

The primacy of an economic consideration in the motivation behind such learning was stated succinctly in the document *Lifelong Learning*: 'Improved access to learning opportunities leads to improved job prospects and security, and to the ability to participate more effectively in the wider community, as well as developing potential and fulfilment' (Labour Party, 1996h, p. 4). Such a primarily economic conception of educational opportunity was equally evident when Blair asserted that 'education must be lifelong. That does not mean a lifetime sitting behind a desk, but...lifetime opportunities to update old skills and develop new ones. This is important for people to stay in employment and also to move up in employment' (Blair, 1996f, p. 126). Significantly, however, conventional educational opportunities for young people were also articulated in such an economic context in later applications. For example, *Equipping Young People for the Future* warned: 'If educational opportunities are unequal, all opportunities will be unequal; for skills and qualifications have become the high road to employment opportunity' (Brown *et al.*, 1996, p. 14). This economic importance of education was earlier framed in Brown's assertion at the 1994 Party conference: 'Our plan is economic: education and employment opportunities for all', while in a Fabian Pamphlet of the same year reference was made to 'the virtuous cycle of education, job opportunities, high-productivity and prosperity' (Brown, 1994b, p. 11; 1994a, p. 25). Furthermore, Brown asserted in the Anthony Crosland Memorial Lecture that 'a new welfare state is needed to bring employment and educational opportunity to those denied it' (Brown, 1997a, p. 39).

This increasingly economic conception of education was further suggested in the firm association made between education, training and employment. With this connection, the opportunity for education was no longer articulated as an end in itself, or a vehicle for self-development and fulfilment; rather, it was conceived of as part of a single, economic process, culminating in economic contribution through employment. There were numerous examples, in applications of *opportunity*, of this single process. *Rebuilding the Economy*, for example, implored that 'every young person leaving school without a job must be guaranteed the opportunity of work with training or education and training leading to recognised qualifications' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 16). Similarly, *A New Economic Future for Britain* asserted: 'Providing economic

opportunities for all our citizens to work, train and study is the only way for Britain to reverse the growing division of society between those with the skills and opportunities to succeed and those sentenced to long-term unemployment or poorly-paid, dead-end jobs' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 9). Furthermore, *Equipping Young People for the Future* suggested that 'it is urgent that we tackle the crisis of under-provision, [and] inadequate opportunity...in the post-16 provision of education, training and work' (Brown *et al.*, 1996, p. 7). The grouping together of education, training and employment was also evident in *Labour's New Deal for a Lost Generation*, the opening section of which examined 'the lack of opportunities and inequalities in opportunity, including employment, skills and education' (Labour Party, 1996f, p. 1).

There was a sense, both in Labour's frequent references to work opportunities, and the connection between education, training and employment, that the rationale behind the Party's articulation of *opportunity* was concerned less with the needs of the individual, as was apparently the case with previous Party references to employment opportunity in the period, and more with the needs of the nation as a whole. Consequently, there was a shift in the Party's focus from an individual, to a national, focus. This change in focus was implied in the assertion by Brown: 'In the industrial age, the denial of opportunity offended many people but it was not critical to the success of the economy' (Brown, 1996b, p. 1). Such a change was evident quite clearly and consistently with regard to welfare provision, and its juxtaposition with opportunity for employment, or education, training and employment. This was something to which Brown himself alluded, referring to 'the modernisation of the welfare state to create new opportunities for employment for all' (Brown, 1996a, p. 29).

This notion of an economic conception of *opportunity* as the solution to Britain's increasing welfare bill (and the impact that this had on the national economy) was consistently articulated in general Party documentation too. Specifically, the way in which this solution might work in practice was referred to in *New Deal for a New Britain*, which stated regarding the choices of employment and education: 'With our new opportunities, continuing forever on full benefit cannot and will not be an option' (Labour Party, 1997b, p. 4). More significantly, *Getting Welfare to Work: Opportunities for lone mothers* asserted: 'Labour believe in an active strategy to provide lone mothers

opportunities to work. We will break down the barriers that prevent lone mothers moving off benefit and into work' (Harman, 1996, pp. 2-3). Furthermore, under the title of 'New opportunities to work', *Labour's Business Manifesto* asserted: 'In government, we will modernise the welfare state. Reform of the tax and benefit system, together with better job opportunities, will get people into jobs' (Labour Party, 1997a, p. 6). Perhaps the most explicit statement of Labour's motivation for the provision of employment opportunity, however, appeared in *Getting Welfare to Work: A new vision for social security*, which under the heading 'Savings for the taxpayer' referred to ensuring 'that opportunities are available to all' as providing 'the real key to cutting the costs of social security for the nation as a whole' (Labour Party, 1996d, p. 8). Once again, the suggestion was that the provision of such opportunity served the needs of the economy as much as it did the individual.

Opportunity and responsibility

The Labour Party's conception of *opportunity*, with its strong economic emphasis, subsequent connection with a modified notion of welfare and an emphasis on national economic well-being, betrayed a close relationship with the concept of *responsibility*. This represented a significant contrast with the connection between *opportunity* and freedom that prevailed in earlier Party applications. Indeed, this relationship between *opportunity* and *responsibility* was often explicitly articulated in later documents and speeches. The tone for such a connection was set in each of Blair's speeches to the Party conference: in 1994 he referred to 'a society of opportunity for all, guaranteed through a strong economy and strong public services' before adding the important caveat: 'But with opportunity must come responsibility' (Blair, 1994f, p. 102). Similarly, he asserted the following year that with the provision of 'opportunity comes the responsibility, because both come together', while in 1996 Blair announced 'a new vision...a society of opportunity; a society of responsibility' (Blair, 1995d, p. 100; 1996g, p. 84). This connection was also evident in Party documents published during Blair's leadership, as seen with the assertion in *Learn as You Earn* that 'we want to put the choice, opportunity and responsibility in the hands of the individual' (Labour Party, 1996g; p. 3). This was expanded upon in *Target 2000*, which asserted: 'The young

unemployed have a responsibility to seek work, accept reasonable opportunities and upgrade their skills' (Labour Party, 1996l, p. 2). Similarly, *Equipping Young People for the Future* referred to the transformation 'from passive welfare provision to expanding educational and employment opportunity, matching opportunities with responsibilities to work or learn' (Brown *et al.*, 1996, p. 23). Furthermore, *New Deal for a New Britain* discussed 'a modernisation of the welfare state for the 1990s and beyond...[which] means new opportunities and new responsibilities for Britain's young and long-term unemployed people' (Labour Party, 1997b, p. 2). As such, the increasingly economic articulation of *opportunity* was accompanied by a sense of contingency not present in earlier, less prescriptive, applications of the concept.

Motivating factors

The transformation of *opportunity* from a relatively general, to a more focused economic, articulation can be contextualised by considering the professed motivation for the Party's pursuit of its increased provision. An important motif for Labour during much of the period in question was the mutually inclusive relationship between social justice and economic efficiency. From before the publication of the first report of the Policy Review, through to the Final Report of the CSJ and beyond, the importance, and intrinsic feasibility, of increasing justice without compromising the efficiency of the national economy, was espoused by the Party. However, while the significance of this two-fold objective remained constant, there was evidence of a shift in its emphasis. This shift was of great significance, given that it seemingly represented in large part the evolving ideational logic behind the Party's changing approach to equality more generally, and its application of *opportunity* specifically. While deemed throughout the period to be very much mutually inclusive, there was a relatively subtle evolution from the notion that justice was the more important element in the coupling, to a subsequent idea that efficiency should be the primary consideration.

This changing ideational premise, on which the conception of *opportunity* was seemingly founded, was evident in early applications that emphasised justice for the individual first, and efficiency of the economy second. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* referred to the goal of 'ensuring that everyone, including the

redundant and long-term unemployed, has the opportunity to acquire new or improved skills so as to increase their job satisfaction, widen their range of job opportunities, and extend their contribution to the economy and society' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 11). This was again evident in *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*: 'Bringing the unemployed back into employment and creating wider opportunities for those whose skills are now under-used is not only good for individuals, it is essential to deal with the skills shortages which now hold Britain back' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 29). Similarly, *Looking to the Future* suggested: 'Creating opportunities is good for everyone. It is also the key to economic success' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 30). A similar logic was used in *Children First* to identify the problems caused by a lack of opportunity: 'Individuals suffer grievously from...lost opportunities. So does the economy, as our failure to compete in the world shows all too graphically' (Straw *et al.*, 1989, p. 1). Furthermore, *Opportunity Britain* endorsed this connection, asserting: 'There is now a marriage of necessity between individual opportunity and the economic success of the nation' before asserting that helping 'women to fulfil their potential is vital if they are to have the opportunity to succeed. But training women is vital for our economic future too' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 5, p. 6). *Opportunities for All*, meanwhile, stated: 'Lack of childcare...and inflexible working patterns are major obstacles to women achieving equal opportunities at work – and they are also economically inefficient' (Labour Party, 1991d, p. 15).

Later applications of *opportunity* saw this order of priority between justice and efficiency reversed, as suggested explicitly in *Rebuilding the Economy*, which asserted: 'Labour is the party of economic prosperity and social justice. We want to build a prosperous economy in which all people have real opportunities to make the most of their talents' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 3). Similarly, *Jobs and Social Justice* referred to the importance of allowing the most vulnerable members of society to 'share in its resources and opportunities. The case for good social provision rests not only on economic efficiency, but also on the principle of social justice' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 23). The way in which the Party by this stage framed its approach to increased social justice in a predominantly economic context was evident in the output of its two most prominent members, Blair and Brown, whose own articulation of *opportunity* appeared

to influence that of the Party more generally under their guidance. The predominance of efficiency over justice in the motivation for extending opportunities was asserted by Brown, for example, in referring to Crosland's notion of democratic equality in a modern context. He stated that 'it demands employment opportunity for all because work is central not just to economic prosperity for Britain but to individual fulfilment' (Brown, 1997a, p. 43). Interestingly, this prioritisation was matched by Blair as early as 1991, in an article for *Marxism Today*, as he referred to 'the real case for investment in training, not just for economic success, but to allow each individual the opportunity to develop his or her talents to the full and thus have much greater power over their future' (Blair, 1991, p. 34). Such a perspective would subsequently lay the foundation for an increasingly economic conception of *opportunity* during Blair's tenure as Party leader. This, as shall now be shown, was to impact on the application of other concepts informing the Party's egalitarian approach, such as that of *potential*.

Potential

As with *opportunity*, the concept of *potential* was used frequently by the Party during the decade in question in framing its approach to equality. Likewise, a number of its applications were similarly ambiguous, or simply inconsequential in offering a specific meaning. This was in part due to the nature of *potential* and its use as an adjective, applied to mean 'possible' or 'likely'. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* referred to 'the potential role of regional institutions', and 'potential conflict'. Furthermore, a subsequent reference in the same document saw it applied as a noun, referring to 'the potential for conflict' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 5, p. 9, p. 14). Such usage, however, was not alluding to potential of people, and as such did not relate intimately to the concepts of *opportunity* and *justice* in addressing the issue of equality. In addition to this, nevertheless, there was also a tendency evident for the Party to refer to this latter sense of *potential* in a relatively ambiguous manner, as it did *opportunity*; there were consequently times when the concept's positive intonation was simply accentuated by offering a non-committal application. Indeed, this was evident in the output of all three Party leaders in during the period. Kinnock asserted in *Opportunity Britain*: 'We have confidence in the strengths and potential of Britain and its people'

(Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991e, p. iii). Similarly, Smith referred, as R. H. Tawney had before him, to 'the extraordinary potential of ordinary people' (Smith, 1991, p. 30; see Smith 1993, p. 139 for reference to Tawney). Finally, Blair talked of 'a society that is genuinely One Nation in which we seek to realise the potential of all our people' (Blair, 1996d, p. 22). However, as with *opportunity*, it is possible to acknowledge the existence of such relatively vague applications while nevertheless identifying a transformation in the general way in which *potential* was conceived during the ten years in question.

Indeed, in a number of important areas, the changes evident in the application of *opportunity* were also evident in the Party's conception of *potential*. It is suggested that, broadly speaking, there was a similar evolution from a relatively general conception of *potential* that related to individual growth and development to a significantly more economic articulation of the concept. It is initially shown how earlier references to *potential* tended to draw on elements of personal development and fulfilment, manifested in the way in which the concept was conceived as something that people have the right to fulfil and how, in a fairly open-ended articulation, relatively little prescription was involved. It is shown that, as a result, the emphasis was very much on people to make the most of their own potential, in what was predominantly an individual (though not individualistic) application of the concept. The way in which the concept's articulation evolved into a more economic application, through a framing of the development of human potential as important to the wider country as well as the individual, is then considered. It is suggested that this facilitated an increasing emphasis on the individual's potential as economically, as well as socially, important. Consequently, it is suggested that later references to *potential* tended to relate to a contribution to the national economy. Inevitably, it is argued, this entailed a shift from a uniquely individual, to a national, articulation of *potential* in the context of a global economy. Finally, it is shown that, in this regard, the motivating factor of national economic efficiency once again became increasingly salient to the way the Party approached the concept of *potential*, as was the case with *opportunity*.

Individual development

In early Labour Party documents – specifically those published between 1987 and 1992 – there was a tendency evident to apply the concept of *potential* in way that related to development of the individual; the focus was thus ostensibly on personal growth and realisation of talent, and for the sake of individual fulfilment. For example, Kinnock's introduction to *Opportunity Britain* expressed the belief that: 'If individuals are to flourish and society is to thrive in freedom, people need the means to develop their potential' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. iii). This notion of individual thriving encompassed a wide range of different activities and achievements, some of which were alluded to in Kinnock's foreword to *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again*: 'We have confidence in our country and in the qualities and potential of its people. We want to nourish their artistic, scientific, sporting and other abilities' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1992d, p. 7). There was very much a cultural element to such a notion of *potential* too, as *Opportunity Britain* asserted, with reference to women, that 'the full excellence of our arts and media, as well as the quality of management, will not be realised while we continue to ignore the potential of half our population' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 32). Similarly, regarding Britain's ethnic minority communities, *Opportunities for All* promised: 'We will give high priority to supporting community and ethnic arts where there is so much untapped potential' (Labour Party, 1991d, p. 23). The quite general notion of *potential* at this stage was most explicitly evident in *Realising Our Potential*, which stated: 'Labour believes that every young person should have the opportunity to realise their full potential however they choose – at college, at work or at home – with the best resources that our society can provide' (Labour Party, 1992g, p. 4).

Nowhere was *potential* articulated in regard to individual development more than with respect to education. For example, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* stated: 'Within an environment of discipline, structure and support, schools must be places where children can reach their full potential' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 47). Furthermore, *Looking to the Future* expressed the intention that 'Labour wants Britain to have the best education and training system in Europe. We want children to be able to fulfill their potential' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 30). A similar outlook was framed in *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again*: 'Good education is the best investment in

Britain's future. All girls and boys, from every background, must be able to discover their talents and fulfil their potential' (Labour Party, 1992d, p. 17). It is clear that this conception of *potential* was fairly indeterminate – its fulfilment was not prescribed through the pursuit of any specific goal, nor need it have been realised at any specific point in one's life. This much was made clear in *Looking to the Future*: 'We want Britain to be a society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfill their potential. Everyone should have the chance of a first-rate education and training, the opportunity to get a good job and be treated fairly, the right to enjoy good conditions at work, the prospect of enjoying retirement on a decent income' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 29).

The relatively open-ended nature of *potential* applied at this time ensured that its realisation was presented as a largely active process. That is, it was up to the individual to make the most of their own potential; the role of the government was presented as merely to provide the conditions in which there was significant, effective liberty enjoyed by individuals within society to allow them to do so. This was outlined in *Britain Will Win with Labour*, which asserted: 'Labour's objective is to broaden and deepen the liberty of all individuals in our community...to free them to realise their full potential; to see that everyone has the liberty to enjoy real chances, to make real choices' (Labour Party, 1987a, p. 8). This alluded to a specific egalitarian approach, which was articulated in a later document, *Agenda for Change*: 'Action for equality of opportunity, we are convinced, will bring benefits to the whole community – by enabling everyone to have the chance to reach their full potential' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 12). Although this was a manifestly individual conception of *potential* and its fulfilment, it was in no sense atomistic; it was merely recognising the diversity that was a by-product of the connection between *potential* and freedom. Indeed, the Party was at pains to emphasise this fact in the very same document, as it was insisted: 'The Labour Party believes that the fulfilment of individual potential can only be fully realised within a strong and cohesive community. We are all dependent on one another' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 13). As such, this conception of *potential* was an individual one in the sense of the relationship between each citizen and the government, whereby the latter 'should help to create the social framework which is necessary to realise people's potential' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 13). Early applications of the concept, then, were

characterised by a general emphasis on personal development sufficiently non-contingent to be actively pursued and achieved by the individual.

Economic potential

The relatively general conception of potential, then, was clearly evident with John Smith as Labour leader, evinced in his post-1992 statement of future Party direction, *Agenda for Change*. Following Smith's death, however, the concept was used less frequently in relation to individual development as an end in itself, as a more economic application became predominant. Couched references to an economic conception of *potential* were, of course, evident prior to this, with *Agenda for Change* itself stating: 'To build a more productive and competitive economy our society must change too. Change is needed to realise the untapped potential of our people' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3). However, it was in documents and speeches from 1994 that references to economic potential were more prevalent and increasingly explicit. For example, *Rebuilding the Economy* stated: 'The Tories' failure in Britain derives from a wrong ideology...which denies the need for action by the community to advance individual economic potential' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 14). Similarly, *A New Economic Future for Britain* suggested that 'a policy for national economic renewal must mean enhancing individual economic potential as the route to rebuilding the industrial base' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 6). Furthermore, *Labour's New Deal for a Lost Generation*, referring to the costs of youth unemployment, stated: 'To this we should add the cost of lost economic potential' (Labour Party, 1996f, p. 4).

Such an economic conception of *potential* was something which characterised the political approach of Gordon Brown at this time, evident in his speech to the 1994 Labour conference: 'The big idea, the key to economic success, is people's potential' (Brown, 1994b, p. 13). This sentiment was replicated in Brown's Fabian Pamphlet, *Fair is Efficient*: 'A new opportunity-based economics which starts from the recognition that it is people's potential that must become the driving force of the 'modern economy' (Brown, 1994a, p. 4). Brown located this conception of *potential* in a wider approach to equality when he referred to 'a new economic egalitarianism which starts from the recognition that it is indeed people's potential – and thus the value of their labour – that

is the driving force of the modern economy' (Brown, 1994c, p. 114). As such, in spite of Brown serving as Shadow Chancellor from the election defeat in 1992 (after which *Agenda for Change*, with its numerous references to *potential* in terms of personal development, was published), it was apparently only from 1994 that he started to articulate an explicitly economic conception of potential in his speeches and documents.

An excellent example of the way in which *potential* assumed this economic sense in later Party applications was its use with regard to education. As illustrated above, early references to educational potential were among the clearest examples of applications of the concept in terms of individual development. However, in subsequent documents and speeches it became clear that even applications of *potential* relating to education carried a significant economic element. In such cases, there was a considerably longer-term perspective than initial individual flourishing. This was evident in *Rebuilding the Economy*, which asserted: 'This economic programme will lay the foundations for a new society in Britain...a society in which all our children can grow up and make the most of their potential' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 24). Such a perspective was made clearer still in *Equipping Young People for the Future* when, regarding universal education up until the age of eighteen, it was asserted: 'Our starting point is a commitment to a 100 per cent society where we recognize that everyone has a potential and a talent that can be developed to benefit them and the country as a whole' (Brown *et al.*, 1996, p. 17). This link between education and later employment was made explicitly clear in *New Deal for a New Britain*, which stated that 'government should act to provide new opportunities for young people to work and to develop their talents and earning power. The prospect of a better future will encourage them to fulfil their potential at school' (Labour Party, 1997b, p. 2). This echoed a sentiment expressed by Blair in a speech a year earlier, in which he suggested: 'To develop our human potential in the way we require demands a revolution in thinking and policy...The students coming out of [Britain's] universities will make up the core of a skilled and adaptable workforce for the next century' (Blair, 1996f, p. 125). The concept of *potential*, then, was framed by this stage with the wider economy, rather than merely the individual, in mind.

Potential as contribution to the economy

This economic sense of *potential* was often framed, in later Party applications, as a necessity in the changing international economic context. For example, *Building Prosperity* suggested: 'To sustain economic opportunity and prosperity in a global economy, Britain needs to use the talents of its workforce to the full...The best companies recognise that high performance is directly associated with maximising the potential of every employee' (Labour Party, 1996c, p. 1). Similarly, *Aiming Higher* included the early assumption that: 'In today's global economy, our national prosperity depends above all else on the skills and abilities of our people...We can no longer tolerate the waste of talent and potential which characterises under-achievement' (Labour Party, 1996b, p. 2). Once again, this logic was expounded repeatedly by Gordon Brown, who explicitly stated that globalising forces necessitated a shift in how *potential* was conceived. Brown contended that 'in a global economy...our view of what it means to realize potential has to be so much more ambitious than ever before' before reiterating the fact that 'it is important to recognise that we approach the question of potential in a completely new economic and social context. The conditions of economic development have changed dramatically as a result of the globalisation of the economy' (Brown, 1994c, pp. 113-4, p. 117). Furthermore, Brown's speech to the 1996 Labour conference included the insistence that 'there is only one way an economy like ours can succeed in a global market place, and that is when what each of us can achieve depends...on the potential each one of us has and on the opportunities we receive to make the most of our potential' (Brown, 1996a, p. 29). This conception of *potential* was evident once again in the Anthony Crosland Memorial Lecture, when Brown stated simply that 'to get the best economy we need to get the best out of people's potential' (Brown, 1997a, p. 41).

The articulation of *potential* in the context of a competitive global economy ensured that there was an increasing emphasis on the potential of Britain as a single economic entity. As such, while largely unseen earlier in the period, the notion of national potential became commonplace in later documents and speeches, seen succinctly in Brown's reference to 'the latent and diverse potential of the population as a whole' (Brown, 1997a, p. 41). Meanwhile, *A New Economic Future for Britain*

warned that the country 'will continue to fall behind our international competitors in terms of both income and productive potential', before asserting that 'the renewal of Britain's economic potential must occur in a rapidly changing, competitive and tough global economy' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 6). Similarly, in the foreword to *Vision for Growth*, Margaret Beckett opened with the belief that 'Britain's potential is enormous. The vitality, dynamism and talent of the British people are second to none' (Beckett in Labour Party, 1996m, p. ii). A very similar application was evident in Blair's foreword to *New Opportunities for Business*, which started with the assertion: 'Britain is a nation full of potential...But too often we fail to achieve that potential' (Blair in Labour Party, 1996k, p. 3). Furthermore, *A Fresh Start for Britain* stated: 'There is still huge potential for Britain in the international economy' (Labour Party, 1996a, p. 7). At the 1996 Party conference, meanwhile, Brown's address included the contention that 'the potential of Britain cannot be realised if lifelong educational opportunity is not matched by employment opportunity for all', while Blair made reference to 'supporting national talent and potential' (Brown, 1996a, p. 30; Blair, 1996g, p. 85). It can therefore be seen that under the guidance of Blair and Brown, *potential* assumed an economic emphasis, both in terms of individuals contributing to the national economy, and the performance of this as a single actor in the broader context of the global marketplace.

Motivating factors

The fact that the changes seen in *potential* – such as an increasingly economic articulation with reference less on the individual and more on the country as a whole – reflected those seen in *opportunity* was perhaps inevitable given logical connection between the two concepts: the acceptance of an opportunity to do or achieve something will necessarily entail the fulfilment of potential in some regard. Specifically, the changes were apparently subject to the same motivating factors. As such, a similar evolutionary shift in the dynamics of the relationship between the mutually important justice and efficiency underpinning the changes in *opportunity* seemingly informed the changing application of *potential* too. Thus, the primary rationale for Labour during the early stages of the period in emphasising the importance of potential and its fulfilment was apparently a concession to social justice – the Party seemed to be offended by the

inherent unfairness of some individuals within in society unable to fulfil their potential. As with *opportunity*, this was explicitly evident in texts at a number of junctures: early references to economic importance of individuals fulfilling their potential, while not portrayed as incidental, were presented as a secondary consideration to that of justice. For example, *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* stated: 'Many...will be unable to realise their full potential. A society which deliberately wastes the talent and energies of its people is not only inherently unjust. It is also profoundly inefficient' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 4). Similarly, *Opportunities for All* asserted: 'We are determined that everyone should have the means to develop their potential. Our policies are not only fair and just, they also make sound economic sense' (Labour Party, 1991d, p. 3). Slightly more implicitly, drawing on the concept of *opportunity* in conjunction with *potential*, it was insisted in *Opportunity Britain*: 'Enabling women to fulfil their potential is vital if they are to have the opportunity to succeed. But training women is vital for our economic future too' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 6).

In subsequent documents, while social justice and economic efficiency were both referred to as relevant in the advocacy of the fulfilment of potential, there was a sense that they were now of equal importance, rather than the latter constituting a secondary consideration. For example, *Rebuilding the Economy* stated: 'Provisional childcare should be an integral part of the *economic* as well as the *social* infrastructure. Millions of people are held back from making the most of their potential through lack of adequate and affordable childcare', echoing an earlier suggestion in *Rebuilding Britain* (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 18; 1993, p. 18; emphases added). Indeed, there was evidence to suggest that, in the Labour Party's priorities, the economic concern in fact assumed a greater emphasis than that for social justice. This was alluded to in the education document, *Diversity and Excellence*, which 'sets out a framework for strengthening the ability of all schools to provide their pupils with the opportunity to realise their true potential'. Importantly, this followed an earlier assertion that education 'is vital to the strength of our economy, the culture of our society and the health of our democracy' (Labour Party, 1995b, p. 3). This increased economic importance ascribed to *potential*, at the expense of a concern for justice, was more explicitly evident in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*, which lamented: 'We are wasting our nation's potential and that of its

people. We are paying a cost in money, in quality of life, and ultimately in influence and standing' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 5). As with *opportunity*, therefore, the evolving application of *potential* was informed by an approach to social justice and economic efficiency that was subject to a discernible shift in emphasis as the period progressed. As will be shown in the following section, this manifested itself in an altered articulation of the concept of *justice* itself.

Justice

It is clear that *justice* played an important role (in its relationship with efficiency), in acting as a point of reference informing the Party's changing egalitarian approach, something that has been illustrated in the changes effected in the concepts of *opportunity* and *potential*. As a consequence of this guiding function played by the concept, *justice* was seemingly applied, perhaps more so than *opportunity*, and certainly more than *potential*, in the fairly nondescript manner that provided a positive sense without meaning anything specific. As has been shown in the concluding sections of the previous two conceptual analyses, it was often used as a location on an ideological compass, justifying a certain development rather than being subjected to specific elaboration itself. However, as with *opportunity* and *potential*, *justice* itself was also subject to an apparent transition towards an increasingly economic, and specifically employment-related, conception. It is suggested here that early applications framed a relatively general articulation of the concept, manifested in a conception of *justice* to be achieved both in the workplace, and in society at large. It is first shown how, regarding justice in the workplace, emphasis was placed on the importance of fulfilling well-paid employment, along with the related issues of ownership and influence. It is subsequently shown that there was an equal emphasis on justice outside of work, alongside references to freedom, *opportunity* and *potential*. Following this, it is suggested that, from around 1994 onwards, there was a significantly greater emphasis on *justice* with regard to employment; however, rather than focusing on the notion of workplace justice, in keeping with the traditions of the Labour movement, it is suggested that there was a tendency to outline a notion of the concept to be achieved *through* work. It is shown that, through the logic of stakeholding and the provision of

employment opportunities, this conception of *justice* constituted an increasingly focused and limited element of Labour's egalitarian approach.

Justice in work

The Labour Party's usage of *justice* in documents and speeches in the early years of the period saw the concept articulated in a relatively general way, incorporating a wide range of applications. Given the rationale of the Party's original inception, it is inevitable that justice within the workplace should constitute an important element of its conception of *justice*. Indeed, reference to the Labour Party's founding purpose was evident in *Agenda for Change*: 'Labour was born out of the struggle for progress and change at the end of the last century, a demand made by millions of working people to meet their aspirations and democratic rights and social justice' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3). Furthermore, there was also a suggestion that for justice in work to be achieved, employment must not merely be provided, but adequately remunerated. Regarding the problem of low pay, Smith promised the 1991 Party conference: 'To end this injustice, as part of our commitment to the European Social Charter, Labour will introduce a legally enforceable minimum wage' (Smith, 1991, p. 29). This assurance built on logic evident in Kinnock's address to the Party conference three years earlier, in which he stated: 'It is folly for anybody to assume that you can secure economic success in a low-tech, no tech, low wage economy. That is the opposite of justice, and the opposite of efficiency for both sexes' (Kinnock, 1988, p. 61).

In addition to a decent wage, there was also an emphasis on fulfilment as a prerequisite to workplace justice. The importance of fulfilling and rewarding work was evident in *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*: 'An economy able to secure greater personal fulfilment and social justice will also be economically more efficient when individual effort is harnessed to the common good' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 5). One way in which the Labour Party at this early stage believed that such fulfilment at work could be achieved was through ownership and influence on the part of workers. This was made explicitly clear in *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* which stated, with reference to the 'organisation of economic activity through both common ownership and extension of democracy at work to influence industrial policy', that, in addition to

the benefit of increased efficiency, 'its fundamental justification is greater social justice and individual fulfilment and satisfaction' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 90). The historical significance of such industrial influence in securing justice within the workplace was alluded to in *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*, which recalled that: 'The brutality and injustice of early industrial society was only tempered by the force of democratic action, expressed through trade unions, political practices and community organisations' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 25). This was made clear once again in *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*, which stated: 'From its inception, the Labour Party responded to the aspirations and demands of those who used democracy to overcome the injustice of power...From its very inception two aims emerged. These were the empowering and protection of consumers, and the empowering and protection of workers' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 54). Once again, it was made clear that the original *raison d'être* of the Labour Party ensured that justice at work should inform much of the Party's articulation of the concept of *justice* in general.

Justice out of work

While Labour applications of *justice* early on in the period in question often related to employment, this in fact represented only a partial constituent of the Party's articulation of the concept. Indeed, many references to *justice* framed the concept as entirely separate from the workplace, relating instead to citizens' general experiences in society at large. This was evident in the relationship between *justice* and freedom. The mutually inclusive nature of the two concepts was clear in much of the early Party documents, as evinced by *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values*, which stated: 'The creation of the more equal, free and just society to which we aspire requires a persistent determination to bring...change about' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 11). Similarly, Kinnock's introduction to *Opportunity Britain* referred to 'the essence of modern democratic socialism' with 'its core convictions of liberty, justice, and opportunity for all' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991e, p. iii). Furthermore, the importance of both *justice* and freedom was outlined in *Agenda for Change*, which stated: 'In a free and just society, a good education should not be the privilege of some, but the right of all' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 15). Indeed, the significance of both extended not just to

British society, but to the application of Labour values across the globe, as *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* asserted: 'Labour supports...policy which reduces east-west tension and plays a vigorous role on the side of peace, freedom and justice in the world' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 48). This sentiment was evident once again in *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*, with Kinnock's assertion that the document 'starts from Labour's basic values – our commitment to individual freedom, to a more just and more democratic society...and to peace, security and fairness across the world' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1989a, p. 5).

