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**LABOUR POLITICS AND SOCIETY
IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE
1939-51**

ANDREW STEPHEN TRICKETT

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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ABSTRACT:

This doctoral thesis looks at Labour politics and society in South Yorkshire between the start of the Second World War in September 1939 and the fall from office of the Attlee Labour Government in October 1951. While it accepts the predominating effects of national and international factors in providing challenges which Labour councils and local Labour Parties had to find solutions to - such as the effects of the Sheffield Blitz in 1940 and the need to re-plan Sheffield and the maintaining of the organisational existence of Labour Parties during the Second World War - it nevertheless examines those 'micro-historical' factors which made for the local diversity of the party in South Yorkshire. It tries to create a holistic and rounded portrait of the local Labour movement based mainly on fragmentary archival and newspaper evidence and examines current historical debates for local relevance such as whether a post-war consensus actually existed, whether popular political attitudes were radical or conservative and, whether such popular attitudes favoured or dis-favoured Labour. It also looks at Marxist debates over the concept of 'Labourism' and whether Labour was narrowly culturally determined or whether other factors were equally important. Chapter One introduces the thesis. Chapter Two examines the fears over the post-war industrial future of Sheffield which took place during the Second World War within the City Council and between it and organisations like the trade unions and the Chamber of Commerce. It also looks at City Council debates over the proposed post-war regionalisation of local government and how that was prevented by a united council. This shows that the centralising tendencies of the London government could be resisted by the peripheries and that such tendencies were not inevitable. Chapter Three examines town planning in Sheffield during the Second World War after the Blitz in December 1940 provided an opportunity to create a more modern, better planned and less ugly city. The planning process is examined and the secrecy of the City Council noted at a time when the country was fighting to defend an open and democratic society from the Nazis. Chapter Three also looks at the wartime context of the acute post-war housing crisis. Chapter Four looks at the wartime Labour Party in South Yorkshire, its ebb in membership prior to 1942 and its resurgence after that date ending with an examination of the 1945 General Election in Sheffield. Chapter Five looks at local government between 1945 and 1951, examining the factors which prevented the reform of the local structure of local government, the effect on Sheffield and Rotherham Councils of the nationalisation of electricity, gas and local authority hospitals, and the attempts to implement the Butler Education Act of 1944 in South Yorkshire. Chapter Six looks at the attempts to implement the 1945 Collie town plan for Sheffield and the reasons for the lack of progress as well as at the contrasting housing records of Sheffield and Rotherham Councils. It attempts to account for the latter's better record when compared with the former. Chapter Seven looks the ideology and cultural determinants of the Labour Party in South Yorkshire between 1945 and 1951. It also examines Labour organisation noting the essential role of women as unpaid voluntary labour and contrasting it with their limited entry to local political office. Finally it looks at and comments on the municipal and general election results in Sheffield of the Labour Party between 1945 and 1951. Chapter Eight provides a conclusion.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 - LABOUR HISTORIOGRAPHY IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE

The main focus of this thesis is on the Sheffield and Rotherham County Borough Councils though I also include some material on the County Boroughs of Doncaster and Barnsley and the lesser district councils which came under the umbrella of the West Riding County Council. As the title of my thesis suggests it aspires to be a regional history of Labour politics and society within South Yorkshire between the outbreak of war in September 1939 and the ejection of Labour from national political office in October 1951. During this period there were Labour County Borough Councils in Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley and in Doncaster from November 1945. Between 1939 and 1945 only three parliamentary seats in the region out of thirteen were held by the opponents of Labour and this fell to two between 1945 and 1951. Labour politics *was* politics in the southern West Riding. South Yorkshire as an administrative entity is of recent origin and was created within its present borders - the borders of this study - in 1974 by local government reorganisation but it is significant that in the immediate post-war period the creation of a 'York South' county was briefly envisaged. However, it would look strange to the inhabitants of present day South Yorkshire as Sheffield was not included within its borders though Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster were. 'South Yorkshire' as a concept has a longer history of usage though arguably it was the Industrial Revolution that created the idea. The Reverend Joseph Hunter, the first real historian of South Yorkshire, for example, had published South Yorkshire: The History and Topography of the Deanery of Doncaster in the Diocese and County of York in the early nineteenth century while in 1862 a pamphlet entitled Rotherham College, Its Retention Advocated commented: 'There are many things they have not in common with the group of towns more especially designated the "West Riding", and in this matter of taking their time-honoured and valuable College some forty miles northward, they must ask to be allowed to prefer it being *regarded as a South Yorkshire Institution*.'¹ The rise of Labour as a movement in South Yorkshire from the late nineteenth century was also historically distinct from that of the textile districts of the West Riding. In the latter the Independent Labour Party was much stronger before 1914 than it ever was in South Yorkshire.² This is in spite of the fact that Labour historians like Eric Hobsbawm have argued that an increasingly homogeneous common working class way of life, which in turn produced increasing support for a class party of Labour, came into being between the 1880s and 1914.³ South Yorkshire's Labour movement was marked by the region's division into two very different occupational worlds - the world of 'King Coal' with its 'archetypal proletarians', the militant miners, and the world of 'King Steel' inhabited by the equally highly-unionised but less militant steel-workers and engineers. Both were different worlds to an extent that is not fully emphasised in this thesis which looks at the congested urban areas rather than at the pit communities, some of which were sited in isolated rural locations. South Yorkshire, despite its dirty urban industrial image, still has many areas of unspoilt natural charm even today about which people from outside the county are generally ignorant. In the 1940s there was still an almost feudal respect for the Earls Fitzwilliam in the environs of Rotherham. Before 1947 they owned local mines and afterwards

they continued to own much land in southern Yorkshire as did the Duke of Norfolk.

South Yorkshire can be compared profitably with South Wales. Though the latter was also equally dependent on coal and iron and steel, it was less economically diversified than southern Yorkshire, if that is possible, and less rich (Sheffield's West End, for example, has always been affluent). Thus, it was even more depressed during the inter-war slump. It saw even greater proportionate unemployment in its labour force and much more political and industrial militancy. There were no 'little Moscows' like Mardy in South Yorkshire run by the Communist Party. The latter were never the electoral threat they, at least potentially, posed in South Wales up to 1951. The balance of anti-capitalist forces was also different. This was true politically and industrially. In the Rhondda valleys in the 1940s the Tories and Liberals' political presence was irrelevant at best while in South Yorkshire the former held parliamentary seats and their Municipal Progressive auxiliaries in Sheffield formed a creditable opposition, with strongholds among the city's council wards that Labour were unable to take. In South Wales and the Nottinghamshire coalfield there had been bitter struggles after 1926 between the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and the company unions, for example, over who would organise the miners. This did not occur in South Yorkshire. Nationality is a glaring difference between the two areas though the people of the North of England and of Yorkshire in particular were also considered to be markedly different in character from those of London and the Home Counties and had been since the Middle Ages when the North was the more backward area. Stefan Berger has recently compared the local Labour movement and working class culture in South Wales with that of the Ruhr Coalfields in Germany. Similar comparisons could be made between the Ruhr and South Yorkshire. In the Ruhr, society was divided on ethnic and religious lines (as it was in Liverpool, Glasgow or Belfast in Britain) which produced heterogeneous working class cultures. This long impeded the progress of a united political Labour movement which, led by the German Social Democrats, only eventually made progress there in the 1950s. The Ruhr like South Yorkshire was based on coal and steel though it did not suffer as badly as the latter in the Slump. Berger contrasts it with the homogeneous working-class culture of South Wales which saw the dominance of one working-class party - Labour - considerably earlier.⁴

Recent work on West Ham,⁵ Coventry,⁶ Preston⁷ and the Rhondda⁸ have emphasised the potential diversity of histories of the development of the Labour Party in Britain in the twentieth century and reflect an overdue interest in politics 'Beyond Westminster'. Too little attention before the 1980s was paid to such diverse twentieth century histories in contrast to the tradition of study of the history of local nineteenth century working class politics that goes back to Engels⁹ and which was boosted in modern times by the publication of Asa Briggs' Chartist Studies in 1959. The latter stated categorically that 'A study of Chartism must begin with a proper appreciation of regional and local diversity.' The lack of attention paid to Labour's regional and local diversity has been attributed to the fact that its rise from 1900 was seen to be bound up with national class-based politics in contrast to the local status-based politics of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ However, in the same year as Briggs' book, Sidney Pollard published his history of labour in Sheffield, which did refer to the politics of the Labour Party in the city

up to the outbreak of the Second World War, but, though an important and pioneering work, it was not widely emulated.

Pollard's study can be criticized for sketching the history of actual Sheffield Labour politics in the inter-war period in too short a span of pages and for the emphasis the book placed on structural factors such as industrial organisation and economic forces in explaining why the politics of the city took the shape it did. But he was after all later to become Professor of Economic History at Sheffield University rather than having academic tenure in political science or Labour Party history. While an account of working-class culture in Sheffield was given some space¹¹ it did not possess the narrow and deterministic explanatory role that some historians like Neville Kirk argue is present in the thesis presented by Eric Hobsbawm to explain the rise of Labour.¹² Socialism was seen to be a consequence of the introduction of large-scale heavy industry, often employing unskilled workers, with alienation resulting between the employed and their masters.¹³ This was an explanation derived from classical Marxism.¹⁴ Today contingency, working class culture and political discourse are all given greater explanatory roles in the development of the Labour Party, reflecting changed intellectual fashions. His book was much more concerned with broad structural economic forces than the contributions of particular individuals. Pollard was, nevertheless, a sophisticated historical practitioner and not a 'vulgar Marxist'. 'Class' was central to his interpretation, and not simply as objective social description, for class consciousness was, he believed, a reality. His history was in a way an early example of the 'total history' of a locality. Before his death in 1998 he contributed an essay on 'Labour' to the second 'Society' volume of the celebratory history of the city of Sheffield that appeared in 1993. That history celebrated the 150 years since Sheffield's municipal incorporation in 1843 and the centenary of Sheffield's city-status, which was proclaimed in 1893.¹⁵ Pollard's essay summarised the contents and conclusions of his earlier book, while extending his treatment of the city's labour history up to the present day. In 1958 he had also helped co-author a volume celebrating the first century of existence of the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council.¹⁶ Much later in 1976 he co-edited with Colin Holmes (and wrote the introduction for) a collection of essays on local economic and social history published by the newly created South Yorkshire County Council. The subjects of these essays while providing some background to later South Yorkshire labour history do not go beyond 1914.¹⁷

Pollard's 1959 history influenced William Hampton's book on Sheffield's post-war politics (published in 1970) which also accepted the role of worker alienation in the rise of Socialism in Sheffield.¹⁸

Hampton's book is a work of political science rather than history but it is important for the 'model' it provides of the typical 'Old Labour' Council during the 'golden age' before 1973. As research it is very much a product of the politics of the period of Harold Wilson's 1964-70 Labour government with the book providing empirical justification for Labour's renewed interest in the viability of regional government and the national economic planning it would allow.¹⁹ This was against the reiterated claim of local councillors in the 1960s (though not Sheffield City Council this time - in contrast to its position in the 1940s)²⁰ that regional government was a threat to local communities because it was too big and

remote from citizens' lives thus creating 'a dictatorial vacuum in which local spirit and initiative would die.'²¹ He argued that while the public could be mobilized against change to the existing system by romantic appeals to 'a golden age of village Hampdens defending their rights',²² they were already unenthusiastic and apathetic about the existing system as it stood, as shown by low municipal election polls²³ and the inability of local political parties to find suitable candidates for such elections.²⁴ The research was also undertaken against the backdrop of Labour briefly losing control of the City Council and of the alleged consciousness this created among city councillors of a need for a change in the way they related to the public given the political apathy which contributed to the crisis in the city.²⁵ Hampton wanted 'neighbourhood councils' formed below the ward level to foster greater participation on the lines proposed by the Skeffington Committee in 1969 so as to provide better information so better decisions could be made by the politicians.²⁶ Hampton's estimation of the limits of popular civic consciousness due to the greater social attachments of working people to their neighbourhoods²⁷ has influenced the arguments of my thesis. Similarly, his view, that the way councils actually operated and were organised affected the manifestation of civic spirit for the worse, has also influenced this thesis. The fact that on a single day councillors could be elected by a small minority of the electorate who then had no further direct control over their actions was not an advertisement for participatory democracy and could allow the taking of extreme ideological positions when Labour councillors made political decisions. The position was no different in the 1940s. In fact that period saw perhaps the peak of Labour confidence in the system in Sheffield, despite Fielding's view that the anti-party popular mood he saw existing during the Second World War represented a lack of confidence in the representative nature of representative democracy.²⁸ There was little indication of any desire by Labour politicians locally at that time to initiate a popular debate on the voting system in local elections or to increase participation in the actual process of town planning, for example, on the lines later proposed by Skeffington.²⁹ In fact Chapter Three of this thesis which tries to answer the question of how far Sheffield City Council was willing to involve ordinary citizens in reconstruction planning provides evidence of the caution and ingrained secrecy of the former. This contrasts unfavourably with the view taken by city councils in Coventry or Bristol that local interests should be intimately involved at every stage. Hampton also believed social surveys should be widely used, for example, but little on those lines was done in Sheffield in the 1940s. It is reasonable to assume that the confidence of the Labour Council in going its own way without considerable formal consultation was due to the greater security of its political position than was the case, for example, in Coventry.

Hampton's book also influenced Dave Backwith's 1995 doctoral thesis on 'The Death of Municipal Socialism'. This analysed the relationship between the growth of council housing into a major tenure and the rise of the Labour Party between the two world wars. Backwith accepted Hampton's view of the nature of the post-Second World War Labour Council in Sheffield and described the post-war period as the 'ebb tide of municipal socialism'.³⁰ General needs council housing was a policy that had specifically originated with the Labour movement. Case studies of Sheffield and Bristol between 1919 and 1939 showed the influence of contrasting local factors on housing reform. Backwith saw inter-war Sheffield

as the exemplar of 'municipal socialism' and related the evolution of Labour's housing policy in both cities to the changing social bases of working-class politics, chiefly the shift from a trade union, industrial base to one based on working-class neighbourhoods. Gender relations were central because women's organisation was vital to the consolidation of Labour support on the new housing estates. But, while Backwith regards municipal socialism as founded on the provision of housing, which was the foremost council service, he argues that it operated through an ideology which fostered a 'dependency culture' on the housing estates. Tenants did not make the decisions that directly affected them - that was done by a paternalistic council and as a result there was often alienation. And though changes occurred in the 1980s, Backwith argued that there was still suspicion between the Housing Department and tenants organisations.³¹ My thesis looks in detail at the period immediately following that covered by Backwith and attempts to discover whether his views and criticisms of housing policy are valid in an altered situation of huge waiting lists and an inadequate supply of housing. It examines the expedients used to speed up house production and, in comparing Sheffield with neighbouring Rotherham, argues there was a qualitative difference in efficiency of production between the two despite both being majority Labour Councils.

Two local studies that have influenced my thesis are Andrew Thorpe's 1993 essay on Sheffield's consolidation as a Labour stronghold between 1926 and 1951³² and David Stevenson's recent doctoral thesis on the Sheffield Peace Movement between 1934 and 1940.³³ Thorpe's study covers the same period as my thesis, but I have been able to use a wider range of local sources, and have been able to cover certain topics in considerably greater detail. Thorpe's essay is at an opposite pole from that of Pollard who mainly concentrated on structural factors in his description of the rise of Labour up to 1939. Thorpe concentrates on shorter-term political factors in his account of the consolidation of Labour's power and though structural factors cannot be ruled out they do not *automatically* affect the political development of the Labour Party. Events have a greater role, as do individuals. Class is not the sole explanation of developments even though it is still important as Sheffield was overwhelmingly a working-class industrial city. The objective conditions for Labour in Sheffield were very favourable given the strong trade union and co-operative movements but Labour also created a coalition of local political support through the votes of clients like the council house tenants and the enlarged workforce that the City Council employed. As Labour was the largest owner of rented property in the city, council house tenants were a dependable source of votes, but the Council also created a large direct labour department to build and repair houses and schools. The employees of the direct labour department, plus the staffs of the electricity and transport undertakings, could be counted on to vote Labour (at least until nationalisation by the Attlee Government after 1945). Labour proved a much more responsible steward of the city's affairs than its opponents had been. The Municipal Progressive leader, Alderman Jackson, could bluster about socialist mal-administration but little was actually wrong with the decisions that Labour took.³⁴

Stevenson's thesis attempted to question the received view of the national peace movement in the 1930s

by looking at the history of Sheffield. While foreign policy was a national issue and the population was informed by an increasingly national media, local factors had a crucial role in the movement's development.³⁵ Stevenson attempted to produce a holistic study of the local peace movement so the scope of his study went well beyond the Labour Party.³⁶ Following Martin Ceadel³⁷ he differentiated between the *pacifist* and *pacifistic* wings of the local peace movement.³⁸ The latter section included the majority of the Labour Party. By 1940 they had adopted a more 'realist' view of 'collective security' and had dropped the 'utopian' view of it they had formerly held.³⁹ Despite this, the Labour Party in Sheffield up to 1940 was often at odds with the national leadership. The evolution of the party's peace policy on the above lines was slow and confused due to the cumbersome nature of the party structure in Sheffield.⁴⁰ The Trades and Labour Council was willing to allow the expression of the opinions of both dissidents and supporters of Transport House and to see opponents of the national leadership take senior positions on the Trade Council Executive.⁴¹ Stevenson ends his thesis with the reorganisation of the Trades Council in 1940 to expel Communist elements within its leadership (including the Trade Council president), who believed the Second World War to be an 'imperialist war', and who attempted to further Soviet propaganda and to encourage peace overtures to the Germans.⁴² I also mention the reorganisation and briefly sketch how Labour's pacificism further developed inside South Yorkshire during a 'total war' and beyond, when the possible threat of an atomic war with Soviet Russia led to a Communist-inspired peace movement seeking to overturn the West's nuclear advantage. This got the support of at least one surviving locally prominent member of the old pre-war pacifist minority in the Labour Party who wanted atomic weapons outlawed.

