

LABOUR'S RENEWAL?

Labour's Renewal?

The Policy Review and Beyond

Gerald R. Taylor

*Senior Lecturer in Politics
LSU College of Higher Education
Southampton*





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First published 1997 by
MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-65248-0 ISBN 978-1-349-25397-5 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-25397-5

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
06 05 04 03 02 01 00 99 98 97

To my parents,
Robert and Lilian

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Preface

This book had its origins on 15 March 1981 at a dark and uninviting Oddfellows Hall in Teignmouth, Devon. It was there that I was persuaded to first join the Labour Party. From a practical involvement in politics came a desire to understand political debate and activity better. This led me back into full-time education, to my PhD, and to the writing of this work. Much has happened in the years in between, but my desire to understand politics, and my membership of the Labour Party have remained constant. It is these two factors which are reflected here – in particular a desire to understand why Labour have not been more successful as an electoral and political force than they have.

Whilst this is clearly a partisan intention, I hope that this is also a work of academic value. This work is intended to contribute, constructively, to the debate on Labour's future and to help us all understand the problems Labour faces. It does not suggest solutions to these problems, though it does criticise the attempts of 'renewal' and 'modernisation' which have been designed to provide Labour with new direction. Indeed it is these attempts at reconstruction of the Party which are used to illustrate and examine the Party's problems.

As with any work which has taken many years to come to fruition the final form owes a great deal to the criticism and commentary of others. The whole has been deeply informed by a series of interviews conducted from 1988 to 1995 with Shadow Cabinet members, MPs and MEPs, Party officials, individuals in Neil Kinnock's Leader's Office, pressure groups, various individuals involved in the Policy Review, the Commission on Social Justice, and the reform of Clause IV. Many asked to remain anonymous, but I would like to record my gratitude for their assistance. The final work has also been shaped by innumerable conversations, discussions and arguments with Party activists and local officials at Teignbridge, Colchester North, and more recently Southampton.

In addition various parts of this book were read and criticised by various people over the same period. I would particularly like to thank David Sanders who must have been very tired of some of my arguments, and my phone calls, by the end. David's comments were particularly valuable, especially with chapter 5. I have not managed to incorporate all the changes he recommended and I am sure that the final product suffers as a result. Thanks are also due to Jim McCormick at IPPR who was a great help with chapter 6 and sharply critical of its contents. I would also like to thank various other friends and

colleagues for support and criticism at various stages. These include David Marsh, Ken Newton and Hugh Ward when I was at Essex, Martin Smith, and Adrian Smith, Frank Cogliano and Paula Coonerty at LSU College. Others who must be mentioned include: Chris Fegan, Dave Fallows, Jane Fensome, Jane Franklin, Chris Sparks, Bob Kennedy and Mark Gardner. I would also like to thank students I have taught at Essex, Westminster, and now at LSU College for occasionally making me think. Eric Shaw kindly gave me permission to use an unpublished research paper.

Finally my deepest gratitude must go to my partner, Sylvia Chin, and our daughter Sarah.

Gerald R. Taylor
LSU College, Southampton

List of Abbreviations

BES	British Election Survey
BT	British Telecom
BTE	British Technology Enterprise
CLP	Constituency Labour Party
CMT	Campaign Management Team
CSJ	Commission on Social Justice
DEA	Department of Economic Affairs
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EC	European Community
ERM	Exchange Rate Mechanism
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMB	General Municipal and Boilermakers' Union
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MP	Member of Parliament
MTIS	Medium Term Industrial Strategy
NEB	National Enterprise Board
NEC	National Executive Committee
NUPE	National Union of Public Employees
PACE	Productive and Competitive Economy
PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
PRG	Policy Review Group
SCH	Southampton Cargo Handling
SCT	Southampton Container Terminal
SERPS	State Earning Related Pensions Scheme
SNP	Scottish National Party
TGWU	Transport and General Workers' Union
TUC	Trades Union Congress
YTS	Youth Training Scheme