Further evidence of the Party's conception, early in the period, of *justice* as distinct from the workplace was provided by the tendency to link the concept with that of *opportunity*. While this occasionally was in reference to opportunity for employment, in the majority of cases it referred to the concept in a more general sense by relating to individual development and growth. This connection was evident in Kinnock's address to the 1990 Party conference, during which he asserted that Labour's policies 'are essential...if we are to generate the wealth that is necessary to provide high and rising standards of social justice, welfare support and opportunity in our country' (Kinnock, 1990, p. 132). This connection between *justice* and a general conception of *opportunity* was further evident with John Smith as leader. *Agenda for Change* asserted: 'A fair and just society offers to each individual an equal chance in life – equal chances to find their own opportunities, pathways to fulfilment in life, irrespective of wealth and circumstance' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 13). Furthermore, at the 1992 Party conference, when discussing the motivations of an embryonic Labour Party, Smith referred to the extension to 'ordinary citizens' of 'opportunities of individual advancement and fulfilment that had previously been denied to them. The Labour Party was a vehicle for their individual aspirations: it was a force for social justice and for change' (Smith, 1992, p. 103). This connection between *justice* and *opportunity* constituted an important element of the Party's approach to justice outside the workplace at this stage of the period.

In addition to its use in conjunction with *opportunity*, there was also a tendency at this stage for the Party to refer to the achievement of *justice* alongside the concept of *potential*. As with *opportunity*, this often took the form of justice assuming a dominant

motivating position for the fulfilment of individual potential. This was perhaps most clearly illustrated in the Party's presentation of its international development policy; for example *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* stated: 'Social justice demands that we help the people of developing countries to achieve their full potential', a sentiment replicated in both *Opportunities for All* and *Opportunity Britain* (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 83; 1991d, p. 29; 1991e, p. 55). As such, applications of *opportunity* and *potential* carrying a general emphasis on personal development attach a similar sense into connected references to *justice*.

Justice through work

In its early articulation of the concept, then, the Labour Party's applications of *justice* were relatively general, and concerned all aspects of the citizen's existence as a member of society. Unsurprisingly, given the Party's heritage, many references concerned the experience within the workplace; significantly, however, many bore little or no relation to employment, focusing instead on the individual's quality of life outside of work. In later applications of *justice*, however, the concept's articulation was more narrowly economic, manifested in a tendency for Party logic to present the link between justice and an individual's employment as inextricable. Some of these applications related to justice in the workplace, a sense consistent with earlier references and drawing on the rationale for the Party's original inception. For example, *Make Europe Work for You* made the charge that 'British Tories are alone in Europe in believing that social justice at work conflicts with productivity' (Labour Party, 1994b, p. 11). Furthermore, *Building Prosperity* suggested in reference to working conditions: 'The absence of minimum legal standards brings instances of straightforward injustice and a more widespread feeling of unfairness' (Labour Party, 1996c, p. 3). Blair emphasised this point succinctly at the special conference on Labour's constitution as he stated: 'Justice at work, again in our new clause, and that includes the right to be a member of a trade union and to be represented by one' (Blair, 1995e, p. 291). With such references, however, applications of *justice* generally implied a subtly different conception articulated by Labour from 1994. Repeated references to *justice* and employment framed the notion that the latter was fundamental to the Party's conception of the former, rather than merely one

location in which it could be realised. Indeed, it would appear that later references framed a conception not merely of justice *at* work, but of justice *through* work.

One document that provided a clear conception of *justice* as achieved through, rather than both within and outside of, work was *Jobs and Social Justice*. The preface stated: 'Just as the call for "work and welfare" rallied support to Labour's post-war social and economic revolution, "jobs and social justice" is the new cry for the programme that will reverse the economic decay and social attrition caused by 15 years of Conservative deregulation' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 4). However, the two were not quite as analogous as the document suggested; the post-war programme to which it referred provided a distinction between economic and social policy, as the provision of welfare was a safety net that became pertinent when work was not an option. The latter suggestion, meanwhile, was that employment was an important prerequisite for social justice, with the two intrinsically linked, rather than the latter catering for the absence of the former. The difference was in fact alluded to in the very same document with the assertion that 'previous Labour governments, in a different economic and social world to which we now inhabit, pursued the twin goals of full employment and social justice with considerable success' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 19). Prior to this, however, it was asserted: 'The challenges of the 1990s and beyond require us to look afresh at how to achieve the twin, *interdependent* objectives of full employment and social justice' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 5, emphasis added). This illustrated the ever-closer connection between the two, and the way in which employment, rather than provision in its absence, was seen as a route to justice.

The connection between *justice* and employment was an intrinsic feature of the Labour Party's applications of the concept from 1994, as explicitly outlined in *Jobs and Social Justice*: 'Work and social justice are already intertwined; the nature of the current debate should be developed for the challenges of the future' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 7). This emphasised the Party's understanding by this stage that the goal of justice had to be approached primarily through economic policy. This was clear in the first major economic statement of Blair's leadership, *Rebuilding the Economy*, which claimed 'that by creating social justice, by working for a high skill, high wage, high investment, high tech economy and by tackling inequality we can produce dynamism

and economic growth' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 12). A similar message was offered in *A New Economic Future for Britain* under the title 'Labour's approach to social justice': 'Mass unemployment is a scar across the face of Britain, a persistent reminder of the waste and injustice that Conservative government has created' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 32). Indeed, at the 1995 Labour conference, Brown applied *justice* with explicit regard to employment policy in promising that 'there will be careful long-term investment, a dedication to equality and social justice, the certainty of action against unemployment and an economic policy run in the interests not of a privileged few, but of the whole community' (Brown, 1995, p. 11). The importance of employment policy to justice was re-emphasised in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*, which stated: 'Our policies for both youth and long-term unemployment – part of our commitment to high and stable levels of employment – are an economic imperative. And social justice demands them' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 17). The pursuit of greater justice, by this stage, related predominantly to the achievement of greater levels of employment.

Stakeholding and a limited notion of equality

Towards the end of the period in question, a conception of *justice* as something to be achieved through employment was articulated, by Blair in particular, through the notion of stakeholding. On occasions, stakeholding was used in a relatively literal sense, implying justice at, rather than through, work. For example, Blair stated at 1995 Party conference: 'Justice, in society and at work: people at work should have a stake in the companies for which they work' (Blair, 1995d, p. 101). However, it was more often used in a relatively abstruse sense, entailing a stake beyond the workplace and in the country at large, something that largely concerned making a contribution to the nation through employment. At times, indeed, social justice was specifically and succinctly defined by Blair as the possession of such a stake. For example, Blair's introduction to *New Britain* included the assertion: 'Social justice, the extension to all of a stake in a fair society, is the partner of economic efficiency and not its enemy' (Blair, 1996c, p. x). Similarly, Blair asserted in the introduction to *What Needs to Change*: 'Social justice is inconceivable while millions of people have no stake in society. That is why we have placed such stress on tackling unemployment, and especially long-term unemployment'

(Blair, 1996b, p. 12). Thus, stakeholding was presented as a pertinent and contemporary approach to social justice, evident as Blair asserted that 'we must create a society based...on what is actually a modern notion of social justice – "something for something". We accept our duty as a society to give each person a stake in its future. And in return each person accepts the responsibility to respond, to work to improve themselves' (Blair, 1996e, p. 298).

Labour's conception of *justice* towards the end of the period in question, as tied up with the attainment of a 'stake' in society, was expressed through applications of *justice* alongside that of *opportunity*. While at times, this was done in a relatively general sense, more common were applications of *opportunity* used in conjunction with *justice* which, unlike earlier applications of the concept, tended to have an economic focus, specifically referring to employment. For example, Brown stated unequivocally in *Fair is Efficient*: 'Full and fulfilling employment opportunities for all who want them are pre-conditions for a just society; and tackling the problem of persistent unemployment is a necessary condition for reversing the growing injustice which plagues British society' (Brown, 1994a, p. 9). Brown subsequently offered a promise along similar lines: 'We will create a fairer and more just society, that ensures work and opportunity for those who need it, and also security for those denied it' (Brown, 1997b, p. 2). A similar message was put forward in *Rebuilding the Economy*, which referred to 'Britain's chronic economic weakness and the poverty and social injustice this implies. Providing economic opportunities for all our citizens to work, train and study is the only way for Britain to reverse the growing division of society', an assertion further evident in *A New Economic Future for Britain* (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 4; 1995a, p. 31). The use of *opportunity* in this economic guise alongside *justice* further emphasised the way in which the latter's achievement was perceived to be through the process of employment.

The Party's focus on affording citizens 'stakes' in society through the provision of opportunities framed employment not only as the most appropriate, but the only viable, method of increasing justice in a modern context. This was something that was reinforced by negative references to alternative approaches to social justice, illustrated by Brown as he said of Crosland: 'I think he would have recognised that the record

since 1979 shows that increased spending does not necessarily increase social justice: that you can tax, spend, borrow...and fail' (Brown, 1997a, p. 39). Similarly, Brown referred in the same year to the 'myth' that 'the more public spending there was...the more we were tackling injustice' (Brown, 1997b, p. 1). Indeed, this logic was also made clear by Blair at the very start of his leadership. Accepting the role, he stated: 'It is time to talk a new language of social justice – of what is just and unjust, fair and unfair, right and wrong. It is wrong that we spend billions of pounds keeping able-bodied people idle, and right that we spend it putting them to work to earn a living wage, as a Labour government will do' (Blair, 1994c, p. 30). An equally clear message was sent out at the launch of the CSJ's Final Report, as Blair asserted: 'Social justice is about building a nation to be proud of. It is not devoted to levelling down, or taking from the successful and giving to the unsuccessful. It is about levelling up' (Blair, 1994d, p. 150). This conception of *justice*, to be achieved without redistributive taxation, was a notion that became crystallised in the Party's logic under Blair, with *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better* stating reassuringly: 'New Labour is not about high taxes on ordinary families. It is about social justice and a fair deal' (Labour Party, 1997c, p. 12). With such an approach, there was a shift in focus; the emphasis was less on those who were suffering the effects of social injustice, and more on the nation at large, who had to fund its diminution.

Justice and efficiency

As was the case with Labour's application of *opportunity* and *potential*, the root of the Party's changing conception of *justice* was apparently to be found in the concept's connection with economic efficiency, given the persistent emphasis on the two as the twin-pillared foundation on which to pursue traditional left-of-centre goals in a modern setting. Indeed, the significance of *justice*, for virtually all of the period in question, was framed by its marriage with efficiency. The proximity of the connection between the two, and the priority – however subtle – within this relationship, went some distance to defining the conception of *justice* held by the Party at any one time. As with *opportunity* and *potential*, an evolution in the dynamics of this coupling, which saw the goal of justice usurped by efficiency as the primary concern, apparently underpinned the

changing articulation of the concept of *justice* itself. In earlier applications, while efficiency was always more than a supplementary 'bonus' in the primary achievement of social justice, there was a sense that the mutual inclusiveness of the two allowed the party to adopt a modern approach to achieving increased justice. Furthermore, in the late-1980s, in spite of the emphasis placed on the two in the early stages of the Policy Review, there was a sense that justice and efficiency were seen as mutually inclusive, but by no means inextricable. Thus, 'economic' approaches were presented as one of a number of different ways of achieving greater justice. This manifested itself in an articulation of the concept of *justice* that was relatively general, applying outside the workplace as well as within it, and not contingent on any specific factor – even one as significant to the Party's heritage as employment – for its potential achievement.

However, it would seem that later on in the period, the connection between justice and efficiency was taken a step further; perhaps no longer battling perceived counter-intuition, the relationship was further cemented. Furthermore, there was a sense that the increasing importance to the Party hierarchy of the narrative of globalisation, and the pressing need this placed on the country for national competitiveness, ensured that efficiency became ever more significant in the relationship. This necessitated a shift, whereby the concept of *justice* became intimately linked to employment, presented as a goal to be achieved solely through work. Thus, its achievement was best approached by the government through the provision of opportunities for employment – facilitated through the language of stakeholding, which was at times framed as a modern conception of *justice*. Alongside the promotion of stakeholding and employment opportunities, alternative approaches such as 'tax and spend' were subjected in the Party literature and speeches to the pejorative label previously attached by opposing parties. Consequently, the onus for achieving justice was increasingly placed on the individual's economic participation as much as on government action, something that was an inevitable by-product of an evolved, ever more employment-focused, conception of *justice*, and the limited solution it was consequently deployed to provide in addressing to the question of equality.

Conclusion

The analyses of Labour's usage of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* have shown indications of subtle, yet significant, conceptual change. While the concepts' significance to the Party's approach, and their inherently 'positive' natures, ensured that they were prone to both unthinking applications alluding to very little and to ambiguous usage that carried multiple meanings, there was evidence to suggest that the Party's egalitarian approach was informed by different conceptions of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* at the end of the period to those evident at its beginning. To appreciate the way in which this change in approach manifested itself conceptually, it is important to understand the nature of the conceptual change evident in the three analyses. Significantly, as has been shown at various points in each case, all three transformations were shifts in the *frequency* of the concepts' various applications, rather than the concepts' *range* of application as such. In other words, the various dominant applications of each concept evident early in the period were still seen on occasions in later years, while applications more apparent in later years were evident previously, albeit less prominently. A product of such change was that it did not simply occur at once, but was more nuanced, and staggered over a period around the mid-1990s; while the altered usage was a feature of the Party's literature from 1994 and the start of Blair's tenure, with possible influence on this apparent in the personal output of Blair and Brown, it was certainly evident on occasions in the years preceding this point too. This is why reference has been often made to 'early' and 'late' applications, rather than those before or after a specific point in time. While this may initially appear to be a relatively inconsequential instance of conceptual change, it could in fact be of great significance, particularly in suggesting that the changes were evolutionary in incrementally building on previous applications of the concepts in question.

This evolutionary nature of the conceptual change was evident not merely in the sense of its timescale but, more importantly, in the transformation of meaning itself. Indeed, such shifts in the concepts' application demonstrated significant similarities with one another, in each case the concept evolving into an increasingly tapered and focused articulation. Earlier applications of all three concepts were relatively general and non-prescriptive, and there was significant flexibility in the way in which the

concepts were applied. Thus, earlier references to *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* at times alluded to work and the economy, but they were also used in applications that moved beyond the sphere of employment. This was perhaps most evident in the discernible emphasis on individual development and fulfilment in the articulation of the concepts, particularly *opportunity* and *potential*. Similarly, *justice* was applied to life beyond the workplace as well as within it. Linked to this was the way in which all three concepts were used in conjunction with freedom; this served to reinforce the element of choice and non-prescription which was intrinsic to the early meanings of the three concepts. Equally, this connection with freedom seemingly further strengthened the way in which all three concepts had a focus on the individual. This essentially embraced the focus on personal development and growth in the concepts' application, which was reinforced by the non-prescriptive nature of *opportunity* and the non-economic articulation of *potential*. Similar flexibility regarding the conception of *justice* ensured that applications of the concept related to different ways of securing its achievement, contingent on a range of individual circumstances, rather than the effect such approaches may have had on the country at large.

In later applications of the three concepts, there was a discernible switch to more narrowly economic references. The general, relatively flexible articulation of *opportunity*, *potential*, and *justice* became altogether more focused. This change could be seen in both explicit economic applications, and more implicit references, which attached economic terms to the three concepts in question. Specifically, this economic focus was expressed in an increasingly close connection between each of the three concepts and the notion of employment. Thus, while earlier references incorporated the notion of work in their ranges of application, this was alongside an equal focus on other references not connected with employment. In subsequent applications, the work-centric element became so dominant that it effectively drew in other (previously general) features, such as education, and attached to them an equally economic meaning. The change in application entailed a shift in the broader emphasis of the three concepts' usage, too. Where previously there was a focus on the individual as a frame of reference for the respective concepts, there was a far wider concern evident behind later applications. The articulation of the three concepts was located within the context

of a primary consideration of what was beneficial for the country at large, as the spectre of the global economy grew ever more prominent in the Party's presentation of its approach. The earlier emphasis on a connection between the three concepts and that of individual freedom was consequently lost to an emerging focus on individual responsibility and contribution to the national economy in the pursuit of equality.

The fact that the three concepts changed along similar trajectories over the ten years in question was not, however, simply incidental. The way in which the three concepts related to one another necessarily dictated their respective meanings, and informed the Party's approach to equality at any given time. The evolution in the use and meaning of each concept therefore served to reinforce a similar evolution in the other two concepts. This was seen in a number of cases documented above, for example with early applications of *opportunity* articulated on various occasions in conjunction with *potential*. The fact that, as has been shown, early applications of *potential* related largely to personal development and fulfilment necessarily impacted on the early applications of *opportunity*. Thus, opportunity to fulfil one's potential, when the latter concept was applied with regard to such development, ensured that *opportunity* itself was applied here with equal regard to development. Similarly, had *potential* at this time been subject to an overwhelmingly economic application, this too would have been bestowed upon *opportunity* when used alongside it. Interestingly, the concept of *opportunity* was used alongside *justice* in both early and later references. Earlier applications of *opportunity*, while at times referring to employment, were largely general in meaning; thus, the use alongside *justice* at this stage served to contribute the sense that it was a goal that could be achieved both in and out of employment. However, the later applications of *opportunity*, which were overwhelmingly work-oriented, served to reinforce the notion of *justice* as a goal to be achieved predominantly (if not exclusively) through work.

While it is apparent that the application of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* in each case changed over the decade from 1987 to 1997, this alone does not tell us a great deal about the reasons behind this conceptual change, only that it represents a shift in the Party's approach to the question of equality. Thus, although the changing application of the concepts certainly represented a changing ideational approach to

egalitarian measures, of equal importance perhaps is precisely what prompted this change. As suggested in the concluding coverage of each of the conceptual analyses, the Party's evolution of ideas regarding the pursuit of equality – expressed in the way in which it articulated the three concepts – was itself founded on an evolution in the conception of the broader context in which this must be framed. As such, the guiding assumption that the Party's egalitarian approach should be framed with reference the goals of both justice and efficiency ostensibly changed during the period: a shift occurred, from the notion that a by-product of social justice (if approached judiciously) could have been economic efficiency, to the rule that efficiency was paramount and that all approaches to justice had to make fundamental concessions to this. This logic impacted significantly on the application of the concepts, both implicitly and explicitly, suggesting that the Party's approach to equality was built on a fundamentally evolving premise concerning its appropriate achievement. This, it seems, informed the ideational evolution underpinning Labour's changing egalitarian approach, as expressed in the transformed application of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*. This would suggest an discernible presence of ideas that is important in understanding the changing way in which the Labour Party addressed the question of equality during the period in question.

4. Fraternity

Introduction

The focus of the conceptual analyses moves in this chapter from the Labour Party's approach to equality to the way it addressed a different, but equally significant, political question, that of fraternity. As with the previous chapter, the aim is to illustrate a discernible evolution of ideas accompanying the Party's changing approach to specific political area, in this case concerning the successful coexistence between members of a shared society. Interestingly, a general trend of gradually moving away from traditional egalitarian commitments was evident, with fraternity the direction was quite the opposite, as Labour ultimately sought to embrace the political question from a previous position of relative ambivalence. The contention is that, in the same way in which it was suggested that ideas were significant in Labour's changing approach to equality, there was an equally important ideational development accompanying the Party's increasing emphasis on fraternity. Indeed, while the respective changes represented moves in opposing directions regarding the approaches to the two specific political questions, it is argued that both manifested an important shift in the Party's trajectory. This chapter seeks, therefore, to identify a change in the use of three inter-related concepts deployed by Labour to address the issue of fraternity, which it is suggested was an important manifestation of an ideational evolution present in the Party's changing approach to this political question.

The concepts selected to analyse Labour's changing approach to the question of fraternity are *community*, *responsibility*, and *family*. All three concepts became increasingly important to the Party's general political approach between 1987 and 1997, illustrating the increased significance placed on the question of fraternity in the latter stages of the period. In locating the individual in a wider social context, the concept of *community* is very closely linked to the idea of fraternity. While remarkably elastic and therefore quite ambiguous, referring to groups from the most diminutive locality to the global population in its entirety, *community* fundamentally concerns the relationship between single individuals within the context of a wider collective. Indeed, for many the concept has become almost a modern pseudonym for fraternity. Related to this is the

concept of *responsibility*, given that the successful interaction between individuals as part of some sort of community requires reference to others, and as such a sense of obligation on the part of individuals, not just to the self, but towards others. As such, the precise meaning of *responsibility* at any given juncture represents an important indication of a broader approach to fraternity. Finally, the concept of *family*, in its application alongside *community* and *responsibility*, became increasingly politicised in the period in question, ensuring that it can be deemed a *political* concept, and one that makes a significant contribution to notions of fraternity. When viewed in such a way, *family* represents an arena of social interaction as much as a simple biological unit, which serves to develop the necessary social skills constituting such an important element of fraternity. Once again, each concept's application by the Labour Party between 1987 and 1997 will be examined, starting with *community*, followed by *responsibility* and then *family*.

Community

The concept of *community* has long served as an important political term, much of its attraction deriving from its remarkably elastic nature, enabling it to be used in a range of applications. Indeed, there were a number of different articulations of the concept evident in the output of the Labour Party during the period in question. At various times, the concept referred to an abstract notion of the collective, the locality, the nation, the world itself, ethnic or cultural groups, and those with a common interest. Unsurprisingly, therefore, *community* was at times also applied, as with the other concepts in this study, to offer a vague but positive inflection, with any collective labelled a 'community' in a relatively facile way. Instrumentally, a single passage from *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* represented both this vaguely positive expression achieved by the concept of *community* and the range of collectives it was so readily applied to characterise throughout the period: 'In the community of the family, the workplace, the trade union, the voluntary organisation or the sports club, there is a sense of belonging and common purpose. The same is true in the wider social, economic and political community' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 6). At the heart of all of these different conceptions of *community*, however, was the representation of the individual's location

within a wider collective. It is suggested here that by thinking about the concept in terms of this relationship, it is possible to discern a specific change in its application by the Labour Party between 1987 and 1997. A consideration of the nature and dynamics of this relationship can provide a fundamental insight into the Party's changing conception of *community* in the way that a simple typology alone cannot, while still proving illuminating in terms of the identifying changes in the kinds of communities alluded to in the application of this intrinsically ambiguous concept.

The suggestion here is that the Party's articulation of *community* underwent a marked change with regard to this central issue of the relationship between the individual and the wider collective. Interestingly, unlike the concepts examined in the previous chapter, which were subject to an increasingly narrow economic application, there was evidence of a *broadening* of application in the case of *community*. It is shown how early references to the concept suggested that this relationship was addressed overwhelmingly from the point of view of the individual, and that the community's role was to facilitate individual success and development. While this was also evident throughout the period, it is suggested that in the latter stages there was an increasing conception of *community* as constituting an important end in itself, beyond merely serving the purposes of the individual, a hitherto unseen facet in the concept's application by the Party during the period in question. This was shown to be reconciled by a presentation of the interests of the individual and the community as interdependent, where they had previously been seen as potentially conflicting. This was manifested in the later stages of the period in terms of the notion of rights and responsibilities, on which the relationship between the individual and the community was founded. It is suggested that this emphasis on individual responsibility informed a prominent socialising element of the concept of *community* that was not previously present – further evidence of an evolution that saw a broadening of its application – drawing on an increasingly important connection between the concept and that of *family*. It is shown that this element, alongside the emphasis on an active individual responsibility to the community, led to both a significant localisation of *community* and the deployment of the concept to represent Labour's aim of devolving the responsibility of the government in various areas down to the level of the locality.

The individual and the collective

There is evidence throughout the period between 1987 and 1997 to suggest that the concept of *community* conveyed, for the Labour Party, a representation of the individual, not as an atomised unit, but as part of a collective, or a series of collectives. Whether referring to the locality, groups of shared interests, or the nation as a whole, it was the conception of *community* as mediating collective between the individual and society at large that framed the application of the concept throughout the period. For example, with Kinnock as Party leader, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* referred to the 'complex of relationships between the individual and society [which] is the community. It is something greater than the sum total of consumers. It is an essential ingredient in the quality of life of each individual' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 27). Similarly, during Smith's tenure, *Agenda for Change* represented the community as mediator by alluding to 'the idea of a new settlement between individual, community and government' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 12). This role for *community* was further evident under Blair, who himself asserted: 'People don't want an overbearing state, but they don't want to live in a social vacuum either. It is in the search for [a] different, reconstructed relationship between individual and society that ideas about "community" are found' (Blair, 1995i, p. 237). It is clear, then, that *community* as the representation of the existence of the individual within a broader collective was the starting point for expression of the concept throughout the period in question.

It is from this shared starting position that subsequent differences in the articulation of *community* during the period can be appreciated. While the concept represented the individual's interaction with others, the precise nature and, more importantly, purpose of this, was framed differently by the Party at various junctures between 1987 and 1997. Early on in the period, the importance of community was certainly emphasised, with *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*, for example, asserting: 'Democratic socialism is about people recognising that we depend on each other, and...reinforcing a sense of community' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 41). However, it would seem that much of this significance lay in its use for individual ends. *Moving Ahead* suggested that 'the very essence of democratic socialism is the use of collective

provision, of the collective strength of the community, in order to enhance individual freedom' (Labour Party, 1987b, p. 5). This sentiment was elaborated upon by Hattersley at the following year's Party conference, as he stated: 'Individual freedom is the only freedom that in the end individuals can experience and enjoy. But it is based on the absolute conviction that individual rights and individual liberties can only be retained, maintained and supported within a community which is based on a belief in fraternity' (Hattersley, 1988, p. 15). Even when using *community* to juxtapose the Party's position with that of the Conservative government's apparent atomistic individualism, the focus was still on the individual, as seen when *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* referred to 'building an alternative to the narrowly individualistic, market-oriented view of society that is Thatcherism. For we argue that only a strong community can guarantee individual freedom and security' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 25). Furthermore, the emphasis on community for individual ends was evident in *Agenda for Change*, which asserted: 'The Labour Party believes that the fulfilment of individual potential can only be fully realised within a strong and cohesive community' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 13).

Later on in the period, with Blair as Party leader, there was still evidence of this emphasis on the individual as beneficiary of the community: Blair himself stated at the 1994 Party conference that 'the individual does best in a strong and decent community of people with principles and standards and common aims and values' (Blair, 1994f, p. 100). However, alongside such applications was an important evolution in the concept's articulation: that of *community* not merely as a vehicle for facilitating individual success, but as a significant end in itself, one whose interests were distinguishable from merely serving those of the individual. For example, *A New Economic Future for Britain* stated: 'The more ambitious and modern view of the full employment society seeks to ensure work and opportunities that are fulfilling for the individual and of benefit to the community' before asserting that 'we must broaden the concept of opportunity...for individuals as well as taking account of long-term benefits for the community' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 37). Similarly, *Strategy for Women* asserted: 'By helping women, we will also bring wider benefits to the whole community' (Jowell, 1996, p. 11). Indeed, this notion of the interests of the community *vis-à-vis* those of the

individual can be seen as a direct influence of Blair himself. As early as 1991, he suggested: 'Citizenship must be distinguished from individualism by an insistence that a citizen is part of a wider community. Citizenship without community and without the willingness to act as a society, is empty rhetoric' (Blair, 1991, p. 32). Blair later contended, regarding crime: 'We should not be afraid to assert that the state's duty is to the whole community...as well as to the individual' (Blair, 1995i, p. 241). Thus, for Labour under Blair, while the community continued to be important in serving the needs of the individual, it was also important in its own right, with its interests considered alongside those of the individual.

One logical consequence of this evolved conception of *community* as an end equal in importance to the individual was the idea that, rather than the community merely serving to work for the interests of the individual, the individual must reciprocate and serve the community too. This was explicitly framed by Blair with the assertion that 'no society can ever prosper economically or socially unless all its people prosper...unless we live up to the ambition to create a society where the community works for the good of every individual, and every individual works for the good of the community' (Blair, 1996c, p. x). This sentiment was evident in an article by Brown written as early as 1992, in which he referred to 'the real challenge for government now; to create a new relationship between individual and community that will enhance both' (Brown, 1992b, p. 3). What both statements alluded to was an interdependence between the individual and the community, identifying a synchronicity of interests that was hugely significant to stress if the Party were to successfully focus simultaneously on the interests of both the individual *and* the community. This sense of mutual interests on the part of the individual and the community was evident throughout Labour's output under Blair's leadership. For example, *A New Economic Future for Britain* stated that 'there would be mutual benefits for community projects seeking to do useful work and individuals who would benefit from both work and training' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 38). Similarly, *New Labour for Women* asserted: 'The availability of childcare not only benefits women, it has wide-ranging benefits for the whole community' (Labour Party, 1997d, p. 3). All of these were expressions of what Blair himself referred to as 'the wider synthesis of community and individual' (Blair, 1996e, p. 304). This

illustrated how, by the mid-1990s, while the articulation of *community* suggested that it had its own interests, these could be easily reconciled with those of the individual.

Rights and responsibilities

The broadening in the Party's application of *community* – seen in the evolution from its importance simply in the realisation of individual ends, to a significant end in itself alongside this – bore a number of manifestations in the changing way in which it was applied at different stages of the period. For example, one product of the Labour Party's early applications of *community* primarily in terms of the individual's interests was the way in which the concept was applied with reference to the rights held and exercised by such individuals. Specifically, it was asserted that the community could serve as a vehicle through which these rights could be secured. For example, *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* stated: 'The rights of every individual, the strength of the community and the economic success of the country are interdependent and all must be assured' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 3). This sentiment was evident in Hattersley's assertion, referred to above, that 'individual rights and individual liberties can only be retained, maintained and supported within a community which is based on a belief in fraternity' (Hattersley, 1988, p. 15). Similarly, the notion that the community should facilitate the achievement of individual rights was alluded to by Kinnock in his speech to the 1991 Labour conference: 'We are democratic socialists. In our own society we know that the rights of the individual depend on the actions of the community' (Kinnock, 1991, p. 137). Furthermore, *Agenda for Change* asserted: 'Change is...needed to ensure that people as individuals have clear, definitive rights over their own lives. And it is through the community – by individual citizens acting collectively – that these rights can be exercised and enforced' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3).

In the same way in which an early individual focus led to an emphasis on the securing of rights through the community, the subsequent emphasis on both individual *and* community, and their professed interdependence, was reinforced by the sentiment that responsibilities or obligations, as well as rights, were pertinent to the individual's relationship with the wider collective. Thus, alongside a focus on the rights that the community could secure for individuals, Labour emphasised the responsibility that the

individual owed to the community as part of the interdependent, reciprocal relationship between the two. Once again, this can be understood as a direct influence of Blair, who at times identified this as among the defining elements of his own conception of socialism. For example, he asserted at the special conference on the Labour Party's constitution that 'we are...members of a community and a society who owe obligations to one another and not just to ourselves, who depend in part upon one another to succeed. That is the spirit of solidarity. That is the socialism I believe in' (Blair, 1995e, p. 292). Indeed, such was the importance attached by Blair to such obligations in this context that, at times, he suggested that community could not be achieved without it. For example, in one speech he asserted: 'Respect for others – responsibility to them – is an essential prerequisite of a strong and active community. It is the method through which we can build a society that does not subsume our individuality but allows it to develop healthily' (Blair, 1995i, pp. 237-8). In a later address, meanwhile, Blair stated explicitly that 'without responsibility to each other, we create a nation where community evaporates' (Blair 1996e, p. 306). It is clear, then, in the application of *responsibility* alongside *community*, that fundamental to Blair's own conception of the latter is this sense not of the rights it can secure for, but of the duties it should stimulate among, its individual members.