The list of studies of Sheffield's political history that have had an influence on my thesis must end with Paul Allender's recent book which uses a case study of Sheffield between 1973 and 1998 in order to provide empirical verification of his views about the shortcomings of the principles and practices under which the Labour Party has always acted.⁴³ Allender derived his primary evidence from taped interviews with a range of local Labour figures including David Blunkett. Labour failed to live up to its own professed aspirations to defend working class interests and to restore the economy of Sheffield, because the Sheffield Labour movement was bankrupt in ideas and ability. It was not a real socialist party seeking comprehensive ideologically-based solutions to problems, but a party which sought short-term pragmatic answers to appease the voters. This ultimately led Labour in Sheffield to rely on the loyalties of local capitalists to bail it out, rather than seek its own socialist solution to unemployment and the need to diversify and rebuild a shattered local economy after the decline of coal and steel. Within the Labour Party nationally the individual members were constantly betrayed by opportunist leaders who concentrated power within the movement in their own hands through excessive bureaucracy and a lack of commitment to real inner party democracy. The party's policy-making process was confused and confusing to members. The claim of the leadership that Labour was a party of the national interest was patently untrue because it was inextricably linked to the trade unions which meant its real interests lay with a sectional interest. Finally, Labour was marked by a culture of defeatism, because it always followed, instead of leading, the electorate. Allender claims that Labour has been essentially the same

phenomenon throughout its century of existence and thus his interpretation can be applied to the 1940s.⁴⁴ Certainly civic, political and business leaders were equally worried about Sheffield's overwhelming dependence on steel and feared that new and existing industry would be directed to locations outside the city. In the event the worries expressed on this score could be discounted as Sheffield's industry entered the 1950s with full order books and a demand for more workers to service that industry. Indeed until the late 1960s unemployment in the city was to be at a level of no more than two percent of the workforce.⁴⁵ Thus the problem of the local economy and Labour's attitude towards it, which, according to Allender, was a test of the ability of the local Labour movement to live up to its own pragmatic claims could be postponed into a future which in the 1950s and 1960s was to appear rosy. What Allender has written is actually a political polemic by a disillusioned ex-Bennite⁴⁶ and the theme of leadership betrayal, while somewhat convincing, is predictable. Allender's case study of Sheffield does not make comparisons with other British or European cities and, in the absence of such comparisons, we do not know whether his conclusions about the industrial decline of Sheffield and the responsibility of its Labour movement for that decline are really characteristic of the wider Labour movement.⁴⁷ The section on Sheffield is the only attempt he makes to ground his assertions in actual empirical research.

Rotherham in contrast with Sheffield has had relatively little academic work done on its Labour movement to compare with the above studies, but then it does not have two major universities located within its environs! Even Doncaster has produced an MPhil thesis on its inter-war Labour Party.⁴⁸ There are signs, however, that this situation is changing. Jonathan Rose uses material on the little-known Rawmarsh ex-miner, writer and Workers' Educational Association lecturer, 'Roger Dataller',⁴⁹ and mentions 'Tommy' James,⁵⁰ a rigid local Communist, who was a graduate of the Lenin School in Moscow, and a commissar in the International Brigade in Spain.⁵¹ James finished in 1968 a narrative history of the Labour movement in Rotherham that was intended to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Rotherham Trades Council.⁵² He had also written an autobiography,⁵³ which, according to Rose, proclaimed James' 'invariable rightness on all issues',⁵⁴ and a history of Rotherham Communist Party.⁵⁵ The Labour movement history relies on the Rotherham Advertiser for its source material. As a 'celebratory' history it tends to be uncritical about 'the workers' and selective. Alderman Caine, Rotherham Labour Party's foremost member in the first half of the twentieth century, nevertheless, wrote an introductory piece, 'A Testimonial from a Pioneer',⁵⁶ to the book which shows that Labour and the local Communists were united in their views on the past in the late 1960s. This unity is also shown by local Labour responses to particular events during the Second World War. For example, Labour in Rotherham supported Communist affiliation to the party in 1943, and, but for Transport House, would have accepted a joint 'Progressive Unity' candidate in the 1945 general election. To these books could be added Jennifer Greatrex's MA dissertation on inter-war mass unemployment in Rotherham⁵⁷ and my MA dissertation that looks at events in the Spanish Civil War from the perspective of Labour in Rotherham, and, to a lesser extent, in Sheffield.⁵⁸ I concluded that, due to its pragmatic, constitutional variety of socialism, the Labour Party locally was forced to rely on 'moral force' to overturn the British government policy of non-intervention. 'Direct action' was limited to raising funds for humanitarian

relief and visits to Spain to express solidarity. Ray Hearne's short celebratory pamphlet, written for the Trades Council's centenary, is largely a condensed version of 'Tommy' James' Labour Movement history, but brings the narrative up to 1991.⁵⁹

1.2 - THE WIDER HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE 1940S

Having described the historiography of the Labour Party in South Yorkshire I now turn to the wider historiography of the 1940s and look at two major topics which have relevance to my thesis. I conclude this Introduction with a brief synopsis of the chapters of the thesis.

1.2.1 - THE MYTH OF CONSENSUS ?

It is perhaps best to start with the controversy over whether there was an elite consensus created during the Second World War between the political parties and in Whitehall which created 'the post-war settlement' as Paul Addison in the classic 1975 book The Road to 1945 believed.⁶⁰ Books and the historians that write them are products of their age and the politics that characterise it. In an essay on the historiography of appeasement and British national identity Patrick Finney has written that the 'underlying point' of his essay was 'to argue that historiography is never innocent; rather it is both shaped by broad ideological forces at work within society and has ideological implications, even if these are not always immediately apparent.' According to Finney

debates [on appeasement] are still predominantly conducted solely in terms of empirical factors, as if all that was at stake was 'the weight of the evidence'. . . . To concentrate exclusively on the empirical dimension obscures the complexity of the constant interactions between past and present within historiography, and the degree to which both interpretations and 'the evidence' alike are subjective ideological constructs, created by historians as they interact with the archival record under the influence of present-centred factors including personal positioning (in terms of race, class, gender, beliefs and their pre-existing interpretations), the current protocols and methodologies of the discipline, and political and social context (including ideas about national identity).⁶¹

Rodney Lowe provides a useful brief account of the historiography of consensus in a 1990 essay. He notes that in the late 1970s and 1980s there was a 'consensus on consensus'. Marxists who sought to emphasise the re-establishment of capitalist hegemony after the war stressed it as did the New Right who sought to discredit post-war policy. Members of the Social Democratic Party, the Labour Right and Conservative 'Wets' endorsed it as a period of harmony and lessened divisions in society. Margaret Thatcher particularly publicised the concept as the source of a post-war decline that appeared omnipresent in the 1970s when class conflict appeared to have burst into flame once more with the end of the

long post-war boom and apocalyptic visions of the end of capitalism seized the imagination of the middle classes. The source of this failure was in the decisions of the 1940s when Britain was fighting for national survival.⁶²

Correlli Barnett in 1986⁶³ extended the revisionist interpretation of the inter-war years that he began in 1972⁶⁴ into the Second World War period. Stephen Brooke has described the book Barnett wrote in 1986 as the 'thuggish younger brother to The Road to 1945' since it accepts the consensus thesis but looks at it from a much bleaker perspective.⁶⁵ The 'moralising internationalists' of the earliest 1972 book, who fatally weakened Britain through their failure to understand the needs of grand strategy, are the same people as the 'New Jerusalemists' who forced a disastrous post-war consensus on the British people with their attempts to foist peace aims on the wartime Churchill coalition. He continued his historical analysis of how and why contemporary Britain has lost world power and status in 1995⁶⁶ with a book which covered the period between 1945 and 1950. More recently, in 2001 he wrote a book⁶⁷ which examined the period between the Korean War and the Suez crisis in 1956. All these books - 'The Pride and the Fall Sequence' - are highly judgmental and controversial polemics. The two middle books were apparently almost required reading for Conservative ministers of the Thatcher and Major era.⁶⁸ Barnett recently said that he believed that a chapter of the last book had influenced New Labour's Estelle Morris in the approach she took to education policy.⁶⁹

Historians have attempted to look in detail at the validity of Barnett's views about the 1940s. Nick Tiratsoo⁷⁰ and Junichi Hasegawa⁷¹ have tested his ideas about the pervasiveness of 'New Jerusalemist' thinking in the sphere of town planning and have examined his contention that housing as a priority was placed well ahead of the needs of industrial reconstruction by the parties in the wartime coalition government as they sought short-term electoral advantage thus imperiling future economic prosperity.⁷² They argue, however, that these conclusions are ill-founded. Barnett, originally a military historian, has been dismissed by Paul Addison as probably the only British historian 'whose creed was Bismarckian nationalism'.⁷³ Barnett believes that a state dedicated to the ruthless pursuit of national competitiveness in a Darwinian world, as the German state was, is the model that Britain should have followed throughout the twentieth century.⁷⁴ As the reference to Estelle Morris shows, his main political achievement has been to influence a revolution in education policy, which has had the aim less of creating the rounded individuals that the old liberal education aimed at than in making them fit for the needs of the workplace.

The consensus notion that underlay Addison and Barnett came, however, to be questioned by the rising generation of younger historians in the 1980s and 1990s. According to Kevin Jefferys

the war had not initiated a process of convergence between the political parties on domestic policy. Part of the problem in this context rests on a definition of 'consensus'. The fact that both parties operated within the same political framework

made a certain level of agreement inevitable, and the war had clearly brought social reform to the forefront of politics in such a way that it could not be ignored by any post-war government. . . . [But] apart from the recognition that particular issues would have to be tackled, the parties were in many ways as far apart on social issues as they had been before 1939.⁷⁵

Stephen Brooke in his book on the Labour Party during the Second World War would agree with Jefferys' analysis, arguing that Labour developed distinct policies of its own that were 'a far cry from consensus'.⁷⁶ Jose Harris claims that 'national consensus was an artificially manufactured myth', while 'To speak of consensus' with regard to the 1947 National Assistance Act created by the Attlee government is 'profoundly misleading', according to Deacon and Bradshaw. S. E. Finer and Samuel Beer have also seen - in sharp contradiction to Margaret Thatcher's views - adversarial not consensus politics as being at the root of the post-war decline of Britain.⁷⁷ Ben Pimlott argues that 'consensus' is one of those words that 'linger, become universally absorbed, and gain a permanent niche in our vocabulary - shaping and perhaps distorting the way in which we view the world.'⁷⁸ 'Consensus' had, indeed, according to Pimlott, distorted historians' views of the wartime and post-war period. It was 'a mirage, an illusion which rapidly fades the closer one gets to it'.⁷⁹ And he believed it would ultimately end up in 'the dustbin of historiography'.⁸⁰ According to Pimlott, 'Distance makes it possible to look beyond the emotion and the invective, and see prevailing attitudes which, because shared and uncontentious, do not hit the headlines and may not even be noticed at the time. But this is not to say that the visible differences - some of which are harsh and desperate - are not real.'⁸¹ In recognition of Pimlott's 1988 essay which started the questioning of 'consensus', an anthology of essays was published in 1996 entitled The Myth of Consensus. Contributions like that of Harriet Jones, who showed the distinctiveness of Conservative political thought in the 1940s, as compared with that of Labour, based as the former was on a defence of inequality,⁸² make this revisionism sometimes seem almost a new orthodoxy but it has had its share of critics who continue to accept the validity of the idea of consensus, for example, Rodney Lowe and Paul Addison.⁸³ They concede that 'consensus' should be used with greater precision which has often not been the case. But Lowe, for instance, argues it was

not a mirage in the 1940s. However, its nature was constantly evolving and it had distinct limitations. . . . The rejection, at all levels of society, of interwar fatalism was the prelude to an agreed series of fundamental reforms in each of the core areas of welfare policy . . . These reforms marked such a historic shift in the state's responsibilities that they required the coining of a new term: the welfare state.⁸⁴

Lowe's thesis seems to me to provide an acceptable *via media* between unqualified acceptance of consensus and dismissing it altogether and this is the view I adopt in the thesis.

1.2.2 - APATHY HISTORY ?

As well as creating an Attlee Consensus, the Second World War, according to Paul Addison, had produced a shift to the left in popular attitudes by at least the autumn of 1942. It may have been further to the left then than it was in 1945 when the radicalisation of the British people won Labour the general election. Addison accepted that some people never change their opinions and some have no opinions to change but he nevertheless believed that the relative weight of the evidence from by-election results and the evidence collected by government agencies proved radicalisation had taken place.⁸⁵ This view and the view that Labour's programme was broadly accepted as well as supported by British public opinion between 1945 and 1951 has been called into question by the same generation of historians who also contest Addison's elite consensus thesis.

The Second World War is now seen to have been in a variety of areas, including female employment, the evacuation of schoolchildren and pregnant women, and armed forces education, much less radicalising in its impact on British society than was claimed by many left-wing commentators during and immediately after the war. The academic reappraisal began in a collection of essays edited by Harold L. Smith in 1986⁸⁶ and was continued in essays edited by Nick Tiratsoo in 1991⁸⁷ and in a book by Steven Fielding, Peter Thompson, and Tiratsoo on the Labour Party and popular politics in the 1940s.⁸⁸ These volumes argue that there was no straightforward popular radicalising trend leading to the 1945 election result. Fielding in a 1992 essay on 'The meaning of the 1945 General Election' claimed that,

Instead of promoting pro-Labour sentiment it seems that the conflict left many members of the public disengaged from the political process and cynical about the motives of all politicians. As a consequence, rather than have Labour hold office by itself the generally favoured outcome appears to have been the formation of a progressive coalition committed to the implementation of the Beveridge report. However, in reality, electors who did not want to see the return of a Conservative government had no choice but to vote 'straight Left'.⁸⁹

Fielding returned to this analysis in 1995, assessing the significance of the 'Movement away from Party' during the war and arguing that it was because the Conservatives were seen to oppose the Beveridge Report and other post-war reforms that they were popularly viewed as operating in a 'party' spirit thus losing them the 1945 election.⁹⁰ An essay by Mason and Thompson on 'The Political Mood in Wartime Britain'⁹¹ in 1991 had emphasised the apathy and conservatism of the wartime public which analysis was continued by Fielding in 'Don't Know and Don't Care: Popular Political Attitudes in Labour's Britain, 1945-51'⁹² and in the book he co-authored with Nick Tiratsoo and Peter Thompson. Nick Tiratsoo in his study of reconstruction in Coventry claimed that the local Labour Party was constrained by 'the fact that postwar Coventry remained very much more conservative - indeed, Conservative - than had seemed likely in 1945'.⁹³

These views are diametrically opposed to those of more *Marxisant* historians who see the Attlee government as, according to Raymond Williams, 'an objectively quite reactionary government' and regard it as having produced in the British people such disgust at the bleakly authoritarian and bureaucratic ethos it introduced that they summarily dismissed it from power in 1951.⁹⁴ Ralph Miliband argues that the popular radicalism of the Second World War of which Labour was the beneficiary in 1945 was not 'for the most part, a formed socialist ideology, let alone a revolutionary one.'⁹⁵ Similarly John Saville while admitting that the war 'radicalised many sections of the British people' at the same time admits that 'Britain was a deeply conservative society, a generalisation which certainly includes much of the working class, whatever their political affiliation'.⁹⁶ In contrast to the alleged picture of Labour's bureaucratic authoritarianism there is a counter-veiling tendency among such historians to present the Communist Party up to at least 1947 as wanting to foster ideas of participatory democracy and an active citizenry. Such is James Hinton's view presented in both articles⁹⁷ and a book.⁹⁸ Unfortunately the Labour Party refused to implement the industrial democracy and other measures of participation supposedly beloved of the communists thus suppressing an important element of an alternative social order to capitalism. In opposition to these perspectives, Steven Fielding considers British communism to be 'interesting but irrelevant'. It never had the importance or influence in Britain that Communist historians give it and, as Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo argue, Labour went out of its way to encourage participation and to 'build community' but its wishes were frustrated by the electorate.⁹⁹

Perhaps the most perplexing aspect of the latter's case is their implicit dismissal of the role of Labour activists. Steven Fielding has dismissed them and the branch culture they created in the 1950s and 1960s as obstacles to greater participation.¹⁰⁰ As John Marriott points out, they dismiss oral history in England Arise as untrustworthy¹⁰¹ which means they do not accept activists own testimony about their role within local communities, so convincingly set out in the book edited by Dan Weinbren, which surely helped build community spirit.¹⁰² Hinton, who memorably terms Fielding and his co-authors the 'Apathy School', argues that activists did not have 'a flawed perception of the electorate'. On the contrary, they understood it only too well but this did not make them give up the whole enterprise out of despair as would be the logical conclusion of accepting Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo's evidence.¹⁰³ In a review of Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo's book on the Labour Party in the 1940s, David Morgan, for example, criticised them for their 'populist tone, berating an enlightened and politically engaged elite for "misconstruing" the public mood, . . . [it is] simply arrogance masquerading as analysis.' He conceded, however, that popular conservatism might explain the Tory hegemony of the 1950s but that what they 'completely left out of the equation' was 'the virulent and highly orchestrated anti-communism which certainly had a massive effect on popular opinion and is still to be adequately researched.'¹⁰⁴ Marriott notes the resonance of the general issues raised by the book

with the Blair agenda. Implicit in its arguments - and in spite of . . . much evidence . . .

[that] points to an attenuated popular radicalization during the war - is the view that the 'traditional' working class was not homogeneous, even at . . . the culmination of the 'long march of British labour'. The party could never rely on . . . [its] unquestioning allegiance. . . , in part because its [the party's] ethical socialism evinced little support. The brand of co-operation and reconciliation, classlessness and consensus simply failed to engage with the realities of class inequalities and antagonisms. Few . . . now . . . dispute the lack of homogeneity. . . . [M]ore contentious is the question of allegiance. This, and the new Labour Party's ability to learn from the lessons of the postwar period, remain to be answered.¹⁰⁵

Fielding, Thompson, and Tiratsoo argued that

the state-centred and bureaucratic outcome of Labour's period in office [between 1945 and 1951] was not intended. Labour's vision of socialism was inimical to it. . . . Thus, if guilt for the subsequent character of the years of 'consensus' is to be apportioned, then Labour should not be alone in the dock. The Party might, in fact, find itself in the role of the prosecuting counsel.¹⁰⁶

Paul Allender, however, would disagree with this view as we have seen. My thesis seeks to come to some conclusion on the matter through looking at town planning and council housing in Sheffield and planners and councillors views about the participation of the public in re-planning the city and their ability to create community spirit on the council housing estates. Fielding, Thompson, and Tiratsoo's book clearly set out the view (one that Nick Tiratsoo¹⁰⁷ has developed further in other articles) that the planners and local councillors did want to create a sense of citizenship in their communities by involving the public in planning. Rather than being arrogant dictators, the planners were mild reformers who wanted to work as much in harmony with the public's needs and desires as they found possible.¹⁰⁸ In a similar vein David Matless has described the links between planners, the attempt to create an active citizenry and the preservation of the British landscape in the 1940s. He argues that this 'recreational citizenship' 'played a key role in the articulation of Britishness within the social-democratic political culture of the 1940s',¹⁰⁹ that it deferred to the expertise and authority of planners, and that, as yet, it saw no conflict of interest with them. That waited for what Lionel Esher calls the 'moral revolution' of the 1960s.¹¹⁰

1.3 - SYNOPSIS OF THESIS

The first three major Chapters of the thesis cover the period of the Second World War from September 1939 to the July 1945 General Election while the following three cover the period between then and October 1951 when Labour was finally defeated by Churchill's Conservatives. Chapter Two examines the wartime debate over the post-war industrial future of Sheffield within the City Council and between it

and concerned organisations like the local trades unions and the Chamber of Commerce. It also looks at City Council debates over Labour's proposal discussed at the 1943 Annual Conference to introduce the regionalisation of local government and how that was resisted by a united council with a vested interest in preserving its existing powers. The episode shows that the centralising tendencies of Whitehall could be resisted and that such tendencies were not inevitable. Chapter Three examines the process of town planning in Sheffield from the 1930s until 1945 and the Town Planning Exhibition held to publicise the Collie Plan. December 1940 and the Sheffield Blitz apparently gave the opportunity to build a more modern, better planned and less ugly city but government procrastination over providing the necessary funding and approval to buy land meant progress was slow before the war's end in re-building Sheffield. This was not helped by the secrecy of the City Council at a time when the country was fighting to defend an allegedly open and democratic society against the Nazis. Participation in town planning was restricted to the Town Planning Committee and its technical officers. The Chapter also looks at the wartime context of the acute post-war housing crisis. Chapter Four looks at the wartime Labour Party in South Yorkshire with illustrations from Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster. It looks at the period of the ebb of Labour Party activity and individual membership due to wartime disruption up to 1942 and the resurgence afterwards as plans were made for post-war reconstruction. Finally, it looks at the 1945 General Election in Sheffield. Chapter Five looks at Labour local government between 1945 and 1951. It examines the factors, including the lack of consensus between the various levels of local government, which prevented the reform of the local structure of local government, including the creation of a York South County Council. It also examines the effect on local government of electricity, gas and local authority hospital nationalisation and the attempts to implement the Butler Education Act of 1944 in South Yorkshire given austerity conditions. Chapter Six examines the reasons why the 'New Jerusalem' in terms of a re-built modern Sheffield failed to be advanced despite the 1945 Collie Plan, and the housing records of both Sheffield and Rotherham County Borough Councils up to 1951, explaining why, despite being close neighbours, they were relatively so different in the progress they made in building council houses. Chapter Seven looks at the Labour Party locally between 1945 and 1951, examining its ideology and whether it was culturally determined by a homogeneous working-class way of life. It describes local Labour organisation and the vital role played by women as unpaid voluntary labour in contrast with their limited entry to local political office. Finally, it investigates Labour's electoral success in municipal and general elections in Sheffield up to 1951. Chapter Eight provides a conclusion.

This thesis is dedicated to my late father who between 1958 and his death in 1967 served as a Labour councillor on the Swinton Urban District Council, a local authority swallowed up in the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough in 1974. He had experienced a measure of upward social mobility since he was a schoolmaster at Mexborough Grammar School while his father had had to work in local steel works and then down the pit as a fitter. My father was of the generation which, voting for the first time, elected Clement Attlee's government in 1945. He himself served in Germany during the latter stages of the Second World War. In some ways he illustrates Hobsbawm's thesis that the rise of the Labour Party was determined by the consciousness created from experience of 'traditional' working-class culture, for he

was both a sometime Congregationalist lay preacher as well as being passionately interested in football which he played in the 1940s in the Army, for Selby Town and at least once for Rotherham United Reserves. I would have liked to include much more material on my home town of Swinton in the thesis - my father wrote 'A Geographical Study' on the Urban District for his teaching diploma in the late 1940s - but this has proved impossible.

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- ² As Laybourn notes - see LAYBOURN, Keith. 'The Rise of Labour and the Decline of Liberalism: The State of the Debate', History, 80, 1995, p221.
- ³ HOBSBAWM, Eric. 'The Making of the Working Class 1870-1914' in HOBSBAWM, Eric (ed) Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion and Jazz. Abacus, 1999, p77.
- ⁴ BERGER, Stefan. 'Working-Class Culture and the Labour Movement in the South Wales and the Ruhr Coalfields, 1850-2000: A Comparison', Llafur, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2001, pp5-40.
- ⁵ MARRIOTT, John. The Culture of Labourism: The East End Between the Wars. Edinburgh University Press, 1991.
- ⁶ TIRATSOO, Nick. Reconstruction, Affluence and Labour Politics: Coventry 1945-1960. Routledge, 1990. See also HINTON, James. 'Coventry Communism: A Study of Factory Politics in the Second World War', History Workshop Journal, No. 10, Autumn 1980, pp90-118 and SCHNEER, Jonathan. Labour's Conscience: The Labour Left 1945-51. Unwin Hyman, 1988, pp174-81 for information on Labour in Coventry in the 1940s.
- ⁷ SAVAGE, Michael. The Dynamics of Working-Class Politics: The Labour Movement in Preston, 1880-1940. Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- ⁸ WILLIAMS, Chris. Democratic Rhondda: Politics and Society, 1885-1951. University of Wales Press, 1996.
- ⁹ See ENGELS, Friedrich. The Condition of the Working Class in England. Penguin Books, 1987. This was first published in Germany in 1845 and was rooted in Engels experience of Manchester.
- ¹⁰ SAVAGE, Mike. 'The Rise of the Labour Party in Local Perspective', Journal of Regional and Local Studies, Vol. 10, Part 1, 1990, p1.
- ¹¹ POLLARD, Sidney. A History of Labour in Sheffield. Liverpool University Press, 1959, pp261-4.
- ¹² KIRK, Neville. "'Traditional' Working-Class Culture and 'the Rise of Labour': Some Preliminary Questions and Observations", Social History, Vol. 16, No. 2, May 1991, p210.
- ¹³ POLLARD, S. 1959, p198.
- ¹⁴ MARX, Karl and ENGELS, Friedrich. Manifesto of the Communist Party. Progress Publishers, 1977, p42-8.
- ¹⁵ POLLARD, Sidney. 'Labour' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.
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- ¹⁸ HAMPTON, William. Democracy and Community: A Study of Politics in Sheffield. Oxford University Press, 1970, p160.
- ¹⁹ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p21.
- ²⁰ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p279.
- ²¹ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p278.
- ²² HAMPTON, W. 1970, p5.
- ²³ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p13.
- ²⁴ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p14.
- ²⁵ HAMPTON, W. 1970, pxvi.
- ²⁶ HAMPTON, W. 1970, pxix.
- ²⁷ HAMPTON, W. 1970, pp120-1.
- ²⁸ FIELDING, Steven. 'The Second World War and Popular Radicalism: The Significance of the 'Movement Away from Party'', History, Vol. 80, No. 258, February 1995, p56.
- ²⁹ According to Skeffington, 'participation involves doing as well as talking and there will be full participation only where the public are able to take an active part throughout the plan-making process'. Quoted in HAMPTON, W. 1970, p290.
- ³⁰ BACKWITH, Dave. 'The Death of Municipal Socialism: The Politics of Council Housing in Sheffield and Bristol, 1919-1939', Ph.D., Bristol University, August 1995, p286.
- ³¹ BACKWITH, Dave. 'Thesis Report - The Death of Municipal Socialism: The Politics of Council Housing in Sheffield and Bristol, 1919-1939 (University of Bristol PhD, 1995)', Labour History Review, Vol. 60, No. 3, Winter 1995, pp54-5.
- ³² THORPE, Andrew. 'The Consolidation of a Labour Stronghold 1926-1951' in BINFIELD, Clyde,

- CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.
- ³³ STEVENSON, David Anthony. 'The Sheffield Peace Movement 1934-1940', Ph.D, Sheffield Hallam University, May 2000 (Unmodified copy submitted before award of degree in 2001).
- ³⁴ THORPE, A. 1993, p117-8. One criticism of the essays in Volume I is that taken as a whole they lack 'passion' - see READ, Donald. Review: *The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993*, ed. CLYDE, BINFIELD et al. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. 1993.) 3 vols.', Northern History, No. 32, 1996, p245.
- ³⁵ STEVENSON, D. A. May 2000, p1.
- ³⁶ STEVENSON, D. A. May 2000, p2.
- ³⁷ CEADEL, Martin. Pacifism in Britain 1914-1945: The Defining of a Faith. Oxford University Press, 1980, p3.
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- ⁴⁴ ALLENDER, P. 2001, pp24-9.
- ⁴⁵ HEY, David. A History of Sheffield. Carnegie Publishing, 1998, p243.
- ⁴⁶ Allender was a Labour Party member between 1980 and 1985. According to him his first three years 'were very definitely 'Bennite' years' after which he became disillusioned - see ALLENDER, P. 2001, p16.
- ⁴⁷ See the review of Allender's book in Tribune 31/08/2001, p18.
- ⁴⁸ TEANBY, K. 'Not Equal to the Demand - Major Concerns of the Doncaster Divisional Labour Party 1918-39', MPhil, Sheffield University, 1983. I have not, however, used it.
- ⁴⁹ ROSE, Jonathan. The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes. Yale University Press, 2001, p222. Politically he was a Liberal and was active before 1914. He is mentioned, for example, under his real name, A. A. Eaglestone at a political meeting at Denaby reported in the Rotherham Advertiser 08/03/1913, p5.
- ⁵⁰ ROSE, J. 2001, p301. To be pedantic, however, it describes him as coming from Sheffield, which description, as he was a local civic patriot and follower of Rotherham United, he would summarily have dismissed. See HEARNE, Ray. No Mean Response: A Brief History of Rotherham Trades Union Council 1891-1991. Rotherham Trades Council, May 1991.
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- ⁵³ JAMES, Thomas Henry. We Tread But One Path. Unpublished, 1966.
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- ⁶¹ FINNEY, Patrick. 'The Romance of Decline: The Historiography of Appeasement and British National Identity', Electronic Journal of International History, < <http://www.ihrinfo.ac.uk/ejournal/art1.html> >, paragraph 39, 2 February 2003.
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- ⁷⁰ See TIRATSOO, N. 1990 and TIRATSOO, Nick. 'Labour and the Reconstruction of Hull, 1945-51' in TIRATSOO, Nick (ed) The Attlee Years. Pinter Publishers, 1991.
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- ⁷⁴ ADDISON, Paul. 'The Road from 1945' in HENNESSY, Peter and SELDON, Anthony (eds) Ruling Performance: British Governments from Attlee to Thatcher. Basil Blackwell, 1989, p19.
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CHAPTER TWO
INDUSTRY, MUNICIPAL LABOURISM
AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM
IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE,
1939-1945

2.1 - INTRODUCTION

Harold Laski concluded in A Grammar of Politics published in 1925 that:

[T]he main difficulty, heretofore, in local government is that it has been rare to attempt the evocation of a community spirit. It has meant a little, but not too much, to be a citizen of some city; but the power has not been there to make citizenship creative, and the general mass has not been related to the process of government. Its art gallery has been a matter for its curator and his committee; it has not been a matter for every citizen possessed of a love of art. Its infant death-rate has been a matter for the medical officer of health; he has not been allowed effectively to appeal to a civic conscience, alert and armed. We must strive to create a local pride in achievement and a local sense of shame in failure.... We need to set local authorities striving against each other in ceaseless rivalry, to produce in men that urgent local patriotism which Mr. Chesterton depicted in the *Napoleon of Notting Hill*. That, I think, can be achieved if the local authorities are free to think out great policies and to apply them in freedom. And it will not be unimportant to the standards of central politics that we are able thus to revivify the quality of local life.¹

A year later Labour having won municipal office in Sheffield, its first big city, Sheffield Forward proclaimed:

*In our columns we prove by official figures that Sheffield can benefit by the elimination of profit-mongers and the substitution of Municipal enterprise based on a realisation of social consciousness. Houses can be built better and cheaper by direct labour. Money can be obtained at a cheaper rate by the establishment of a Municipal Bank. Useful schemes of work at Trade Union rates of pay can be promoted.*²

Municipal enterprise was once regarded as a respectable alternative means of delivery of public goods and services to both national 'statist' solutions such as the Morrisonian public corporation and to the unfettered operation of private companies. The public/private collaborations that are today's big idea for the provision and finance of public services and infrastructure were unknown. Great northern cities like Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, and Bradford were suffused in the 1940s with the physical

reminders of a golden Victorian civic past that testified to the operation of municipal enterprise in a multitude of ways from reservoirs to sewers and gas, electricity and transport undertakings. It is not surprising that the Conclusion of Sheffield Replanned (produced in 1945 as part of the Town Planning Exhibition to publicise the Collie Plan for the city) harked back to great Victorian achievements while also emphasising those of the Second World War. Labour's opponents in Sheffield and Rotherham were themselves the direct political heirs to this Victorian tradition of municipal provision - late nineteenth century Conservatives were its pioneers in Sheffield, while in Rotherham the Liberals began and extended municipal ownership. The Corporation was a ubiquitous and tangible presence in the consciousness of every citizen. Alan Bennett has noted how in the 1940s Leeds of his childhood the stamp of the Corporation's heraldic crest emphasised this throughout the city in a variety of ways. It was stamped on the exercise books in which he wrote at school, for example, and on the sides of trams and in a hundred other ways. Representations of it were even made in floral form in municipal parks and gardens courtesy of the Council parks department. He believes that this generated even in the most insensitive child or adult citizen some civic consciousness of Leeds as an single entity.³

In spite of the physical and symbolic manifestations of a city's civic spirit which the above provided evidence of, however, many historians tend to see ordinary working-class people as lacking a sense of a wider civic consciousness. This is because, for most members of the working class, their family, the home in which they lived and the recreational activities and hobbies they undertook outside work were central. Work was often not intellectually demanding or emotionally fulfilling. Hence the private and domestic nature of working-class life. Mass-Observation which looked at life in Bolton in Lancashire in the late 1930s summed up the concerns of its inhabitants as being on the whole concerned '... about their own homes, and their few personal dreams (security, a holiday week at orientalist Blackpool, a fortune in the Pools) and nothing else matters very much except the progress made by the town's famous football club'.⁴ The same could be said of working people in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. The civic patriotism generated by local football clubs like Sheffield Wednesday whose fans were largely working-class but whose paternalistic directors were often members of the local Liberal or Conservative elite should not be underestimated but generally being a football supporter was a less demanding manifestation of civic spirit than standing as a candidate in a local election.⁵ A local authority like Sheffield covered a large geographical area. It had within it vibrant working-class communities with their own peculiar history and character, like Attercliffe or Brightside, while the city was further polarised between its West and East Ends, with the inhabitants of the former tending to live off the latter. On the other hand, the city of Sheffield is an old town as shown by the unique local surnames of its geographically very faithful residents, many unchanged since medieval times.⁶ Sheffield's ethnic and religious make-up was remarkably stable in the 1940s and gave rise to little tension. It had been relatively little affected by immigration from Ireland in the nineteenth century, for example,⁷ or by that of Jews fleeing Eastern Europe at the turn of the twentieth century.⁸

Hampton's empirical study of post-war Sheffield politics argued that those who had the strongest social

attachments to local communities, which he saw as consisting of a few streets or a neighbourhood in which people encountered each other face-to-face very often, had also the least awareness and interest in the political life of the wider city. He believed that 'geographical compactness . . . , the age structure of the electorate, the homogeneity of the population, the industrial structure of the city, and other similar influences' did determine a city's political style but that 'they affect the degree of attachment to the neighbourhood only through their effect on the relationships of people to one another.'⁹ Elected representatives often saw themselves as community leaders but this was largely a myth since they had not been born and perhaps did not live within the wards or constituencies they represented. They were usually people interested in public affairs who had sought an opportunity to represent their fellow citizens wherever that might conveniently be found and had been given their chance by a political party to whom their real loyalties were given.¹⁰ Electoral boundaries on a map did not themselves create a community or were perceived by people to be a community.¹¹ Wards and parliamentary constituencies were representative of communities for electoral purposes but had no other function.¹²

Hampton's conception of the 'political community' echoed that of the political theorist L. T. Hobhouse. He believed that it was any population 'living under a common rule' despite having 'only the bare bones of a common life'.¹³ But Hampton combined this with another view that the 'political community' consisted primarily of those involved in local politics who 'meet each other regularly, share common interests, and denounce public apathy towards their activities with a vehemence only matched by the suspicion they sometimes evidence towards those who seek to contest their authority.'¹⁴ Elected councillors obviously formed such a community *as councillors* within the council chamber whatever their political affiliations. They, as we shall see, proved unwilling to accept disruption of existing local government structures by its regionalisation because the perceptions that there was a need for reform at all reflected badly on their own achievements as councillors within the existing system. Moreover, they believed that they personally would achieve much less as members of an authority with diminished powers but yet would still be held accountable by Sheffields for the actions of their regional masters. The experience of wartime regional administration from Leeds sharpened these fears.