Community as socialising agent

The Party's focus on the responsibility of the individual, in the context of duties owed to the wider collective, revealed a further product of its conceptualisation of *community* not evident in the preceding years: that of socialisation. As well as constituting a representation of the collective which located the individual within society, and at times served to further the individual's interests, for Labour under Blair the concept of *community* also served to prescribe certain behaviour that was acceptable and necessary for successful coexistence within a society. As such, there was a significant moral element to the Party's later applications of *community*: membership was no longer merely rationalised in terms of furthering one's own individual interests, but understood, almost philosophically, in terms of comprehending one's role as a social creature and what this required on an individual level. For example, Blair asserted that

'people are not separate economic actors competing in the market-place of life. They are citizens of a community. We are social beings, nurtured in families and communities and human only because we develop the moral power of personal responsibility for ourselves and each other' (Blair 1996e, pp. 299-300). Similarly, Blair suggested that such a perspective could only be offered by one side of the political spectrum: 'The left can fashion a new moral purpose for a nation which combines individual and social responsibility...It has the moral authority to enforce [social] rules because it sets them within an active and strong community' (Blair, 1995b, p. 13). The fundamental importance of such responsibility to one's nature as a social creature, and the need for its instilment in each individual, was alluded to by Blair when he suggested that children should be educated 'in a disciplined environment that teaches responsibility to self and to community' (Blair, 1995c, p. 164).

A significant feature of Labour's subsequent articulation of *community* under Blair, in terms of socialisation, was the connection made between the concept and that of *family*. Reference to such a connection had been made on occasions earlier in the period, for example when Kinnock stated in *Family Prosperity*: 'The family is the essential unit in society. It is, and will remain, the mould from which the community is made' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991b, p. 3). However, a remarkable increase in emphasis was placed on the association of *community* and *family* from the mid-1990s onwards. For example, *Early Excellence* contained references to 'strengthening the partnership between the family and the community' and 'a partnership between parents and the wider community' (Blunkett in Labour Party, 1995c, p. 2; Labour Party, 1995c, p. 4). Significantly, the connection between *community* and *family* alluded to the fact that the destiny of one precipitated that of the other. For example, *Tackling Youth Crime* suggested: 'When communities fracture and whole areas tip into decline, parents and children are affected and can lose a sense of direction' (Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 16). Similarly, *Tackling the Causes of Crime* warned: 'Drug misuse harms individuals, families and whole communities' (Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 11). Conversely, this sense of interlinked destinies was presented in a more positive light by Blair in *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better*: 'We will help build strong families and

strong communities, and lay foundations of a modern welfare state in pensions and community care' (Blair in Labour Party, 1997c, p. 5).

As with the application of *responsibility* alongside *community*, the focus on *family* in this context could clearly be seen as the influence of Blair, who sought to articulate the logic behind the connection made between the two concepts. Once again, it was the socialising feature, first seen in the family, and then replicated in the community, which Blair was at pains to outline. He asserted at the 1994 Party conference: 'The essence of family life is that you are not on your own. You are in it together and families work best when the members of it help and sustain each other; and the same is true of communities and nations' (Blair, 1994f, p. 100). Blair later stated at the launch of the Final Report of the CSJ: 'It is in families that we first learn respect for others, and it is on strong families that the strength of communities rests' (Blair, 1994d, p. 148). This relationship between socialisation in the family and its replication in the community was again framed in a subsequent speech, in which Blair stated: 'Responsibility is about family...But responsibility is also about service beyond the family, to the community' (Blair 1996e, p. 306). Indeed, Blair attempted to present this connection between the community and the family as the received wisdom of the time, hoping to juxtapose Labour's position with that of the Conservative Party's individualism and, interesting, perhaps even his own Party predecessors, as he suggested: 'Increasingly, the intellectual inadequacy of an analysis based on the theoretical rights of individuals without reference to the specific family and community structures in which they live has been recognised' (Blair, 1994e, p. 245). This last assertion serves to reinforce the importance of duty to others, honed through a socialising process, not only to Blair's conception of *community* but to his broader political approach too.

National and local communities

By the mid-1990s, then, the emphasis in the output of Labour in general, and Blair in particular, was on individual responsibility to others and the way in which this was to be nurtured through a socialisation process that started in the family and continued in the wider community. This alluded to a further important change in the Party's conception

of *community*: that of localisation. Of course, references to both the 'local community' and the 'national community' were evident throughout the period. Nevertheless, the early emphasis on the interests of the individual in a sense served to frame at this stage a conception of *community* at the national level. As shown above, for example, this primarily individual focus ensured that a connection was made between *community* and rights; this focus on rights and individual liberty alluded very much to a national conception of *community*, achieved and enjoyed by individuals at a society-wide level. Examples of *community* as the national collective abounded in early documents within the period. For example, *Britain Will Win with Labour* stated: 'Labour's objective is to broaden and deepen the liberty of all individuals in *our* community' (Labour Party, 1987a, p. 8, emphasis added). Similarly, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* asserted: 'The true purpose of socialism is the creation of a genuinely free society in which a more equal distribution of power and wealth extends the rights and choices of the whole community. That society offers more than the chance to take better advantage of traditional liberties' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 55). Perhaps more explicitly still, Smith stated at the 1992 Party conference: 'Our strength lies in our knowledge that we are, each of us, members of one community, and it is our responsibility as citizens to work together for the good of that community as a whole, because we believe that the power of all of us together can advance the good of each individual' (Smith, 1992, p. 103).

In later documentation, the more active relationship between the individual and the community, focusing on a practical fulfilment of obligations and a socialisation process aimed at shaping tangible interaction with others, certainly seemed to allude to a more localised articulation of *community*. Indeed, there was an increasing tendency for the Party to frame or demarcate its conception of *community* at a local level, even when this was not explicitly identified as such. For example, *Safer Communities, Safer Britain* discussed the imperative of 'ensuring that [drug] treatment services are provided for drug abusers and that education and youth services provide drugs education in schools, clubs and the wider community' (Labour Party, 1995e, p. 10). This localised conception of 'the wider community' was more explicitly evident in *Lifelong Learning*, which stated: 'We will build on best practice in links between university and the wider community. The contribution of universities and colleges to local and regional

economies...is vital' (Labour Party, 1996h, p. 27). Furthermore, *Labour and the Voluntary Sector* stated: 'The concept of 'stakeholding' has long been central to the ethos of many voluntary organisations, which recognise the need for users, volunteers, employees and the wider community to be involved'. This statement, unremarkable in itself, was closely followed by the assertion that such voluntary organisations 'enable local people to be involved in the renewal and regeneration of their local community' (Labour Party, 1996e, p. 2). It can therefore be seen that while references to the individual's 'whole' or 'wider' community had previously tended to denote the societal context, in subsequent applications this context often constituted the locality.

Community and the reinvention of government

The increased framing of *community* at a local level in the later output of Labour was important to the Party in a political, as well as social, sense. There was an emphasis on *community* not merely as the expression of the relationship between the individual and society, but also as the intermediary between the individual and the state. This deployment of *community* to facilitate political, or constitutional, change was evident in equal force in the output of both Blair and Brown. Specifically, both wished to emphasise the concept in order to devolve down responsibility for certain areas of governmental remit to a lower level. Brown outlined 'a new constitutional settlement between individuals, their communities and the state that offers guaranteed safeguards to individuals and devolves power wherever possible' (Brown, 1994c, p. 114). Elsewhere, in backing the devolution of power in this way, Brown supported the need to 'use the power of community to enable people to take control of their own lives' (Brown, 1994a, p. 25). Consequently, the importance of a revitalised notion of *community* in order to achieve such political change was stressed by Brown, who asserted that 'to reinvent government we must first reinvigorate the idea of community' (Brown, 1994a, p. 5). Among specific policy areas whose remit would be subject to such devolution were crime and education. Regarding the former, Blair stated that crime 'can only be resolved by acting as a community, based on a new bargain between individual and society' (Blair, 1993c, p. 28). In terms of education, it was asserted in

Diversity and Excellence that 'accountability must exist locally to parents and the community as well as nationally to central government' (Labour Party, 1995b, p. 1).

One thing that both Blair and Brown were keen to emphasise in this reinvention of the governing process was the localised nature of this new, 'reinvigorated' conception of *community*. Indeed, while the precise articulation of the concept in this context might not have been made explicitly clear, it was repeatedly asserted that it was *not* central government. This is something about which Blair felt strongly as early as 1991, when he stressed that 'action by community does not mean action by central government' (Blair, 1991, p. 33). The same sentiment from Blair was again evident a few years later, as he asserted: "'Community" cannot simply be another word for "state" or "government". Both of these have a role to play, but we should aim to decentralize power to people, to allow them to make important decisions that affect them' (Blair, 1996e, p. 298). This notion was expressed by Brown when claiming 'it is essential that we retrieve the wide and expansive notion of community from the narrow and restricted idea of the centralised state...examining very clearly how the community can organize its affairs in a decentralized way, more sensitively and flexibly' (Brown, 1994c, p. 119). Brown subsequently elaborated on this by referring to 'a radical transfer of power from the centre to the communities, so the idea of one-dimensional government as the expression of community must end' (Brown, 1994c, p. 121). Both Blair and Brown, then, sought to use *community* in a political sense to represent a shifting remit of various elements of political policy downwards towards localities. Perhaps more than anything else, this localisation of *community* to serve a political, as well as a social, purpose is testimony to the concept's great flexibility, and the way in which the Party fully exploited this in its later emphasis on the concept. It is clear, however, that central to both conceptions is an equal emphasis on the notion of *responsibility* such a localisation requires of individuals, something that is examined in the following section.

Responsibility

As has already been alluded to, if *community* serves, as it did for Labour throughout the period in question, to represent the relationship between the individual and a wider

collective, then the concept of *responsibility* in a sense frames the requirements and specific dynamics of the actors within this relationship. Like *community* (and other concepts such as *potential*) the concept of *responsibility* can be fairly elastic in its application; in this case, it can range from fairly prosaic references to ascribed duty or specific remit, to more philosophical allusions to obligation and human interaction. It can therefore be used – and indeed was used by the Labour Party – to mean a number of different things (or equally, very little). This fact is perhaps best illustrated by the references throughout the period in question to the very general coupling of ‘rights and responsibilities’ (for use as a title, see Labour Party, 1988b, p. 41; 1991d, p. 25; Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 6; Labour Party, 1997b, p. 3). Such applications of *responsibility* at times offer little explanation of central elements of the concept, such as by who, to whom and for what the duty or obligation is held. Changes in the application of *responsibility* usually concern the dynamics of this relationship. In the political sphere, the duty is usually deemed to be held by either the government on the one hand, or the individual (or in some cases a conception of ‘society’) on the other. Those to whom this responsibility is owed can vary from the government, the individual or the collection of individuals constituting the general citizenry. It is the expression of such dynamics of a given application of *responsibility* that serves to attach to it a specific meaning, and it is therefore by tracing the changing incidence of such combinations that transformations in the concept’s general articulation can be identified.

It is suggested that the change in the internal dynamics of *responsibility* saw a broadening of application in the evolving use of the concept similar to that evident in *community*. It will be shown that early applications essentially alluded to government responsibility, entailing both a general subjective ‘line-drawing’ of its theoretical duties, and more objective expression of the remit of individual actors or departments within government. It is then shown how the relatively few references to individual responsibility in documents and speeches up until the early-1990s largely concerned family obligations to children, dependants or the elderly and infirm. From the mid-1990s, while there was still evidence of such reference to government responsibility, it is shown how there was a discernible increase in emphasis on individual responsibility alongside this. Importantly, while responsibilities to one’s family were still emphasised,

a large proportion of the later references to individual responsibility tended to incorporate an added facet, entailing both an individual duty to government, and a more fraternal responsibility to fellow citizens. As such, the broadening of *responsibility*, from a predominant emphasis on government duty to the incorporation of an added dimension of individual responsibility, is shown to have constituted an evolution from a largely political (and at times familial) conception of *responsibility*, to a more demanding articulation entailing economic, social and even moral facets of the concept. The Party located this shift in the wider context of a new 'social contract' between the individual and *society*, one that therefore moved beyond the relationship merely between government and individual, to a concern with the relationship *between* individuals too. That people would be willing to accept this more onerous conception of *responsibility* was assumed implicitly in references to notions of stakeholding and citizenship, both of which served to illustrate the role of interdependency (or rather, reciprocity) as a necessary prerequisite of effective coexistence.

Government responsibility

In speeches and documents early on in the period between 1987 and 1997, references to *responsibility* largely concerned the government, with the primary content of the concept in this context therefore that of political duty. Applications related both to roles that the Party believed that any government should be fulfilling and, more specifically, those it believed the incumbent Conservative administration were failing to fulfil. Most commonly, the context was an economic one, in which the importance of not leaving everything to the market was repeatedly expounded. For example, *Meet the Challenge*, *Make the Change* stated that 'it is clear that the real prosperity we seek can be achieved by a government which is not hamstrung by ideological obsessions with non-intervention, but which instead recognises and accepts its responsibilities' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 10). This sentiment was echoed in *Looking to the Future*: 'The Conservatives believed that they could create a successful economy by abandoning government responsibility, by leaving it all to the market' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 5). *Agenda for Change* repeated this notion once again, providing a scathing verdict of Conservative economic policy throughout the 1980s: 'It was characterised by the

abdication of responsibility by government for the proper management of the economy' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 7). While the vast majority of such references alluded to government responsibility *vis-à-vis* the market, on occasions this responsibility was juxtaposed with that of individual responsibility too. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* referred to 'a partnership that couples opportunity for each individual with the acceptance by government of overall responsibility', before alluding to 'our drive towards individual opportunity and government responsibility' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 4, p. 6).

The application of *responsibility* with regard to duties of central or local government was evident throughout the later stages of the period in question as well. Indeed, it could be argued that this was inevitably the case given the nature of the literature – that of an aspirant Opposition seeking to identify shortcomings in the incumbent administration while identifying ways in which they themselves could do better. For example, it was asserted in *Jobs and Social Justice*: 'Governments cannot avoid their responsibilities to intervene where free markets fail' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 21). Similarly, *Rebuilding the Economy* stated that 'government has a responsibility to create the physical and social infrastructure which will help create...industrial success, especially in the areas of training and information technology' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 18). Furthermore, *New Deal for a New Britain* stated: 'Government has a responsibility to create a jobs, information and careers service and offer a range of opportunities that allow real choices to the young unemployed' (Labour Party, 1997b, p. 4). This government responsibility framed by the Party extended beyond economic affairs too, with *Tackling the Causes of Crime* claiming: 'The Tories have consistently down-played the importance of dealing with the causes of crime, and failed to accept responsibility for what is happening in society' (Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 7). Similarly, *Safer Communities, Safer Britain* suggested with regard to privatisation of the prison sector: 'It is the direct responsibility of the state to administer the punishment of the courts' (Labour Party, 1995e, p. 5).

As suggested above, a second feature of references to government responsibility were the more specific applications regarding the precise duty and remit of various individuals and departments within government. These often concerned the division of

duties proposed by devolution, as *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* stated, for example: 'In Scotland the Scottish Assembly will have...the responsibility for the administration of regional policy and revenue raising powers through the variation in income tax levels' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 15). Other references concerned the proposed introduction of new government departments: *Looking to the Future* revealed that 'Labour will establish a Ministry for the Arts, responsible for promoting Britain's arts – and also the services and industries associated within them, including broadcasting' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 27). This assignment of duty extended to individual ministers as well as the general departmental remit. For instance, *A New Ministry for Women* asserted: 'The Women's Minister will work closely with ministers from other departments. Joint responsibility will be developed so that...both Ministers may speak in Parliament' (Labour Party, 1991a, p. 9). Similarly, *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again* asserted: 'We will...create a Department of Legal Administration headed by a Minister in the Commons who will be responsible for all courts and tribunals in England and Wales' (Labour Party, 1992d, p. 24). Such applications of *responsibility* were relatively procedural and did not necessarily reflect a broader perspective on where responsibility should lie within a society as suggested by more general references to government responsibility of the time. Nevertheless they played an important role in reinforcing the notion that responsibility was something primarily to be associated with government. Considered together, then, the specific duties of government departments and ministers combined to constitute this responsibility in a practical and applied sense.

This more procedural notion of *responsibility* as specific remit was also evident later in the period too. For example, *Jobs and Social Justice* asserted: 'The Employment Service should retain its responsibility for providing counselling and support, and assistance with job search' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 22). Similarly, *A New Economic Future for Britain* proposed to 'place the responsibility for the initial identification of a potential Family Credit recipient on the Inland Revenue' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 40). Furthermore, *Tackling Youth Crime* stated: 'Responsibility for policy on young offenders will be located clearly in the Home Office' (Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 9). As with the earlier stages of the period, the proposed division of duty following the

devolvement of power to Scotland and Wales also accounted for a number of applications of *responsibility* in this way. For example, *Diversity and Excellence* asserted: 'Labour's proposed Welsh Assembly will take on responsibility for developing [school] policy in Wales' (Labour Party, 1995b, p. 7). Meanwhile, *New Labour, New Life for Britain* suggested of power devolved to Scotland: 'This will mean extending democratic control over the wide responsibility currently exercised by the Scottish Office' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 30). Equally, such applications were also employed with reference to the creation of new positions too: *Strategy for Women* asserted that, with the proposed Minister for Women, a 'further responsibility will be the monitoring of Britain's performance in meeting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action' (Jowell, 1996, p. 32). Similarly, *New Deal for a New Britain* proposed 'a dedicated politician of Cabinet minister rank who...will take political responsibility for the delivery and success for the welfare-to-work programme' (Labour Party, 1997b, p. 5). It is therefore clear that both general and more specific references to government responsibility were largely uniform during the period, something which is not surprising given that the nature of the documents and speeches – that of a government-in-waiting presenting its policies – remained equally uniform throughout.

The added facet of individual responsibility

While the reference to government responsibility – both in terms of general duties and more specific remits – remained relatively consistent, the broadening of *responsibility* in the later stages saw this joined by a significant emphasis on individual duty alongside it in the Party's articulation of the concept. While there were, of course, some references to individual responsibility in early documents and speeches, these were largely allusions to individual responsibility to one's family dependants. For example, *The Charter of Rights* stated that 'we have set out details of our commitment to guarantee every worker...rights related to family responsibilities', while *Opportunities for All* asserted: 'We want to make sure that there is a real choice for people in how they share their family responsibilities within the family and combine these with employment' (Labour Party, 1991g, p. 15; 1991d, p. 15). This notion of individual responsibility towards one's family was essentially a social responsibility to others, but

in an extremely narrow sense. Indeed, it could be argued that it was almost apolitical, given its intuitive nature and presence in all political perspectives. Only very rarely did an individual conception of *responsibility* move beyond this. On one occasion, for example, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* referred to 'using the accountable power of the state to help create a society in which citizens have the means and the self-assurance to take responsibility for their own lives and to fulfil their obligations to others' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 6). Similarly, *Family Prosperity* stated that Labour 'has always understood...that people have responsibilities to each other and that society must create opportunities for individuals' (Labour Party, 1991b, p. 9). Nevertheless, such applications were conspicuous in their divergence from an overwhelmingly familial conception of individual responsibility during the early stages of the period.

In later speeches and documents, from the mid-1990s onwards, there was a real proliferation of references to individual responsibility that moved beyond this instinctive family duty. Indeed, such was the importance ascribed to the concept in this individual guise that, as Party leader, Blair framed *responsibility* as one of Labour's fundamental principles. For example, his speech to the Party conference in 1994 referred to 'our project for Britain. It will be founded on these four pillars: opportunity, responsibility, justice and trust' (Blair, 1994f, p. 100). It was made clear by Blair that this was not a conception of *responsibility* outlined by the Labour Party in the preceding years, but one of a number of concepts reclaimed from recent Conservative Party espousal, that was being thrust into the canon of contemporary Labour Party values. For example, Blair's speech to the 1995 Labour conference on Party's constitution saw him urge delegates: 'Please let us not fall for this nonsense about stealing Tory clothes when we talk of crime or the family or of aspiration or of duty and responsibility...We are reclaiming this ground, because it is rightfully ours' (Blair, 1995e, p. 291). Blair reiterated this a few months later, asserting: 'Over the past year we have been reclaiming ground we should never have lost to the Conservatives. Freedom. Responsibility. Family. Efficiency' (Blair, 1995h, p. 20). These references to the retrieval of *responsibility* from promotion by the Conservatives suggest that it was an individual articulation of the concept that Blair was seeking to capture for the Labour Party.

Guises of individual responsibility

The articulation of this revived sense of individual responsibility served to suggest that it carried three prominent elements – economic, social and moral. The economic facet apparently constituted the conception of *responsibility* being reclaimed from the Conservative lexicon, representing the individual's interconnected responsibility to be self-sufficient and to contribute to the national economy through employment. This conception of responsibility was outlined in *A New Economic Future for Britain*, which referred to 'the responsibility of the long-term unemployed to seek work' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 36). An obligation to work was often presented as part of a balance with family duties (which further emphasised the distinction between individual and traditional family responsibility suggested above). For example, *Strategy for Women* promised that 'Labour will help working parents share the responsibilities of home and work by giving them the opportunity to take parental leave' (Jowell, 1996, p. 2). Such an economic responsibility was particularly emphasised with regard to young people, with *Target 2000* asserting: 'The young unemployed have a responsibility to seek work, accept reasonable opportunities and upgrade their skills' (Labour Party, 1996l, p. 2). This obligation on the part of the individual to remain employable in a manifestly changing economic environment was applied to all those of working age, however, as *Aiming Higher* contended: 'Individuals are increasingly responsible for ensuring that they adapt to changed circumstances, acquire new skills and make successful career choices' (Labour Party, 1996b, p. 7). The responsibility on the part of the individual to remain willing and able to accept opportunities for employment provided by the government represented an important element of Labour's transformed approach to welfare under Blair, founded on a 'welfare-to-work' approach and informing policy proposals such as the 'New Deal' (see Labour Party, 1997b). Indeed, *New Labour, New Life for Britain* stated succinctly: 'All this is part of the creation of a modern welfare state. Opportunities provided, responsibility demanded' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 22).

The second element of Labour's increased emphasis on individual responsibility under Blair – a social facet that emphasised the importance of obligations to fellow citizens for effective coexistence – alluded less to a relationship between individual and

government, than to one between fellow individuals. This specific element of individual responsibility was largely portrayed by Blair himself. For example, its importance to a social existence was suggested in his address to the Labour Party conference in 1994: 'Responsibility means a recognition that there is no divorce from the outside world – social responsibility for all' (Blair, 1994f, p. 103). This was more apparent still in Blair's Party conference speech two years later, in which he reminisced: 'When I was growing up the family was strong, the sense of social responsibility was strong, crime was low. There was a national ethos and spirit that had won us the war and stayed with us in peace' (Blair, 1996g, p. 84). While apparently quite nostalgic about bygone expressions of social responsibility, Blair offered a contemporary solution to the problem of achieving the fraternal existence of the past: 'The spirit of solidarity on which the Labour Party was founded has a very modern meaning – the creation of a true community of citizens involving all the people and based on rights and responsibilities together' (Blair, 1996c, p. xii). Indeed, Blair took this further still by insisting that, not only was a sense of social responsibility an important element of a 'true community of citizens', it was in fact a prerequisite of *any* conception of society: 'Without social justice, there will be no modernisation; without mutuality and solidarity there will be no prosperity; without shared values there will be no progress; without responsibility there is no society' (Blair, 1996b, pp. 3-4). At the heart of Blair's social sense of individual responsibility was a simple belief that individual responsibility need not merely concern responsibility to the self, family or government; it could, and should, also represent a duty to fellow citizens.

The importance of a responsibility to others, while necessary for effective social existence, was founded on a connected facet of individual responsibility espoused by Blair, one concerned less with social expediency than moral, almost religious, considerations. This was succinctly represented as Blair stated: 'The key is to recognise that we owe duty to more than self. Responsibility...[is] about service beyond the family, to the community' (Blair, 1996e, p. 306). Indeed, this sense of duty beyond the family – obligation *to* others as opposed to *for* others – was fundamental to Blair's notion of moral responsibility, and distinguished the broader fraternal social responsibility from a narrower familial conception. The importance of this facet of the

concept was demonstrated in references to individual responsibility in the moral framework instilled into children as part of the socialisation process. For example, Blair stated: 'It is in the family that we first learn to negotiate the boundaries of acceptable conduct and to recognise that we owe responsibilities to others as well as ourselves' (Blair, 1994e, p. 247). Similarly, he replicated this sentiment a year later in asserting: 'It is in the family that the limits of freedom are first experienced and the roots of responsibility put down' (Blair, 1995b, p13). The moral element of individual responsibility was further alluded to when Blair later asserted: 'If I take without giving, enjoy rights without accepting obligations, then I betray the trust of those who do give, those who do exercise their responsibilities in a responsible way' (Blair, 1996e, p. 306). Indeed, this moral facet was explicitly addressed by Blair as he asserted that traditional left-wing values, when applied to the modern world, 'can fashion a new moral purpose for the nation which combines individual and social responsibility and which can assert the importance of social rules and order' (Blair, 1995f, pp. 208-9). This frames the moral element of individual responsibility as distinct from, but nevertheless very much related to, the social facet that draws on social expediency as much as more fundamental notions of right and wrong.

A new social contract

Perhaps tacitly aware that a moral obligation to others was unlikely to suffice in convincing people to accept the expanded duties ascribed in such a conception of *responsibility*, the transformed concept was presented by the Party as the product of a new social contract. Given that the altered conception drew on considerations of fellow citizens rather than merely those of family or government, the contract was framed as an agreement not between the individual and government, but between the individual and *society*. The purpose of this was alluded to by Blair when he highlighted the 'need to construct new principles to govern the relationship between individual and society...where we cease to posit an entirely false choice between social and personal responsibility' (Blair, 1993d, p. 6). This relationship was also referred to by Margaret Beckett in *Getting a Grip on Crime*, when she wrote of 'a new bargain between the individual and society. Rights and responsibilities must be set out for each in a way

relevant for a modern world' (Beckett, 1993, p. 2). A more formal restatement of this agreement was evident in a later reference, when Blair stated that 'we need a new social contract between society and the individual in which rights and responsibilities are more closely defined' while the various parties involved in any such agreement were outlined by Brown in referring to 'an over-arching New Settlement: a new constitutional understanding between individual, community and state that offers guaranteed safeguards to individuals – both rights and responsibilities' (Blair, 1996f, p. 121; Brown, 1994a, p. 5). It is perhaps significant that such an agreement had been outlined earlier in Party documentation; however, in this case the contract explicitly framed the concept of *responsibility* with regard to the government rather than the individual, as *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* suggested that 'a new partnership between the individual and society is necessary: partnership that couples opportunity for each individual with the acceptance by government of overall responsibility' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 4).

Significantly, it would appear that Labour under Blair felt the need to frame a new contract between individual and society precisely because previous agreements conceived by the left failed to sufficiently embrace the individual facet of *responsibility* in its various guises. This in itself was a manifestation of the broadened application of the concept in the later years of the period in question. Such a fact was made clear by Blair himself in 1995, when he reminded the reader that 'during the 1960s and 1970s the left...fought for racial and sexual equality, which was entirely right, but it appeared indifferent to the family and individual responsibility, which was wrong' (Blair, 1995b, pp. 11-12). The period under attack by Blair was then protracted in a later assertion, as he stated: 'In the 1970s and the early 1980s, the left sometimes spoke as though it was possible to divorce rights from responsibilities' (Blair, 1996b, p. 7). This criticism was further evident as Blair referred to 'the confusion of early Left thinking' which he believed 'was compounded by a belief that the role of the state was to grant rights, with the language of responsibility spoken far less fluently' (Blair, 1995i, p. 236). Blair was keen to make clear, however, that the individual notion of *responsibility* was not alien to left-wing thinking in general; rather, the recent neglect of this element was merely something of an aberration when considered in a broader historical context. He

therefore stated: 'A return to what we are really about... would be a healthy journey for our country as well as the Labour Party. It would also help us comprehend more fully the importance of personal responsibility in our lives and its relationship to society as a whole' (Blair, 1993b, p. 12). Similarly, Blair also grounded individual responsibility in the Labour tradition when he insisted: 'Look back to the first heyday of the Left in the 1930s and 1940s and you will find heavy emphasis on responsibility, self-improvement and the family' (Blair, 1995f, p. 206).

In the same way in which Blair was keen to emphasise that a focus on individual responsibility was not counter-intuitive to the traditional thought of the political left, he was equally eager to emphasise that it was not necessarily a natural position of the right either. Indeed, this served to highlight the different facets of Labour's conception of individual responsibility under Blair, drawing on social and moral, as well as economic and familial, elements. Blair sought to remind people: 'The reaction of the Right, after the advent of Mrs. Thatcher, was to stress the notion of the individual as against the state. Personal responsibility was extolled. But then...the Right started to define personal responsibility as responsibility not just for yourself but to yourself' (Blair, 1995i, p. 236). A consequence of this had been, for Blair, quite apparent: 'the Right developed a type of economic libertarianism which often lapsed into greed, selfishness, and social and moral irresponsibility' (Blair, 1995f, p. 207). Consequently, Blair was trying to guide Labour along a course that stressed the importance of individual responsibility without narrowing this too much so as to preclude considerations of others, a need he had identified prior to becoming leader, emphasising the importance of 'moving the debate beyond the choice between personal and social responsibility' (Blair, 1993c, p. 27). Contextualising this approach to the concept of *responsibility* in the rejection of previous approaches from both sides of the political spectrum, Blair later stated that 'we have to counter the historic belief found on the Right, but sometimes on the Left, that action by society to improve social conditions is incompatible with notions of personal responsibility' (Blair, 1994e, p. 246). Thus, Blair was laying the foundation for his conception of individual responsibility, looking to reconcile as mutually inclusive its different guises that would subsequently constitute

such important elements of his, and Labour's, articulation of the concept of *responsibility* more generally.

Citizenship and stakeholding

It was, of course, one thing to emphasise the individual element of *responsibility*, to extend its scope beyond existing parameters, and to frame this in the context of a new agreement between the individual and society. It was quite another thing, however, to persuade individuals to understand accept and support such an increased onus. While allusions to considerations of economic contribution, social expediency and even moral virtue might have persuaded some, Labour under Blair sought more a succinct and resonant contractual rationale for the acceptance of the increased individual dimension of *responsibility*. The notion of citizenship seemingly served this purpose in part, capturing both the rights given to individuals in the traditional approach of the left, with the responsibilities expected from the political right. Prior to becoming leader, then, when talking about the 'new principles to govern the relationship between individual and society', Blair asserted that 'it involves a new concept of citizenship in which rights and responsibilities go together' (Blair, 1993d, p. 6). A similar connection was made in *Jobs and Social Justice*, which suggested that justice 'is about striving to achieve the principles outlined...with the involvement of actively participating *citizens*, who clearly understand their written rights and responsibilities' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 20, emphasis added). Similarly, *Tackling the Causes of Crime* reminded the reader that 'as citizens we all have responsibilities as well as rights, duties as well as freedoms' (Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 6). While such rights were deemed to be important, it was the acceptance of individual responsibilities that, for Blair, defined the essence of citizenship, as suggested by his summary of T.H. Marshall's account of the gaining of rights: 'The assumptions of hierarchy, deference, and status are broken down, and progress to full citizenship is gradually achieved. But full citizenship requires that people take on new responsibilities too' (Blair, 1996b, p. 7).