A study of Nelson in Lancashire has noted that there was a degree of formal co-operation between Labour and its opponents on that Council in the inter-war period which would have been unimaginable before World War One. The same is true of South Yorkshire in the 1930s and 1940s. Labour's representatives were no longer isolated agitators causing trouble for local elites by stirring up the masses but were full members of the 'political community' accepting the rules and norms of behaviour of that community. They were more concerned to appear 'respectable' and responsible. The anti-socialist coalition in Nelson also offered little ideological challenge to Labour. The anti-socialists attacked Labour's municipal representatives' personal experience and competence but never the basic issue of the role of the municipality in politics. They offered themselves as 'administrators' and not as 'politicians'. They attacked 'socialist extravagance and maladministration' rather than socialism itself. Lack of business expertise was seen as Labour's chief failing.¹⁵ Similar opinions were present among anti-

socialists on County Borough Councils in South Yorkshire.

The 1940s Liberal and Conservative ideal of a 'property-owning democracy' appealed to an idea of 'community' but it was a right-wing concept of 'community'. It was ideally one of middle-class people with a little capital (they owned their own shop or home) who lived in suburbs like those expanding in the West End of Sheffield in the 1930s or else they formed part of the Conservative 'shopocracy' that controlled many councils in English rural towns at this time. The archetype of the latter was Mrs Thatcher's famous father, Alderman Roberts of Grantham. He provided her with a set of nineteenth century values that put the consumer (and especially the house-wife) first rather than the producer organised in a trade union.¹⁶ Sometimes in contradiction to this was an earlier nostalgic specifically Tory vision of a paternalist, unequal and aristocratic social order where everyone knew their place and which was located in the timeless southern English countryside that epitomised Englishness.

This vision was articulated most successfully by Stanley Baldwin. He, however, for all his success in doing so, was not a representative of the authentically existing countryman of the inter-war period but a rural romantic. His father's iron foundry was a typical small Victorian family firm and Baldwin felt a close empathy with the employees whom he knew well in a paternalistic way. Having deep religious convictions he saw considerateness as 'the central English virtue' and refused to descend to intemperate insults against his opponents in the heat of political controversy. Hating conflict, he believed that the British people had to be educated to have limited expectations of government. He saw mass urban democracy as a potentially dangerous innovation that threatened an English civilisation based on private property since possession of the vote was no longer a guarantee of civic responsibility. That civilisation in its classic form was rural and not urban, despite the fact that urban-living was now the norm for most of the population as well as the mainstay of support for Labour. It is ironic that he extolled an eternal cross-class 'community' that supposedly existed in the English countryside yet under his premierships the pace of change in the countryside vastly accelerated destroying that order forever.¹⁷ Baldwin criticised Labour as being an instrument of sectional trade union interests and for having an attachment to 'foreign' socialist theories abhorrent to the sound conservative instincts of the ordinary Englishman because based on class conflict. He stressed that workers and employers had a mutual interest in the smooth and profitable running of their firms.¹⁸ Conservatives like Baldwin defended workers' freedoms not to join unions or to pay into union funds which supported Labour. They attacked the political ambitions of socialist trade union leaders as illegitimate to their members real needs. Tory small businessmen also often opposed their employees joining unions or visibly supporting Labour because it could force up their overheads; their profits were often small and dependent on the sacrifice of their own consumption.

Socialism in Sheffield took root in large-scale heavy industry.¹⁹ Trade unionists found it easier to organise steelworkers and foundrymen because the thousands of often unskilled workers employed by the steel firms were unlikely to have close personal relationships with their employers and were thus less

prone to direct influence. They tended to vote Labour in consequence and to stand as Labour candidates.²⁰ However, in 'light trades', like cutlery manufacture, the 'little mester' employed only a few extra workers and was often almost indistinguishable from them socially. Cutlery was a 'sweated' trade though highly skilled, competition for work was stiff and not unremunerative. An outworker might work at one and the same time for several manufacturers. He was only nominally independent of any single one. A personal relationship with them was necessary to get work but also meant each outworker was in competition with every other one and could be played off against each other. It was a long time before there was a united cutlery union.²¹ Cutlery trades unionists retained Liberal sympathies in Sheffield even into the 1930s.²² This does not mean they were not 'radical' despite the view often expressed that large-scale industry always created radical movements. Andrew Thorpe describes this latter view as not always correct - such 'industry in Reading between the wars did not produce particularly vibrant Labour politics', for example.²³

Labour, *pace* Baldwin, never presented itself to the voters as merely a party representing a sectional interest whether of the unions or of the working class. It saw its rule as being in the interests of the 'community' as a whole whether at a local or national level. It tried to bolster both local civic consciousness and a particular conception of Britishness that reflected its own traditions and world-view. Attlee during the 1945 General Election stated that:

Forty years ago the Labour Party might with some justice have been called a class Party, representing almost exclusively the wage earners. It is still based on organised labour but has steadily become more and more inclusive ... The Labour Party is, in fact, the one Party which most nearly reflects in its representation and composition all the main streams which flow into the great river of our national life ... Our appeal to you, therefore, is not narrow or sectional ... We have to plan the broad lines of our national life so that all may have the duty and the opportunity of rendering service to the nation, everyone in his or her sphere, and that all may help to create and share in an increasing material prosperity free from the fear of want.²⁴

In South Yorkshire Labour had less of a problem in representing what it might suppose to be the interests of the mass of the population should they only know them. Superficially it appeared that it need not make strenuous efforts to appeal to middle-class voters as the big cities of the southern West Riding were overwhelmingly working-class in composition. A preponderant part of that class in the four County Boroughs - as the 1951 Census showed - were skilled working class which formed the politically active backbone of the organised Labour movements.²⁵ Many of the poor and the 'rough' working class, however, voted Tory even in 1945. Labour and the Progressives in Sheffield both saw themselves as embodying the interests of the 'community', yet this is a vague if always positive concept and some citizen was always bound to feel upset by a particular council decision or felt unwilling to forego their self-interest in the interests of this nebulous wider 'community'. In Sheffield Labour appealed beyond

the working classes for support because the middle classes, like the working classes, were not evenly spread but were especially strong in particular wards and constituencies.

It was also, however, in the interests of some middle-class people to give Labour support since the party directly helped the employment opportunities of public sector professionals (which is not to discount the latter's idealism). Labour was the party of public sector expansion locally and nationally through its support for public ownership. The South Yorkshire County Borough Councils had been keen to extend municipal ownership. Perkin has described World War Two as producing a revolution of expectations among the working classes as the state was forced to expand. This consolidated the triumph of what he terms 'the professional ideal' in post-war society over 'the entrepreneurial ideal' that characterised Victorian middle-class society and over the egalitarian ideals of the working classes. According to him: '[T]he entrepreneur proved himself by competition in the market, the professional by persuading the rest of society and ultimately the state that his service was vitally important and therefore worthy of guaranteed reward. The first called for as little state interference as possible; the second looked to the state as the ultimate guarantee of professional status.'²⁶ Labour in Sheffield could call on the support of middle class professionals like R. W. Allott, an unsuccessful candidate in Hallam Ward, a Progressive stronghold, in 1945, who asserted that:

As a result of the War, there has been a great awakening of the SOCIAL CONSCIENCE of our people and it is no longer enough to say that Municipal matters are no concern of mine, so long as I am living in comfort. There is now a wider vision of our duty to our neighbour and it is in the Municipal Election that we have our nearest opportunity of showing that we do care how the other half of the City lives. It is our DUTY to concern ourselves with Civic affairs, of East end and West end alike and this Election is a great chance for us to do so.²⁷

The war was generally regarded by the political Left as having produced a greater sense of community spirit. By this they meant that Britons were more willing to countenance radical reform as a result of greater social mixing due to total war. J. B. Priestley told radio listeners that:

Now, the war, because it demands a huge collective effort, is compelling us to change not only our ordinary, social and economic habits, but also our habits of thought. We're actually changing over from the property view to the sense of community, which simply means that we realise we're all in the same boat. But, and this is the point, that boat can serve not only as a defence against Nazi aggression but as an ark in which we can all finally land in a better world.²⁸

Conservatives like Churchill were less convinced. Their view (similar to that expressed by the anti-socialists on Nelson Borough Council in municipal politics) was that in national politics they were just

'administrators' of the war machine intent on the non-political aim of victory over Hitler. Party politics should shut down for the duration and parties should not take advantage of the war for their own purposes. Thus in Sheffield in 1940 the Progressives tried to get passed a resolution that would have banned 'the use of public buildings for party political purposes' due to 'the extreme importance of maintaining national unity . . . when the free and independent existence of the State is menaced by a determined and ruthless enemy and whilst responsible political opinion is united in its determination to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion'.²⁹ Unfortunately despite a strong anti-party wartime popular mood, this was in the 1945 general election to be to the detriment of the Conservatives and their allies who were seen as opposing popular reforms like those envisaged in the Beveridge Report.³⁰

Labour, according to Fielding, Thompson, and Tiratsoo did want to achieve substantial material reforms after the war combined with the ethical transformation of the people of Britain. This would be the foundation of socialism or the 'Responsible Society'. Material reform did not go far enough. The people of Britain had to be turned into instinctive socialists in thought and deed. An infrastructure had to be created that would encourage active popular participation and citizenship, minimise helplessness and overcome ignorance. This was especially important given that the central state was to be expanded as the instrument of socialist planning and it was feared that a 'dependency culture' would be created that would discourage popular initiative and an active citizenry. Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo aver that, despite the commitment to nationalisation, Labour wanted to inspire what James Griffiths called 'a real civic consciousness' and to produce greater popular involvement in local government.³¹ This aspiration, they state, was made flesh after the war by the 1948 Local Government Act which considerably widened municipal powers.³² The problem with this analysis is that such moves threatened the power of Labour oligarchies in local government. The suspicion must be that for many, if not all, local party bosses their agreement with Griffiths' aspiration was simply paying lip-service to a fashionable idea while they took steps to maintain their monopoly of power in municipalities like Sheffield.

Local councils attempted to create a more active citizenry, according to Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo, by altering the local built environment through 'neighbourhood units'³³ and through town planning.³⁴ Just as town planning and architecture was allegedly used in London in 1900 to make Londoners conscious of themselves as imperial citizens and proud of their city as the metropolis of the British Empire,³⁵ so it could be perhaps used (as Sheffield Replanned demonstrated) to make citizens of Sheffield proud of their city as a Socialist city through the impressive new buildings and streets that were envisaged. Thus they might become active supporters of Labour or, at least, willing collaborators with Socialism. The achievements of the Labour council from 1926 *were* publicised as Socialist achievements in municipal manifestos and attempts were made to persuade Sheffielders to think of the council not as 'the council' but as 'our council'. But it is arguable that, as Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo aver, the results of Labour's efforts were mixed at best. They were let down by popular conservatism and apathy as much as by the machinations and black propaganda of the vested interests that Labour ideology attacked.³⁶ The war was less productive of a wider community feeling than left-

wing commentators and Labour Party members deluded themselves was the case. What there was largely evaporated afterwards.³⁷ In contradiction, however, to the view that Labour *as a government* intended to create a greater civic consciousness can be set the common sense view of Mary Walton whose history of Sheffield and its achievements was published in the late 1940s. While noting the existence of the 1948 Local Government Act and the greater role of the local state in the care of children and the elderly, she said that this tendency was ‘much weaker’ than that towards centralization.³⁸ It is the demonstrable *actions* of the Labour government and not its *intentions* which really matter in the final analysis. A similar view must be held of ‘Old Labour’ councils like those of Sheffield or Rotherham.

Part of the problem in creating an active citizenry was Labour’s Fabian inheritance. The question of ‘industrial democracy’ and the devolving of power to workers in nationalised industries closely paralleled questions of achieving popular democratic participation in the decisions of local government and it was equally unpopular with those who already made decisions. Local councils partook of the supremacy of Parliament as the source of their delegated power. According to Dahl:

Two features of the Fabian conception of the state and government led inevitably to the rejection of workers’ control [or participation in the local government planning process]. The first was the acceptance of parliamentary supremacy as an expression of the majority will . . . all attempts to impinge on the Supremacy of Parliament or to weaken Parliament as a majoritarian institution were consistently opposed by the Fabians . . . To have any public official ultimately responsible to some agency other than Parliament [or the local council that partook of Parliament] was a denial of the whole meaning of the British constitution . . . The other determining feature of the Fabian conception of government was an uncommon respect for the expert.³⁹

Labour and the Fabians did not hold to theories of political and administrative pluralism. Conservative local authorities were not to be allowed to go their own way but were to be compelled to obey Labour at the centre and the needs of the programme it had been elected to implement. Similarly a Labour council elected by the people could not delegate authority to outside bodies. Male city councillors in Sheffield made a fuss when women attempted to get themselves co-opted to the Housing Sub-Committee of the Estates Committee in 1944 without already being elected councillors, for instance.⁴⁰

Labour councillors were amateur administrators since they often had full-time jobs in industry (unless they were trade union officials). Thus they were from necessity dependent on the full-time middle-class professional experts employed by the council who arguably because they controlled the information on which decisions were made by councillors could skew those decisions to their own satisfaction. The official’s technical expertise was regarded as providing the status due to ability that in the same way the skilled Sheffield craftsman felt he had in the workshop through his skill gained through serving an apprenticeship. Both commanded their respective rent of ability in Fabian terms. Councillors who had

only elementary education supplemented part-time by the Workers' Educational Association or perhaps the National Council of Labour Colleges naturally deferred to the holder of an academic qualification like a degree which had vastly more prestige as a positional good in the 1940s than is the case today when such qualifications are spread more widely through the population. Knowledge was seen to confer power. It and the possession of abundant leisure had been the basis of the upper classes claim to monopolize power in the past. In opposition the Fabians had emphasised the control of local government functions by an expert middle-class 'intellectual aristocracy' in the late nineteenth century. Municipal enterprise was seen by Fabians as a first step towards their ideal of bureaucratic state socialism rather than as an antidote to it as Conservatives in local government at the time believed. The politicisation of municipal enterprise by the Fabians was to prove the major barrier to its continued twentieth century expansion.⁴¹

Herbert Morrison had an influential role as the organiser of the London Labour Party and the formulator of the codes of conduct which determined the relationships between Labour councillors and officials. He pioneered an approach, described as 'municipal labourism',⁴² which was opposed to the confrontational direct-action tactics of 'Poplarism'. Poplar Council led by George Lansbury in the early 1920s was a thorn in Morrison's side. Labour councillors had previously had a tradition of hostility to professional officials - they cut their salaries with alacrity, for example, as economy measures - but Morrison emphasised the need for mutual trust between them if constructive achievements were to be made possible. He also, however, saw the need to prevent corruption by specifying that the relationship should be a public one but one that was at arms length in private. Both sides had their tasks and spheres of responsibility and the experts should be allowed to get on with their tasks without undue interference.⁴³ Yet this approach did have drawbacks with regard to participation by working people in the decision-making processes of councils. Such people became clients who felt gratitude to individual councillors for what was done for them rather than feeling that it was their right to have their complaints dealt with satisfactorily. 'Poplarism', however, tried to mobilise the entire local community behind certain specific demands to relieve unemployed workers and their families. The forces of financial orthodoxy and respectability were not to be allowed to dictate the strategy of Labour councillors if they were opposed to working-class needs. Morrison's strategy, however, was aimed at enlisting the support of the middle classes and dictated that they not be scared off by ignoring their needs and sensitivities. This was despite the fact that in the County of London Labour took power because of the middle-class flight to the suburbs and the resulting greater voting strength of the working classes in previously mixed inner city areas.⁴⁴

Morrison has influenced how 'Labourism', the thought and practice of the party, has generally been seen. 'Labourism', *pace* Baldwin, emphasised pragmatism, dislike of theory and praised native traditions and institutions like the Labour Party itself or the local government system. Morrison was quoted as saying that 'Socialism is what the Labour Party happens to be doing at any one time'.⁴⁵ In 1954 he published Government and Parliament: A Survey from the Inside which characteristically expressed his 'great love

and admiration for British parliamentary democracy'.⁴⁶ He was, as he showed during Cabinet discussions over the creation of the National Health Service, a champion of local representative democracy opposing hospital nationalization because it was an attack on the powers of a native British institution as much as on his own power base in London. Fielding puts forward the view that socialist ideology was more important in the Labour Party of the 1940s than is commonly accepted, particularly by Marxists.⁴⁷ Martin Francis has agreed with him in a substantial book on Labour's political thought in government under Attlee.⁴⁸ But 'Labourism' has most often been used in a pejorative sense by Marxist historians like Saville,⁴⁹ to explain Britain's failure to follow the trajectory predicted by Marx. This is despite the fact that this view is open to the criticism that it has always been counter-factual to actual events in the real world. Labour is attacked for opportunism and lack of theoretical rigour. Its leaders are attacked for betraying their followers and the masses. In addition Labour was seen in the 1940s as doing capitalism's work for it by re-stabilising the capitalist economy and suppressing socialist alternatives. Allender, an 'independent left' political scientist greatly influenced by Ralph Miliband, characteristically argues in a case study of Sheffield Labourism between 1973 and 1998 that its Labour movement '... was not equipped with the ideas and arguments that would enable it to defend the interests of the workers and unemployed people of the city. It was part of a tradition that had spurned theory and ideology over eighty years earlier and thus was left with nowhere to turn but to local capitalists who were loyal to Sheffield.'⁵⁰

In the light of the issues discussed above the following chapter looks at the wartime debates around the threat to Sheffield's industrial future from a post-war slump and the degree of collaboration this produced among Labour and Progressive City Council members. Questions of local post-war economic prosperity are highlighted because it was a necessary, if not sufficient, basis for the creation of a civic consciousness in Sheffield. It also examines the heated discussions in 1942 and 1943 over local government reform based on the regional government proposals put forward by the Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee of the Central Committee on Reconstruction of the Labour Party.