Alongside such a relatively traditional notion of citizenship, Labour attempted to provide a novel expression of the rights and responsibilities that were the product of this new contract between the individual and society. The Party did this with reference to

the notion of stakeholding: Blair, for example, referred to 'a new social contract between society and the individual...in which we grant each citizen a stake in our society but demand from each clear responsibilities in return' (Blair, 1996f, p. 121). Blair subsequently referred to his vision of working together 'to create a genuine civic society where everyone has a stake, where everyone has a responsibility', while in a separate account was more explicit still, warning: 'If people feel they have no stake in society, they feel little responsibility towards it and little inclination to work for its success' (Blair, 1996b, p. 3; 1996a, p. 3). Moreover, in wider Party literature, *Tackling the Causes of Crime* suggested: 'The concept of mutual responsibility lies at the heart of the stakeholder society – a society in which we all have a place and an opportunity' (Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 6). Furthermore, *Labour's Business Manifesto* and *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better* both referred to 'the true meaning of a stakeholder economy – where everyone has a stake in society and owes responsibilities to it' (Labour Party, 1997a, p. 7; 1997c, p. 19). This straightforward logic neatly framed Labour's later conception of *responsibility*, a largely individual conception that carried both economic and social elements, and served to constitute a requisite feature of what the Party considered to represent successful social existence.

Family

Such a conception of a social existence held by Labour, as has already been suggested at various junctures so far, while framed through the application of *community* and founded on a specific conception of *responsibility*, was increasingly informed during the period in question by the Party's references to the concept of *family*. Indeed, for the Labour Party (as perhaps for other parties) the family was effectively treated as society's predominant unit. Indeed, such was the presentation of the family as this constitutive unit throughout the period, references to the *family* were ubiquitous in the Party's output throughout the period as a result. Consequently, the concept of *family*, perhaps more than any other in this study, was susceptible to references carrying little meaning in themselves, merely applied to represent the organisation of society without being the main focus of the sentence or phrase. That this remained the case throughout the period could be illustrated using any two documents from its early and later stages,

in this case *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* and *Vision for Growth* (published in 1988 and 1996 respectively). The former made reference to ‘many families [having] no recourse but to turn to charity’, ‘families...forced to rely on means-tested benefits’, and ‘whether in the last decade of the twentieth century it will be acceptable to give families an income that does no more than supply them with food, clothing and heat’ (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 17, p. 18, p. 20). Equally, the latter referred to the ‘price of aiming low...[being] the damage and destruction of the livelihood of many individuals and families’ and ‘the freedom and flexibility which the car brings to families and individuals’ (Labour Party, 1996m, p. 5, p. 10). In each case the use of *family* was not of primary importance to the sentence in which it was applied. However, it will be shown that, even in such cases, the Party still attached to *family* a specific and discernible meaning.

As such, in spite of the concept’s ubiquity, it is nevertheless possible to identify a transformation in the application of *family* by the Party during the period in question. As such, it is suggested that there was a shift from the presentation of *family* as simply an economic unit, to an expanded conception that incorporated an important social element too. It is shown how, in the early stages, this manifested itself in an almost statistical treatment of *family*, using it to highlight the impact of existing government policies, or the purported effect of future Labour Party alternatives to these. It is then shown how there was an emphasis on either family poverty or family prosperity, as families, framed as micro-economic units, were portrayed as analogous to businesses, and therefore subject to the same economic language. Consequently, it is shown how changes to the family in recent years were treated as economic changes, while the need to support families was articulated in a solely economic sense. Significantly, it is suggested that, while this economic facet of *family* was still evident – and significant – in later years, it was joined by an equally significant social element: while the family was still seen as an economic unit, therefore, it was also understood as a social unit. Much of this change was through a connection between *family*, *community* and *responsibility*, as there was an increasing tendency to frame families as proto-communities where a sense of duty is first cultivated. As such, social forces wreaking change on the family were seen not merely as economic, but as social too, something

that was treated by the Party as lamentable, with an emphasis given to family breakdown and its negative consequences. Consequently, rather than articulating *family* in a descriptive sense, the concept was framed increasingly prescriptively, with support entailing assistance to the family as a social institution rather than merely as an economic unit.

Economic unit

In documents and speeches in the early stages of the period, the concept of *family* carried an overwhelmingly economic articulation. As such, its treatment as the primary constitutive unit of society adopted an equally economic meaning. For example, referring to people realising the problematic nature of the poll tax, *Moving Ahead* stated: 'We can help them to do so by spelling out how it will punish the less well-off, increase bills for the average family and undermine the quality of local services' (Labour Party, 1987b, p. 10). Equally, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* warned: 'By 1991 the benefits system will be even less able to meet the demands made upon it. Many families will have no recourse but to turn to charity for basic necessities' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 17). *Children First*, meanwhile, stated that 'students should not be deterred from pursuing education or training for reason of family income' (Straw *et al.*, 1989, p. 16). The presentation of the family as an economic entity was similarly evident in *Looking to the Future*, which asserted: 'Millions of families are trapped in mortgage misery because of the Government's policy of high interest rates' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 25). In the introduction to *Opportunity Britain*, furthermore, Kinnock said of the country's economic problems: 'Almost every family is feeling the effects', while later in the same document it was asserted that rising unemployment 'means that more families have to depend on benefit' before it suggested that 'Child Benefit is the most efficient and equitable way of helping families' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991e, p. i; Labour Party, 1991e, p. 38, p. 42). It can be seen in such cases that *family* was articulated largely in an economic sense, almost in passive terms, as the effect of political action on citizens was demonstrated through the medium of the concept.

Indeed, such was the sense that families represented to the Labour Party the economic impact of public policy, the concept of *family* took on something of a

statistical role during the early stages of the period in question. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* stated that 'three quarters of a million families are forced to rely on means-tested benefits to top up poverty wages' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 18). Similarly, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* claimed that 'some three million people in low paid families live in or on the margins of poverty' before suggesting that 'for families with children, Child Benefit...has been cut by 12 per cent in real terms since 1979' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 30, p. 31). Further evidence of the statistical role of *family* could be found in *Looking to the Future*: 'Nearly a million people live in families where the breadwinner has to claim means-tested benefits to top up a low wage' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 37). *Made in Britain*, meanwhile, asserted: 'One hundred thousand families lost their homes last year' (Labour Party, 1991, p. 4). As well as illustrating the deficiencies of Conservative policy, *family* was also invoked in figures attempting to show the benefits of Labour Party alternatives. For example, *Opportunity, Quality, Accountability* contended regarding Labour's proposed 'fair rates': 'Independent research has shown us that, given the same level of government support, at least seven out of 10 families will be better off under our proposals compared with the poll tax' (Labour Party, 1991f, p. 7). Similarly, *Family Prosperity* stated: 'Savings on the poll tax means that this year's bills would have been £140 lower for the average family under Labour's system' (Labour Party, 1991b, p. 12). Such statistical applications, while perhaps inevitable when discussing policies and their impact, further accentuated the economic presentation of the family.

Family fortunes

The economic sense articulated by Labour of the concept of *family* at this time, both in terms of the purported malaise under the Conservative government and the potential improvements possible under a Labour administration, manifested itself in emphases on both family poverty and prosperity. Lamenting the impact of the incumbent administration's policies on families, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* stated: 'People in poverty do not want benefits to ease their hardship – over £1 billion a year remains unclaimed by many of the poorest families', before it was subsequently contended that to 'tackle family poverty there must be a significant and generous

increase in Child Benefit over the lifetime of the next parliament' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 30, p. 32). Similarly, *Family Prosperity* claimed that 'the proportion of families in Britain living in poverty increased by one third in the 1980s – at a time when the governments in France, Belgium, Greece and Spain *reduced* family poverty' (Labour Party, 1991b, p. 8, original emphasis). *Opportunity Britain*, meanwhile, asserted: 'The number of children living in poor families has doubled under the Conservatives', while *Opportunities for All* warned: 'Under the Conservatives there are more families living in or on the margins of poverty than ever before' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 40; 1991d, p. 15).

In contrast to the family poverty presented as entrenched in Britain under the Conservative government, Labour used the prospect of an upturn in family fortunes to illustrate how life would be better under its administration. This was alluded to in *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*, which stated: 'The best form of support for families, one which does not trap the poor into poverty, is adequate child benefit. Improving Child Benefit...[has] a direct effect on family incomes' (Labour Party, 1988b, pp. 18-9). The potential for the improved economic circumstances of the family was subsequently discussed at length in *Family Prosperity*, which stated: 'Families are the building blocks of our society. When families prosper, the nation prospers', a sentiment that was replicated in *Opportunities for All* (Labour Party, 1991d, p. 7; 1991d, p. 15). *Family Prosperity* went on to assert that Labour would not 'accept that families in Britain should be left behind. We are determined to put in place our programme for family prosperity', before outlining plans for the country with the postscript: 'That is the way to family prosperity' (Labour Party, 1991b, p. 12, p. 18). Similarly, in the introduction to *Opportunity Britain*, Kinnock asserted that Labour's aim was 'to help families to prosper in a fairer, safer society' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991e, p. iii). Furthermore, the perceived significance of the family unit's poverty and prosperity respectively, as a reflection of the country's overall economic position, was illustrated in *Labour's Budget Statement 1992-93*: 'Our success as a nation depends upon making the most of the skills and abilities of our people. That is why proposals for tackling poverty and building family prosperity are a key part of our strategy for improving Britain's economic performance' (Labour Party, 1992e, p. 3).

Perhaps the most illuminating manifestation of *family's* articulation in the early stages of the period to represent a fundamentally economic unit was the propensity for the Party to articulate it as analogous to a business. An early instance of this was evident in *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*, which stated: 'Our attention will be directed to the largest amounts of capital that escape effective taxation, rather than the modest transfers involved for most families' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 22). Similarly, *Opportunity, Quality and Accountability* claimed that the 'Poll Tax has wreaked havoc on family finances, council budgets and vital local services all over Britain' (Labour Party, 1991f, p. 6). A more explicit connection was made in *Opportunity Britain*: 'Fundamental tax reforms...must be introduced gradually, so that the family and business budgets are not disrupted' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 14). Similarly, *Labour's Budget Statement 1992-93* asserted that the Conservative income tax cuts 'not only added a double fiscal stimulus to an already unstable situation, but gave precisely the wrong signals to families and firms' (Labour Party, 1992e, p. 6). Most unequivocal of all in framing families in terms of businesses, however, was *Made in Britain*, which stated: 'Every business and every family needs to look forward with confidence, to plan for the future. Soaring interest rates destroy a family's budgeting, just as they threaten a company's balance sheet'. It was subsequently asserted: 'Every family and every business knows the difference between long-term investment – whether in a house or a new factory – and day-to-day spending. But curiously, the British government doesn't make the same distinction' (Labour Party, 1991c, p. 8, p. 9). This was perhaps the clearest representation of the tendency at this stage to articulate the concept of *family* in overwhelmingly economic terms.

Family change as economic

This articulation of *family* by Labour in the late-1980s and early-1990s was further reinforced by the Party's conception of family change. Transformation of the family, its structure and organisation were approached from an avowedly economic perspective. Specifically, attention was paid to the increasing role of women in the workforce, and the consequent work-family balance this required. *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* asserted: 'Efficiency and equality also demand a closer examination of the

relationship between employment and family responsibilities', referring to 'social strategies that would give women and men a greater choice of working arrangements' (Labour Party, 1998, p. 12). Similarly, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* stated: 'Too many women never get the education and training they deserve. Others, highly-trained and qualified, find it impossible to combine demanding employment with the care of a family'. It was subsequently asserted: 'Women are the growth area of the British workforce...[but] still have to fit work around family responsibilities because men still do not undertake their fair share of that work' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 7, p. 22). Meanwhile, *Women and Work* contended: 'Women have to have a real choice between taking a paid job and caring for their family. They need help in combining the demands of their work and their home' (Labour Party, 1990b, p. 2). This sentiment was replicated in a speech by Smith at the 1992 Labour conference, in which he asserted that 'child care provision, flexible working hours, job-sharing are practical and necessary measures for women – and men too – who should not have to choose between family life and outside employment' (Smith, 1992, p. 106). Furthermore, *Make Europe Work for You* referred to 'social changes, such as the increased participation of women in the labour market and a rebalancing of work and family priorities' (Labour Party, 1994b, p. 12).

The Party's presentation of changes to the family as a largely economic phenomenon saw the concept of *family* applied in a way that was ostensibly more descriptive than prescriptive. This was evident, for example, when *The Charter of Rights* alluded to a separation between public and family life with reference to 'protection for an individual's right to respect for his or her private and family life', while *Opportunities for All* asserted: 'We recognise...that the family comes in all shapes and sizes' (Labour Party, 1991g, p. 6; 1991d, p. 15). Such non-prescriptive applications of *family* entailed a quite specific notion of family 'support'. *Opportunities for All* immediately followed the suggestion that families vary in form with the claim that 'parents, guardians and carers within the family, whether working or not, poor or not, need practical support from the government'. Interestingly, however, it subsequently asserted: 'Under the Conservatives there are more families living in or on the margins of poverty than ever before' (Labour Party, 1991d, p. 15). Therefore,

'support' for the family at this stage largely entailed economic assistance, rather than support for the family as an institution. Similarly, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* stated: 'The best form of support for families, one that does not trap the poor into poverty, is adequate child benefit' before pledging to consider 'how best to achieve genuine independence in taxation, while targeting support on families with children' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 22). Furthermore, *It's Time for Families* claimed quite generally that 'Labour is the party of family values. We believe that Britain's families deserve the support which families receive in other European countries'. This, however, was followed by the assertion: 'We will start immediately to make British families better off' (Labour Party, 1992c, p. 2). At this stage, then, the family was to be supported as an economic unit through economic assistance.

Social Unit

The articulation of *family* in later Labour Party output – largely that from the mid-1990s – contained many elements framed in the concept's usage in the earlier stages of the period. For example, there was discussion of family finances, statistical representation of *family* to illustrate various policy problems or benefits, the reference to family poverty and prosperity, and a tendency to frame elements of family change through changes in work practices. However, in addition to all this, there was a new, significant element emphasised that was scarcely present at all in earlier applications: the family was presented not just as an economic unit of society, but as a *social* unit. Thus, rather than merely representing collections of people living together, supporting one another financially and sharing relative wealth or poverty, the concept of *family* broadened to incorporate an important socialising function. An emphasis, hitherto unseen in the period, was therefore placed on the family's role in creating and enforcing a social or moral code, which could then be replicated in wider social scenarios involving interactions with non-family members. The intended result was a social cohesion or stability deemed to be sorely lacking in Britain in the mid-1990s. There were, it should be conceded, very occasional references to the family as a social unit in earlier applications of the concept. For example, Kinnock's foreword to *Family Prosperity* included the assertion that 'the difference between the family that imparts happiness,

love and the fundamental moral precepts that govern a decent society to its children and the one that does not has huge implications for the rest of society' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991b, p. 3). However, such references were extremely uncommon in earlier speeches and documents, and were virtually lost in the overwhelmingly economic conception of the family unit at this stage.

The novelty of Labour's subsequent articulation of *family* as a social unit was explicitly drawn on by Blunkett in his foreword to *Early Excellence*: 'Not since the 1970s has there been such an interest in the development of policies aimed at sustaining the family'. Blunkett followed this with reference to 'reinforcing those values which help to strengthen the family as a building block for stability and security within our society' (Blunkett in Labour Party, 1995c, p. 2). This notion of the social function of families, in contributing strength and stability to wider society, was frequently evident at this stage. For example, Blair stated in a speech of the same year: 'The only way to rebuild social order and stability is through strong values, socially shared, inculcated through individuals and families' (Blair, 1995f, p. 208). This sentiment was also evident in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*, which asserted: 'Strengthening family life is essential to any decent concept of a civil society'. The specific social elements were subsequently outlined: 'The family unit is where young people learn the boundaries of conduct, the difference between good and bad, the need to respect others' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 25). This replicated the sentiment expressed by Blair at the 1995 Party conference, where he asserted that 'in the family people learn to respect and care for one another. Destroy that in a family and you cannot rebuild it in a country' (Blair, 1995d, p. 100). The social function of the family, portrayed as equally important as its economic function, but not necessarily connected to it, was neatly captured by Blair in his contribution to the Fabian Pamphlet *What Price a Safe Society?* in which he asserted: 'Children that are brought up in unstable or unhappy families are deprived irrespective of the wealth of the parents, as are children who are badly educated' (Blair, 1994a, p. 3).

The socialising role of the connection made between *family* and *community* by Labour in the later stages of the period has already been discussed in this chapter. However, equally important to this notion of socialisation was the changing nature of

the connection between *family* and *responsibility*. Earlier references to the two concepts had been effectively economic in nature, juxtaposing the commitments to the family with those of employment. For example, *Opportunity Britain* discussed the rights needed by 'both men and women so as to reconcile their work and family responsibilities', while *Opportunities for All* referred to 'a real choice for people in how they share their family responsibilities within the family and combine these with employment' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 36; 1991d, p. 15). While this application was also evident in later sources, a connection with *responsibility* in a socialising context was increasingly apparent. This was a connection made by others too, such as the CSJ – Blair suggested at the launch of its Final Report that he wanted 'to look further at the discussion of family responsibility that the Commission rightly puts on the agenda. It is in families that we first learn respect for others' (Blair, 1994d, p. 148). Similarly, Blair noted in a later address: 'It is in the family that the limits of freedom are first experienced and the roots of responsibility grow. The family is the antithesis of narrow selfishness' (Blair, 1995f, p. 206). As such, there was a change in the connection between *family* and *responsibility*, from a sole allusion to the duty of the mother or father to their dependants, to the addition of a second element referring to a wider sense of duty first cultivated in the family unit.

Family change as social

The social element of Labour's articulation of *family* was reflected in a transformed conception of family change. As seen above, this was previously articulated in economic terms, alluding to factors such as an increased need to balance work and family commitments. While this was still evident later on in the period, it was joined by a hitherto unseen emphasis on the social side of family change. For example, *Early Excellence* stated that 'the extended family has been fragmented and...mobility has separated out families who previously were able to give much more by way of mutual support and care' (Labour Party, 1995c, p. 4). *New Labour, New Life for Britain*, meanwhile, diagnosed more immediate problems for families in the context of social transformations: 'Many of these changes are liberating. But at the same time has come greater crime...Families break up. The harm to children is severe' (Labour Party, 1996i,

p. 21). Such changes to the family were placed in a broader context by Blair at the 1995 Labour conference: 'My generation enjoys a thousand material advantages over any previous generation and yet we suffer a depth of insecurity and spiritual doubt they never knew. The family weakened, society divided' (Blair, 1995d, p. 98). In his speech to the following Party conference, meanwhile, Blair reminisced: 'When I was growing up the family was strong, the sense of social responsibility was strong, crime was low...What was strong then is fragile now...our feeling of collective responsibility starved of expression, the family unsupported' (Blair, 1996g, p. 84). Blair suggested that such family instability was now a defining feature of modern times: 'Crime, high structural levels of unemployment, serious poverty and the collapse of family and community stability; these are the hallmarks of society today' (Blair, 1994a, p. 2). Interestingly, both economic *and* social elements of family change were alluded to in a later address as Blair asserted: 'Work patterns have changed...the old cultural, social and family ties have loosened' (Blair, 1996f, p. 121).

The presentation of family change as a social, as well as economic, process manifested itself in an increased emphasis on developments such as loosening ties and family breakdown, and the negative consequences of these such as criminality and anti-social behaviour. Indeed, a direct link was made between family circumstances and low-level, localised crime, which further reinforced the social function ascribed to it in later applications. Indeed, the influence of Blair in the Party's framing of such a connection is evident in the way in which this link was made by Blair prior to becoming its leader. He asserted that 'any sensible society acting in its own interests as well as those of its citizens will understand and recognise that poor education and housing, inadequate or cruel family backgrounds...will affect the likelihood of young people turning to crime' (Blair, 1993c, p. 27). Later the same year Blair asserted that 'children brought up ...with family breakdown, and in bad housing, are more likely to drift into crime than those that aren't' (Blair, 1993d, p. 7). This was the logic subsequently evident in wider Party literature under Blair's leadership. For example, *Safer Communities, Safer Britain*, with regard to crime prevention, referred to 'support to strengthen families so they are better able to supervise their children and divert them from anti-social and criminal behaviour'. The logic of such practice was provided by

the subsequent assertion: 'There has been a plethora of research on the links between family background and crime', a sentiment also evident in *Tackling the Causes of Crime* (Labour Party, 1995e, p. 11; Straw and Michael, 1996, p. 9). Furthermore, *New Labour, New Life for Britain* stated plainly: 'The link between crime and family breakdown is every bit as well documented as the link between unemployment and crime' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 25). The need to reverse the social impact of family change, then, was made explicitly clear by the Party at this stage.

The family value

For the Labour Party at this stage, the solution to the connection made between family breakdown, and social disorder and criminality, was equally as straightforward as the original problem: support the family to prevent it breaking up, and this would land a pre-emptive blow against crime. This notion of family support, then, was very different to the one seen earlier on in the period which, as shown above, had concerned financial aid to impoverished families. Later notions of support, however, alluded to strengthening the family as a social institution. This was seen in *Safer Communities, Safer Britain*, which promised: 'Family support for those experiencing difficulty in coping with their children' (Labour Party, 1995e, p. 12). Even when not linked to criminality, there was an emphasis on the need to provide support for the family institution: Blunkett stated in *Early Excellence* that Labour 'recognises the need for accessible, affordable and flexible early years services – services which support the family rather than forcing parents to juggle with work commitments and the care of children' (Blunkett in Labour Party, 1995c, p. 2). What supporting the family specifically entailed was explicitly referred to in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*: 'It is easy to say "support the family". It is harder to find specific policies that will achieve this. We have made proposals – on childcare, on support for single-parent families, on more flexible patterns of working, on reforming the Child Support Agency – which can reduce the strain on families' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 25). A more succinct insight was provided in *New Labour for Women* when it referred to 'encouraging local authorities to give a higher priority to family support and parenting programmes' (Labour Party, 1997d, p. 4).

In light of Labour's emphasis on support for the family to aid its preservation, not only did the Party by this time apply *family* to represent a social institution rather than merely an economically-defined collective, it apparently articulated it as a motivating *value* of its political approach. This was evident specifically in the output of Blair: for example, he asserted at the 1994 Party conference that the 'Tories have posed as the party of the family for too long. They are no more the party of the family than they are the party of law and order in Britain today' (Blair, 1994f, p. 100). Indeed, Blair subsequently alluded to the retrieval of *family* as a value from Labour's opponents, just as it did for the concept of *responsibility*: 'Over the past year we have been reclaiming ground we should never have lost to the Conservatives. Freedom. Responsibility. Family. Efficiency. These are Labour words and we should never have allowed them to be taken away' (Blair, 1995h, p. 20). Furthermore, in an article published in the same year, Blair stated defiantly: 'When we talk about strong families, responsibility and duty, and being tough on crime...we are not aping the Tories, but recapturing the values that are rightfully ours'. As Blair subsequently asserted in the same article, the official restatement of the Labour Party's aims in the form of the revised Clause Four itself alluded to the importance of family. The old Clause had been replaced by 'a clear statement of the left-of-centre's values: power, wealth and opportunity for all, social justice, equality between people...support for family and community life' (Blair, 1995b, p. 14). The difference between this articulation of *family* and that of Blair's predecessors was significant, something alluded to by Blair himself at the 1995 Labour conference: 'A young country that wants to be a strong country cannot be morally neutral about the family. It is the foundation of any decent society' (Blair, 1995d, p. 100). This simple statement, as much as any other during the period, represents the change in the Party's conception of *family*, from a mere unit society's organisation, to a crucial element in its future success.

Conclusion

The change in the Labour Party's approach to fraternity between 1987 and 1997 was undoubtedly informed by a greater emphasis placed on the concepts of *community*, *responsibility* and *family*. However, alongside this increased emphasis, the way in

which the three concepts were framed and articulated was discernibly different at the end of the period compared to a decade earlier. As with those relating to equality, in each case examples of conceptual usage prevalent later on in the period were on occasions evident in its early stages, while applications dominant in the early stages were subsequently deployed in its latter stages. The transformation in the three concepts, although still subject to a relatively nuanced process of change without a specific juncture after which any change took place, was generally evident from 1994: that is, the Party seemingly articulated different conceptions of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* under the leadership (and clear influence) of Blair than was the case under Kinnock and Smith. Significantly, however, the nature of the transformations was very different to that seen with the concepts relating to equality. While *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* were all subject to an increasingly narrow economic focus that apparently marginalised a number of the concepts' previous applications, the concepts covered in this chapter underwent quite the opposite change: their articulation broadened, to incorporate an emphasis on hitherto unseen (or very scarcely seen) dimensions. This change was effectively a broadening of the concepts' articulation given that, while the applications prevalent in the early years of the period in question were still evident, and at times prominent, these were subsequently joined by a further dimension of references. As such, although polarised in terms of the nature of the transformations, the conceptual changes identified in this chapter were equally as evolutionary as those pertaining to equality.

This evolutionary broadening of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* manifested itself in a number of specific changes evident in the articulation of all three concepts. Perhaps the most apparent change was what could be described as a greater social emphasis in the concepts. Early applications were framed largely from the perspective of the individual: for example, the Party's early articulation of *community* was expressed in the context of the advancement of individual freedom. As such, Labour presented *community* as an important political commodity, but important largely because of its facilitating role in the advancement of the individual's interests. Similarly, early uses of *responsibility*, on the occasions that they referred to the duty of the citizen rather than the state, ensured that this was concerned primarily with

individual responsibility either to the self, the family or the state. In a social contract that was effectively framed between the individual and the state, there was consequently very little expression of a sense of duty between fellow citizens other than a basic and instinctive duty to one's family dependants. Finally, the articulation of *family* itself was framed effectively as a collection of related, reliant individuals. In the same way that *community* and *responsibility* were presented with respect to largely economic considerations of the individual, *family* was framed as an essentially economic unit – one that could benefit, or suffer, financially from the government's policies.

Later applications, under Blair's leadership, while maintaining such 'individual' elements, embraced a far more social articulation of the three concepts alongside these. While *community* was still seen as important for individual development, it was also presented as an important end in its own right. Thus, rather than merely stating that people rely on one another to get on in life, the Party took the concept a step further by suggesting that individuals had obligations to others in the form of the wider community. Later applications of *responsibility*, meanwhile, carried alongside the existing individual economic facet an important social element. This entailed a duty to fellow citizens, rather than to the government or dependants, heralding a change in focus from the relationship between the individual and government to incorporate interactions *between* individuals. This change was manifest in the presentation by the Party of the revised conception of *responsibility* in terms of a contract to which society, rather than merely government, was party alongside the individual. Regarding the concept of *family*, a new social element provided this with an important socialising function, providing early guidance in successful interaction with others that could then be replicated in wider social scenarios. As such, families were presented as proto-communities, where previously they had often been alluded to as proto-businesses. Such a social element in the respective concepts at times overlapped with a moral overtone evident seen in all three concepts, particularly in their application by Blair himself. In the articulation of *community*, there was an allusion to a moral framework to which people had to subscribe in order to enjoy membership and the privileges this brought. The contingent element of *community* rested on the requirement of *responsibility* and its own moral element, which emphasised a natural duty to others

rather than merely to oneself. Such a duty was framed as something that was to be cultivated in the *family*, whose socialising role facilitated this.

The concepts informing the Party's approach to fraternity were subject to frequent and explicit interaction, certainly more than was the case with those framing Labour's approach to equality studied in the previous chapter. This interaction served to constantly reinforce the changes in one another's meanings, and provide a more overtly changed approach to fraternity in general. For example, *community* and *responsibility* were subject to significant interaction in the later stages of the period, which reinforced the former's active and contingent meaning and the latter's element of duty to fellow citizens. Similarly, the relationship between *community* and *family* strengthened the former's moral element and lent it a localised emphasis, while giving the latter an important social (rather than merely economic) function. More interesting still was the interaction between *responsibility* and *family*, a relationship that was evident throughout the period. Early interaction ensured that references predominantly concerned a *responsibility* both for, and to, the *family*. However, later cases of interaction saw the *responsibility* alluded to not merely concerning the family, but others beyond this immediate sphere; as such, *responsibility* to others constituted a moral characteristic first learned and cultivated within the socialising environment of the *family*. Overall, the frequent use of, and interaction between, the three concepts in the later stages of the period, by which time all were imbued with a greater social and moral elements, ensured that the Party's approach to fraternity was far more explicit and significant to its broader political approach than had been the case earlier in the period.

The changing usage of the three concepts seemingly represented a discernibly altered ideational approach to fraternity by the Labour Party in the later stages of the period in question. Earlier on, under Kinnoch and Smith, while apparently dismayed by the Conservative government's rejection of fraternity, nevertheless seemed to share – or at least understand the need to espouse – its focus on the advance of the individual and individual freedom (albeit in a discernibly different guise). As such, Labour's approach to fraternity at this time was a strange hybrid of an emphasis on both the collective and the individual, but with an apparent individualist slant. With Blair as Party leader, however, the individual was seen far more as constituted by ties to a wider collective,

be it a family, a community or some other group. It was in this regard that the influence of communitarian thought on the approach of Blair in particular, at times some years before he became Party leader, was most evident. It was this notion of an embedded individual that provided the foundation for both an increased emphasis on *community*, *responsibility* and *family*, and a stronger social and moral application of each. Such was the conception of the human as a social creature for Blair that the changes in society and the subsequent breakdown of such collective ties was treated as a major contributing factor to the British malaise framed by the Party in the 1990s. This breakdown was attributed both to the specific neglect of fraternity in the approach and policies of the Conservative government (and to a lesser degree of the Labour Opposition under Kinnoch and Smith) and to the impact of an ever-changing and increasingly disconnected external context. Only with an emphasis on fraternity through the application of the altered conceptions of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* could such changes, according to Blair and the Labour Party under his guidance, be reversed and could Britain thrive once more.

5. Contextual Change

Introduction

While the previous two chapters offered a conceptual examination of Labour's changing approach to the questions of equality and fraternity, this chapter seeks to use conceptual analysis to consider the way in which the Party addressed a very different question – that of change itself. The backdrop for the transformations undertaken by Labour was represented by a shifting external context, which informed the Party's changing position by instilling within it a wider logic and sense of necessity. Given this significance, the way in which Labour conceptualised external change between 1987 and 1997 constituted a crucial feature of its general transition throughout the period. This chapter seeks to illustrate how the way in which this change was conceptualised represented an important foundation upon which the Party's general approach to policy was built. It is suggested that the Party's conception of the external political and economic environment was itself subject to an evolution of ideas: from the conception of change as significant enough to pose a challenge to, and prompt a revision of, existing approaches; to the treatment of change as epoch-defining and agenda-setting, requiring a fundamental reconsideration of the Party's approach to important political questions. This evolutionary development of Labour's conception of change therefore informed a shift in the way it framed the most judicious course of policy direction in general, and sought to address more specific political questions such as equality and fraternity in particular.

Significantly, the analysis undertaken here reflects a different aspect of conceptual change to that seen in the previous two chapters. Whereas the changes considered up to now concerned the transformed meaning of existing concepts within the Party's lexicon, the changes studied in this chapter entail the introduction of new concepts, and the potential marginalisation of previously prominent ones. This distinction is informed by Farr's assertion that conceptual change can be said to have occurred not only when existing concepts are subject to altered meanings, but also when some concepts emerge for the first time (Farr, 1989). Of course, the latter type of conceptual change cannot show an evolution in the *usage* of the concepts as such, given

that the change relates to the very use (or lack thereof) of the concepts in question. However, it will be suggested that such change can nevertheless be shown to represent an important evolution of *ideas* as expressed by this transformed conceptual application. The concepts chosen to examine Labour's perception of external change and its political consequences are *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress*. All three have been selected because they each allude in some way to change, either in terms of its conceptualisation or the desired direction of change in general. The concept of *globalisation* has been chosen because, above all others, it has come to succinctly represent the nature of the changed external environment facing contemporary political parties when constructing their general approaches. The concepts of *renewal* and *progress*, meanwhile, both allude to change in the direction of parties' approaches, and the desired impact this should have on the country at large. Specifically, this direction can be seen as a conceptualisation of a party's response to the changing context of politics. The application of each of the three concepts, then, in expressing and responding to this changing external environment, will be considered in turn, starting with *globalisation*, followed by *renewal* and *progress*.

Globalisation

The context within which the Labour Party framed its approaches to equality, fraternity and other important political questions was subject to consistent change during the period in question. The specific conceptualisation of such change by the Party, and the way this was deemed to impact on its political approach, was therefore of great importance. It will be shown that this conception came to be expressed through the introduction of *globalisation* into the Party's lexicon, and that this became hugely significant, impacting on the way in which the Party framed its whole approach. Interestingly, however, this ensured that many of its applications – in a similar vein to a concept like *family*, for example – were not the primary focus on the sentence or phrase in which they were deployed. Indeed, the stage-setting or rationalising role the concept played for more specific details ensured that many of its uses were brief references at the beginning or end of sentences, something that can be illustrated by using two separate examples. The former is evident in *Aiming Higher*, in which it was asserted:

'In today's global economy, our national prosperity depends above all else on the skills and abilities of our people; a multi-skilled, creative and adaptable workforce' (Labour Party, 1996b, p. 2). Conversely, *A New Economic Future for Britain* referred to the need to 'have more people with the skills, investment capacity and new technologies which are key to successful competition in the modern global economy' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 6). Nevertheless, such relatively cursory references in no way undermined *globalisation's* significance to the Party's whole approach. Indeed, its very use in such contexts ensured that the concept had a significant impact on the way in which Labour framed its approach in a wide range of areas once it had been firmly implemented into the Party's lexicon as a conceptualisation of contextual change.

It is initially shown how, in the early years of the period, a conception of a global context was applied by the Party not to express the changing policy backdrop, but overwhelmingly focused instead on the environment. As such, it is shown that only from the early-1990s did the Party's articulation of *globalisation* as a process represent an evolution in its conception of contextual change. Following this, the way in which *globalisation* was used to articulate a need for a reaction from the Labour Party, emphasising both its limiting effect on individual national governments as well as the possible opportunities presented by a judicious response to the globalising forces, is considered. It is then shown how such logic subsequently saw *globalisation* applied as a fundamental rationale behind Labour's approach to policy-making, expressed as a starting point from which policy in a number of different areas was to be conceived. Finally, the specific reaction to this conception of contextual change as *globalisation* perceived by Labour to be required is considered, as the Party outlined the need to move away from positions held by traditional left and the right approaches if such change was to be adequately addressed and exploited. For this to be effective, those on the left had to be convinced that Labour was not turning away from traditional social democratic ideals, but rather approaching them in a modernised way necessitated by the impact of changing times. Thus, it is shown how Labour used the concept of *globalisation* specifically to underpin changes in its approach to fundamental questions of equality and fraternity: an evolution in the conception of contextual change is shown to have effected a similar evolution in the way it addressing such issues.

Early applications

In the Party's documents and speeches in the early years of the period in question, references to the concept of *globalisation* were largely absent. It was not until 1992 that regular references to the process were evident. Hitherto, references to 'globe' and 'global' had all been concerned with the environment. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*, discussing 'particular environmental issues', referred to 'the growing demand for action on global questions', suggesting that to 'enhance our environment we intend to emphasise everyday matters as well as global concerns' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 39, p. 41). Furthermore, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* alluded to 'the acid rain and global warming produced by fossil fuels and from the toxic waste and safety risks of nuclear power' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 16). This environmental articulation of issues of global impact also applied to references in *Agenda for Change*, which referred to 'the need to protect and enhance our environment...[f]rom local to global level' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 19). Indeed, even in three early documents in which there was an occasional reference to *globalisation* – *Looking to the Future, Made in Britain* and *Opportunity Britain* – all other allusions to global issues within these related exclusively to the environment (see Labour Party, 1990a; 1991c; 1991e).

When the Party did refer specifically to the process of *globalisation* in these early stages of the period in question, the way in which this was done ensured that it was not applying the concept as an expression of broad, sweeping changes impacting on many different elements of politics and policy-making. Indeed, in *Made in Britain*, its impact was actually undermined, as evident in the laconic assertion: 'It is nonsense to try to blame this recession [in Britain] on global problems' (Labour Party, 1991c, p. 11). In the other two documents, *globalisation* was applied to refer to much more specific developments. *Looking to the Future* discussed the process of globalisation only very narrowly, *vis-à-vis* Britain's trade gap: 'With the increasing globalisation of trade...export promotion must become increasingly professional' (Labour Party, 1990a, p. 17). This could be juxtaposed with the way in which Kinnock, in the same document's introduction, framed very generally the changed environment in which

Britain found itself – without reference to *globalisation* – in stating that ‘we have...taken account of further changes in Britain, across Europe and in the rest of the world’. Kinnock then described a major theme of his Party’s approach as: ‘Realism about the challenges and the opportunities which face us’ (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1990a, p. 3). Similarly, *Opportunity Britain’s* only reference to *globalisation* referred largely to Britain’s role in Europe: ‘The only way to raise our standard of living...is by becoming more competitive within Europe and within the global economy. The challenge of ‘1992’ and the growing integration of the European economies makes Labour’s programme for supply side strength even more urgent’ (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 14). Once again, this specific reference stood in contrast to the broad picture of change painted by Kinnock in this document’s introduction without deploying the concept of *globalisation*, referring to ‘a time of rapid and significant change at home and abroad’ before suggesting that ‘we take further account of changes in the condition of our country and the world’ (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1991e, p. i).

The way in which contextual change was articulated in *Looking to the Future* and *Opportunity Britain* was representative of the way in which Labour’s output in general conceptualised such transformation in the early stages of the period in question. As such, it is important to reaffirm that documents prior to 1992 *did* refer explicitly to various changes in the external economic and political circumstances facing Britain – indeed, some outlined a picture of change invoking many of the elements we now associate with the process of economic globalisation. For example, *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* stated: ‘Over future decades the sources of wealth and power will change. Changes in the economic and industrial basis of society will alter the way we live and work, and will affect the pattern of both the production and the distribution of resources and wealth’ (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 3). Similarly, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* asserted: ‘Labour’s Policy Review is about change – the changes which are happening and will happen, the changes which *we* want to bring about’. It then stated: ‘In the 1990s, there will also be radical changes affecting Britain’s economy...the growing challenge from the industrialised countries of the Pacific make the improvement of Britain’s competitiveness an essential and urgent priority’ (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 5, original emphasis). While it might appear that, in such cases, the

Party was effectively describing the transformations that subsequently became conceptualised as *globalisation*, and that its failure to articulate change in this way was effectively due to the availability of the terms at the respective leaders' disposal, this was quite clearly not the case. Labour's own very occasional applications of the concept from 1990 illustrate that the notion of contextual change as being potentially global in scope and impact *was* at the Party's disposal at this time, yet very rarely articulated in this way.⁷

The representation of change

Although in the early years of the period Labour framed its approach within a changing external context, and in spite of the fact that the concept was in use at this stage, it was almost exclusively after 1992 that *globalisation* was employed by the Party to represent this transformation. Even following 1992, however, formal references to the concept *per se* were fairly infrequent; rather, references to the process of *globalisation* were generally articulated more precisely and succinctly as describing developments as being *global*. This enabled Labour to focus on certain elements of the process at the expense of others. Specifically, it allowed the Party to offer an account of globalisation as primarily an economic (rather than political, cultural or environmental) phenomenon. This was clearly reflected in the specific qualification of Labour's references to global developments, with an overwhelming emphasis on 'the global economy' and 'the global market' evident. For example, *Rebuilding Britain* stated: 'Fourteen years of Conservative government have left Britain as ill equipped to compete in the global economy as to meet the basic needs of citizens' (Labour Party, 1993, p. 4). Similarly, Brown stated the following year that 'the main characteristic of the emerging global economy is the need for even greater co-operation' (Brown, 1994c, p. 119). *Winning for Britain*, meanwhile, offered the belief that 'Britain's industry must now win in a global market that is increasingly competitive' (Labour Party, 1994d, p. 4). Further economic applications were also evident, such as the references to 'global competition': Blair stated that the 'challenge before our Party this year is...to prepare our country for new global competition', while Brown asserted that 'the effect of global competition in goods markets mean[s] that, inevitably, national economic policy must focus less on

managing demand and more on supply-side measures' (Blair, 1995h, p. 20; Brown, 1997a, p. 38). Such references attached and reinforced a central economic element to Labour's articulation of *globalisation*.

Whether expressed in references to *globalisation* specifically in terms of economics, or as a more general process, from 1992 – and particularly 1994 onwards – Labour's conception of contextual change became epitomised by the concept. Indeed, it was perhaps no coincidence that Labour's conception of change in this way occurred as Blair and Brown became more influential within the Party following John Smith's death. Interestingly, an article about the international economy written by Smith himself as late as 1994 made no reference to globalisation or the global economy, other than referring to 'global membership' of institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. This was in spite of alluding to 'growth in the world economy', 'the changing dynamics of the world economy' and 'our international economic system' (Smith, 1994, p. 2, p. 3). In contrast, Blair and Brown were keen to repeatedly stress the epoch-defining nature of globalisation as the representation of the changing context in which the Labour Party operated. For example, Blair surmised in one article: 'Labour's task at the end of the twentieth century is to find answers to...fundamental questions. First, how we cope with, and how we shape, the economic changes of the global economy to provide prosperity and security for all people' (Blair, 1995b, p. 11). This emphasis placed on global forces was replicated a year later in the Fabian Pamphlet *Socialism*, in which Blair referred to 'obvious changes in the post-war world. First, the economy is global and the trading future of our economy is completely interlocked with those of our main trading partners' (Blair, 1994b, p. 5). Similarly, Brown asserted regarding the conception of *potential*: 'One hundred years ago this objective made action against poverty, slums and unemployment first priority...Fifty years ago the route to achieving this objective involved setting a floor of rights...Now in a global economy...our view of what it means to realize potential has to be much more ambitious than ever before' (Brown, 1994c, pp. 113-4).

In seeking to place global developments in a grand historical context with such references, it would appear that the concept of *globalisation* was applied by Blair and Brown as the very expression of contemporary times. Specifically, the economic

articulation of the concept facilitated by its curtailment and qualification ensured that it represented a new phase of capitalist development. This was made clear in Brown's discussion of the enduring relevance of Croslandite social democracy, when he stated: 'Today's world is, of course, quite different from the world of 1956...Now we operate in an open, global market in capital and credit' (Brown, 1997a, p. 37). The Party's expression of change through the application of *globalisation* was perhaps most clearly evident in Blair's 1996 speech to the Labour Party conference, in which he asserted: 'Our task is to restore...hope, to build a new age of achievement in a new and different world. Today, we compete in the era of global markets' (Blair, 1996g, p. 81). While often achieved explicitly in this way, the very allusion to *globalisation* as a novel development sufficient in scale and effect to impact on history ensured that it implicitly provided a modernising sense not achieved by accounts of change (however similar) that were framed without reference to the concept. As such, the deployment of *globalisation* allowed the Party to succinctly express changes to the wider context in a way that, with its expression of novelty and its connotations of previous epochs, presented these as manifestations of a definitively new stage of historical development. It was here that the specific appeal of the concept of *globalisation* apparently lay for the Party under Blair and Brown: depicting change in such momentous terms ensured that Labour's leading lights were effectively able identify a requisite response, framed in a way of their own choosing. As such, a significant factor in the Labour Party's application of *globalisation* as the expression of change was the catalytic role it played with respect to the Party's logic regarding its future direction.

The necessity of reaction

For Labour in the mid-1990s, then, understanding the nature of globalisation was only half of the story; crucially, the Party also articulated a patent need to respond to its impact. The necessity of response to global forces had been outlined previously, for example in *Labour's Campaign for Recovery*, which referred to the 'response to the emerging global economy – and the inevitably more limited scope for national governments' (Labour Party, 1992f, p. 4). However, this was further emphasised with Blair as leader. Indeed, Blair himself alluded to both the diagnosis of change and

prescription for a response to this in his introduction to the 1997 election manifesto, *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better*: 'In economic management, we accept the global economy as a reality and reject the isolationism and 'go-it-alone' policies of the extremes of right and left' (Blair in Labour Party, 1997c, p. 3). A more complete assessment of the limiting effect of the global economy ascribed to it by the Party was evident in *Rebuilding the Economy*, which conceded that 'the reality of the global economy is that countries – especially small countries like Britain – cannot go it alone in macroeconomic policy without quickly running into balance of payments problems' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 16). Frequent references of this sort over the next two years drew on ever more threatening language, culminating in the assertion in *A Fresh Start for Britain* that 'if we ignore, or try to turn back, the global forces that are shaping our international environment, the British people will pay a heavy price' (Labour Party, 1996a, p. 1).

The increasingly strong way in which the Party emphasised the need for adaptation and change was not entirely fatalistic, however. Indeed, Labour articulated the global processes facing the Party as both a challenge *and* an opportunity. The multifaceted situation facing Britain was clearly articulated in *Winning for Britain*, as the 'global market' was deemed to represent 'a changing world that offers both the greatest opportunity and the severest challenge in our industrial history' (Labour Party, 1994d, p. 4). Similarly, Blair stated in the 1995 Mais Lecture: 'Global capital markets have advantages as well as perils for a British government' (Blair, 1995g, p. 86). This sentiment was reflected in a later assertion that, in 'a global economy, transformed by a revolution in the way we work and communicate, the opportunities are great but so are the risks' (Blair, 1996b, p. 11). Importantly, the framing of *globalisation* in this way was frequently linked to the response of the government. *A Fresh Start for Britain*, for example, stated: 'Whether Britain benefits from the new global trends, or becomes a victim of them, will in large part be determined by the extent to which its government develops an international strategy in touch with the real world' (Labour Party, 1996a, p. 1). This choice for the government was explicitly outlined in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*: 'The biggest battle ahead may be that between those who believe the way to cope with global change is for nations to retreat into isolationism and protectionism and

those who believe in internationalism and engagement' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 37). Such statements were indicative of Labour's desire to frame *globalisation* in this dual fashion: it was a challenge because it entailed significant changes; yet it was potentially an opportunity because the judicious undertaking of such changes ultimately would be beneficial for the country at large.

Unsurprisingly given the presentation of *globalisation* as constituting the 'biggest battle ahead', the concept subsequently became the foundation on which policy direction was constructed – illustrated by the clear tendency to set the ensuing Party agenda against the backdrop of a global context. This was perhaps inevitable with documents and speeches concerned primarily with economic affairs. For example, *Winning for Britain* asserted early on: 'Our proposals are aimed at increasing the competitiveness of British companies in increasingly competitive global markets' (Labour Party, 1994d, p. 1). Furthermore, Brown's foreword in *Rebuilding the Economy* warned: 'In a world of revolutionary changes – global financial markets, the computer revolution, the rise of the east Asian economies and growing environmental imperatives – our economic policy cannot afford to resist change' (Brown in Labour Party, 1994c, p. 2). Indeed, the agenda-setting role played by Labour's conception of *globalisation* was evident in the Party's special conference entitled 'New Policies for the Global Economy', which was concerned with 'the new challenges of policymaking in an increasingly global economy' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 3). Interestingly, however, the role of *globalisation* in fundamentally shaping policy rationale was evident in non-economic texts and speeches too: as seen at the start of the chapter, for example, the introduction to the education document *Aiming Higher* suggested how in 'today's global economy, our national prosperity depends above all else on the skills and abilities of our people' (Labour Party, 1996b, p. 2). This sense that a conception of *globalisation* informed all areas of Party policy was perhaps best illustrated in a paragraph from Blair's introduction to *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better*, in which he stated that Labour's 'vision is one of national renewal, a country with drive, purpose and energy. A Britain equipped to prosper in a global economy of technological change' (Blair in Labour Party, 1997c, p. 3). The concept served, therefore, to frame the need for widespread change in the Party's approach.

The nature of the reaction

In identifying this role played by the concept of *globalisation* in rationalising Labour's transformation, equally important as tracing the appeal to the concept as the stimulus for change was the precise nature of the change which the Party deemed appropriate as a response. This response was alluded to in *Vision for Growth*, which asserted that 'Labour in government will set a new agenda', one which 'must deal with the reality of a fast-changing, global economy in which Britain must compete' (Labour Party, 1996m, p. i). The precise nature of this new agenda was outlined in *New Labour, New Life for Britain*: 'It recognises the value of co-operation, as well as competition, but it is hard-headed, practical and geared to making us more successful in the global marketplace. It differs from the old left it differs from the new right. It is a new agenda, and it is a full one' (Labour Party, 1996i, pp. 16-17). The ground for this new approach was laid as early as 1992, when Brown, in his speech to the Labour Party conference, asserted: 'What the Tories cannot grasp is that in the new global economy...a new economics must replace the failed simplicities of the command economy and the unfettered free market' (Brown, 1992a, p. 19, p. 20). This notion of global forces necessitating a new path was replicated elsewhere, with Brown stating in his foreword to *Labour's Business Manifesto*: 'In a global marketplace, the old national economic policies – corporatism from the old left, isolationist ideology from the new right – no longer have any relevance' (Brown in Labour Party, 1997a, p. 1). Similarly, Blair's foreword to *New Britain* asserted: 'We live in a world of dramatic change and the old ideologies that have dominated the last century do not provide the answers. They just do not connect with a new world of global competition' (Blair, 1996c, p. x).

The task of Labour, in responding to globalisation by forging a path between left and right, was presented in a relatively palatable way to those on the left by being framed not as an abandonment of traditional values, but as a modernisation of them in order to make them applicable to the modern world. Blair started to prepare the ground for such an approach as early as 1992, as he wrote in *Fabian Review*: 'The essential task is to retain the values and principles underlying social democracy or democratic socialism but apply them entirely afresh to the modern world. This modern world has a

number of altered characteristics...[including] a global economy where international co-operation is replacing the possibility of any country "going it alone" (Blair, 1992, p. 3). This retention of the Party's key values was drawn on far more explicitly by Brown, who stated: 'In the new global economy, our socialist analysis is more relevant than ever' (Brown, 1994a, p. 4). The practical ramifications of the separation of socialist ends and the traditional means of achieving them was subsequently addressed by Brown in his speech to the 1996 Party conference, in which he asserted that he and Smith had 'agreed that in the battle to achieve social justice in the global economy of the 90s we could no longer rely on the economic weapons of the 40s, or the 70s' (Brown, 1996a, p. 32). Indeed, Blair clearly articulated this separation of means and ends in the same year, when he referred to a more equal distribution of power, wealth and opportunity: 'The old means of achieving that on the left was through redistribution in the tax and benefit regime. But in a global economy, the old ways won't do' (Blair, 1996a, p. 3). Labour's increased application of *globalisation* in framing its political approach, then, saw the Party attempting to address (or at least presenting itself as addressing) a number of traditional concerns of the left, but in a changed way, apparently necessitated by the transformed nature of the contemporary world.

In this respect, the evolution of the Party's representation of change fundamentally impacted on the way it addressed key political questions. Regarding equality, reference to *globalisation* was frequently invoked when framing the Party's transformed approach to this issue. For example, *Rebuilding the Economy* showed this explicitly in stating that 'the changes we are witnessing in the global economy require...that poverty and inequality increasingly generated in the workplace must be addressed at source in the workplace' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 22). Interestingly, the link between Labour's articulation of *globalisation* and the Party's specific approach to equality, drawing on concepts of *opportunity* and *potential*, was evident on a number of occasions, particularly in the output of Brown. For example, the Shadow Chancellor asserted that 'the changes we are witnessing in the global economy require a new addition to the fairness agenda. Our new policies to arrest and reverse the new sources of deprivation and restricted opportunity must be centred on the workplace' (Brown, 1994a, p. 2). Similarly, he told the Labour conference in 1996 that 'there is only one

way an economy like ours can succeed in the new global market place, and that is when what each of us can achieve depends...on the potential each one of us has and on the opportunities we receive to make the most of our potential' (Brown, 1996a, p. 29). Furthermore, Brown stated unequivocally that 'it is important to recognise that we approach the question of potential in a completely new economic and social context. The conditions of economic development have changed dramatically as a result of the globalisation of the economy' (Brown, 1994c, p. 117).

The evolving conception of change could also be seen to affect the way in which the question of fraternity was addressed by the Labour Party – and by Blair in particular – by the mid-1990s. In the output of the Party during this period, there was a connection made between global economic change and social deterioration. It was not made clear whether the social problems were caused by global economics, or merely constituted an accompanying manifestation of globalisation at large. Certainly, in one speech by Blair a causal connection between the two was outlined: 'The mirror image of the economic insecurity is a profound sense of social, even moral, insecurity...I do believe that this too is linked to globalisation' (Blair, 1996f, p. 121). Similarly, in The Mais Lecture of the same year, Blair asserted that in 'a world in which education, training and skills will increasingly be tested by global standards, any country which falls behind may be faced with huge social as well as economic consequences' (Blair, 1995g, p. 97). Brown, meanwhile, was more sanguine about the social impact of economic globalisation, as he asserted that 'the main characteristic of the emerging global economy is the need for greater co-operation', itself constituting 'the only route to the true realization of individual freedom. Community is not therefore a threat to individual freedom but an essential element of realizing it' (Brown, 1994c, p. 119). Equally, mutually inclusive economic and social elements were framed in *Lifelong Learning*: 'To succeed in the global economy and to prosper in cohesive communities, we must be an innovative, dynamic and enterprising country' (Labour Party, 1996h, p. 31). This perceived impact of global developments on Labour's approaches to both equality and fraternity ensured that the Party's conception of the contextual change as *globalisation* fundamentally informed its altered political trajectory. Prescribed changes to such a trajectory framed

by Labour during Blair's tenure as leader emphasised a new path for both the Party and Britain to follow in such a transformed context, as illustrated in the following section.

Renewal

If *globalisation* represented Labour's evolved conceptualisation of the changing external context, then the nature of the course that subsequently had to be charted by both Party and country itself was often represented in Labour's output by the concept of *renewal*. In the same way, then, that *globalisation* gained increasing prominence in the Party's lexicon, so too *renewal* was ascribed a greater emphasis in the later stages of the period in question. Much of the time, the articulation of *renewal* was not particularly specific, nor elaborated on in much detail. Rather, it was suggested that, with a governing Labour Party, various elements, from the economy, to politics, to the very nation itself, would be renewed. This was often done without explicitly stating how this might be achieved, or precisely what it would entail. However, this lack of explicit qualification could be less important with the concept of *renewal* than it was with the other concepts in this study; above all else, *renewal* was applied in a fairly emblematic way, as a vision of the future and a direction to be taken by Party and country, as much as a detailed framing of policies to achieve this. It is in this sense that its hitherto unseen emphasis in the Labour Party's lexicon was so significant.

It is initially shown how, in contrast to the few early applications alluding simply to reinvigoration, *renewal* was subsequently used as a means of symbolising a general process of change, one that was necessary in the context of transformations to the external context. The response to this change took the form of a significantly transformed approach to policy-formation, represented by Labour's discussion of Party renewal. At this stage, the application of the concept might appear to have been part of an avowedly reactive process – it was used to represent the Party's own transformation in response to the changing external context. However, the way in which the application of *renewal* also had a profoundly proactive element too is then illustrated: the changed Party could then go on to effect similar change in the nation as a whole, as Party renewal was thus presented as a prerequisite to national renewal. It is then shown how the Party applied *renewal* to frame the problems inherent in Britain under the

Conservative government, and the way in which these might be addressed. As such, it is shown how national renewal was deemed to entail transformation in the economic, social and political spheres. In each area, this change was expressed through the application of *renewal*, in order to emphasise the way in which a national renaissance was only possible under the guidance of a reborn Labour Party pursuing a new approach required by the fundamentally altered external context.

Early uses

While infrequent, it should be noted initially that there were nevertheless references to the concept of *renewal* made by the Labour Party evident in the early stages of the period in question. However, such applications implied not a change of direction or rationale, linked to a transformed external context; rather, they tended to allude simply to a reinvigoration of existing elements. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* stated regarding international trade: 'We need a better system of regulation which recognises the mutual interests of developed and developing countries – and which will contribute towards economic recovery and renewed prosperity' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 47). Equally, *Opportunity, Quality, Accountability* asserted that local councils could 'campaign for the development and renewal of the infrastructure in their area' (Labour Party, 1991f, p. 11). The conception of *renewal* as revival was made very clear in *Opportunity Britain*, meanwhile, as it stated: 'It was a Labour government that created the NHS. Now we need another Labour government to renew the NHS as a public service' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 17). Furthermore, *Labour's Campaign for Recovery* suggested: 'Monetary policy measures must be accompanied by industry, employment and fiscal measures and by a renewed effort at European co-operation to expand the economy' (Labour Party, 1992f, p. 5). In each of these cases, by not linking the application of *renewal* to some prompt, such as contextual change – either directly or indirectly – there was a sense that the concept alluded to the reinvigoration of the old, rather than an embrace of the new.

The necessity for renewal

From 1994 onwards, not only was *renewal* used far more frequently, the Party's articulation of the concept was connected to the process of wider transformation in the world, grounded in a belief that change had to be effected if Britain was to thrive in such a context. This was most evident in the language of Blair, who often applied *renewal* in the context of broader change in this way. For example, in his speech to the 1994 Party conference, Blair stated: 'Ours is a project of national renewal, renewing our commitment as a nation, as a community of people in order to prepare and provide for ourselves in the new world we face' (Blair, 1994f, p. 106). It is evident with such a reference that the motivation for national renewal was the 'new world' to which Blair refers. This was perhaps most explicit in Blair's later assertion that the country must 'respond to the challenge of the new millennium by embarking on a journey of national renewal which creates a new young Britain' (Blair, 1996h, p. 320). On occasions, the process of renewal in a certain area was deemed to be more difficult precisely because of the wider changes that were occurring (see for example Labour Party, 1995a). Nevertheless, this did not compromise the sense in which such renewal was presented as necessary precisely as a result of such changes, which demanded a modern party to modernise the country at large.

It can be seen, then, that the Labour Party's increased application of *renewal* was used to conceptualise change, specifically the transformation required in response to a changing external context. Indeed, this was explicitly illustrated by the tendency for the Party to allude to *renewal* alongside references to the term 'change' when framing its broader vision for Britain. For example, *Rebuilding the Economy* referred to 'a society in which we are able to embrace change and renewal because we are confident of finding new opportunities and developing new capacities' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 24). Similarly, Blair asserted in the introduction to *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better*: 'The vision is clear. And from that vision stems a modern programme of change and renewal for Britain' (Blair in Labour Party, 1997c, p. 4). Indeed, this notion of *renewal* as a vision of change was certainly characteristic of Blair's articulation of the concept. It was evident when Blair was discussing the potential replication of the success of the 1945 Atlee administration: 'I passionately want to lead

a party which once again embodies that national mood for change and renewal' (Blair, 1995a, p. 3). Furthermore, in his speech accepting the role of leader of the Labour Party, Blair stated: 'I will tell you what our task is. It is not just a programme of government. It is a mission of national renewal: a mission of hope, change and opportunity' (Blair, 1994c, p. 29). In such applications of *renewal*, therefore, Blair was articulating the message that it was Labour who clearly understood the nature of wider change impacting on contemporary Britain and, more importantly, who understood what needed to be done in response to this. The implication, then, is that only Blair's Labour Party could use such an understanding to actively effect the changes to Britain required by the transformed external context. In this respect, the concept of *renewal* was used in both a reactive, diagnostic sense, and subsequently in a more proactive, curative fashion.

New Labour, New Britain

The proactive element of Labour's application of *renewal* under Blair was represented by the notion that, in order to effect the required change on the country as a whole, the Party itself first had to modernise its general approach. The discussion of this development with reference to the concept of *renewal* could be seen at various stages in the period in question. While its application became significantly more frequent during the period leading up to the 1997 election, references to Party renewal prior to 1994 were largely limited to major moments of introspection, for example following the general election defeats of 1987 and 1992. *Moving Ahead* asserted: 'In this statement...we aim to begin this process of reflection and renewal' (Labour Party, 1987b, p. 2). Meanwhile, the equivalent document post-1992, *Agenda for Change*, stated: 'It is the commitment of our membership which provides a vital source of energy and renewal' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 25). Interestingly, one impact of the increased emphasis on *renewal* following Blair's accession as leader was his repeated allusion to the work of his predecessors in such terms. For example, Blair noted: 'The great achievement first of Neil Kinnock and then of John Smith was to take the Labour Party back on a course towards renewal' (Blair, 1994b, p. 1). As such, it was clear that, in spite of the dearth of references to Labour's renewal prior to his leadership, Blair saw

the general process as starting from Michael Foot's departure: 'My judgment has always been that to renew from the dark days of 1983, Labour needs a quantum leap to become a serious party of government again' (Blair, 1995h, p. 19). Blair was more explicit about this 'leap' when he stated: 'With Neil Kinnock's election as leader we began a long march of renewal. That project was taken forward by John Smith. We owe it to them both...to finish the journey' (Blair cited in Blair, 1996c, p. 3).

While Blair apparently saw both Kinnock and Smith as instrumental in the renewal of the Labour Party, neither predecessor appeared to suggest that this might have been connected to a subsequent, wider, renewal of the country at large. Indeed, *renewal* was apparently not referred to outside above applications in the context of Party development, suggesting that the concept here was in keeping with other early applications in alluding simply to reinvigoration or revival, rather than broader change as such. However, for Blair, Party and national renewal were intrinsically linked. Prior to becoming leader, he stated: 'The project of renewal for Labour mirrors that for Britain. What the country wants is what Labour needs' (Blair, 1993d, p. 11). A sign of this emphasis on Party and national renewal was evident in Blair's leadership Election Statement, titled 'Change and National Renewal' (see Blair, 1996c, p. 3). This theme culminated with the adoption of a slogan that presented Party and national renewal as mutually inclusive. Blair explained: 'The phrase New Labour New Britain...describes where we are in British politics today. It embodies a concept of national renewal led by a renewed Labour Party' (Blair, 1995a, p. 12). It is therefore clear that for Blair, unlike for Kinnock or Smith, the renewal of the Labour Party was not simply framed in terms of Party fortunes, but as a necessary precursor for replicating a similar change to Britain as a whole.