2.2 - PROTECTING SHEFFIELD'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE

Collinge has noted that while literature on the formation of local economic strategies in Britain exists, it is problem centred, concerned to promote or evaluate local policies and initiatives. By contrast, the actual history of local government intervention to foster economic development - when this started, how long it continued and how it altered over long periods of time - has received less attention. At the same time the theoretical significance of such intervention for Marxist local government models has not been adequately recognised or how it might be explained in the light of the assumptions made by those models. Collinge argues against the views of Marxist writers who believe that central government is largely responsible for maintaining capitalist production while local government is concerned with capitalist reproduction by helping working-class families maintain and expand the supply of able-bodied and compliant labour through their consumption of welfare, housing, education and health services. He

stresses that local government has always had an extensive role in the sphere of capitalist production through ownership of utility services, its role in town planning and through schemes of industrial self-promotion and the direct fostering of economic development.⁵¹

Collinge believes that the periodic changes in the various forms of local government intervention can be synchronised with long-term changes in the economy from about 1880. 'Growth management' strategies developed in line with economic cycles. They expanded in periods of prosperity and contracted in periods of depression. 'Growth promotion' strategies, on the other hand, expanded in periods of depression and contracted in periods of prosperity. 'Growth management' strategies included provision of utility services and the drawing up town planning schemes which hindered individual firms from disrupting the environment for capital as a whole. 'Growth promotion' strategies included industrial self-promotion and economic development schemes which were used to encourage capital formation to defend the fiscal and political bases of local councils. Collinge sees local authorities as responding to economic circumstances at both a national and local level, though the specific action taken, in terms of both types of strategy, was constrained by the need to get central government support and initiative. Control over local councils' actions increasingly came from the centre as the state system grew and became more integrated.⁵²

During the 1920s municipal enterprise continued to expand as more and more authorities supplied water, electricity, tram, trolley bus and motor bus services. By 1937, councils supplied 65 per cent of the country's electricity and 33 per cent of its gas. There was, however, after World War One increased opposition by private enterprise to municipal trading and to subsidising municipal enterprise from the rates as economic conditions deteriorated. Central government attitudes changed in the late 1920s and the last Private Act extending municipal trading was passed by Parliament in 1929. Central government also took a hand in restructuring the utilities and merging local authority companies when in 1926 the Central Electricity Board was set up to oversee the creation of a National Grid, and by 1934 the number of generating stations had fallen from 500 to 146.⁵³ If we examine just one Sheffield municipal utility service, electricity generation, abundant and cheap supplies were needed by industry to enhance its competitiveness and thus it was an issue vital to local industrialists. But Labour's programme in 1926 also acknowledged the desire to see workers' homes and the streets better lit by electricity.⁵⁴ Collinge's perception that local government was about capitalist production as well as about capitalist reproduction is thus equally true in this instance.

The Conservatives in the late nineteenth century pioneered municipal enterprise in Sheffield. This was because it was beneficial to manufacturing industry at the height of Victorian imperialism and facilitated the creation of a Tory-voting working-class. Municipal enterprise under the Conservatives, as later under Labour, combined the two roles of helping capitalist production and working class reproduction and gained them a coalition of votes from both middle and working-class citizens. Water was municipalised in 1888, electricity in 1898, the tramways in 1896 and the markets in 1898. Attempts

were also made, unsuccessfully, to take gas into municipal ownership.⁵⁵ The Municipal Progressives were thus enabled to pose as sincere defenders of Sheffield's public utilities against a grasping Socialist Government after 1945. The latter would destroy a major attraction for industry of locating in Sheffield and thus working-class employment would not be able to expand. Until 1945 this perception was part of an evolving political consensus between the municipal parties over the role of municipal enterprise. The Progressives were as concerned as Labour to expand domestic electricity use through cheaper supplies.⁵⁶ Thus, while in 1898 there were just 694 consumers, by 1945 there were 165,300. 835 million units were sold with a resulting revenue of two million pounds.⁵⁷ A new municipal electricity showroom was a feature of both new city centre plans in 1937⁵⁸ and 1945.⁵⁹ The Labour municipal manifesto of 1945 noted that:

TRAMS, ELECTRICITY, WATER. These Trading Department supply their services to the people of Sheffield at the cheapest possible rates WITHOUT PRIVATE PROFITS. Wartime percentage increases of price have been less by far than is the case with goods and services supplied by purely profit-making concerns. They are all thoroughly sound financially, and are about to be EXPANDED and IMPROVED to meet Sheffield's growing needs.⁶⁰

Labour was also optimistic in Rotherham about their undertaking's prospects prior to nationalisation. The Corporation under Liberal auspices had first built a power station in 1900. A new station was opened by the Prince of Wales in 1923. The Advertiser noted (like the Municipal Progressives in Sheffield) that the existence of cheap power generated locally was a prime reason why industries were keen to locate in Rotherham. In 1939 the station was extended to increase power generation. Another extension was planned for 1940-1 - but the war intervened.⁶¹ Labour's Immediate Programme in 1937 had called for the nationalisation of power as had For Socialism and Peace in 1934 but since improvements were to be made under both councils it is obvious that neither expected as a contingency a majority Labour government prior to the war and thus did not imagine anyone would actually carry out Labour's previous manifesto pledges.

Local authority town planning powers were strengthened in the 1920s and 1930s though remaining focused on housing and sanitation. Generally such powers tended to be negative in their effects, preventing nuisances rather than encouraging good development.⁶² The situation in Sheffield between 1937 and 1945 is dealt with in Chapter Three. Though new housing construction was the first priority of Sheffield Replanned (a priority higher than the reconstruction of the city centre) it was also noted that:

[I]t would be true to say that without steel there would be no Sheffield. There is no other town in the country approaching the size of Sheffield which depends so exclusively on one basic product. . . . [I]t is essential to bear in mind in considering schemes for fine public buildings and vast housing programmes, for the need for the

houses, shops, schools and other buildings is dependent entirely on Sheffield's ability to maintain itself as an industrial city.⁶³

In 1945 the City Engineer while preparing a comprehensive development plan for Sheffield told the Regional Planning Officer of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning that, 'Industry is the basis of all our planning; in Sheffield there is a considerable area of land still available and suitable for industry - and suitable for nothing else. Thus unless a planned national dispersal of industry is contemplated we can easily go ahead with our industrial zoning.'⁶⁴ This latter possibility, then and earlier during the war, was seen as a real threat to future prosperity.

The Communist Wal Hannington wrote in 1937 that:

There can be no doubt that, unless something very effective is done to grapple with this problem of the Distressed Areas, the present feeling of unrest against the Government over the question will assume still greater proportions in the political life of this country; it may become the main issue in domestic policy that will hasten the end of any Government which fails to solve it.⁶⁵

The first attempts to tackle this important political question by revitalizing the economies of the depressed areas rather than by simply helping the young and able-bodied members of their populations to migrate to more prosperous areas (which had the bad effect of robbing the depressed areas of their most enterprising people) had tentatively been made in 1934. This was the Special Areas Act. Southern Scotland, the North-East, Cumbria and South Wales were designated 'Special Areas'. Two commissioners were appointed with two million pounds to spend each to help councils attract firms to their areas and to carry out amenity schemes. This figure had increased to seventeen million pounds by 1938.⁶⁶ One strand of policy was to set up 'trading estates' - areas of land on which factories had been built for rent to industrialists. Another was to provide funding for firms to establish factories who could not raise it via normal means but the total money available was inadequate. These initiatives had little effect. They provided, however, models for more ambitious schemes during and after the war. The National Government was unenthusiastic intervening for electoral reasons and to forestall more far-reaching intervention.⁶⁷

One further step taken was to appoint a Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population under Montague-Barlow in 1937. According to Hall it 'was directly responsible, through a chain reaction ..., for the events that led up to the creation of the whole complex postwar planning machine during the years 1945-52'. It decided that the national and regional distribution of industry was linked to how population was concentrated and that the South-East of England had major strategic, economic and social disadvantages. The majority report wanted a 'central authority' to control industrial location and disperse it from congested areas like London to areas of high unemployment, thus killing

two birds with one stone. In London, journeys to work, traffic congestion and air pollution would be lessened, property values would rise less swiftly and housing problems would be easier to solve. In the depressed areas, people would be employed and would not have to emigrate to find work. Dispersed industry would also be less at risk from aerial attack.⁶⁸ The Report published in 1940 has been regarded as the first symbol of a new wartime consensus in favour of state intervention.⁶⁹ The call for a 'central authority' was repeated in 1942 by the Uthwatt Committee on compensation and betterment and the Scott Committee on rural land use. Regional planning authorities were to oversee detailed implementation of decisions reached by the central authority.⁷⁰ If after the war local government had been superseded by regional authorities, as Labour proposed in 1943, Sheffield Council would have lost its town planning powers to an authority covering the West Riding. The Council would have been less able to take steps independently to attract industry as it would need the permission of the regional authority to do so which would want to plan without favouring any lesser authority unduly.⁷¹

Hugh Dalton, President of the Board of Trade from February 1942, had the major role in the creation of the Distribution of Industry Act 1945 - the final outcome of the attempt to control industry recommended by Barlow. His aim was avoidance of a post-war slump. The belief that conditions after World War Two would repeat those after World War One was widespread but Labour was determined to prevent that.⁷² The return of the slump was also feared in Sheffield by labour leaders and industrialists. Unemployment had reached a peak of over 58,000 in the last one.⁷³ Among those affected might be Labour city councillors themselves. In 1940 the Council had supported a resolution to find out what steps government proposed to take to deal with post-war unemployment. Progressive Alderman Turner said that:

When this war is over we shall find ourselves in the same situation as existed after the last war, if we are not very careful. At that time we had men simply turning soil over - just doing something to enable them to draw the dole. There were no [municipal work] schemes in embryo then. My suggestion is that, in view of past experience, we should now have properly scheduled schemes in preparation so as to find work for thousands of men immediately the necessity arises. The Corporation will have to bear the brunt of the unemployment problem and they will have to find work at once.

He called for public works schemes to be devised in advance of government sanction and financial help and went on to say that:

I would prefer any time that a man earned what he received than that he should have money for nothing. We gave thousands of pounds away for nothing after the last war. We must contemplate building a new city, properly planned and scheduled. The ideas I have in mind are, perhaps, a vision at the moment, but I would advocate giving instructions to the City Architect to prepare details and produce a plan - in other words,

see that the machinery is ready to receive the motive power when the demand justifies it. We must visualise the needs of the future. If we cannot learn from the past we are a poor lot.⁷⁴

Hence town planning was seen as an essential part of the solution to the slump.

Post-war employment prospects would also depend on the rapidity of 'industrial re-conversion' from war to peace in areas of heavy industry like South Yorkshire. The Board of Trade and other departments of government from early in the war were under pressure to discover what the prospects of this were and how much employment industry would offer. Attempts were made to get an approximate picture of post-war prospects from sources like the Nuffield College Reconstruction Survey which submitted numerous reports on the prospects of particular industries and industrial regions. Six reports were specially undertaken for the Board of Trade on Rotherham, Darlington, Kidderminster, Stroud Valley, Hull and Stoke-on-Trent. However, in wartime no outside body could hope to have access to enough facts about key munitions industries where the re-conversion would be most important and difficult and the Board ultimately dispensed with the Survey and did the work itself.⁷⁵ In 1943 the Town Clerk of Barnsley was approached by the Board for help in a survey it was producing on post-war industrial reconstruction and prepared data at their request on the industrial position of the County Borough.⁷⁶

Dalton had led the official Labour Party investigation into the Distressed Areas in 1936/7. He was also influenced by observations of Soviet planning after a visit in 1932 as well as his knowledge of miners' experiences during the depression in his constituency. From spring 1943 he rallied Labour ministers on the Cabinet Reconstruction Committee behind a policy of control of the location of industry and in 1944 got inserted into the important Employment Policy White Paper a chapter on 'The Balanced Distribution of Industry and Labour'. It was stated that it would 'be an object of Government policy to secure a balanced industrial development in areas which have in the past been unduly dependent on industries specially vulnerable to unemployment.' Dalton then went on to set up a department within the Board of Trade to give effect to the White Paper commitment and worked to get an Act of Parliament to set the legislative seal on the policy. The Distressed or Special Areas were given the snappier title of 'Development Areas'. Despite the fact that the Churchill Coalition was coming to an end, the Bill did get its Second Reading on 21 March 1945 and it eventually passed into law on 15 June under Churchill's Caretaker Government. It was to remain the basis of regional policy until 1960. The Board of Trade was allowed to build factories and houses for key workers in the Development Areas and the Treasury could make loans or grants to firms to locate there. Financial assistance could also be made available to improve transport networks and public utility services.

But it did not include Sheffield within the Bill and the fear was locally that no new industry at all would be allowed to locate to Sheffield.⁷⁷ For example, the Town Clerk in a memo discussed by the City Council in 1942 stated that the policy of the central planning authority on 'industrial development

probably envisages the removal of existing industry to another site, possibly in another town, and the prohibition of the establishment of new industry in an existing industrial area.' Progressive Alderman Wilson felt sure that all in the Chamber would object to the City's industry being moved elsewhere.⁷⁸ These fears were widely felt in other blitzed cities. When Lord Woolton visited Bristol in January 1945 he told a questioner that blitzed industry would be encouraged to take factories in Development Areas and that if they preferred to stay in their existing location they could not expect to have permission to rebuild their factories before the acute housing shortage had been met. The Development Officer of the Bristol Development Board for the Advancement of the City and Port of Bristol wrote to inform Sheffield City Council of this statement. The Board felt that to build up Development Areas at the expense of blitzed cities was 'a great injustice in itself, but far more so is the endeavour to turn a temporary misfortune into a permanent disablement.' It called for equal priority between blitzed areas and Development Areas for factory building.⁷⁹

These fears were present when Alderman Thraves, Labour Leader of the Council, Alderman Jackson, leader of the Progressives, with the agreement of the President of the Chamber of Commerce, decided in November 1944 to set up a joint committee of the Council and the Chamber to 'examine the industrial construction of the City of Sheffield and thereafter to make such proposals as may be considered necessary in order to provide the people of Sheffield, regarded as a whole, with the fullest prospect of steady and fruitful employment.' They noted that:

During the past 30 years full employment for the people of Sheffield has only been possible during the period when the nation has been preparing for and engaged in war. Since 1918 the city has endured trade depression, unprecedented unemployment, and the misery which these conditions bring in their train. The balance of our industries has not altered substantially since 1918. This being so, it is always possible that Sheffield may suffer in the future, as it has in the past, from its lack of industrial diversification. The problem, of course, is one which is shared with several other areas in the country. The White Paper on "Employment Policy" shows the intention of the Government to steer new industries into those areas which they recognise as being out of balance industrially, but does the Government recognise the Sheffield problem? It is most important that the attention of the Government should be focused upon the needs of the city to secure new industries.⁸⁰

The City's leaders were not hostile to the 'balanced distribution of industry' but to its effect on Sheffield should the City be excluded. When the Distribution of Industry Bill came before Parliament in 1945 the main worry of the Post War Reconstruction Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, for example, was with a clause in the Bill allowing the Treasury to give financial aid in the form of grants or loans to firms setting up in Development Areas. They felt that a firm which could not get capital from normal commercial sources like the banks or the recently announced Financial Corporations was unworthy of

help. The Committee felt that a government department would be less a good judge of commercial risk than a bank. Otherwise they supported the Bill in principle.⁸¹

The belief in the essential unity of interest of local Labour and Capital (beyond that of their representatives within the 'political community' inside the council chamber) is also shown in one of the more interesting proposals of wartime - to create an 'Industry House' to house the City's trade organisations, both those of the employers and the trades unions, under one roof. This was put forward by the Chamber of Commerce in 1941 and the idea was described as 'an investment with the best public long-term security' for the City Council. Industry would have

(1) excellent opportunity for inter-communication, (2) ready-to-hand facilities for all occasions such as meetings (including very large meetings), (3) facilities for improving mutual relations through more frequent contact between officials and staffs, (4) accommodation probably superior to that now engaged by any of the individual organisations, (5) a centre which would give an immediate good impression to any visitor to the city (the city as a whole would share in this).