Features of national renewal

Labour's repeated purpose of national renewal was a broad aim, involving a variety of different elements. On a number of occasions, Blair spelt out precisely what it entailed: 'Our task now is nothing less than national renewal, rebuilding our country as a strong and active civil society backing up the efforts of individuals within it. That requires economic renewal, social renewal and political renewal' (Blair, 1995a, p. 16).

Economic renewal was referred to explicitly in *Rebuilding the Economy*, Labour's first wide-ranging statement of economic intent with Blair as leader. Referring to Britain under the Conservatives, it asserted: 'Instead of the national economic renewal we need, the British economy is suffering from long-term national economic decline' (Labour Party, 1994c, p. 5). Similarly, the next major document on economic policy, *A New Economic Future for Britain*, referred to 'the renewal of Britain's economic potential' and asserted that 'a policy for national economic renewal must mean enhancing individual economic potential as the route to rebuilding the industrial base' (Labour Party, 1995a, p. 6). Even relatively general output at times made reference to economic renewal, such as *New Labour, New Life for Britain*, which stated: 'Art, sport and leisure industries are vital to our quality of life and the renewal of our economy' (Labour Party, 1996i, p. 25). The emphasis that the Party placed on the idea of economic renewal at this time was evinced by the title of Brown's speech to the 1995 Party conference. Under the banner of 'Debate on economic renewal', Brown opened with the statement: 'We meet here today...united in our resolve to renew this country' (Brown, 1995, p. 8). Furthermore, Blair's speech to the special conference on Labour's constitution alluded to one aspect of what the Party meant by economic renewal when he said: 'Our task now is...economic renewal, so that wealth may be in the hands of the many and not the few' (Blair, 1995e, p. 292).

During the Labour Party's time in Opposition, alongside the perennial critique that the Conservatives were badly mishandling the national economy, there was a repeated claim made that this had manifest social implications. Of course, such a connection between the social and the economic could be seen as fundamental to the heritage of left-wing perspectives in general. Thus, it was unsurprising that linked to the need for an economic renaissance was a social regeneration. This was made explicit by Brown in his speech to the 1995 Party conference, in which he referred to capital 'with one aim, to rebuild and renew the social and economic fabric of our country' (Brown, 1995, p. 10). Blair was equally forthright in his association of the two, when he talked of the need for 'social renewal, so that the evils of poverty and squalor are banished for good' (Blair, 1995e, p. 292). The problem of economic deprivation and its potential social implications was approached from a different perspective in *Jobs and Social*

Justice: 'We must replace the passivity of unemployment with new initiatives so that the unemployed are engaged full-time...in temporary work or in the renewal of the social and physical environment in their localities' (Labour Party, 1994a, p. 21). It could therefore be seen that, in highlighting the social ills the Party saw as symptomatic of the Conservatives' approach to economics and society, Labour outlined a clear need for renewing the social constitution of Britain.

The socio-economic problems perceived by the Labour party in Opposition were framed not just as products of misguided ideological dogma, however, but of the flawed mechanics of the political process through which policies were constructed and implemented. Consequently, along with the need to galvanise Britain's 'social and economic fabric' as alluded to by Brown, Labour also asserted in *Renewing Democracy, Rebuilding Communities* that the Party's proposed policies would 'contribute to the much-needed renewal of the democratic fabric of our society' (Labour Party, 1995d, p. 5). This link between the economic, social and political spheres was explicitly framed as Blair lamented: 'The trust that people had in government fifty years ago no longer exists, which is why political renewal is integral to economic and social renewal' (Blair, 1996b, p. 14). The specific urgency for political restitution in Britain was earlier outlined by Blair, as he referred to the need to 'renew the way we govern ourselves, our outdated and decrepit constitution that now contains the worst features of the centralising tendency of government', asserting later that this meant that 'Labour's ambitions for national renewal...require a new relationship between government and citizens – a genuine reinvention of government' (Blair, 1994b, p. 6; 1995h, p. 20). A prominent element of such a decentralisation was an increasing emphasis by the Party on 'local renewal'. This either took the more formal path of 'Renewing local democracy', or merely the aim to 'enable local people to be involved in the renewal and regeneration of their local community' (Labour Party, 1995d, p. 13; 1996e, p. 2). Indeed, the two were at times linked, as Blair claimed that 'many Labour local councils have...turned themselves into the catalysts of local renewal, working with the business sector, voluntary organisations and the local community' (Blair, 1996b, pp. 14-15). It can therefore be seen that Labour's expression of change in all areas of policy came to

be expressed with reference to *renewal*, a development that, as will be seen next, had a discernible impact on existing expressions of change.

Progress

The significant increase in emphasis on the concept of *renewal* by the Labour Party apparently had an impact on the usage of another concept representing change, that of *progress*. Generally speaking, *renewal* can be applied in similar contexts to *progress*, in that each concept is able to portray both a general vision of change as well as more narrow developments. While certainly not claiming, however, that there was a straightforward disposal of *progress* as a concept by Labour under Blair, it is nevertheless suggested that one feature of the proliferation of references to *renewal* was the way in which the concept was often applied in contexts where previously *progress* had been used. As such, *progress*, like *renewal*, was often articulated in a relatively non-specific sense, alluded to without explicit qualification of what this might entail, even when referring to relatively specific developments, such as economic or political progress, as opposed to progress of the country more generally. Equally, as with *renewal*, this was less problematic than was the case with other concepts, given the very nature of *progress* and its tendency to be applied almost as a guiding compass (albeit with significantly more ideological 'baggage' than *renewal*) determining the general course of policy proposals. Thus, its very use (or lack thereof) was significant in understanding Labour's conception of change, both for the Party and for the nation as a whole.

Perhaps the most effective approach to illustrating the way in which *renewal* and *progress* were seemingly used to represent both a conception of, and response to, change is by retracing the circumstances in which Labour used the concept of *renewal* in order to show that *progress* had previously been applied in such contexts. Thus, initial coverage is given to the Party's use of *progress* in a general sense, relating to a broader vision in conceptualising change. It is then shown how *progress* was applied to represent changes in the Labour's approach, articulating the Party's general development during its period in Opposition. Following this, the way in which the concept was deployed in the context of the country at large is considered, broken down

into more specific elements pertaining to the economic, social and political spheres. Interestingly, it is suggested that the use of *renewal* in lieu of *progress* was reinforced on a number of the occasions when Blair *did* use the latter concept – that is, it was often applied to represent politics of the past, rather than of the present or future. Thus, in this sense the concepts of *renewal* and *progress* were effectively juxtaposed by Blair in order to delineate the approach of Labour during his leadership tenure as distinct from that of the Party during those of his predecessors.

The vision of progress

In the same way in which Labour in the later stages applied the concept of *renewal* to conceptualise change in general, there was a manifest tendency early in the period to allude to *progress* as a broad vision – a guiding logic serving as the Party's *raison d'être*. In this sense it could be seen to represent not specific developments, but a general sense of the required change to society motivating most, if not all, left-of-centre political parties. One element of this was the affirmation of the section of society whose interests Labour was representing in its vision of a better nation. This was expressed in *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values*, which referred generally to 'progress in the rear ranks of society' as opposed to 'the rich advance guard' (Labour Party, 1988a, p. 7). Given its fundamental importance in the Labour Party's traditional perspective, *progress* was at times used as something of a barometer against which specific approaches could be measured. This was evident in Kinnock's rebuttal of the idea that those on the left could not be individualists: 'Frankly, I am amazed that any socialist can say that. Because to me there is no test for progress *other* than its impact on the individual' (Kinnock, 1988, p. 63). *Agenda for change*, meanwhile, made numerous references to the concept of *progress*, typical of which was the assertion that the 'Labour Party has always been the party of progress in Britain' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3). It was in this document that the most explicit articulation of *progress* as a representation of necessary change could be found. For example, reference was made to the fact that 'Labour was born out of the struggle for progress and change', while it was added shortly afterwards that 'we know that there must be progress and change if people are to have real choice and real opportunities' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3). On

such occasions, *progress* was explicitly linked with 'change' in the same way that *renewal* was with Blair as leader.

Party and country moving forward

At the end of the 1980s and the start of the 1990s, the Party was in increasingly good heart, as was the case under Blair in the mid-1990s. Much of this was due, in each case, to the way in which the respective Party leaders felt that the Party was developing under their guidance; yet, while for Blair, as was shown above, this development articulated as *renewal*, for Kinnock it was expressed as *progress*. This was evident in the opening lines of the address by Kinnock to the 1989 Labour conference: 'We meet in this conference in the spirit of progress; we meet in a spirit of confidence'. Such a sentiment was replicated at the end of the speech, with a note of warning: 'It is not an empty claim that this conference is one of progress, is one indeed of celebration, not one of relaxation or of complacency' (Kinnock, 1989, p. 57, p. 62). Kinnock's application of *progress* to describe the Party's development was replicated in his speech to the Labour conference the following year too, in which he stated that 'we meet in this conference in strength and in the confidence that progress and advance bring to us' (Kinnock, 1990, p. 127). Furthermore, Kinnock's appraisal of Labour's fortunes was repeated a third year in succession at the Party conference when he ended his address on a light-hearted note: 'How about if we get up and sing a song which is not only a great hymn of progress but also, in our case, is a forecast of an absolute racing certainty. "We shall overcome"' (Kinnock, 1991, p. 138). In equivalent speeches later in the period in question, Blair at no point made reference to the concept of *progress*, choosing instead to express Party change through the concept of *renewal* (see Blair, 1994f; 1995d; 1996g).

There were occasions on which Kinnock's discussion of Labour's progress was mirrored in the expression of the Party's vision for Britain at large in terms of national progress. For example, *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* warned: 'Decisions that benefit the country as a whole...cannot always be subject to a local veto, otherwise communal progress could be stifled' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 42). Similarly, discussing *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values* (the reaffirmation of the Party's general approach, at the 1988 Party conference), Hattersley outlined the problems with

Thatcherite principles with which the Conservative Party was governing the country: 'Greed is extolled as the engine of economic growth. Selfishness is glorified as an incentive to progress'. Shortly after this assertion, Hattersley framed the Labour Party alternative, which sought 'to ensure that our progress as a nation is not bought at the expense of any groups within society or within our world' (Hattersley, 1988, p. 15; see Labour Party, 1988a). Kinnock employed a similar argument two years later, in highlighting the problems caused to the nation by the Conservative government, and in suggesting the solution. Referring to the Conservatives' 'dogma', he stated: 'It is inefficient, it is anti-social, it neglects the environment, it disables the economy. That dogma is a barrier across the road to national progress'. Kinnock then added: 'Everyone now knows that the only way to clear away that block is to get rid of the government that forms the block across the road to progress' (Kinnock, 1990, p. 130).

As suggested by Kinnock's statement regarding the way in which the Conservatives' approach 'disables the economy', it was apparent that a predominant element of the Party's conception of *progress* for the country as a whole concerned Britain's economic development. The notion of economic progress was referred to on a number of occasions in the early years of the period in question. For example, *Opportunity Britain* asserted: 'Because we know that economic progress must take account of environmental responsibilities, the next Labour government will embrace the goal of sustainable development' (Labour Party, 1991e, p. 21). This was echoed in *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again*, which stated: 'Economic progress goes hand in hand with environmental responsibility' (Labour Party, 1992d, p. 21). It is not just the economic progress of Britain that was discussed by the Labour Party early in the period, however; *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency* referred to the advancement of developing countries: 'As they progress towards greater prosperity, developing countries will provide new trading opportunities for Britain' (Labour Party, 1988b, p. 46). This sentiment was expressed again in *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*, which referred to 'the practical belief that economic progress in developing countries is an essential part of progress in the world community', a sentiment repeated in *Opportunity Britain* (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 84; 1991e, p. 57). There was later evidence of this conception of *progress* under Smith too, as he himself asserted in a

contribution to *Fabian Review*: 'For me, economic progress and social justice are intertwined and inseparable', before referring to the prospect of 'an era of economic progress and prosperity never seen before' (Smith, 1994, p. 4).

In the same sense that Conservative Party 'dogma' was blamed by Labour for impeding economic progress, a similar charge was levelled at the incumbent administration regarding Britain's social fortunes too. Kinnock suggested in his introduction to *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*: 'Mrs. Thatcher persists in trying to impose her free market dogmas on the rest of the EC, seeking to thwart every measure for social progress' (Kinnock in Labour Party, 1989a, p. 7). The following year Kinnock asserted, in his speech to the Party conference, that the Conservative government's failure to fulfil a promise regarding the introduction of community care was 'stock-in-trade of the government, especially when they have given undertakings to support social progress or to improve the quality of life and eventually find themselves faced with the demand to deliver' (Kinnock, 1990, p. 133). The motif of social progress was alluded to in John Smith's address to the following year's Labour conference, in which he said: 'I want us to build a society...which offers a new path of purpose and progress to the listless and disenchanted teenagers in our run-down housing estates and decayed city centres' (Smith, 1991, p. 30). This theme was continued when Smith himself became Party leader a year later. As shown above, the first comprehensive account of the Party's vision under Smith, *Agenda for Change*, started with a reminder of the Party's history: 'Labour was born out of the struggle for progress and change', followed by the assertion that this entailed 'a demand made by millions of working people to meet their aspirations for democratic rights and social justice' (Labour Party, 1992a, p. 3).

The reference to 'democratic rights' with regards to 'the struggle for progress' was indicative of the tendency at this stage to allude to political, as well as economic and social, progress. Such political progress was discussed at a number of levels. Regarding a specific policy, *It's Time for a Strong NHS* stated that 'we are determined to make substantial progress in implementing our [eye care] policy as quickly as possible' (Labour Party, 1992b, p. 2). Referring to policy more generally, at local level *Opportunity, Quality, Accountability* stated that the Party 'will approach local

government reorganisation in a spirit of flexibility. Where there is a clear local consensus progress can be brisk' (Labour Party, 1991f p. 15). Referring to a sub-national level, *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change* asserted, regarding the situation in Northern Ireland, that a specific element of the Anglo-Irish Agreement 'should not be allowed to constitute a veto on political progress' (Labour Party, 1989a, p. 58). At a supranational level, meanwhile, *Made in Britain* made reference to European integration: 'The steps we take to get out of recession must also be designed to lay foundations for steady progress within Europe' (Labour Party, 1991c, p. 5). Indeed, there was even discussion of political progress on a worldwide scale, as Kinnock discussed at some length during his speech to the 1991 Party conference the end of the Cold War. Regarding the United States' subsequent process of disarmament, Kinnock claimed that 'Britain must be part of that progress', echoing an assertion made to the Labour conference two years prior to this, relating to the process of change in Eastern Europe, that Labour wanted to be 'part of that progress, part of that momentum' (Kinnock, 1991, p. 137; 1989, p. 61). In a political, as well as economic and social context, then, *progress* was applied to represent the direction of change needed in the country at large.

Later applications

While the use of *renewal* in contexts where *progress* had previously been applied does not necessarily point to a wider decline in Labour's application of the concept, the way in which Blair himself *did* deploy the concept *progress* during the later stages of the period in fact goes some way to underline, rather than undermine, the developments documented. Specifically, in the same way that *renewal* was apparently deemed by Labour in the later stages to be more appropriate than *progress* in a number of situations, when the latter concept *was* applied it was often attached to past political developments, and thus carried a somewhat anachronistic connotation. For example, in one speech Blair stated that 'as a result of economic and social progress, government does not have the power over its citizens to enforce the change it wants' (Blair, 1995f, p. 213). Furthermore, a more recent, though nevertheless historical, point of reference was made when Blair referred to the way in which the 1970s Labour government

'consolidated progress in the fields of pensions...and women's rights' (Blair, 1995a, p. 9). Most unequivocal, however, was an assertion made by Blair in the introduction to *What Needs to Change*: 'In 1945, Labour was truly representative of the nation as a whole. In 1964, it summoned up a spirit of national progress. Today, I want the party to capture the spirit of national renewal' (Blair, 1996b, p. 4). Here, the concepts of *progress* and *renewal* were explicitly juxtaposed: the former represented a bygone journey in which the destination had already been reached; the latter alluded to a new destiny that Britain was still approaching.

This portrayal by Blair of *progress* as being somehow irrelevant, or anachronistic, was even clearer in references to 'progressive' policies or Labour as a 'progressive' party. The adjective of 'progressive' was often used to describe previous Labour incarnations rather than the contemporary Party led by Blair himself. In the Fabian Pamphlet *Let Us Face the Future*, Blair lauded the 1945 Labour administration's achievements, stating: 'Nor should we forget the role the party played in helping socialist and progressive forces around the world', adding that it 'was a government that was willing to draw on the resources of the whole progressive tradition' (Blair, 1995a, p. 7, p. 8). However, Blair went on to suggest that this tradition was no longer suitable for contemporary politics. Arguing that the Party's values had not changed, Blair added the important caveat: 'What have changed are the means of achieving these objectives. Those should and will cross the old boundaries between left and right, progressive and conservative' (Blair, 1995a, p. 14). It was thus made clear by Blair that the progressive tradition was seen as part of an outmoded cleavage along which contemporary politics could no longer be divided, as he delicately attempted to pay credit to the past Labour governments while distancing the Labour Party of the mid-1990s from a location within their broad approach. This emphasis on past Labour incarnations as progressive was all the more apparent given that the Party under Kinnock and Smith made only extremely infrequent references to 'progressive' politics. This emphasised the fact that Blair's allusion to the progressive tradition served to juxtapose what was portrayed as the outdated approach of previous Labour generations, with his own thoroughly modern agenda appropriate for such a fundamentally changed external context.

Conclusion

It has been shown in the three conceptual analyses that there was evidence of conceptual change with regard to the concepts of *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress*, yet of a different kind to that documented in the previous two chapters. Rather than relating to transformations in the meaning of concepts already in use, the conceptual transformation relating to the changing context concerns the effective introduction of two concepts into the Party lexicon, and the relative marginalisation of a third. As such, this is potentially a more straightforward facet of conceptual change to identify; the very use (or lack thereof), rather than specific meaning, of the concepts under scrutiny is itself evidence of transformation. In cases of such conceptual change, the important issue is less the meaning of the concept, than the reason for its inclusion (or marginalisation), and the purpose this serves in a broader context. While this is demonstrably a different case of conceptual change to that concerning the questions of equality and fraternity, the same important qualifications apply. The changes did not occur at a single point in the period: indeed, this is more apparent here than in the previous two chapters, whereby the very use, rather than specific meaning, of a concept is significant. Rather, this change occurred around 1994, following the death of Smith and the increased prominence within the Party of Blair and Brown that followed. The concepts of *globalisation* and *renewal* were evident on occasions prior to this point, but were only really embraced after it, resulting in a discernible proliferation in their use.

Equally, the concept of *progress* was manifestly still a feature of the Party's lexicon in the later stages of the period. However, it was subject to significantly less emphasis, with *renewal* applied in many of the contexts in which *progress* had previously been used. This ensured that its application became relatively marginalised, a fact further suggested by the contexts in which the concept was applied later on in the period. It would, of course, be fallacious to suggest that there was a case of the concept of *renewal* simply replacing the concept of *progress* in the output of the Labour Party during the later stages of the period. For one thing, the two concepts cannot be said to carry precisely the same meaning, and in a significant number of contexts, it would be nonsensical to attempt to replace one with the other. Furthermore, in some documents and speeches, both the concepts were applied, thus debunking an assumption that the

use of one necessarily precluded that of the other. Nevertheless, it is equally undeniable that, as illustrated above, the two concepts *were* used in a similar contexts: to express a broad vision by representing change in general and acting as a compass broadly outlining the desired direction of this; and to specifically chart the changing fortunes of the Labour Party, and extrapolating this to potential changes in Britain at large. Thus, *renewal* and *progress* were at different times applied to represent change, both in response to contextual transformation, and informing subsequent transitions required across the country at large. The different conceptions of this contextual transformation at the beginning and end of the period in question ensured that, where *progress* initially sufficed as a diagnosis of – and prescription for – change, in the latter stages this was superseded by the concept of *renewal*.

In the same way in which changes to the concepts examined in the previous two chapters occurred not incidentally but as a result of their interaction with one another, this principle was evident with the concepts of *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress*. In this case, interaction was less explicit (in the sense of the concepts' application directly alongside one another) and more by implication. Specifically, the extent to which each concept was used with increased frequency, or was subject to a relative dearth of application, was largely dependent upon the articulation of the other two concepts. The introduction of *globalisation* into the Party's approach, and the role this was to play in conceptualising change and alluding to a requisite reaction, ensured that a further concept to represent such a response was necessary. This role was fulfilled by *renewal*, which was used to conceptualise the specific response required by the contextual changes represented by *globalisation*. Thus, the introduction into the Party's lexicon of *globalisation* had in a sense informed this emphasis on *renewal*. Equally, the use of *renewal* in this way to represent the requisite direction of the Party in response to *globalisation* apparently had a profound effect on the concept of *progress* within Labour's conceptual usage. It was used in a number of contexts – both general and specific – in which *progress* had previously been applied, suggesting that the introduction of *renewal* into Labour's lexicon, while certainly not replacing or precluding the use of *progress*, nevertheless impacted on its application in a discernible way.

Given the nature of the conceptual change evident here, more appropriate than an exposition of specific internal changes to the three concepts is an attempt to unpack the logic of the purpose served by change in frequency of their application. The introduction of *globalisation* both emphasised change and constructed a specific narrative concerning the changing contemporary world, going far beyond previous accounts of contextual change. Early conceptions of change understood it as significant – sufficiently so to require an updating of the way the Party framed its approach to successfully fit the changed backdrop. Yet the conception of change as global in nature and impact later in the period ensured that a number of features of this transformation were identified and highlighted: firstly, the change was deemed to be coherent and consistent, rather than piecemeal and patchy; furthermore, the change was presented as an all-encompassing force, sociological in nature by defining the age in which we live; following on from this, the change was ascribed an intensity and resonance – and most importantly, a permanence – therefore ensuring that constraints were more strict, and resistance more futile than previously thought. Inherent in such an account of contextual change was an unequivocal assertion that a response was necessary by political parties to accommodate changes of such impact and magnitude; furthermore, there was also an intrinsic prescription for the type of political response that was appropriate. Specifically, the nature of the response needed to take the changes as a fundamental starting point from which subsequent directions were plotted. Consequently, it needed to comprehend the gravity, novelty and permanence of the changes by charting a new course, or looking at familiar issues in new ways. Furthermore, it is logical that an approach that sought to emphasise these developments with such vigour should have attempted to show that these were responses which could be beneficial, lest the Party have adopted a completely fatalistic approach verging on scare-mongering.

As has been suggested, the nature of this response to contextual change was alluded to at different times in the period with the concepts of *renewal* and *progress*. Specifically, both represented the direction in which change – in terms of the approach of the Party and the country at large – took place, in that they were indicative of the ends of a certain process of transformation. In this sense, *progress* was relatively linear – it alluded to change along a fixed path, perhaps a pre-determined, acknowledged

outcome to which some distance had already been travelled. This was certainly true when it was applied explicitly in the sense of 'progress towards'; yet it was also true in a more abstract sense, in the application merely of 'progress' as an aim in its own right. So although the concept alluded to a process of change, particularly highlighted when juxtaposed with notions of reaction or conservatism, it did so in a peculiarly traditional sense, constructing boundaries within which this change could and should occur, limiting it at least to a familiar, if not a well-trodden, route. Thus, when constructing a radical account of contextual change as conceptualised by *globalisation*, a response represented by the concept of *progress* appeared increasingly unsuitable.

In comparison to *progress*, the concept of *renewal* carried a more dynamic inference. If the former represented a transformation along an existing path, the latter epitomised a more radical change, a revitalisation that entailed a transition to a new path. The novelty of contextual change as conceptualised by *globalisation* necessitated a response that was equally novel: traditional approaches were no longer deemed suitable in such a transformed context. Thus, the Party could only move forward by changing, rather than advancing along, its existing course. Of course, it was important for continued identity and support that this new path did not appear to undermine previously agreed aims and values; consequently, the transition to a path not yet travelled required not a change in the fundamental questions addressed, but a modified way of addressing them. It is in this sense that *renewal* carried a further appeal to the Party in framing its approach: it alluded to a change that, while manifestly more extreme and far-reaching than *progress*, nevertheless still constituted an evolutionary development. As such, it still articulated a process, one that changed the means rather than the ends, and as such served the crucial role of preventing the alienation of Labour's traditional framework of support in doing so.

It can be seen, therefore, that the concepts of *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress* illustrate the importance of ideas throughout the period in question regarding the broader context within which general political approaches must be framed, and the impact of changes to this. The notion of a changing context was prominent in Labour's approach during the period in question; there was a sense that it was at the forefront of the Party's logic, manifested in the way it framed such a changing context in outlining

major statements of policy. At all times, then, Labour's approach between 1987 and 1997 was apparently founded on specific ideas regarding the policy-making context, the way this had changed and the way it was likely to continue to change in the future. Furthermore, it was clear that this ideational conception of the external context was presented not as a distant, philosophical, backdrop, but as something that had an immediate and irrevocable impact on the Party's general approach both at that stage and in the future. This conception evolved as the period progressed, from one of significant, to epoch-making, change; consequently, the way Labour framed its general approach in light of this conception itself evolved, from a framing of future Party direction that was located at the very edges of its existing approach, to one which suggested that a new course needed to be plotted in order to pursue existing goals. As such, founded on the Party's ideas regarding the external context were related ideas with respect to precisely how this would affect its existing policy approach and what actions needed to be taken to ensure that future policy would be suitable for, and successful in, this changing environment.

6. Analysis

Introduction

The preceding three chapters have sought to show the way in which conceptual usage in the Labour Party's policy documents, and prominent speeches and papers written by its leading members, changed between 1987 and 1997. In doing so, it has been suggested that such change can be identified as evidence of ideational development, or transformation, during this time. Such a connection between concepts and ideas was framed in the second chapter, in which it was asserted that conceptual usage can be understood to represent the expression of political ideas. Furthermore, the connection between language and politics, at the heart of conceptual approaches, has been shown to indicate that a conceptual – and therefore ideational – transformation must constitute an intrinsic feature of political change. This chapter revisits such theoretical positions in light of the conceptual analyses of the Labour Party in the decade from 1987, specifically applying the changes documented both to the various different conceptual theories articulated, and the general approach to concepts and ideas that unite these different accounts. It aims to link explicitly the theoretical logic with the empirical findings, in order illustrate the way in which conceptual analysis is an appropriate method to trace ideational change and identify its presence in wider political change. The hope is that doing so will provide a more rounded account of Labour's transformation in emphasising the importance of ideas in the Party's changing political approach, something that has been under-represented in the literature on the subject.

The first section offers a brief summary of the main findings of the three conceptual chapters, showing how the usage of the respective concepts addressing the questions of equality, fraternity and contextual change evolved during the ten years in question. These findings are then related to the specific conceptual theories discussed in the second chapter. Thus, each group of concepts is first considered in respect of James Farr's theory of conceptual change, looking at the wider political context behind these changes, and the specific contradictions that might have prompted such transformations. Following this, the changes are held up to Michael Freeden's theory of the very process of conceptual change. In each case the internal dynamics of such transformations,

entailing the marginalisation of some elements of a concept, and the emphasis or promotion of others, is considered to offer an account of the process undergone by the concepts in their changing usage by the Party. Finally, the framework of conceptual change as conceived both by Quentin Skinner and John Pocock is revisited, specifically with regard to the evolutionary nature of the transformations documented and the way in which their respective theories suggest that change must necessarily be thus. Looking once again at the various theories in light of the changes identified in the Labour Party's usage further emphasises the differences in their respective approaches to conceptual change, its nature and dynamics, highlighting the fact that each offers a specific insight into Labour's changing conceptual usage during the period. Nevertheless, the third section seeks to illustrate the way in which each theory deems conceptual change to be always present in, and therefore a part of, political change. It is this notion, in conjunction with the understanding that concepts represent the expression of ideas, which serves to identify an ideational evolution present in the Labour Party's transformation.

The Labour Party's conceptual change

The conceptual usage of the Labour Party examined in the previous three chapters concerned the way the Party addressed the important political questions of equality, fraternity, and the wider context within which these and other issues are to be pursued. The change in the Party's approach to egalitarian measures was evident in a transformation common to the three concepts used to address this question. In the cases of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*, there was a more specific focus evident in the concepts' articulation from the mid-1990s, as their respective meanings became increasingly economic in emphasis. Earlier applications were fairly general and non-prescriptive, with a connection in each case with freedom and a relatively individual perspective that drew heavily on notions of personal growth and self-development. Subsequent applications, however, were more tapered, with a noticeable switch to more narrowly economic applications. This manifested itself in a close connection with employment, and a focus more at the national, rather than individual, level, which incorporated the notion of *responsibility* to this broader interest. The way in which each

concept's application became increasingly focused in this way during the period in question served to reinforce a similar evolution in the other two concepts, as early interaction with one another in a relatively general sense gave way in later years to concurrent use in which both concepts were applied in a specifically economic sense.

In contrast to the Party's approach to equality, the changing way Labour addressed the question of fraternity saw a very different transformation in the concepts involved. Rather than an increasingly economic conception apparently at the expense of previous applications, *community*, *responsibility* and *family* were all subject to a broadening in their articulation, whereby applications seen at the start of the period remained throughout, yet were joined by hitherto unseen applications during Blair's tenure as leader. Specifically, the concepts were all subject to an increased social element: early applications seemed to be framed from a largely individual perspective, relating for example to furthering the individual's interests, or duty to oneself; subsequent applications, however, incorporated a far more communal element, such as furthering the interests of the wider collective, duty to others and an increased socialising function. Encapsulated in these applications was a moral dimension seen for the first time in all three concepts' articulation in the later stages of the period. As with equality, the concepts addressing the question of fraternity were subject to frequent interaction with one another, which served to accentuate the changes in their application. The increasingly social and moral articulation of each concept instilled a similar expression in the other two concepts when used in conjunction them.

The concepts deployed to address the issue of how the changing context, and its impact on policy direction, was to be conceptualised were subject to a different type of conceptual change than those relating to equality and fraternity. Rather than entailing a change in the application of concepts already in use, this concerned the increasing prominence in Labour's language of *globalisation* and *renewal*, and the relative marginalisation of *progress* as a concept. Early in the period, the Party conceived of a significantly changing external context, yet did not articulate this as *globalisation* until 1992, and particularly from 1994 with Blair as leader, in spite of the concept being in currency prior to this. Meanwhile, the early years of the period saw the Party's approach to its own direction, and that of the country as a whole, as represented by *progress*; later

on in the period, both increasingly came to be represented by *renewal*. More significant perhaps than the previous two groups of concepts was the apparent relationship between the three concepts: the conception of contextual change as *globalisation* appears to have required the use of *renewal* to frame the Party's general approach as a response to this. Equally, the concept of *progress* became less apt as an outline for Labour's trajectory in the light of such a notion of change.

Theories of conceptual change revisited

It is clear, then, that the Labour Party's conceptual usage changed during the period in question. This ensured that the way in which it addressed the questions of equality, fraternity and contextual change were informed by different conceptions of important political concepts by 1997 than was the case in 1987. However, for the significance of these changes to be understood with regard to the relevance of ideas to the Party's political change during this period, it is necessary to return to the conceptual theories discussed earlier in the study and to reconsider the empirical findings in light of these. These theories each constitute unique approaches which, while not necessarily incongruent with one another, tell us something specific about the Labour Party's conceptual change: Farr frames the political and strategic motivations for this change; Freedon offers insights into the precise content of the change; and the shared contextualism of Pocock and Skinner offers an explanation for the evolutionary nature of this transformation. Significantly, each theory is relevant to the primary aim of this research – that of indicating the importance of ideas to political change – given the theoretical foundation on which they are founded: that language is politically constituted and politics is linguistically constituted. This subsequently ensures that political change must be accompanied by conceptual, and therefore ideational, transformation.

Farr's occasions of conceptual change

The theoretical work of James Farr offers an interpretation of the political context of the Labour Party's conceptual transformation (Farr, 1988; 1989). As shown in the second chapter, Farr provides an account that offers strategic considerations regarding the

ideologist's political approach as the catalyst for conceptual change, therefore framing a fairly pragmatic account of this change. The starting point for Farr's analysis is the understanding that 'our concepts and beliefs and actions and practices go together and change together. To understand conceptual change is in large part to understand political change and vice versa' (Farr, 1989, pp. 24-5). From this understanding of 'the political constitution of language', Farr turns his attention to the 'political designs of individuals or groups who change their concepts in order to solve problems and remove contradictions' (Farr, 1989, p. 26). In this way, he presents as the basic mechanism of conceptual change a general model of solving political problems: these are founded in contradictions in or between the conceptually-constituted beliefs, actions and practices of a political approach. Such problems, Farr believes, are not found in the simultaneous profession of directly incompatible beliefs as much as in the extended implications or unintended consequences of multiple principles. These contradictions are brought to light by criticism, either from external sources or from the ideologist himself; the response to this criticism, Farr believes, leads to the contradictions being resolved by changes in beliefs, which itself results in the transformation of their constitutive concepts (Farr, 1989). As was suggested in the second chapter of this study, while Farr is offering a manifestly strategic account of change that centres on the realisation of the individual ideologist's political designs, because such contradictions are held between ideas, or beliefs, the response to criticism of these and the resultant changes made – changes that reveal themselves conceptually – can nevertheless be understood to be the manifestation of ideational considerations.

Labour's changing approach to the question of equality has been shown to be expressed conceptually in the changing application of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*. Farr's theory would suggest that such conceptual change must have been prompted by a contradiction in the broader political approach of the ideologist. This contradiction appears to have concerned the changing relationship between social justice and economic efficiency. The prioritisation of efficiency over justice as the period progressed was at odds with an approach to equality framed by early applications of the three concepts, which emphasised individual fulfilment and development. Criticism of this incongruity was brought to light by both opponents of the Party and its own

modernising faction: the former sought to suggest that such a pursuit of egalitarian ends would cost the country excessive amounts in taxation; the latter sought to highlight the fact that framing an egalitarian approach with reference to a non-prescriptive, general application of the concepts of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* was no longer workable with the increased emphasis on national efficiency necessitated by fundamental changes to the external context. Consequently, changes in the way in which the Party conceived its egalitarian approach, manifested in an increasingly focused economic articulation of the three concepts, led to the resolution of such a contradiction: a prioritisation of efficiency over justice was coupled with an approach to equality expressed in more economic terms with the later articulation of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*.

The Party's changing approach to fraternity was apparently informed in the latter stages of the period by a diagnosis of Britain's problems being caused – or at least exacerbated – by an overly individualistic, perhaps atomistic, culture. This social fragmentation was presented as partly due to the policies of the Conservative governments of the 1980s and 1990s, and partly as a symptom of broader social and economic change in Britain and elsewhere, a predicament not helped by the relative under-representation of social and moral issues by the Labour Party itself during the tenures of previous Party leaders. The contradiction, which became more apparent as this reading of contemporary Britain became increasingly entrenched in the Party's approach, was that a lack of emphasis on the social and moral facets of modern life, expressed through fairly individual and asocial conceptions of *community*, *responsibility* and *family*, was not compatible with this belief in the disintegration of Britain, its causes and its effects. Criticism in this respect was overwhelmingly offered by the Party itself – specifically by Tony Blair, influenced by various strands of communitarian thought – in repeatedly asserting that conceiving of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* in the existing way, or indeed neglecting such concerns altogether, was not compatible with a prescription of fostering increased interdependence and socialising functions to help remedy the modern British malaise. As such, in the output of Blair specifically, and the Labour Party in general, redress of this inconsistency entailed a modification of the way fraternity was framed, as manifested in a broadening of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* to incorporate and

emphasise this important social and moral element. The result was that, by the later stages of the period in question, an increased focus on the importance of successful and fruitful social existence for the country's fortunes (both social and economic) was coupled with an approach to fraternity expressed through the increasingly social, and at times moral, articulation of these three concepts.

The backdrop of a fundamentally changed world had extended consequences for the way in which questions of equality and fraternity were addressed by Labour's conceptual usage, and was itself subject to explicit articulation in the Party's approach to the issue of contextual change. The contention was that the contemporary world had undergone such a remarkable change that it required a major reconsideration of the way specific political questions were addressed and broader political approaches framed. As such, the contradictory element in the Party's approach at the start of the period seems to have been that such a transformed external context was incompatible with the existing Party trajectory. Such a contradiction was identified by the Party modernisers themselves, whose critique entailed a conception of contextual change as the unprecedented and irreversible *globalisation*, which was shown to sit uneasily next to existing methods that were presented as increasingly impotent and outmoded. Despite the resolution of this contradiction essentially requiring something as significant as an overhaul of the Party's general policy approach, in terms of its presentation in Party rhetoric it was achieved more swiftly, neatly and palatably by a relative marginalisation of *progress*, and increased emphasis on *renewal*, in representing the compass for Labour's future trajectory. As such, a conception of change as *globalisation* was coupled with a response by the Party that was equally novel in nature, and thus more appropriate than a path along existing lines originally tailored within a very different external context.

Freeden's process of conceptual change

The work of Michael Freeden on concepts and ideologies is concerned not with the occasions of conceptual change, but the precise way in which this process might occur (Freeden, 1994; 1996). As such, Freeden's account offers an insight into the specific content of conceptual change. His approach is founded on the notion that the structures

of concepts are composed of various organised features, much in the same way that ideologies themselves are composed of organised concepts. Freedden initially presents a picture of an individual concept's internal structure: at its heart is an ineliminable component, an empirically, rather than logically, crucial element without which the concept would lose all meaning derived from understood usage. Providing the concept with specific meaning and content are various features that occupy 'idea-environments'. These features are deemed to be 'quasi-contingent' given that they may be dispensable individually but nevertheless occupy categories that are not. Such features can be selected or deselected from this environment by the process of logical and cultural adjacency, with changes to the components in this way serving to alter the meaning of the concept as a whole. Given the fundamental mutability of concepts and their meanings, the only barometer of success in the process of change is the test of acceptability of a certain number of users. Freedden then draws a parallel between the structure of concepts and those of wider ideologies, in that he conceives of the latter as composed of organised concepts, with contingent ones crucial for content and meaning, and peripheral ones simply providing a specific relevance. While these peripheral concepts might themselves not be central to the ideology, the categories that they occupy certainly are (Freedden, 1994). Using Freedden's approach, it is therefore possible to look at both the internal changes to concepts that have transformed during the period, and the logic behind those that have emerged or become marginalised from the Party's lexicon and thus from its approach in general.

As stated above, the concepts applied in the Party's approach to equality were all subject to an increased economic focus as the period in question progressed. In terms of Freedden's theory of conceptual morphology, this entailed the maintaining of a central, ineliminable feature, accompanied by an increasingly tapered collection of quasi-contingent features. In the case of *opportunity*, this central feature was (for want of a single word) the notion of the chance to do something; without this, the concept would lose all understood meaning. However, it was the contingent features that gave this core any real meaning and context: early in the period, such features included fulfilment, development, influence, participation, education and employment. This ensured that applications were fairly general, accentuated by the concept's interaction

with freedom. Later in the period a number of such features were effectively marginalised, as the focus became increasing economic and concerned with employment specifically, as well as related features such as prosperity and poverty. This impacted on existing features such as education to provide a more specifically work-related articulation, exacerbated by an interaction with *responsibility*. A similar change could be seen with the concept of *potential*: the ineliminable feature, a notion of possible capability, was supplemented in the early stages by features such as personal growth, development, freedom, education and the individual; in the later years it seemed many of these had been lost with the increasing prominence of features such as the economy, an economic conception of education, and the nation. With regard to the concept of *justice*, the key feature when expressed in relation to equality concerned a sense of fairness in how society's resources are earned and distributed. In a clear case of an increasingly employment-centric articulation, early references drew on features such as employment, participation, influence, freedom and *opportunity*. The subsequent conception of *justice*, meanwhile, saw the omission of a number of these features, focusing instead on employment, a work-centred application of *opportunity*, and the related feature of stakeholding.

In contrast, all three concepts relating to the question of fraternity saw a broadening of application as the period progressed. As such, existing features remained throughout, yet were joined in subsequent years by those hitherto unseen. The concept of *community* had as its ineliminable feature (once again for want of a better word or phrase) the expression of the individual as part of a wider collective. Early applications carried a specific content with the inclusion of features such as the individual interest, rights and society. All these were present in applications later in the period, yet were joined by features such as *responsibility*, the collective interest, socialisation and locality, as the concept kept its individual element but also gained a significant social facet too. With respect to the concept of *responsibility* itself, its central feature of the duty of or to someone or something was initially supplemented in the main by features of government and family early in the period. These features were subsequently joined by a more complex individual element, drawing on economic, social and moral facets, bound together by the related features of citizenship and stakeholding. Finally, the

concept of *family* had at its centre a notion of the biological and domestic collective. In the early stages of the period, the concept was largely expressed politically by linking this with a notion of the economic, reinforced by features such as poverty and prosperity. Later in the period these features, still significant, were supplemented by that of socialisation, manifested in greater interaction with the concepts of *community* and *responsibility*. In all three cases, therefore, the structure of the concept evolved to incorporate a significant social element not seen, or at least not prominent, in earlier applications.

As suggested throughout this research, the third group of concepts – *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress* – was subject to a different type of conceptual change, which saw them introduced or marginalised from the Party lexicon rather than changing in meaning. This therefore related to the element of Freedden's theory which asserts that whole concepts themselves are organised (much in the same way that their own constituent features are) to compose a broader ideology or political approach. As Freedden asserts: 'So far we have been discussing the internal morphology of a single concept. Ideologies, however, are combinations of political concepts organized in a particular way' (Freedden, 1994, p. 155). Given that the structure of the individual concept is deemed by Freedden to resemble something of a microcosm of the broader approach or ideology, the concepts in this instance serve the purpose fulfilled by the internal features within individual concepts seen with the previous two groups. As such, an approach gains relevance by having specific categories such as equality and fraternity filled by peripheral concepts. A further category would concern the conception of the external context within which a party is operating, along with the related issue of its overall political approach in response to this.

In the case of Labour, this last category was filled by concepts relating to change, indicating that the Party understood that it was operating in a time of significant transformation. However, this was expressed in the early stages by references to the transformation of economic basis of society, significant economic shifts, or simply to change itself. Later in the period, while such terms were undoubtedly used, this was done in elaborating the Party's overwhelming conceptualisation of change, that of *globalisation*. A related category is that of Labour's general approach in response to

such change – this was necessary to give the Party an overall logic and direction in answering specific political questions. Equally, it also served as an indication of the direction in which Labour wished to take the country as whole. Early in the period, this category was addressed primarily by the concept of *progress*, which grounded the Party's overall approach in its own tradition, and provided it with a familiar identity as a force for (equally familiar) social change. This category, apparently in response to the transformed conception of change in the previous category expressed through an application of *globalisation*, was subsequently occupied by the concept of *renewal*. This served to offer the Party as a whole a new identity and sense of purpose in addressing specific political questions, something required by its changing conception of the external context.

Pocock, Skinner and the framework of change

The historical approaches of both Pocock and Skinner lead them to emphasise the linguistic context of conceptual usage and change. As such, they assert the importance of understanding the language of any society at a given point as founded on a wider framework, to which all users must subscribe. In doing so, the two theorists offer a potential insight into the nature of Labour's conceptual change. The work of Pocock conceives of organising concepts that make up paradigms governing political speech (Pocock, 1972a; 1972b). It is through such concepts that a society articulates its political affairs, and breaking free of these is not really possible if an actor is to be comprehended by the community within which he is writing or speaking. Pocock's account is significantly more structuralist than that of Skinner, who understands such structural constraints yet affords the agent the ability to manipulate language to his own ends, albeit within conventional linguistic usage (Skinner, 1988, 1989). Skinner asserts that the agent is able to do so by using certain terms that not only describe a given action or state of affairs, but evaluate it in a certain way, either commending it or condemning it (Skinner, 1988). As such, the two theorists are framing accounts with very different implications regarding the connection between thought and action, and the potential for conceptual innovation. Given both the specific differences between the approaches of Pocock and Skinner, and the important shared foundation of their work, it

is possible to apply Labour's conceptual changes to their respective theories in (at least) two ways, one relating specifically to Skinner's work and the other to the more general shared elements of linguistic contextualism.

The first element, that of Skinner's evaluative-descriptive terms, can be seen in a number of specific cases of conceptual change by the Labour Party during the period in question, whereby the use of a concept changed from serving a primarily descriptive purpose, to an evaluative role alongside this. Of course, the nature of all the concepts studied – perhaps part of their role as important (Pocock might say 'organising') political concepts – ensured that they all carried a broadly positive intonation: it is hard to imagine anyone explicitly suggesting that they stand *against* any of them in principle. Consequently, as suggested in the conceptual analyses themselves, each term was at times applied in a relatively vague or banal manner, to provide sanguinity to a given phrase or sentence. This could be seen particularly with concepts such as *opportunity*, *potential* and *community*, whereby little qualification was provided in offering a specific meaning other than suggesting that the Party supported these, and sought to increase or foster them. Equally, *justice* was often used as a rationale for other concepts, with little elaboration to provide anything more than simply a positive endorsement.

With other concepts, however, there was a definite sense of transition, with previous uses offering a largely descriptive or neutral articulation being replaced by later applications that carried an intrinsic evaluation. For example, early usage of *family* presented it as an economic unit in a largely descriptive manner which at times lapsed into statistics and analogies to businesses; later in the period the concept became entrenched in the Party's value system, a fundamentally positive institution, neglected in the past but crucial to the social well-being of the nation and in need of support and nurturing. Equally, early references to *responsibility* treated it as almost procedural in terms of natural duties, the fulfilment of which would be unquestioningly expected, be it in the form of state or ministerial remit, or that of the adult family member. Subsequent applications, however, once again placed *responsibility* as a headline value of the Party, moving beyond such an intuitive application, in championing individual duty to fellow citizens as necessary and, once again, important for the nation's social fabric. In terms of wider contextual change, too, there was evidence of this evaluative-

descriptive use of concepts: concerning the nature of change itself, external transformations were presented at the start of the period in a relatively matter-of-fact manner – they were undoubtedly occurring and clearly significant and required a response from the Party. Once this change was expressed as *globalisation*, however, not only was it framed as occurring and important, it was presented as exciting (more than forbidding) and a positive sign of changing times. The responses to this change were equally subjective: *renewal* moved from a mere description, to a positive endorsement, of change, replicated with reference to both the Party and the country as a whole as a sign of a renaissance to be embraced. Equally, *progress* was perhaps subject to an even greater change, from a description of movement along an existing path that was often projected as a positive emblem of the Party's tradition and motivation, to a less favourable presentation as an anachronistic direction in a changing world.

The feature of Skinner's work which is shared by the approach of Pocock too – and perhaps the defining characteristic of the Cambridge School's conceptual approach – is that of a linguistic framework to which all users of concepts are subject, and by which all are therefore constrained. Above all else, the most important consequence for conceptual change of such a framework theoretically relates to the nature of change. Specifically, it suggests that, given the importance of subscription to this linguistic context for understanding by others, and the limiting impact this has on how one uses a concept, changes in conceptual usage must necessarily be incremental lest they be largely nonsensical. Indeed, one could think in terms of Freeden's theory of the importance of the ineliminable feature at the heart of a concept, the exclusion of which would go against all empirically-ascertainable uses of the term. Such an understanding of the nature of change can certainly be witnessed in virtually all cases included in this study: as suggested, all the concepts examined were fairly significant 'organising' concepts, whose shared meanings enabled society as a whole to discuss its political affairs in an intelligible way. As such, changes to them must have subscribed to common understandings of their meaning and role, and therefore could not be changed radically at the whim of an individual agent or political party.

With the cases of those concepts addressing the question of equality, therefore, all three were subject to changes that built on existing usages in evolving into a more

focused economic application. The concepts of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* retained their fundamental, shared, meaning but became altered in nuanced ways. Indeed, it was often the interaction between such evolved concepts that reinforced the changed meanings in providing an altered egalitarian approach. Similarly, with *community*, *responsibility* and *family*, all early applications of the concepts were evident later on, but were joined by additional references, ensuring that the concepts' transformations were incremental expansions in their respective articulation. Thus, the concepts retained their fundamental meaning, but were subject to additional facets, which were reinforced as the altered applications interacted with one another. Even in the cases of *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress*, where change concerned the introduction or relative marginalisation of concepts from the Party's lexicon, this change was still fundamentally evolutionary in nature. The term *globalisation* was not created by the Labour Party during the period – it was in existing use and was appropriated by the Party to express its specific conception of contextual change. Similarly, *renewal* constituted a commonly-used and understood term that was incorporated into Labour's approach with unseen vigour by Blair and his colleagues to express the prescribed Party direction in light of change framed with reference to *globalisation*. Furthermore, while apparently surpassed by *renewal* in a number of significant areas, the concept of *progress* was not completely marginalised by Labour, but used in a certain light to emphasise the Party's changed approach. As such, it could be seen that even when changes were apparently fairly radical in nature, they were nevertheless subject to the same linguistic framework providing an important sense of meaning and context for all conceptual usage.

Concepts, ideas and the Labour Party's transformation

Using the respective theories to interpret Labour's changing language offers different accounts of the Labour Party's conceptual transformation. As such, each tells us something specific about the nature of this process. Drawing on the theory of Farr highlights the way in which the Party's conceptual change was the manifestation, or extended implication, of elements of its approach that became increasingly contradictory as the period progressed. Specifically, its changing conception of the

external context, and the subsequent impact this had both on the Party's motif of the mutually beneficial relationship between justice and efficiency and on the perceived need for greater interdependence between citizens, in part provided the prompt for the Party's conceptual change. The contribution of Freedon's analysis illustrates the precise form that such change took: the way in which the increasing economic focus of the concepts relating to equality entailed the marginalisation of features pertaining to individual development and the subsequent emphasis on economic features; how the broadening of concepts relating to fraternity entailed the inclusion and emphasis of social and moral features; and the way in which the conceptualisation of the external concept saw an embrace of *globalisation* within the Party's lexicon, and the consequent use of *renewal* to express the reaction to this. Finally, the contextualism of Pocock and Skinner tells us something very important about the *nature* of Labour's transformed conceptual usage. It suggests that, given the constraints imposed by a common linguistic framework, changes to the concepts' usage must have necessarily been evolutionary in nature.⁸ Thus, later applications must have constituted developments of earlier ones: the more specifically economic articulation of concepts informing the Party's approach to equality; the broadening of those relating to fraternity; and the way in which the external context and the Party's response to this was always represented by concepts of change, only to differing degrees.

Conceptual change and political change in the Labour Party

Each theorist's work, then, frames a unique account of the Labour Party's change, providing narratives that do not necessarily tessellate neatly with one another in offering accounts that frame respectively: the potential strategic motivation of this change; the specific and detailed way in which such a changed approach to various political questions might have been achieved; and the inevitable evolutionary nature of this change. Such insights alone, however significant, nevertheless only address specific elements of Labour's changing conceptual usage. They do not in themselves broach the central concern of this research – an interpretation of the Party's wider political transformation, nor the importance of ideas within this. This is addressed less by the specific minutiae of the respective theories than by the general relationship between

language and politics on which they are all founded. Given the shared premise that language is politically-constituted and politics is linguistically-constituted, each of the theories illustrates an important connection between conceptual change and political change: Farr suggests that conceptual change can have political motivations; Freedon implies that, given the relationship between concepts and ideologies, changes to a political approach must entail changes in its constitutive concepts; and both Pocock and Skinner suggest that changes in an ideologist's political approach can be legitimated by changes in the concepts used to express this, as long as this is done within the boundaries of conventional usage. In doing so, and in each providing fairly plausible accounts of Labour's transformation, they have suggested that, irrespective of the specific focus, by adopting a conceptual approach to the study of a case of political change, it is possible to attach a constant significance to language in such change.

This connection made within the theories covered, between conceptual and political change, is of great significance to this study's interpretation of Labour's transformation. The way in which the two are linked as constitutive to one another suggests that, in cases of political change, such as that of the Party's approach between 1987 and 1997, conceptual change must *always* be a part of such a transformation. Indeed, it is here that this study attempts to provide a novel addition to the literature on Labour's transformation. It is widely acknowledged that the Party's policy approach in the ten years following defeat in 1987 underwent significant change. This entailed shifts in the Party's specific approaches to equality and fraternity, as well as the way in which it conceptualises the external context within which such ends must be pursued. The three conceptual analysis chapters illustrated that such a manifest political change has been accompanied (as it always must be) by changes in the political concepts that inform these respective approaches. Applying these changes to the specific theories of Farr, Freedon, Pocock and Skinner respectively provides differing accounts of the detail of the Party's changing language, given the different focus of each individual theorist, from the context of change, to the process of change and the nature of this transformation. Nevertheless, such diverse accounts of conceptual change each underline the fact that, regarding wider political transformation, altered usage of relevant concepts must always attend cases of such change.

The importance of ideas in the Labour Party's transformation

Of course, the aim of this research is to suggest that *ideas* were important in the Labour Party's transformation – the discussion and application of conceptual theories is simply a means by which to achieve this. As outlined in the second chapter, this study has chosen to apply such conceptual approaches given the relationship understood to exist between concepts and ideas. It was suggested that concepts act as a vehicle through which ideas can be expressed. In cases of political change, then, the conceptual change that must always attend this can itself be understood as a manifestation of changing ideas. The logical extension of this relatively straightforward assumption, therefore, is that ideas matter: in cases of political change, ideas are not simply epiphenomenal but are an intrinsic part of this process of change. In the case of Labour's transformation, then, a novel account of the period in question can be framed by tracing the changing application of concepts in addressing important political questions within its broader approach, which logically serves to illustrate a process of ideational evolution that is not captured in non-conceptual narratives of this change. As such, the theories of Farr, Freedman, Pocock and Skinner, by attaching a permanent connection between conceptual change and political change, can serve to identify an attendant ideational change too. It is therefore possible to consider the way in which drawing on these conceptual approaches potentially illustrates such an ideational input in the three specific areas of political change looked at in this study: those relating to equality, fraternity and contextual change. The input of the respective theories, with respect to the context, content and evolutionary nature of the Party's ideational development, is clearly evident, alluding to the specific way in which each theory might contribute to highlight a fundamental presence of ideas in political change.

Regarding the question of equality, the changing use of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* seemingly represented a shift in the way in which egalitarian approaches were framed by the Party. Specifically, while the motif that such approaches should fulfil criteria relating to both social justice and economic efficiency was present throughout the period, the internal dynamic of this relationship changed in time, with an early emphasis on justice seemingly replaced by a subsequent prioritisation of the

efficiency. This change in the Party's conception of the context within which egalitarian measures must be framed underpinned the way in which it subsequently undertook this task in its application of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*. All three concepts were conceived of in a discernibly more economic manner compared with the early stages of the period, with ideas pertaining to work and the necessity of a contribution to the national economy, rather than those relating to individual fulfilment or development, manifestly informing the way in which the Party subsequently articulated the concepts in framing its egalitarian approach. This change could be understood as proceeding incrementally as the period progressed, with existing expressions of ideas forming the platform for the development of subsequent expressions. This was a product of the transformation of an existing motif underpinning the Party's conceptual presentation of its egalitarian approach, consequently ensuring the evolutionary nature of its ideational approach to equality.

Equally, with regard to the Party's transformed approach to the question of fraternity, an ideational development clearly seems to have accompanied this political shift. Changes in the expression of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* seem to have been a manifestation of the Labour Party hierarchy's awareness of a need to address the cause and impact of an increasingly fragmented and individualistic society, and frame this as a key element in offering a solution to Britain's social and economic problems of the time. Significant to this awareness was the notion that the emphasis on such considerations was necessary due to both a perceived neglect of these by Party predecessors and the incumbent Conservative government, and the social and economic changes occurring within Britain at the time. As such, the Party's subsequent articulation of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* – with an additional social element prominent alongside the existing emphasis on the individual and the expansion of individual freedom – expressed the ideas of the individual as a social creature obliged to consider fellow citizens rather than merely the immediate family or the state. This further manifested itself in moral facets of the concepts articulated, which moved beyond an economic need to consider the state, or an instinctive need to consider the family, in one's everyday life. Furthermore, such ideas were built alongside, rather than at the expense of, the importance of the individual, ensuring that such conceptual

evolution was the expression of a similarly evolutionary ideational change, one that sought to embrace the concerns of the individual while acknowledging and promoting the importance of collective ties and co-operation among citizens.

Finally, in terms of the transformed way in which the Labour Party conceptualised the transforming external context, the usage of *globalisation*, *renewal* and *progress* can clearly be seen to represent ideational development in its conception of change and the most appropriate path to be taken by both the Party and the country in light of this. Labour's expression of change itself as *globalisation*, alluding to a transforming world on an epoch-defining scale, was presented as having a fundamental impact on the way in which the Party had to pursue its existing goals, both for itself and the nation as a whole. The specific nature of this direction, seemingly articulated with reference to *renewal* rather than *progress*, was the expression of the idea that such a dramatically changed context required a novel path in response, at the expense of existing courses being charted. In spite of the relatively radical nature of this type of conceptual change – where one concept emerged, became marginalised, or replaced another – there was still an important evolutionary element here: conceptualisation of change built on previous understandings, while the response to this simply encapsulated varying degrees of change. The use and prominence of such concepts represented and rationalised the Party's changing course, suggesting that an identifiable element of its approach was this evolving conception of change, and how best to respond to it.

Conclusion

Revisiting the various conceptual approaches in light of the analyses of Labour's own conceptual change highlights two things. Firstly, it reaffirms the notion that they are very different approaches, with distinct focuses and implications, making it unwise (and certainly not the intention of this research) to seek to compose an overarching model of conceptual change to be subsequently applied to the transforming Labour Party between 1987 and 1997. Secondly, it is equally apparent that holding up the empirical analyses of the Party's conceptual usage to such approaches does not necessarily provide a neat tessellation between theory and findings. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that the theories of Farr, Pocock and Skinner were conceived to study the history of political

thought and therefore framed with centuries-old conceptual usage in mind, while Freeden's account seeks to provide a conceptual analysis as part of broader studies of canonical ideologies. However, in spite of the differences between the respective theories, and the variable success with which they can be used to account for changes in the Labour Party's conceptual usage, they each offer insights into this process. Specifically, in respectively providing analyses of the occasion, process and nature of Labour's application of important political concepts, the theories are founded on a connection between ideas, language and politics that is not limited to specific epochs or political situations. It is in this respect that concerns about the respective theories' suitability for the study of contemporary political change can to a large degree be assuaged.

As informative as the specific insights into the Labour Party's conceptual change are, it is the shared premise on which the respective theories are founded that addresses the central concern of this research. By framing a mutually-constitutive relationship between language and politics, they each present in their own way the existence of an intrinsic connection between Labour's conceptual change, and wider changes in its approach to important political questions. Given the understanding that the political concepts forming the central analytical unit of conceptual approaches are deemed to represent the expression of political ideas (at various points referred to beliefs or principles), this logically suggests a presence of ideas in instances of political change. This relationship between conceptual change and wider political change can be evinced in the changes to the Party's language and its broader political approach, illustrating a discernible ideational development in this change. However, given the relative neglect of ideas in analyses of Labour's transformation, this is not a common interpretation of this process of change. Consequently, the findings of the research offer a relatively limited position that emphasises the presence of ideas without seeking to attach to them any causal significance: the transformation in Labour's approach was accompanied by an ideational development, one which can be traced through the changing application of political concepts. That is, at any given point during the period, the Party held a discernible ideational position concerning important political questions and the external environment in which these must be framed. Indeed, despite the

incremental nature of its change, it is argued that this ideational element transformed sufficiently in the short time period under consideration to suggest that the ideas accompanying this change, and manifested in concepts that expressed elements of the Party's political approach, were discernibly altered by the end of the period. As such, it is suggested that Labour's transformation over the ten years in question cannot be satisfactorily understood without identifying this constant, evolving ideational element accompanying the Party's change.

7. Conclusions

Introduction

Interpretations of the Labour Party's transformation, from defeat in the 1987 election and its return to power with a landslide victory ten years later, offer widely varying explanations of the nature of, and reasons for, this change. This study has sought to provide a novel addition to this debate: through studying Labour's changing language, it has attempted to show that an ideational evolution attending the Party's transformation between 1987 and 1997 can be identified. As such, it has hoped to offer an interpretation of the changes undergone by the Party in its political approach in this time that focuses on an area of the existing literature on the period that appears to have been underdeveloped. It has taken as its starting point ideas in political change, attempting to trace their development and illustrate their presence throughout the period in question in attending Labour's transformed approach. Treating political concepts as a vehicle through which ideas are expressed, the study has drawn on a number of different conceptual theories. Each provides specific insights into the Party's changing conceptual usage while all offering a crucial connection between conceptual change and political change, and can therefore help identify and trace the Party's changing ideational positions during the decade in question. This concluding chapter will initially provide a brief summary of the research's logic and findings, before locating it in the broader field of interpretations of the changing Labour Party, illustrating how it offers an alternative account in providing a narrative of change that identifies the importance of ideational factors in understanding this transformation throughout the period in question.

Ideas and political change in the Labour Party

A deceptively simple premise has been at the heart of this study's attempts to identify and illustrate an evolution of ideas held by the Party during this period, and to suggest that this was not merely epiphenomenal to its transformation. This premise concerns the relationships between ideas and concepts, and concepts and political approaches. It has been suggested that ideas are expressed and articulated in a tangible way through the

deployment of political concepts; and just as ideas themselves are elusive, so concepts are equally indistinct and mutable. As such, a transformation in use of a concept therefore indicates a transformation in the idea or ideas it serves to articulate. In taking this connection between ideas and concepts as its foundation, this study has deemed it possible, through tracing the development of the Labour Party's conceptual usage over the period in question, to trace an attendant development in its ideas. The consistent significance that this study has attached to this evolution in the Party's ideas is derived from the logic inherent in the theories drawn on in attempting to understand the causes, processes and implications of changing ideas expressed through conceptual change. This is the suggestion that such is the relationship between politics and language – politics being conceptually-constituted and language politically-constituted – changes in conceptual usage must *always* attend cases of political change. Given the premise that such usage represents the expression of ideas, it can then be asserted that ideational development is an important constitutive element of political change. From this theoretical starting point, it becomes possible to identify, and illustrate, the permanent presence of ideas informing Labour's transformation.