It was hoped that the 'proposed building could include, in addition to administrative offices, committee rooms, halls for medium and large general meetings, facilities for industrial exhibitions, an industrial museum, library, etc., etc..⁸² This was taken sufficiently seriously that the idea appeared in Sheffield Replanned, though it was only given a secondary priority among the new buildings planned for the city centre and the idea was to be finally shelved after the war.⁸³

This proposal does illustrate the perception among local businessmen of the trade unions respectability and the probability that they would want to play their part as partners in achieving post-war economic prosperity in local industry. The TUC General Council showed its awareness of its members potential role in boosting economic prosperity when in 1944 in its interim report on Post-War Reconstruction it saw trade unions as playing a part in the running of publicly owned industry.⁸⁴ Brooke argues, however, that because of the trades unions continued insistence on the sanctity of free collective bargaining with employers, the creation by Labour of a centrally planned economy using physical planning methods was fatally undermined. This forced Labour to rely on Keynesian demand management and to place the emphasis as a result on the budget and fiscal policy when intervening in the national economy. It caused the failure of its distinctive wartime socialist vision of democratic planning. A policy of fixing wages to direct labour into critical areas of the economy was out of the question as far as the unions were concerned. Encroachment on the prerogative of management to manage businesses as they wanted was not ultimately accepted by the unions despite qualified support for joint production committees.⁸⁵ Jim Tomlinson, while accepting that Brooke's argument has a long pedigree, is less convinced by it, arguing that under the Attlee Government wage planning was a left versus right issue rather than one between the government and unions. Most Labour Ministers, including those least wedded to free collective

bargaining, feared the politicisation of wage disputes if they got involved. Trades unions gave a great deal of actual support to the Attlee Government in the late 1940s including a self-denying wage freeze. They had no desire to embarrass it and disputes only arose when they felt the government had not consulted them on major issues.⁸⁶

Sheffield Replanned noted that it was not intended to include Sheffield as a redevelopment area under the Distribution of Industry Bill because 'in the Government's view Sheffield is not likely to suffer from industrial depression in the immediate post-war years.' It was believed that, despite the growth of competitors, 'the experience, skill and industry' of Sheffield people would be able to maintain Sheffield's position as a steel producer.⁸⁷ There were those, however, who disagreed with this picture, such as Frederick Pickworth of the English Steel Corporation who wrote two articles published in the Telegraph in March 1945. Sheffield's narrow dependence on steel was once more stressed as were the greater number of competing areas within Britain producing alloy steels. He said that:

[S]teel plants to-day require elbow room. How can a new plant be erected on the site of an old one [in Sheffield] without the risk of losing the business whilst the reconstruction takes place, and (more important) what becomes of the workpeople during the period of rebuilding, a process which - under modern conditions - might take two years? Many of the firms concerned [in Sheffield] have interests in other towns and cities, and those responsible for their management can only give preference to Sheffield when conditions are suitable; at the moment ... they are not. This is likely to lead to further migration of the city's industries and even partial transfer [of these industries] would have a serious effect and might lead to a gradual abandonment of Sheffield for certain of its remaining products.⁸⁸

Ultimately it might be asked whether Labour's industrial location policy mattered? Barnett argues that the attempt to revivify the Distressed Areas through Dalton's Act was misguided because it was based on foolish 'New Jerusalemist' notions which emphasised the 'social rescue' of the areas before exports and was an inefficient use of vital resources after the war. He likens the Development Areas to 'species at the end of their evolutionary line, unwilling and unable to adapt', arguing that they should have been allowed to expire. He argues that the attempt to save jobs in them, and 'full employment' itself, caused lasting damage to the economy.⁸⁹ Sheffield's industry did not suffer the disadvantage in his eyes of being rescued but could Labour politicians have allowed the Distressed Areas simply to die when they were the bases of their power? They had to make the effort. It was part of a pact between Labour leaders and their followers to improve conditions in the Labour heartlands after the bitterness of the inter-war years. The miners in Bishop Auckland would never have forgiven Hugh Dalton for renegeing on that pact had he done so.

Tomlinson and Scott both argue that while regional policy in 1945-51 was successful in maintaining full

employment, a stress on creating jobs instead of long-term growth resulted in the failure to create a foundation in the Development Areas for self-sustaining industrial expansion. Policy-makers were interested in short-term considerations and particularly from 1947, *pace* Barnett, dollar earning or saving priorities. By that time the desire to promote exports dominated decision-making and as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade said in 1949 'distribution of industry principles [are] being overridden in case after case because of production considerations'.⁹⁰ The government's policies added a labour-intensive, branch plant economy to the industrial structure of the formerly depressed areas, employing a large proportion of unskilled labour in factories which were particularly vulnerable to a substantial down-turn in economic conditions. The period 1945-51 was thus 'a lost opportunity' for these areas.⁹¹ Even if Sheffield had been included within the scope of the Distribution of Industry Act it would thus not actually have helped in the longer term to markedly diversify the City's economy. Regional policy was essentially about preventing further haemorrhaging of decaying local economies and not their economic reconstruction. In consequence the problem for Sheffield was postponed. The City Council's response was pragmatic accepting that nothing could be done under existing political conditions except to continue lobbying government departments. As Hampton noted diversification remained a pre-occupation of the City Council even in the 1960s because the proportion of the city's working population employed in engineering and metals compared with other cities at over 44 per cent meant that the city was almost unique in its dependence on one group of industries. Major service sector employment did not exist in the city even in 1961.⁹²

2.3 - THE DEBATE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

According to Baston:

The Labour Party's thought, as a national party, has neither been consistently localist or centralising, but instrumentalist. The division of power within government has traditionally been subordinate to the wider social aims of the party, and the desire to give the party the maximum say in the nation's affairs. This has meant upholding local autonomy in periods like the first quarter of the [twentieth] century, and the 1980s, when the party has faced a hostile national climate; and downplaying its role when the party has been in power during the 1940s and 1960s - and, so far, during the late 1990s.⁹³

This is broadly true. During the early 1940s Labour began a debate within the party on the merits of regional government as a means of reforming a local government system that many recognised was inefficient and unsuited to modern requirements. This obviously had to be a threat to local autonomy and the local government status quo - a status quo which had many defenders particularly within the Labour local authorities. The latter did not see the point of 'a leap in the dark' which would make them guinea-pigs in an experiment which might have dire electoral consequences given local attachments and

pride in towns and cities which might now find themselves swallowed up by an authority no-one felt any attachment to and which was less accountable to the local citizen. Ultimately the national party had to back down. Tichelar sees this episode as providing evidence that centralisation of power was not an inevitable process where local control necessarily gave way to that of the central government and that the picture is much more complex with the outcome the necessary result of tension and negotiation between the protagonists. He argues that as a consequence Labour councils were influential in diluting the Labour Party's commitment to land nationalisation under a central authority despite the impetus the destruction of the Blitz was giving to centralisation as a result of the need to effectively redevelop areas of the damaged towns and the calls for a central planning authority in the Barlow, Uthwatt and Scott Reports.⁹⁴ This section looks at the debate from the point of view of South Yorkshire, as well as looking at it from the national perspective, arguing that the personal interests of councillors within the 'political community' inside the council chamber had some impact since the reduced status of the City Council inside the regional authority, it was feared, equally meant reduced personal status for the city councillors themselves.

Alexander describes the whole period from 1935 until 1945 as one of 'The Acceptance of *Immobilisme*' when it came to local government reform. He sets out some of the reasons given by political, official and intellectual sources for their support of reform yet does not describe the debate on regional government during World War Two inside Labour. Alexander notes, however, that the Churchill Coalition did set up a committee to look into the post-war needs of local government in 1941 - probably stimulated by the need to create a new system of regional administration for better emergency planning. And in 1944 it announced in Parliament that there would need to be changes in 'status, boundaries and areas' of local authorities but 'within the general framework of the county and county borough system'. This may have meant either that ministers and Whitehall departments accepted that since there was no consensus in the system on reform, government should take only cautious or marginal initiatives, or that, while root-and-branch reform was impossible, cumulative reform could occur under government auspices with local authority approval - as between 1945 and 1949 seemed presaged in the work of the Local Government Boundary Commission. Alexander points out that conflict was inbuilt in the local government system from its origins in the late nineteenth century due to the local government structure that was piecemeal created. This structure created discord between the various types of local authority and the national bodies that represented them. These bodies were relatively parochial, fiercely fighting for their members interests without worrying about the ultimate functional and structural coherence of the whole system. Its obsolescence was, however, widely recognised.

Alexander quotes the Barlow Report in this regard. It recognised that conditions were 'vastly different' from the nineteenth century and that, 'The important industrial towns have long outgrown their boundaries as local government units.'⁹⁵ The demands of working people for a council roof over their heads made territorial extension an urgent priority for Sheffield Council as is explained in Chapter Six. William Robson was a Fabian local government expert at the London School of Economics and author of

The Government and Misgovernment of London. He was also co-editor of the Political Quarterly.⁹⁶ Writing during the Blitz he noted that the main impetus to extend was in order 'to catch the nomadic tribes of season-ticket holders and road passengers, who work in the town but escape liability to pay rates by living outside. Very often, the town council supplies public utility and other services to the outlying districts where these people live.' He called for reform of local government through the creation of directly-elected regional councils. His views and criticisms were similar to those of James Griffiths (below) but he wanted local authorities to become

'the radiating centre of cultural and creative and recreative activities in the locality or region. We need municipal theatres, municipal concerts, lectures, cinemas, pageants, cafes. Life without the arts is a dull affair, and man does not live by drains alone. After the war, local democracy must become bolder, gayer, more colourful.... Let us bear in mind that the rebuilding of Britain is not merely a matter of bricks and mortar.'⁹⁷

Griffiths summarised for the NEC the objections Labour had to the existing system during a debate over a resolution proposing that Regional Authorities and secondary tier Area Authorities take over from existing local government bodies. This occurred at the Labour Party Annual Conference in 1943. The resolution embodied the report of the Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee of the Central Committee on Reconstruction appointed in 1941 to look at the future of local government. Griffiths believed there were too many local authorities and too many these had neither the population nor the resources to provide the essential services local government should provide. Existing administrative arrangements within local government were also out of date bearing little relationship to modern needs. Existing boundaries and the local government structure (embodied in Rural and Urban District Councils) created a division between town and country opposed to the best interests of the nation. And existing financial methods were inadequate and needed fundamental revision. This was 'far too obvious' even before 1939 and it made local government 'a defective instrument' for dealing with post-war reconstruction. He feared the system would completely break down once peace returned and it was faced with these new tasks. Given Labour's 'instrumentalism' it is not surprising that he stressed that Labour needed these reforms in order to adequately enact its reconstruction pledges. To re-house people, plan town and country and redistribute industry there needed to be an effective instrument. Labour wanted to reorganise health services nationally while the new Education Act would thrust new and greater responsibilities on local councils. Thus reform was even more urgent than in 1939.⁹⁸

The dual system proposed by the NEC represented a compromise made by Charles Latham of the London County Council on the Sub-Committee.⁹⁹ He had wanted to abolish all local government units except county councils but believed the compromise reached 'would avoid complaints about the remoteness for administrative purposes of the local authorities, and yet leave the big boroughs without an obstructive autonomy in all things.'¹⁰⁰ Thus, the latter must be tamed, since if Conservative-controlled,

they would damage the wider plans of a Labour central government. A 1946 Labour pamphlet on reform noted another difficulty Labour faced:

Councillors [including Labour ones] nearly always think their council is doing a very good job, and any change which is going to reduce its powers or, worse still, abolish it, rouses all their powers of resistance. This is understandable and excusable. It would be a poor look-out for local councils if their members were not keen on them and proud of what they were doing; but it has obvious dangers. Unless we can adjust our methods of government to the ever-changing needs of democratic socialist reconstruction the whole system may break down.¹⁰¹

In July 1942 the Sub-Committee issued its provisional proposals to encourage internal party discussion and over thirty conferences and consultations took place with Divisional and Local Labour Parties as well as Labour Council members.¹⁰² This included ones in Doncaster and Sheffield.¹⁰³ In Sheffield opposition to regional government was heartfelt even before due to suspicions that the wartime Regional Commissioners and the division of Britain into Civil Defence Regions would be made permanent superseding existing local government. Robson saw Regional Commissions as 'an experiment of the highest interest and importance' and while he wanted them replaced by directly-elected regional councils he believed 'Regionalism had to come. The only question at issue was whether it should come as an expression of local government or as an imposition by the central government.' He viewed the Regional Commissions as 'a complete break with the British constitutional tradition and the principles of public administration that have hitherto prevailed.' Unfortunately they inspired distrust because, 'The urgency of the war situation, the dangers of procrastination, the futility of legalistic quibbling while London or Coventry burns, result[ed] in the authority of the Commissioners often greatly exceeding their powers.'¹⁰⁴

Regional Commissioners were particularly disliked by Sheffield councillors because the wartime regional administration was based in Leeds.¹⁰⁵ This especially attracted the criticism of the Municipal Progressive leader who put down a motion opposing regional government stating that reorganisation on such a basis was 'undemocratic in character, [would] destroy local initiative, reduce local interest, and deprive ratepayers through their elected representatives of the control and responsibility entrusted to them.'¹⁰⁶ Labour demurred at the wording of the motion and the political philosophy it expressed but not its subject. In wartime debates on reform Labour believed that the stress should be not so much on the preservation of democratic traditions but on increasing the range and power of democracy.¹⁰⁷ Thus Labour in Sheffield in 1943 approved a resolution giving the local government vote to all Parliamentary voters despite Municipal Progressive opposition which wanted to keep the local government vote firmly in the hands of ratepayers. That would raise the municipal electorate by at least a quarter. One reason the Progressives gave for their opposition was that there was no demand for the change. Labour Councillor Ballard believed, however, that it was unfair that the municipal vote should be denied to ex-

servicemen living in rooms because they could not afford anything better and stated that, 'If we are to have full democracy, [we must] base our franchise not upon property-owning or renting capacity but upon human needs and requirements in the conduct of communal life.' The Progressives denounced Labour's resolution as inspired by the political benefits Labour would gain and feared it would lead to the abolition of local government.¹⁰⁸

Municipal Progressive opposition is unsurprising. They said they aimed

to organise public opinion in favour of a progressive municipal policy, having for its object the development of trade and commerce in the city and the provision of such amenities as may be desirable for the public good. The Party believes that municipal policy should be governed by local needs and local circumstances, and should be kept entirely free from matters which are properly the concern of Parliament.¹⁰⁹

So they wanted 'separate spheres' of responsibility for local and central government while priding themselves on their localism. Although Labour's national presence and policy was due to the convergence of views and organisation of parties based in specific localities which were not simple microcosmic expressions of the national party, it did not accept the validity of 'separate spheres' of responsibility. It had to intervene. Hence it was attacked by the supposedly 'non-party' Municipal Progressives for having introduced party politics into local government. Party politics, however, were indisputably major features of nineteenth century Conservative and Liberal politics in Sheffield and were perhaps even fiercer since there were more elective offices like Vestries, School Boards or Boards of Guardians to contest.¹¹⁰ Alderman Jackson's April 1943 letter to the Telegraph emphasises that Progressives saw 'regionalisation' as a conspiracy against the independence of local government by people with scant knowledge of it and from far outside Sheffield.¹¹¹ This was a view shared equally by Labour Council members like Alderman Caine of Rotherham who commented that, 'many of the ideas now being propounded on these matters [are] mostly by theorists with no practical experience in local government'; however, he was optimistic 'that the fundamental principles upon which British Local Government is founded will remain pretty much as they are to-day, with the necessary modifications to meet the new circumstances that will follow the peace.'¹¹² The ratepayer was central to Progressive views of what constituted democratic freedom since property gave 'a stake in society'. According to Jackson:

Transport, water and electricity are marked down for administration by large and unwieldy bodies who will necessarily be out of touch with the local rate-payer. Indeed, the whole trend of official thought is that the ratepayer who will have to find the money, does not matter. The very thing that our gallant fighting men are striving for in all parts of the world to-day, namely, freedom, is the one thing in real danger in this country.¹¹³

Under Labour's 1943 proposals Regional Authorities would make regional town planning schemes and lesser Area Authorities would oversee the operation of planning schemes and consents to erect buildings in accordance with them. The Regional Authorities would make the building by-laws while the Area Authorities would administer them. Regional Authorities would also be able to undertake major housing schemes, slum clearance and development schemes while the Area Authority would undertake local housing schemes, including reconditioning buildings. In terms of finance the Area Authorities would collect rates while the larger authorities would value property and make precepts. Regional Authorities would control hospitals and health centres while the smaller authorities would have lesser services like midwifery and maternity and child welfare. Regional Authorities would have the fire services and main drainage. The lesser authorities would have sewerage and minor public health duties like refuse collection. Public Assistance would be controlled by regional government. Gas, transport and electricity would be under national public ownership. Urban and Rural District Councils would be amalgamated and the basis of the Area Authority where possible would be a County Borough.¹¹⁴ The existing County Boroughs like Sheffield would thus be drastically affected as 'Current Topics' pointed out in the Telegraph.¹¹⁵

Wartime plans for reorganisation were not, however, just the province of the Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. The Town Clerks of Rotherham and Sheffield were part of a Special Committee appointed by the Association of Municipal Corporations (representing the County Boroughs) which in 1941 issued a memorandum on the subject. New local government areas would be of such a character and status that they would be suitable for the tasks of post-war reconstruction or redevelopment. Rural areas would be blended with an urban area so 'overspill' and the 'consequent escape of fiscal responsibility' could be prevented. The congestion and lack of amenities in many areas, it was felt, could be overcome by limiting the growth and population of each area by town planning restrictions and limitation of space. Obviously this looked to the County Boroughs to be the basis of a reformed local government. They wanted a single authority and not a dual system.¹¹⁶ They had some support on the Labour Sub-Committee from Susan Lawrence who penned a minority interim report in July 1942. She had been MP for East Ham in the 1920s and was also involved in 'Poplarism'. During World War Two 'she rendered valuable assistance to the Party by undertaking research work in connection with the Barlow Report and other war-time social documents.' She left the Sub-Committee in December 1942.¹¹⁷ She also wanted a single authority but made up of a small region believing this would overcome 'the enormous time and energy spent on conflicts between the major and minor local authorities in times of peace and the imperfections of the dual control [*sic*] in this time of war.' She feared that division of authority would be 'a real step backward and ... an obstacle to that unification of health services admitted by all to be necessary.'¹¹⁸

The majority interim report formed the basis of the statement The Future of Local Government discussed at the 1943 Annual Conference. Replies to the prior consultations had generally tended to show

opposition, a desire for unitary authorities or just modifications to present local government boundaries yet it was decided to publish this statement.¹¹⁹ In Rotherham the Council Labour Group opposed the proposals while the malcontents of the Trades Council, who usually opposed National Labour Party policy on such things as Communist affiliation to the Labour Party, supported the majority report and their amendment was carried after a vote.¹²⁰

The Provisional Proposals¹²¹ published for party consultation and The Future of Local Government both asserted in almost identical words that the areas of the Regions envisaged 'must not be so large that the sense of a common interest in their government would be lost, or cause various areas on the outskirts to feel that they had too little in common, but must be large enough to permit an adequate area for development.'¹²² But this was exactly what its opponents alleged - that it would be too large to enable civic pride to be encouraged. J. W. Sutherland of the United Textile Workers' Association put down an amendment at the Conference calling for withdrawal of the proposals and asserted that, 'Large units can be efficient, but they are not necessarily so. They tend to become impersonal and autocratic. Civic pride is entirely absent from the administration of County Councils now, and I am certain it would be entirely absent from the administration in Regional Councils.' The County was to be the basis of the regions if large enough so it did not bode well.¹²³ Fred Marshall, MP for Brightside and a former Alderman of Sheffield Council, objected to the statement given in the Provisional Proposals that 'elected representatives must retain effective control over the services for the provision and administration of which they are made responsible by Parliament.'¹²⁴ He believed that membership of just two Committees on a County Borough Council could take up all of a councillor's time and that it was another thing entirely to deal with the hundred or more problems of four or five large towns in a region. The West Riding County Council, which might form a region, would have Sheffield, Leeds, and up to ten other great County Borough Councils. He was concerned for Labour members with limited leisure time and believed the democratic basis of such a regional council would be undermined. In many of the County Boroughs which would become Area Authorities, Labour had done its greatest work and had made the most progress with many successful experiments in municipal ownership. They would be relegated to merely collecting the rates. It would be 'a humiliating position for those great authorities who have been blazing the trail in Labour representation now for a century.'¹²⁵

When the proposals were put to a card vote almost 40 per cent of the Conference voted against them. The issue was referred back for more consideration of the question of local finance. Labour Councils wanted more funding from central government to cover the cost of national services, the transfer of all local authority debts for education or housing to the centre and capital loans for post-war reconstruction and redevelopment which were interest free, but they also wanted enabling legislation to give them a freer hand in serving their areas. Recognising this inconsistency Sheffield Council called for a general inquiry into local government finance in its entirety. Local authorities, like Sheffield, as we shall see in Chapters Three and Six, desperately needed government financial help to redevelop areas like The Moor and rebuild major department stores. Reconstruction of these civic landmarks had enormous symbolic

importance to Sheffielders. Rate revenue would also flow to the Council and local jobs would be created. However, if central government provided most local authority funding then because it paid the piper it would want to decide the tune. Ultimately the contradiction could not be solved during the war by Labour's policy-makers or by the Churchill Coalition.¹²⁶

Opposition to regional government continued in Sheffield after the Conference. Labour and the Progressives united to pass a motion in August 1943 stating that they were opposed to any change by central government to their powers or functions without a full and impartial inquiry and consultation with the bodies representing local authorities. The time was considered opportune because Sheffield was to celebrate the centenary of its Municipal Incorporation in 1843. Alderman Thraves, leader of the Labour Group, said he had been associated with two committees, experience of which showed him that it was not just the Cabinet Ministers and MPs they had to fear but also 'the civil servants, who relentlessly pursued a policy of digging themselves in, and making themselves important.' He was upset that 'we cannot [even] do as we like with our own buses and have to consult Leeds, though the public, not realising that, criticise us.'¹²⁷ The motion was endorsed in September by representatives of ten County Boroughs, nine non-county Boroughs, 58 Urban District Councils, 21 Rural District Councils and the West Riding County Council at Wakefield and a Standing Committee was appointed to co-ordinate action.¹²⁸

In February 1944 the Editor of the Telegraph published the replies of Thraves and Jackson to the question 'Should there be a new Sheffield Region?' Jackson maintained his total hostility to regional administration even if based on Sheffield since those in the present-day local authority areas that it was suggested could amalgamate - in Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster, Worksop, Retford, Chesterfield, and the Hope Valley - would be able to influence Sheffield's standard of services in Sheffield and no place or authority outside Sheffield should be able to legislate for it. Thraves believed there could only be forms of regional administration over particular services based on Sheffield by consent of each local authority. He wanted to build up an economic region looking to Sheffield while retaining the present system of local government within it.¹²⁹ Alderman Thraves' view was acted on by Sheffield Council in terms of some of the measures it took with regard to post-war reconstruction. For example, Sheffield led in 1944 a group of local authorities within a thirty mile radius of the City as part of a Government scheme for the advance preparation of housing sites. The City Council was to take charge of road-making and mains and sewer construction for the whole lot.¹³⁰

Labour did at first defend a proposal in the National Health Service White Paper in 1944 to transfer municipal health services, including hospitals, to a Joint Authority to cover Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Chesterfield. The Progressives were entirely opposed as might be expected. Howard Hill, the sole Communist, argued that services in Sheffield would be levelled up since Sheffield people were waiting for extra beds and there were empty beds in authorities outside the city borders. Labour Councillor Dyson bravely remarked that he was not frightened of area authorities or regional control and that accepting Alderman Jackson's advice would cause people to die because they had not

had proper attention. Labour was in favour because in the past year the Council had had to help local voluntary hospitals out so they could continue to function but the voluntary system and especially its dependence on charity was seen as out of date.¹³¹ Unfortunately, shortly after, a Special Sub-Committee of the Health Committee under Labour Alderman Yorke while welcoming a comprehensive health service retreated from the earlier position and opposed transfer of municipal hospitals. An Authority with executive powers was regarded as 'a serious threat to the maintenance of Local Government on democratic lines.'¹³²

By the latter stages of the war it seemed less and less likely that the Churchill Coalition or Labour if it won a General Election would introduce regional government. There was from the Government side no desire to stir up uncomfortable controversy and it compromised by promising a greater role for local government after the war in return for acceptance of a boundary commission to alter the boundaries, status and territory of local government units. A White Paper was produced which ended the Regional Commissions and advised the strengthening of local authorities so they could deal with post-war responsibilities. Labour also supported a boundary commission since it could think of no other way of greatly modifying local government areas so they could deal with reconstruction. Local Government reform did not feature in Let Us Face The Future in 1945 though a boundary commission was to be created.¹³³ Regional government as an idea, however, continued to be discussed inside Labour. Labour flirted with regional authorities in the 1960s and 70s and moves to create regional assemblies in England have gained impetus from devolution in Scotland, Wales and London in the 1990s.¹³⁴

2.4 - CONCLUSION

Writing a 'Municipal Review' in 1942 Alderman Caine of Rotherham noted that in happier times it would have celebrated municipal progress and achievement, particularly the expansion of public services in a dozen different ways which would all have been to the benefit of the common people of Rotherham. But all hopes and plans had had to take a back seat due to the war emergency. While the experience of total war had made a great difference to the work of the Council he noted that

looking back over the 3 years it is surprising how much of our pre-war organisation and service remains in almost normal operation. Our policy has been to maintain the scope and efficiency of the public services at the highest level compatible with the drastic reductions in staff and the financial and other restrictions that have been imposed on municipalities in the interest of the war effort.¹³⁵

This Chapter could have been a description of the actual work of wartime local government. I have deliberately concentrated on questions of post-war industrial reconstruction rather than the operation of services like education or public health or latterly air raid precautions which had so large a role in protecting Sheffield's people and industry in wartime. I have also concentrated on the debate over local

government reform which Labour local authorities opposed and successfully defeated despite government and national party attempts to the contrary. The efforts to maintain municipal services during the war, particularly during the Sheffield 'Blitz' in December 1940, were heroic and they could not have been done without the cross-party co-operation that is evident in the two areas highlighted in this Chapter. It is arguable, however, that, as with the case of local government reform, while the members of the City Council were justifiably proud of their achievements in local government and spoke of their desire to defend local democracy and to create a wider civic consciousness of Sheffield this co-operation could not fail to be self-interested as they had a vested interest in preserving the existing City Council and retaining its existing powers since this provided them with status and the opportunity to make a name for themselves which would have been impossible under regional government. The possibility that the seat of regional administration would be in Leeds would also be an affront to local pride. The preservation of working-class jobs was part of Labour's *raison d'être* while preserving local firms was the *raison d'être* of the Progressives. Both had a pragmatic interest in defending and revitalising the local economy since it helped form the power base of both parties and employed the councillors. The ethical socialist rhetoric of many Labour city councillors did not disguise the real constraints on their individual room to manoeuvre caused by party politics within the council chamber. The Labour Group was, says Hampton, itself 'a closed community: exercising a fierce version of party discipline that forbade public expressions of dissent'.¹³⁶ A councillor's first loyalty was to the Group and not directly to the constituents who had elected him on one particular day and had then no subsequent control over the decisions he took in their name.

- ¹ REISMAN, David (ed) Democratic Socialism in Britain: Classic Texts in Economic and Political Thought 1825-1952. Volume 6 Harold Laski A Grammar of Politics. Pickering and Chatto, 1996, pp426-7.
- ² DICKENS, Peter, DUNCAN, Simon, GOODWIN, Mark and GRAY, Fred. Housing, States and Localities. Methuen, 1985, p164.
- ³ See his final monologue on the video BENNETT, Alan. Telling Tales. BBC Worldwide Ltd., 2000.
- ⁴ FIELDING, Steven, THOMPSON, Peter and TIRATSOO, Nick. "England Arise !": The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain. Manchester University Press, 1995, pp10-1.
- ⁵ See the discussion of 'Spectating and Civic Pride' in HOLT, Richard. Sport and the British: A Modern History. Oxford University Press, 1989, p159-74.
- ⁶ HEY, David. A History of Sheffield. Carnegie Publishing Ltd., 1998, p3.
- ⁷ HAMPTON, William. Democracy and Community: A Study of Politics in Sheffield. Oxford University Press, 1970, pp35-7.
- ⁸ As the East End of London was - see WHITE, Jerry. London in the Twentieth Century: A City and Its People. Penguin Books, 2002, pp108-12. Also see pp126-8 on anti-Semitism.
- ⁹ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p120-1.
- ¹⁰ HAMPTON, W. 1970, pxviii.
- ¹¹ HAMPTON, W. 1970, pxvii.
- ¹² HAMPTON, W. 1970, pxviii.
- ¹³ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p17.
- ¹⁴ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p49.
- ¹⁵ HILL, Jeffrey. Nelson: Politics, Economy, Community. Keele University Press, 1997, p104.
- ¹⁶ CAMPBELL, John. Margaret Thatcher. Volume One: The Grocer's Daughter. Jonathan Cape, 2000, pp1-2. Though Campbell sees her as denying this heritage until it became politically useful to her much later on in her career.
- ¹⁷ BARNETT, Correlli. The Collapse of British Power. Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1997, pp65-8.
- ¹⁸ WARD, Paul. 'Preparing for the People's War: Labour and Patriotism in the 1930s', Labour History Review, Vol. 67, No. 2, August 2002, p174.
- ¹⁹ POLLARD, Sidney. A History of Labour in Sheffield. Liverpool University Press, 1959, p198.
- ²⁰ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p160.
- ²¹ GRAYSON, Ruth with HAWLEY, Ken. Knifemaking in Sheffield and the Hawley Collection. PAVIC Publications, 1995, p8.
- ²² POLLARD, S. 1959, pp265-6.
- ²³ THORPE, Andrew. 'J. H. Thomas and the Rise of Labour in Derby, 1880-1945', Midland History, VOL. 15, 1990, p113.
- ²⁴ Quoted in ALLENDER, Paul. What's Wrong With Labour?: A Critical History of the Labour Party in the Twentieth Century. Merlin Press, 2001, p139.
- ²⁵ Census 1951: England and Wales General Tables. H. M. S. O., 1956, pp176-7.
- ²⁶ PERKIN, Harold. The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880. Routledge, 1990, pp417-8, xiii.
- ²⁷ Labour Hallam Ward November 1945 Municipal Election Address, CPR8 (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁸ Quoted in WEIGHT, Richard. Patriots: National Identity in Britain 1940-2000. Macmillan, 2002, p85.
- ²⁹ City Council Meeting, 09/11/1940, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1939/40, p528.
- ³⁰ FIELDING, Steven. 'The Second World War and Popular Radicalism: The Significance of the 'Movement Away from Party'', History, Vol. 80, No. 258, February 1995, p57.
- ³¹ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp92-4. Apart from a very few thinkers, like Evan Durbin, Labour was less concerned to create more psychologically healthy individuals and more concerned with ethical transformation in order to get an obedient workforce, yet surely if Labour had paid more attention to educating people to be emotionally happier rather than simply appealing to their reason, the problem for Labour of an apathetic and conservative electorate that Fielding, Tiratsoo and Thompson emphasise might have been overcome. See NUTTALL, Jeremy. 'Psychological Socialist'; 'Militant Moderate': Evan Durbin and the Politics of Synthesis', Labour History Review, Vol. 68, No. 2, August 2003, pp235-52.
- ³² FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, p107.
- ³³ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp103-5.
- ³⁴ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, p111.
- ³⁵ SCHNEER, Jonathan. London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis. Yale University Press, 1999, p13.
- ³⁶ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp213-4.

- ³⁷ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp37-8.
- ³⁸ WALTON, Mary. Sheffield Its Story and Its Achievements. S. R. Publishers Ltd. and the Corporation of Sheffield, 1968, p252. The first edition was published in October 1948.
- ³⁹ Quoted in TOMLINSON, Jim. Democratic Socialism and Economic Policy: The Attlee Years 1945-1951. Cambridge University Press, 1997, p97. Dahl was writing in 1947.
- ⁴⁰ Parliamentary and General Purposes Committee, 25/10/1944, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1943/44, p364.
- ⁴¹ PERKIN, H. 1990, pp137-8.
- ⁴² GYFORD, John. The Politics of Local Socialism. George Allen and Unwin, 1985, p10.
- ⁴³ DONOUGHUE, Bernard and JONES, G. W. Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician. Phoenix Press, 2001, pxxxiii.
- ⁴⁴ WHITE, J. 2002, p372.
- ⁴⁵ HATTERSLEY, Roy. Choose Freedom: The Future for Democratic Socialism. Penguin, 1987, p3.
- ⁴⁶ MORRISON, Herbert. Government and Parliament: A Survey from the Inside. Oxford University Press, 1956, pvi.
- ⁴⁷ FIELDING, Steven. 'Labourism in the 1940s', Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1992, p139.
- ⁴⁸ FRANCIS, Martin. Ideas and Policies Under Labour, 1945-1951: Building a New Britain. Manchester University Press, 1997.
- ⁴⁹ See, for example, SAVILLE, John. 'The Ideology of Labourism' in BENEWICK, Robert, BERKI, R. N. and PAREKH, Bhikhu (eds) Knowledge and Belief in Politics: The Problem of Ideology. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1973.
- ⁵⁰ ALLENDER, P. 2001, p121.
- ⁵¹ COLLINGE, Chris. 'The Dynamics of Local Intervention: Economic Development and the Theory of Local Government', Urban Studies, Vol. 29, No. 1, 1992, p57, 61.
- ⁵² COLLINGE, C. 1992, p71, 72.
- ⁵³ COLLINGE, C. 1992, p64.
- ⁵⁴ THORNES, Vernon and BALLARD, Dr. Albert. Forty Years of Labour Rule in Sheffield. Ripley Printers Ltd., 1966, p6.
- ⁵⁵ See MATHERS, Helen. 'The City of Sheffield 1893-1926' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p54. W. C. Leng, leader of local Conservatism and editor of the Sheffield Daily Telegraph, went so far as to describe himself, in 1889, (p59) as an unashamed 'socialist', though this simply meant that he favoured local ownership of public utilities.
- ⁵⁶ Progressive Post-War Policy: The Sheffield Municipal Progressive Party's Programme of Reconstruction. Municipal Elections on 7th November 1945. Municipal Progressive Party, 1945, p18.
- ⁵⁷ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. Sheffield Replanned. Sheffield City Council, 1945, p59.
- ⁵⁸ Star 03/07/1937, p1.
- ⁵⁹ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, p59.
- ⁶⁰ Labour Will Lead in Civic Progress. Sheffield Labour Party, 1945, CPR 8 (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁶¹ Rotherham Advertiser 25/03/1939, p19.
- ⁶² COLLINGE, C. 1992, p65.
- ⁶³ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, p3, 22, 50-1.
- ⁶⁴ Letter dated 14/11/1945 from Collie, J. M., Sheffield City Engineer, to Voyce, E. R., Regional Planning Officer, Ministry of Town and Country Planning, on 'Replanning of Sheffield', pp2-3, CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁶⁵ Quoted in LAYBOURN, Keith. Britain on the Breadline: A Social and Political History of Britain 1918-1939. Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1998, p37.
- ⁶⁶ LAYBOURN, K. 1998, p25.
- ⁶⁷ SCOTT, Peter. 'British Regional Policy 1945-51: A Lost Opportunity', Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1997, pp359-60.
- ⁶⁸ HALL, Peter. Urban and Regional Planning. Routledge, 1992, p67, 69-70.
- ⁶⁹ SCOTT, P. 1997, p360.
- ⁷⁰ The Times 09/04/1941, p2.
- ⁷¹ Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. The Future of Local Government. Labour Party, 1943, p15 (Labour Party Archive).
- ⁷² PIMLOTT, Ben. Hugh Dalton. Macmillan, 1986, p344, 400.
- ⁷³ Figure is from HEY, D. 1998, p213. Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 06/12/1940, p5 gives a

peak figure of 62,000 unemployed and The Times 14/10/1941, p8 gives a figure of 65,000 at one time in Sheffield.