The study of the Party's ideational development during the period in question has taken the form of an analysis of its conceptual usage, broken down into important groups of three concepts in recognition of the deployment of, and interaction between, specific concepts in addressing important political questions. The questions examined in this study concern the fundamental issues of equality, fraternity and the external context of politics and policy-making. In the case of each group, there was a change evident in the way in which the concepts were applied by the Labour Party over the period in question. This change was seen to be sufficiently uniform, or at least logical, within each group to suggest that transformation in the conceptual usage was a manifestation of a coherent transformation in the way in which the Party approached such political questions over the decade being studied, rather than merely the random or incidental use of language. Specifically, a pattern emerged within the groups, whereby the changes identified mirrored and reinforced each other, representing a discernible transition in the way in which the relevant political question was addressed. Furthermore, this coherence in the conceptual application ensured that such changes were largely incremental, not

just in time, but in content, building on existing uses reaffirmed by the concepts' interaction with one another.

As conceptual approaches suggest, change in the use of concepts does not, of course, occur in some kind of linguistic vacuum – this has an important connection with transformations in the non-linguistic political world. The constitutive nature of this connection between conceptual change and political change, a principle that is either asserted explicitly in the theories, or manifested in their details and implications, has been evident with the conceptual usage of the Labour Party during the period in question. As such, the Party's changing approach to important political questions was attended by a change in the concepts that inform this. For example, the changing approach to the question of equality, which entailed a move away from traditional egalitarian measures such as increased taxation and public spending and towards work-related policies, was attended by a change in the conception of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*, each of which became increasingly economic in its application. Conversely, the Party's transformed approach to fraternity saw an increasing embrace of the importance of the individual's location within the collective, manifested in changes in the application of *community*, *responsibility* and *family*, each of which were subject to a broadening that incorporated and emphasised social and moral elements in their articulation. Finally, Labour's conception of the external context within which political trajectories must be framed, and therefore the Party's representation of its entire political approach, was transformed: from one in which external change was understood to be significant yet not sufficiently so to warrant a self-conscious rethink of the Party's approach to its values; to a conception of change as fundamental and requiring a discernible shift in this approach. Such a development was manifested in the introduction into the Party's lexicon of *globalisation* to conceptualise this change, and *renewal*, rather than *progress*, to express the future direction required by both the Party and the country as a result of this.

The fact that Labour's changing approach to these important political questions was manifested in a conceptual change in the way in which these approaches were framed and presented suggests that there was an important ideational element to this political change. It would appear possible to identify, through this changing conceptual

usage, an evolution of ideas, held by the Party with regard to key political questions, over the decade following defeat in 1987. These were expressed through the application of significant political concepts deployed to inform the Labour's approach to such questions at various stages during the period in question. As these ideas evolved over the period in question, so too did the concepts that were deployed to express them; and given that these concepts represented the expression of the Party's political approach to these questions over the period, ideas can be deemed to be a constitutive part of this process. Thus, by examining the Party's changing political trajectory over the period through tracing its changing conceptual usage, an important process of ideational evolution can be captured that is so often overlooked in interpretations of the changing Labour Party.

Narratives of the changing Labour Party

The position of this study – that ideas should be identified as consistently present in (and relevant to understanding) political change, and that this can be illustrated using conceptual approaches hitherto largely applied in analysing political thought – opens the possibility of a distinctive narrative of the Party's development during this time. It can therefore be seen that this research frames an account of the Party's change that differs from each of the narratives reviewed in the first chapter. By offering a perspective that suggests that ideas must be given any sort of credence, this study is providing a different analytical dimension than narratives suggesting that merely considering electoral positioning is adequate in understanding Labour's changing course during the decade in question. Furthermore, in taking ideas seriously – as a starting point for analysis rather than merely an afterthought – the research offers something different from approaches that self-consciously take into account different dimensions of change, apparently at times to debunk in principle those approaches that solely look towards a single explanation rather than to emphasise any particular dimension's importance in such a process. Finally, by using concepts as the central unit of analysis, the research provides an account of change that offers an emphasis on ideas *throughout* the period in question. This distinguishes it from accounts highlighting the relevance of ideas during the latter stages of the period only. By tracing the changing

use of concepts at different stages, the research identifies an ideational element to the Party's approach evident at all times between 1987 and 1997.

In light of the conceptual analyses, accounts that offer an overwhelmingly electoral narrative of the Party's change, either by drawing on Downsian preference-accommodation or equally defensive variations on this theme, appear to provide only a relatively superficial narrative of Labour's development.⁹ The changing use of various concepts has offered an account of change that illustrates a reconsideration of how the Party saw its future direction in light of unprecedented external transformations. As such, its changing course was in part informed by its conceptualisation of wider changes as *globalisation*, something that formed the rationale for a change in its own approach expressed as *renewal* rather than *progress*. This diagnosis of the contemporary world, and the way it impacted on policy approaches generally, and more specifically with regard to traditional questions such as equality and fraternity, informed a careful recasting of existing values in the context of such change. For such predominantly electoral accounts to neglect this element of the Party's introspective debate about the validity of its existing approach and how to reformulate increasingly inappropriate elements of this – first in the form of the Policy Review and its aftermath, then with the outsourced CSJ, and finally with the inception of the 'New Labour' project under Blair – and instead to reduce changes solely to the pursuit of votes, offers an unsatisfactory analysis of Labour's development during the period. This is perhaps most apparent in the accounts of those who actively query the impact of ideas, often expressed with reference to the relative impotence of ideational sources (such as sympathetic think-tanks, for example) at the Party's disposal during the period. That the Labour Party's changing approach (as illustrated in its changing conceptual usage) did appear to interact with such sources – be they from the CSJ in its use of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*, as well as its conception of *globalisation* as its implications, or Blair's embrace of communitarianism in the application of *community*, *responsibility* and *family* – ensures that such a disdain of ideational input can clearly be challenged.

Those accounts that move beyond this straightforward neglect at best, and disparagement at worst, of ideas in Labour's changing approach often do so in the guise of a 'multi-dimensional' approach. Such approaches share an important foundation with

this research in asserting that a significance of one factor in a given case of change need not (and should not) rule out others factors as interpretive elements. Nevertheless, in offering a complex and multi-faceted narrative of the Party's change, they are more often than not doing so from the opposite end of a spectrum of interpretive factors (as often conceived in their own studies) from this research. Thus, in spite of critiquing those accounts that frame the Party's changed approach entirely in terms of electoral opportunism, it is generally from this position that such studies themselves begin, before moving out beyond this to consider other factors. While there is nothing inherently wrong in such an approach, it does serve to place a dominant emphasis on such electoral considerations, presenting alternative factors as supplementary. Indeed, even when ideational elements are considered alongside electoral ones, such is their subjugation that it almost appears that these are treated as epiphenomenal – the extended implications of electoral strategy rather than constitutive features of change in their own right. By starting from the ideational end of the interpretive spectrum, the conceptual analyses of this research offer a very different multi-dimensional account. Rather than suggesting that the presentation of change as *globalisation*, and the economic conceptions of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice*, were simply ideational rationalisations of a changing approach founded on electoral considerations, for example, this research suggests that such developing conceptions were constitutive elements of the Party's transformed approach and therefore central to understanding this process.

Simply starting from a position that takes ideas seriously does not ensure that various narratives offer the same interpretation of the Party's transformation, however. As such, a distinction can still be made between this research and those accounts offering, on the face of it, an ideas-centric account of Labour's transformed approach. Most accounts taking ideas seriously nevertheless offer an interpretation in which, during the early stages of the period in question, Labour framed a largely defensive approach in light of a dominant, preference-shaping Conservative administration. As such, it is only after Blair became leader in 1994 that ideas are deemed to be significant in understanding the precise direction of the Party's approach. However, this research has been keen to emphasise not simply the relevance of ideas in this way from the mid-

1990s, but of an evolution of ideas evident from the very beginning of the period in question. The conceptual analyses suggest that the ideational positions held by Labour with Blair in charge were effectively refinements, developments or reconsiderations of those occupied under his predecessors. Specifically, the usage of *opportunity*, *potential* and *justice* under Blair were effectively narrower, more economically-focused versions of those witnessed earlier on in the period. Conversely, *community*, *responsibility* and *family* kept their existing meanings while subject to an additional social and moral element. Finally, the Party's conception of change as *globalisation* was a development of its previous understanding of contextual change, while the prescribed response to this articulated by *renewal* was a more novel development of the increasingly radical changes previously represented as *progress*. In each case, Labour under Blair was not embracing ideas from a position of empty electioneering under Kinnock or Smith; rather, the Party was building on ideational conceptions of important political questions already held, and defining the specific approach, under the previous Party leaders.

The consistent relevance of ideas *throughout* the period in question suggested in this research is derived from its theoretical connection made between ideas, concepts and political change. It is this connection that suggests the development of ideas must *always* attend such change, something that can be captured in an interpretation of Labour's transformation by adopting a conceptual approach to this change. Specifically, the way in which these ideas *evolved* over the period in question can be shown, through the study of conceptual change, to have represented a constitutive element of the changes in Labour's political approach. Indeed, to claim that such an ideational evolution attended the Party's changing approach can appear reasonably self-evident when considered in the context of the Labour Party's process of development in the decade between 1987 and 1997 itself. This period, and the changing approach of the Party that occurred during it, contained various different staging posts of this transformation: the aftermath of the 1987 defeat and the subsequent Policy Review process; the fall out from the 1992 defeat and the reconsideration of modern approaches to centre-left politics in the brief of the CSJ; and the death of John Smith and the birth of the 'New Labour' Project. These constituted important attempts to carefully consider how best to pursue the Party's goals and promote its values. Added to this was the

backdrop of great external change, requiring the different Party leaders to discuss how best to take the Party forward in light of this changing environment.

These different stages ensured that there was a consistent embrace of important and large-scale questions regarding the Party, its values and how best to achieve them, throughout the period. As a consequence, on each occasion of debate and discussion, there was a fairly recent exposition of ideas for the consumption and reconsideration of those undertaking the latest round of introspective debate. This logically served to facilitate a development of the Party's approach based on incremental change, whereby the existing ideas, held by its leading members and expressed in official Party literature, constituted the starting point for the next round of intra-Party discussion, and the subject of the subsequent stage of refinement. This process of almost perpetual reconsideration of fundamental political questions – such as how to organise the distribution of resources, how to facilitate the successful coexistence of citizens within society, and how to achieve these in a context of unprecedented change – is illustrative of a constant ideational element attending the changing direction of the Party's policy approach and laying the foundations for subsequent positions adopted. This would imply that, rather than being a simple irrelevance, a mere implication of electoral factors, or important only at certain stages of the period, ideas played a constitutive role in the Labour Party's transformation between 1987 through to 1997. By drawing on conceptual analyses to chart the Party's changing approach, this study has suggested that it is possible to identify the evolutionary form that such ideas took, and to illustrate their presence in accompanying this process of change.

Endnotes

- 1 This is something to which Kinnock himself has subsequently alluded (Kinnock, 1994). He suggested that while Labour's 1987 manifesto was not itself a 'socialist' document, he had hoped that it would allow the Party to gain office, after which time it could then seek to shape the preferences of the electorate to accept a more socialist agenda.
- 2 A notable exception here is the account of Philip Gould, Labour's electoral advisor (Gould, 1998). Given Gould's role in charge of conducting focus groups for the Party in the years preceding the 1997 election, it is unsurprising that this account offers a narrative of the Party's transformation prior to 1997 primarily founded on electoral strategy and positioning.
- 3 This agential aspect of Skinner's work is further emphasised in his more recent focus on rhetoric (see Skinner, 2002; Palonen, 1997).
- 4 To return to Freedman's own example of *liberty*, a change in the nature of *liberalism* as an ideology would necessarily entail a change in its constitutive conception of *liberty*. The ideology change might entail marginalisation of adjacent concepts or features, such as *autonomy*; this, in turn, would alter the conception of *liberty* itself.
- 5 As with Farr, given that the agent in question is the ideologist, such action can be understood to entail political change (or ideological change specifically).
- 6 Such a conception of positive liberty is framed in *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values*, and alluded to in numerous documents during the early stages of the period. The importance of the expansion of individual liberty to the Party's approach at this stage is also explicitly discussed in the retrospective account by Kinnock himself (see Labour Party, 1988a; Kinnock, 1994).
- 7 Indeed, the expression of *globalisation* to represent epoch-defining changes in the external context was in currency on the left from the mid-to-late-1980s, most prominently in the 'New Times' project associated with *Marxism Today* (see Hall and Jacques, 1989).
- 8 Skinner's work, specifically, suggests that this evolutionary change entails a transition from the application of a term in a purely descriptive fashion to its deployment to simultaneously describe *and* evaluate.
- 9 As suggested in the opening chapter, such approaches often appear to be partly informed by an implicit judgment concerning the necessity and desirability of the Labour Party's changed approach. This is something that could also be said to apply to accounts ascribing an importance to ideas only under Blair's leadership in the later stages of the period in question.

Bibliography

- Anderson, P. and Mann, N. (1997) *Safety First: The Making of New Labour*. London: Granta Books.
- Austin, J. L. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*. J.O. Urmson and M. Sbisà (eds), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ball, T. (1988) *Transforming Political Discourse: Political Theory and Critical Conceptual History*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ball, T. and Pocock, J. G. A. (1988) 'Introduction' in T. Ball and J. G. A. Pocock (eds) *Conceptual Change and the Constitution*. Kansas: University of Kansas Press, pp. 1-12.
- Ball, T. (1999) 'From 'core' concepts to 'sore' concepts: ideological innovation and conceptual change', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 4 (3), 391-396.
- Beckett, M. (1993) *Getting a Grip on Crime*. London: Labour Party.
- Bevir, M. (1992) 'The Errors of Linguistic Contextualism', *History and Theory*, 31 (3), 276-298.
- Bevir, M. (2000a) 'New Labour: a study in ideology', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2 (3), 277-301.
- Bevir, M. (2000b) 'The Logic of the History of Ideas', *Rethinking History*, 4 (3), 295-300.
- Bevir, M. (2000c) 'The Role of Contexts in Understanding and Explanation', *Human Studies*, 23, 395-411.
- Bevir, M. (2003) 'Notes Toward an Analysis of Conceptual Change', Paper 1081, University of California Postprint.
- Bevir, M. (2005) *New Labour: a critique*. London: Routledge.
- Blair, T. (1991) 'Forging a New Agenda', *Marxism Today*, October, 32-4.
- Blair, T. (1992) 'Pride without prejudice', *Fabian Review*, 104 (2), 3.
- Blair, T. (1993a) 'A battle we must win', *Fabian Review*, 105 (5), 1-3.
- Blair, T. (1993b) 'Foreword' in C. Bryant (ed.) *Reclaiming the Ground: Christianity and Socialism*. Kent: Spire, pp. 9-12.

Blair, T. (1993c) 'Why crime is a socialist issue', *New Statesman and Society*, 29 January, 27-8.

Blair, T. (1993d) 'Why modernisation matters', *Renewal*, 1 (4), 4-11.

Blair, T. (1994a) 'Crime and society' in A. Dubs (ed.) *What Role a Safe Society?: Proceedings of the Fabian New Year School* (Fabian Pamphlet no.562). London: Fabian Society, pp. 2-4.

Blair, T. (1994b) *Socialism* (Fabian Pamphlet no.565). London: Fabian Society.

Blair, T. (1994c) Speech accepting the leadership of the Labour Party, 21 July, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 29-34.

Blair, T. (1994d) Speech at the launch of the Final Report of the Commission on Social Justice, 24 October, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 141-150.

Blair, T. (1994e) Speech to the Family Breakdown and Criminal Activity Conference, 24 May, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 244-248.

Blair, T. (1994f) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 4 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference* [1994]. London: Labour Party

Blair, T. (1995a) *Let Us Face the Future: The 1945 Anniversary Lecture* (Fabian Pamphlet no. 571). London: Fabian Society.

Blair, T. (1995b) 'Power for a purpose', *Renewal*, 3 (4), 11-16.

Blair, T. (1995c) Speech at the Institute of Education, 23 June, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 159-172.

Blair, T. (1995d) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 3 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference* [1995]. London: Labour Party.

Blair, T. (1995e) Speech to the Labour Party Conference on the Party's constitution, 29 April in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference on the Party's Constitution*. London: Labour Party

Blair, T. (1995f) Speech to the Newscorp Leadership Conference, 17 July, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 203-214.

Blair, T. (1995g) The Mais Lecture, 22 May, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 75-97

Blair, T. (1995h) 'The power of the message', *New Statesman and Society*, 29 September, 19-20.

Blair, T. (1995i) The Spectator Lecture, 22 March, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 236-243.

Blair, T. (1996a) 'A Stakeholder Society', *Fabian Review*, 108 (1), 1-4.

Blair, T. (1996b) 'Introduction: My Vision for Britain' in G. Radice (ed.) *What Needs to Change: New Visions for Britain*. London: HarperCollins, pp. 3-17.

Blair, T. (1996c) *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate.

Blair, T. (1996d) Speech at Millbank Tower, 4 July, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 22-25.

Blair, T. (1996e) Speech at Southwark Cathedral, 29 January, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 297-309.

Blair, T. (1996f) Speech to the Keidanren, Tokyo, 5 January, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 118-129.

Blair, T. (1996g) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 1 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1996]*. London: Labour Party.

Blair, T. (1996h) The John Smith Memorial Lecture, 7 February, reproduced in *New Britain: My Vision for a Young Country*. London: Fourth Estate, pp. 310-321.

Brown, G. (1992a) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 28 September in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1992]*. London: Labour Party.

Brown, G. (1992b) 'The battle of ideas', *Fabian Review*, 104 (5), 1-3.

Brown, G. (1994a) *Fair is Efficient: a socialist agenda for fairness* (Fabian Pamphlet no. 563). London: Fabian Society.

Brown, G. (1994b) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 3 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1994]*. London: Labour Party.

Brown, G. (1994c) 'The Politics of Potential: A New Agenda for Labour' in D. Miliband (ed.) *Reinventing the Left*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 113-122.

Brown, G. (1995) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 2 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1995]*. London: Labour Party

Brown, G. (1996a) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 30 September in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference* [1996]. London: Labour Party.

Brown, G. (1996b) 'Tough decisions', *Fabian Review*, 108 (3), 1-3.

Brown, G. (1997a) The Anthony Crosland Memorial Lecture, 13 February, reproduced in D. Leonard (ed.) (1999) *Crosland and New Labour*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp. 35-48.

Brown, G. (1997b) 'The iron man', *Fabian Review*, 109 (1), 1-2.

Brown, G., Blunkett, D. and Harman, H. (1996) *Equipping Young People for the Future: From welfare to education*. London: Labour Party.

Burns, A. (2006) 'Is it Possible to Write the History of a Concept? Quentin Skinner's Use of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*', Paper Presented at the University of Sheffield, 28 February.

Coates, D. (2000) 'The character of New Labour' in D. Coates and P. Lawler (eds) *New Labour in Power*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 1-15.

Coates, D. (2005) *Prolonged Labour: The slow birth of New Labour Britain*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Connolly, W. E. (1993) *The Terms of Political Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Davey, K. (1996) 'The Impermanence of New Labour' in M. Perryman (ed.) *The Blair Agenda*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, pp. 76-99.

Downs, A. (1957) *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. London: Harper Collins.

Driver, S. and Martell, L. (2002) *Blair's Britain*. Cambridge: Polity.

Driver, S. and Martell, L. (2006) *New Labour: Politics after Thatcherism*. Cambridge: Polity (2nd Edition).

Farr, J. (1988) 'Conceptual Change and Constitutional Innovation' in T. Ball and J.G.A Pocock (eds) *Conceptual Change and the Constitution*. Kansas: University of Kansas Press, pp. 13-34.

Farr, J. (1989) 'Understanding Conceptual Change Politically' in T. Ball, J. Farr and R.L. Hanson (eds) *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 24-49.

Farr, J. (2004) 'Social Capital: A Conceptual History', *Political Theory*, 32 (1), 6-33.

Fielding, S. (2003) *The Labour Party: continuity and change in the making of 'New' Labour*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Freeden, M. (1994) 'Political Concepts and Ideological Morphology', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 2 (2), 140-164.

Freeden, M. (1996) *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Freeden, M. (1999a) 'The Ideology of New Labour', *Political Quarterly*, 70 (1), 42-51.

Freeden, M. (1999b) 'True Blood or False Genealogy: New Labour and British Social Democratic Thought', *Political Quarterly*, 70 (supplement), 151-165.

Gallie, W. B. (1955) 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 56, 167-198.

Gould, P. (1998) *The Unfinished Revolution: How the Modernisers Saved the Labour Party*. London: Little Brown.

Gray, J. N. (1977) 'On the Contestability of Social and Political Concepts', *Political Theory*, 5 (3), 331-348.

Gunnell, J. G. (1998) 'Time and Interpretation: Understanding Concepts and Conceptual Change', *History of Political Thought*, 19 (4), 641-658.

Hale, S. (2006) *Blair's Community: Communitarian thought and New Labour*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hall, S. and Jacques, M. (eds) (1989) *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Harman, H. (1996) *Getting Welfare to Work: Opportunities for lone mothers*. London: Labour Party.

Harmel, R. and Janda, K. (1994) 'An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 6, 259-287.

Hattersley, R. (1988) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 3 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1988]*. London: Labour Party.

Hay, C. (1999) *The Political Economy of New Labour: Labouring Under False Pretences*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hay, C. (2002) *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Heffernan, R. (2000) *New Labour and Thatcherism: Political Change in Britain*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Helms, L. (1999) 'Innovation in the Shadow of Power: The Reform of the Labour Party 1979-97' in H. Katendiek, R. Stinshoff and R. Sturm (eds) *The Return of Labour – A Turning Point in British Politics?*, Berlin: PHILO, pp. 109-127.

Heywood, A. (1994) *Political Ideas and Concepts: An Introduction*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Hindmoor, A. (2004) *New Labour at the Centre: Constructing Political Space*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hughes, C. and Wintour, P. (1990) *Labour Rebuilt: The New Model Party*. London: Fourth Estate.

Janssen, P. L. (1985) 'Political Thought as Traditionary Action: The Critical Response to Skinner and Pocock', *History and Theory*, 24 (2), 115-146.

Jones, T. (1996) *Remaking the Labour Party: From Gaitskell to Blair*. London: Routledge.

Jowell, T. (1996) *Strategy for Women*. London: Labour Party.

Kavanagh, D. (1997) *The Reordering of British Politics: Politics after Thatcher*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kenny, M. and Smith, M. J. (1997) '(Mis)understanding Blair', *Political Quarterly*, 68 (3), 220-230.

Kenny, M. and Smith, M. J. (2003) 'Interpreting New Labour: Constraints, Dilemmas and Political Agency' in A. Chadwick and R. Heffernan (eds) *The New Labour Reader*, Cambridge: Polity, pp. 66-76.

Kinnock, N. (1988) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 4 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1988]*. London: Labour Party.

Kinnock, N. (1989) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 3 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1989]*. London: Labour Party.

Kinnock, N. (1990) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 2 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1990]*. London: Labour Party.

Kinnock, N. (1991) Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 1 October in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1991]*. London: Labour Party.

Kinnock, N. (1994) 'Reforming the Labour Party', *Contemporary Record*, 8 (3), 535-554.

Koikkalainen, P. (2005) *The Life of Political Philosophy After its Death: History of an Argument concerning the Possibility of a Theoretical Approach to Politics*. Rovaniemi: University of Lapland Press.

Koselleck, R. (1985) *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (trans. K. Tribe). Cambridge: MIT Press.

Kuhn, T. S. (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Labour Party (1987a) *Britain Will Win with Labour* (1987 Election Manifesto). London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1987b) *Moving Ahead*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1988a) *Democratic Socialist Aims and Values*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1988b) *Social Justice and Economic Efficiency*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1989a) *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change: A new agenda for Britain*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1989b) *Multi-cultural Education*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1990a) *Looking to the Future*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1990b) *Women and Work*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991a) *A New Ministry for Women*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991b) *Family Prosperity*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991c) *Made in Britain*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991d) *Opportunities for All*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991e) *Opportunity Britain: Labour's better way for the 1990s*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991f) *Opportunity, Quality, Accountability: The better way from local government*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1991g) *The Charter of Rights*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992a) *Agenda for Change*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992b) *It's Time for a Strong NHS: Labour's budget boost for the Health Service*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992c) *It's Time for Families*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992d) *It's Time to Get Britain Working Again* (1992 Election Manifesto). London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992e) *Labour's Budget Statement, 1992-93*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992f) *Labour's Campaign for Recovery*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992g) *Realising Our Potential: What Labour's policies will mean for young people*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992h) *The Best for Everyone: What Labour's policies will mean for ethnic minority communities*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1992i) *The Time of Your Life: What Labour's policies will mean for pensioners*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1993) *Rebuilding Britain: Budget action for investment and jobs*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1994a) *Jobs and Social Justice: Labour's response to the Green Paper on European Social Policy: Potions for the Union*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1994b) *Make Europe Work for You* (1994 European Elections Manifesto). London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1994c) *Rebuilding the Economy*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1994d) *Winning for Britain: Labour's strategy for industrial success*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1995a) *A New Economic Future for Britain: Economic and employment opportunities for all*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1995b) *Diversity and Excellence: A new partnership for schools*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1995c) *Early Excellence*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1995d) *Renewing Democracy, Rebuilding Communities*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1995e) *Safer Communities, Safer Britain*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996a) *A Fresh Start for Britain: Labour's strategy for Britain in the modern world*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996b) *Aiming Higher: Labour's plans for reform of the 14-19+ curriculum*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996c) *Building Prosperity: Flexibility, efficiency and fairness at work*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996d) *Getting Welfare to Work: A new vision for social security*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996e) *Labour and the Voluntary Sector*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996f) *Labour's New Deal for a Lost Generation*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996g) *Learn as You Earn: Labour's plans for a skills revolution*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996h) *Lifelong Learning: A consultation document*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996i) *New Labour, New life for Britain (Draft Manifesto)*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996j) *New Labour, New Life for Young People*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996k) *New Opportunities for Business*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996l) *Target 2000: Labour's plan for a lost generation*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1996m) *Vision for Growth: A new industrial strategy for Britain*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1997a) *Labour's Business Manifesto: Equipping Britain for the Future*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1997b) *New Deal for a New Britain: Labour's proposals to tackle youth and long-term unemployment*. London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1997c) *New Labour: Because Britain Deserves Better* (1997 Election Manifesto). London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1997d) *New Labour for Women: New Future for Britain*. London: Labour Party.

Lipsey, D. (1999) 'Revisionists Revise' in D. Leonard (ed.) *Crosland and New Labour*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp. 13-17.

Ludlam, S. (2000) 'New Labour: what's published is what counts', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2 (2), 264-276.

Mandelson, P. and Liddle, R. (1996) *The Blair Revolution: Can New Labour Deliver?*. London: Faber and Faber.

Marquand, D. (1999) *The Progressive Dilemma: From Lloyd George to Blair*. London: Phoenix (2nd Edition).

Martin, R. T. W. (1997) 'Context and Contradiction: Toward a Political Theory of Conceptual Change', *Political Research Quarterly*, 50 (2), 413-36.

Muller, W. C. (1997) 'Inside the Black Box: A Confrontation of Party Executive Behaviour and Theories of Party Organisational Change', *Party Politics*, 3, 293-313.

Norris, P. (1999) 'New Labour and the Rejection of Stakeholder Capitalism' in G. Taylor (ed.) *The Impact of New Labour*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp. 26-36.

Norris, P. (2001) 'New Labour and Public Opinion: the Third Way as Centrist?' in S. White (ed.) *New Labour: The Progressive Future*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp. 32-44.

Palonen, K. (1997) 'Quentin Skinner's rhetoric of conceptual change', *History of the Human Sciences*, 10 (2), 61-80.

Palonen, K. (2003) *Quentin Skinner: History, Politics, Rhetoric*. Cambridge: Polity.

Panitch, L. and Leys, C. (1997) *The End of Parliamentary Socialism: From New Left to New Labour*. London: Verso.

Peacocke, C. (1992) *A Study of Concepts*. London: The MIT Press.

Plant, R. (1999) 'Crosland, Equality and Labour' in D. Leonard (ed.) *Crosland and New Labour*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp. 19-34.

Pocock, J. G. A. (1972a) *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History*. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd.

Pocock, J. G. A. (1972b) 'The History of Political Thought: A Methodological Enquiry' in P. Laslett and W. G. Runciman (eds) *Philosophy, Politics and Society*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 183-202.

Pocock, J. G. A. (1975) *The Machiavellian Moment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Shaw, E. (1996) *The Labour Party Since 1945*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Skinner, Q. (1981) *Machiavelli*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Skinner, Q. (1988) 'Some problems in the analysis of political thought and action' in J. Tully (ed.) *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 97-118.

Skinner, Q. (1989) 'Language and Political Change' in T. Ball, J. Farr and R.L. Hanson (eds) *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 6-23.

Skinner, Q. (2002) *Visions of Politics Volume I: Regarding Method*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, J. (1991) Speech to the Labour Party Conference speech, 30 September in *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1991]*. London: Labour Party.

Smith, J. (1992) Speech to the Labour Party Conference speech, 29 September *Verbatim Report of the Labour Party Conference [1992]*. London: Labour Party.

Smith, J. (1993) 'Reclaiming the Ground – Freedom and the Value of Society' in C. Bryant (ed.) *Reclaiming the Ground: Christianity and Socialism*. Kent: Spire, pp. 127-142.

Smith, J. (1994) 'A new Bretton Woods', *Fabian Review*, 106 (2), 1-4.

Smith, M. J. (1994) 'Understanding the 'Politics of Catch-Up': the Modernization of the Labour Party', *Political Studies*, 42, 708-715.

Smith, M. J. (2000) 'Tony Blair and the Transition to New Labour: 1994-2000' in B. Brivati and R. Heffernan (eds) *The Labour Party: A Centenary History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 143-162.

Straw, J., Fatchett, D., Armstrong, H. and Smith, A. (1989) *Children First: Labour's policy for raising standards in schools*. London: Labour Party.

Straw, J. and Michael, A. (1996) *Tackling the Causes of Crime: Labour's proposals to prevent crime and criminality*. London: Labour Party.

Taylor, A. (1993) *Opening Doors to a Learning Society*. London: Labour Party.

Taylor, G. (1997) *Labour's Renewal? The Policy Review and Beyond*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Taylor, G. (1999) 'Power in the Party' in G. Taylor (ed.) *The Impact of New Labour*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp. 9-25.

Thorpe, A. (2001) *A History of the British Labour Party*. Basingstoke: Palgrave (2nd Edition).

Tully, J. (1988) 'The pen is a mighty sword: Quentin Skinner's analysis of politics' in J. Tully (ed.) *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 7-25.

Tully, J. (2002) 'Political Philosophy as a Critical Activity', *Political Theory*, 30 (4), 533-555.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations* (trans. G. E. M. Anscombe). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Wickham-Jones, M. (1995) 'Recasting Social Democracy: a Comment on Hay and Smith', *Political Studies*, 43, 698-702.

Wright, T. (1997) *Why Vote Labour?*. London: Penguin.