⁷⁴ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 06/12/1940, p5.

⁷⁵ CULLINGWORTH, J. B. Environmental Planning Volume I: Reconstruction and Land Use Planning 1939-1947. H. M. S. O., 1975, pp32-3.

⁷⁶ Meeting, General Purposes Committee, 07/07/1943, Barnsley Town Council Minute Book 1942/43, p548 (Barnsley Archives and Local Studies Section).

⁷⁷ PIMLOTT, B. 1986, pp400-407.

⁷⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 06/08/1942, p3.

⁷⁹ Letter dated 25/01/1945 from the Development Officer of Bristol Development Board for the Advancement of the City and Port of Bristol, CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).

⁸⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 14/11/1944, p4.

⁸¹ Meeting, 20/03/1945, Post War Reconstruction Committee Minutes, Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, LD2421/7 (Sheffield Archives).

⁸² 'The Proposed Plan for the Central Area of Sheffield - Comments of the Town Planning Committee of the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and of the Retailers' Advisory Committee on Town Planning', Appendix No. 2 - 'Industry House' - 24/02/1941, CA659 (3) (Sheffield Archives).

⁸³ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, p23.

⁸⁴ LAYBOURN, Keith. A History of British Trade Unionism c.1770-1990. Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1997, p161.

⁸⁵ BROOKE, Stephen. 'The Labour Party and the Second World War' in GORST, A., JOHNMAN, L. and LUCAS, W. S. (eds) Contemporary British History 1931-1961: Politics and the Limits of Policy. Pinter Publishers, 1991, pp12-3.

⁸⁶ See TOMLINSON, J. 1997, pp178-82.

⁸⁷ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, p51.

⁸⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 20/03/1945, p2.

⁸⁹ BARNETT, Correlli. The Lost Victory: British Dreams, British Realities 1945-1950. Pan, 1995, p323.

⁹⁰ TOMLINSON, J. 1997, pp173-4.

⁹¹ SCOTT, P. 1997, pp358-9.

⁹² HAMPTON, W. 1970, pp39-42.

⁹³ BASTON, Lewis. 'Labour Local Government 1900-1999' in BRIVATI, Brian and HEFFERNAN, Richard (eds) The Labour Party: A Centenary History. Macmillan, 2000, p454.

⁹⁴ TICHELAR, Michael. 'Central-Local Tensions: The Case of the Labour Party, Regional Government and Land-Use Reform During the Second World War', Labour History Review, Vol. 66, No. 2, Summer 2001, pp187-206.

⁹⁵ ALEXANDER, Alan. 'Structure, Centralization and the Position of Local Government' in LOUGHLIN, Martin, GELFAND, M. David and YOUNG, Ken (eds) Half a Century of Municipal Decline 1935-1985. George Allen and Unwin, 1985, pp50-54.

⁹⁶ KRAMNICK, Isaac and SHEERMAN, Barry. Harold Laski: A Life on the Left. Hamish Hamilton, 1993, p267.

⁹⁷ Picture Post 15/02/1941, p24, 26.

⁹⁸ Labour Party Annual Conference Report 1943, pp190-1.

⁹⁹ TICHELAR, M. Summer 2001, p191.

¹⁰⁰ Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee Minutes, (2), 13/11/1941, p1-2 (Labour Party Archive).

¹⁰¹ Local Government Reform, Labour Discussion Series No. 4, May 1946, p2-3 (Labour Party Archive).

¹⁰² Labour Party Annual Conference Report 1943, p192.

¹⁰³ Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. 1943, p2 (Labour Party Archive).

¹⁰⁴ Picture Post 15/02/1941, p26.

¹⁰⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 08/01/1942, p3.

¹⁰⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 03/01/1942, p2.

¹⁰⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 08/01/1942, p3.

¹⁰⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 07/10/1943, p3.

¹⁰⁹ Sheffield Telegraph Year Book 1945, p167.

¹¹⁰ GYFORD, John. Local Politics in Britain. Croom Helm, 1976, pp59-60.

¹¹¹ Sheffield Telegraph 10/04/1943, p2.

¹¹² Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council 1st Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for the Year Ending 1942, p31 (Sheffield Archives).

- ¹¹³ Sheffield Telegraph 10/04/1943, p2.
- ¹¹⁴ Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. 1943, pp14-6 (Labour Party Archives).
- ¹¹⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 10/04/1943, p2.
- ¹¹⁶ Association of Municipal Corporations Reorganisation of Local Government Report of Special Committee Adopted by General Purposes Committee on 21st January 1942 (Labour Party Archive).
- ¹¹⁷ SHANE, T. N. 'Susan Lawrence' in TRACEY, Herbert (ed) The British Labour Party: Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders. Volume III. The Caxton Publishing Company Ltd., October 1948, pp318-20.
- ¹¹⁸ Minority Report of the Sub-Committee on the Machinery of Local Government by A. S. Lawrence, no date [July 1942] (Labour Party Archive).
- ¹¹⁹ TICHELAR, M. Summer 2001, p192.
- ¹²⁰ Rotherham Advertiser 12/12/1942, p12.
- ¹²¹ Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. Local Government in the Post-War World - Provisional Proposals. Labour Party, July 1942, p2 (Labour Party Archive).
- ¹²² Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. 1943, p8 (Labour Party Archive).
- ¹²³ Labour Party Annual Conference Report 1943, p193.
- ¹²⁴ Machinery of Local Government Sub-Committee. July 1942, p2 (Labour Party Archive).
- ¹²⁵ Labour Party Annual Conference Report 1943, p194.
- ¹²⁶ TICHELAR, M. Summer 2001, pp192-3.
- ¹²⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 05/08/1943, p3. The idea of even celebrating Municipal Incorporation in wartime split the Council at first - see Sheffield Telegraph 04/03/1943, p3 - but eventually a pageant was produced for the occasion by Dr. L du Garde Peach which celebrated Sheffield's past history and which played to packed houses in the City Hall - see Sheffield Telegraph 26/08/1943, p3.
- ¹²⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 30/09/1943, p3.
- ¹²⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 21/02/1944, p2.
- ¹³⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 16/03/1944, p3.
- ¹³¹ Sheffield Telegraph 06/07/1944, p3.
- ¹³² Meeting, Health Committee, 29/08/1944, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1943/44, pp294-5
- ¹³³ TICHELAR, M. Summer 2001, pp193-4.
- ¹³⁴ TAYLOR, Miles. 'Labour and the Constitution' in TANNER, Duncan, THANE, Pat and TIRATSOO, Nick (eds) Labour's First Century. Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp171-2.
- ¹³⁵ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council 1st Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for the Year Ending 1942, p31 (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹³⁶ HAMPTON, W. 1970, p75.

CHAPTER THREE
NEW JERUSALEM PROPOSED ?
TOWN PLANNING AND HOUSING PROVISION
IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE, 1939-1945

3.1 - INTRODUCTION

The reshaping and rebuilding of the great City of Sheffield is a vast undertaking; but, as a consequence of the war, it is one we must engage in whether we like it or not.

What we have now to decide is: are we to rebuild in conformity with a plan convened on bold lines and in the high spirit of social enterprise, of co-operative effort and of public service, or are we to rebuild in the main on the old lines with all alterations reduced to the essential minimum ?¹

Sheffield Replanned and the Town Planning Exhibition held in summer 1945 attempted to give a vision of the future Sheffield as embodied in the Collie Plan named after the City Engineer. The latter was the culmination of a process that had begun before the Second World War and continued through it. The quotation illustrates the dilemma which faced Sheffield and other blitzed cities during the 1940s. The result was a compromise between the Labour Party and the needs of local business interests and the actual planning hardly involved ordinary citizens directly except that in 1945 they were given the privilege of knowing about the result. The wartime local electoral truce was one of a number of factors which insulated the decision makers. Labour wanted a modern city with imposing buildings, squares and streets because it wanted to make Sheffielders proud of the achievements of Municipal Socialism, to foster community and to make them socialists. Similarly in London in 1900 politicians and architects wanted a city that would physically reflect its pretensions to a world role as the centre of the British Empire so Londoners 'as if through a process of osmosis, [could] come to understand what their attitudes toward empire and the imperialized peoples should be.'² Sheffield was the fifth city in the country with an international reputation and they wanted a city to match. Sheffield's leaders were also conscious that they sometimes came off worst to Leeds, the great rival, which was the wartime centre of regional administration. As Joe Ashton says, 'It was Sheffield's proud boast that it made the weapons of war for the troops while Leeds made the WAAF's knickers. Which was why Goering never bothered bombing Leeds.'³

To get an overview of the development of town planning in Sheffield during the 1940s it is instructive to compare three Times articles. The first in August 1942 had the headline 'A Better And A Greater Sheffield' and the sub-title 'War-Time Spirit of the City of Steel'. It had a patriotic, morale-boosting tone and gives an idea of wider perceptions of Sheffield and its folk. It was a set of perceptions Sheffielders readily agreed with. They were 'an outspoken people and they do not suffer fools gladly. They work hard and they play hard.' It commented that:

[I]t is no secret that the city has fared badly by enemy attacks from the air. Frequently there may be seen on a board announcing committee meetings at the town hall, the words "Town Planning." This committee meets regularly. For obvious reasons its deliberations are confidential, but it is safe to assume that when the time comes it will introduce schemes to rebuild and remould. It is not a long time ago that the Emergency Committee issued to members of the Civil Defence Services some words of praise following a particularly trying ordeal during an air-raid on the city - "How shall we honour our dead ? That is for the future. When the time comes we shall remember them by removing our scars, and in their place we shall build a better and greater Sheffield." Those words can, perhaps, be used to describe the ambition of those who are responsible for the future destinies of Sheffield.⁴

The second appeared in 1943 and was entitled 'A New Sheffield' and sub-titled 'Working Out Ideals'. Sheffield's aim had once been to be merely a successful manufacturing community but now:

With the development of social consciousness has come the realization that there are other aims worthy of equal effort. The transformation of the city into a dignified expression of its industrial achievements, the scientific zoning of its various industrial and business activities, the abolition of its slums, the loosening up of its population densities, the provision of houses fit for workers to live in and in happier and pleasanter situations which are available, the cultivation of community centres, the development of education, of music, and the arts - these are new ideals which are gradually taking practical form.

This 'social consciousness' had quickened during the inter-war period and much preparatory town-planning work had been done. This included the Civic Survey and Plan produced by Patrick Abercrombie in the 1920s and the 1939 draft Central Area Scheme. Thus, Sheffield was more prepared for reconstruction than other cities and after the air raids many difficulties in the way of creating a splendid city had been removed.⁵

The final article appeared in October 1952. Like the first it presented the gritty, blunt, no-nonsense, Northern characteristics of Sheffield folk. It was optimistic about the future of the City but did not minimise the lack of progress that had been made. It said that 'Sheffield people have a deep distrust of the cheap, the showy, and the superficial and none of these qualities finds a place in the scheme for replanning their bombed city.' Sheffield was a 'hard-headed and feet-on-the-ground community' which looked for 'practicability' in its town plans. The air raids had not proved such a straightforward opportunity as appeared in 1943: 'Such a toll of damage, though it demanded a planned reconstruction of the city centre, was too scattered and sporadic to assist materially in securing it. To some extent, indeed, it made the execution of comprehensive redevelopment more difficult by giving a scarcity value to the

properties still remaining.’ The Collie Plan was commended in that it

differed from most plans produced at that time in that it rejected the idea of a fixed “master plan” in favour of a flexible scheme which would allow for progressive adjustment to accord with current needs and legislation. The severe avoidance of what was known at that time as “imaginative planning” ensured that the plan was kept within the limits of probable execution in the difficult post-war years.

But it noted that

the city authorities feel that much more might have been done in Sheffield if materials had been available in good time. They fear that if trading facilities are not restored quickly in the areas where they flourished before the war, neither traders nor the public will regain the habit of seeking them there. Thus there will be a permanent loss of rateable value, and Sheffield will be denied a shopping centre commensurate with its status. The council have made many approaches to the ministries concerned, but without success.⁶

The town-planning profession have been attacked for writing simplistic Whig histories of their subject. Much of it presented itself ‘as an inevitable, unquestionable and heroic story in which all achievements are laid to its credit, while adverse factors are attributed to accident or hostile forces.’ Ravetz has attempted to produce a more balanced picture claiming that planners had underestimated or ignored the influence of important factors and agents by concentrating on the narrow history of their profession.⁷ David Cannadine has also made a distinction between ‘planning history’ whose practitioners have ‘their own applied and essentially anachronistic field of historical vision’ and ‘urban history’ as pioneered by H. J. Dyos - a much more inter-disciplinary and comprehensive study of the history of cities.⁸ Nick Tiratsoo and Junichi Hasegawa, while making a contribution to planning history, do so in a much more critical light than professional town planners. They are more concerned with whether the plans for reconstruction were actually realised in particular cities and the reasons for the success or failure. Such studies allow a better understanding of Labour Party history at both national and local level and its success or failure as a political entity. Tiratsoo has examined the re-planning of Hull⁹ and in greater detail at Coventry.¹⁰ In both cases he has attempted to demonstrate that Correlli Barnett’s controversial thesis of ‘Parlours before Plant’ is unhelpful as a description of historical actuality. According to Barnett:

It was Britain’s free choice - the choice of governments and electorate alike - to relegate the physical re-creation of her industrial base to a very poor second place in her order of building priorities. Instead of starting with a new workshop so as to become rich enough to afford a new family villa, John Bull opted for the villa

straightaway - even though he happened to be bankrupt at the time.¹¹

This was because in the debates about post-war reconstruction during the Second World War 'New Jerusalemists' infected with optimism about creating a 'Brave New World' after the war triumphed over economic realists who put forward the view of the 'Cruel Real World' in which Britain had to make a living.¹² Building houses and hospitals were supposedly put before factories and esoteric visions informed town plans that did not find adequate space for factory building and expansion but concentrated on zoning for homes. Tiratsoo and Hasegawa do not confirm this picture. Coventry, for example, is usually seen as a major success of bold 'New Jerusalemist' town planning in the 1940s and, wrongly, as typifying, with Plymouth, post-war reconstruction in the blitzed cities. In fact it was atypical. In Hull and Southampton the original bold wartime plans were never implemented, despite the Labour councils in power, and in Bristol, though the shopping centre was re-located to a new site, local Labour was not as enthusiastic as it might have been.¹³ Hasegawa has also written about Conservative Portsmouth, a city where town planners were little regarded or supported and whose plan was also undone.¹⁴ Both historians show that the supposedly 'New Jerusalemist' plans were not realised because industrial reconstruction was, *pace* Barnett, taken extremely seriously at a time when exports were necessary to fill the 'dollar gap' in order to pay for imports from the United States and to overcome national bankruptcy. House-building admittedly *was* an immediate priority of Labour councils but it always lost out to the building of new factories. On the other hand, house-building in areas with industries that did produce exports had an economic rationale that Barnett underestimates because it did help increase labour factor mobility and so promoted labour flexibility in industry.

Work has been done on the history of town-planning in Sheffield before but it has been largely done by professional town-planners. They have also employed for the 1940s generalisations which Tiratsoo and Hasegawa question at length. Did the Second World War really see established 'a [national] political consensus to ensure a programme to effect a policy for land use and development in the process of post-war reconstruction [?] [And] Locally, [did] it engender . . . an enthusiasm for planning not only as a means of reconstructing the blitzed cities but as an act of faith in the future [?]'¹⁵ They argue that detailed 'micro-historical' studies show that the reality was more complex and much more contradictory than these generalisations suggest.

Even Paul Addison, the classic historian of wartime consensus, notes that while the main principles of town and country planning were agreed between the two national parties, particularly that there should be some kind of central planning authority, yet there was stalemate over whether the new Ministry of Town and Country Planning should have the powers over land use recommended by the Uthwatt Committee into betterment and compensation.¹⁶ The achievements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 enacted by Labour in the field of compensation and betterment were short-lived and repealed by the Conservatives after 1951 so they were not part of any consensus. While admitting that point, the town-planner, H. W. E. Davies, does, however, support the consensus thesis, arguing that the Act's five basic

legislative principles did survive and were enshrined in the Act of 1990. Even Margaret Thatcher's government, though allegedly antagonistic to everything exemplifying consensus, did not scrap these principles but confirmed them.¹⁷

Peter Mandler, unlike Davies, sees the planning system created by the 1947 Act as largely dismantled and nullified by the Conservatives after 1951. This produced a return to *laissez-faire* with the result that in the 1950s and 1960s city centres were handed over to private developers with usually catastrophic results. This contemptuous treatment of historic townscapes, however, has usually been regarded as the responsibility of arrogant town planners which explains their negative popular image.¹⁸ Alison Ravetz, subscribes to this popular view of town-planners arguing that the 1940s generation of town planners were exponents of a 'clean sweep' style of planning indiscriminately hating and undervaluing the Victorian urban legacy.¹⁹ Mandler argues, however, that there was a wider circle of responsibility. And he puts some of the blame on the public who made few protests about what was happening at the time because they had little interest in town planning.²⁰ Tiratsoo agrees with Mandler on the apathy and conservatism of the public on the subject even at its supposed height in World War Two. They both believe the planners were limited reformers who tried to work harmoniously with the public and that they should be given more credit than is usually the case for what they actually did.²¹

Tiratsoo with Thompson and Fielding has questioned the Addison thesis of a significant leftward shift in popular attitudes in wartime by looking at a variety of wartime developments which have been said to have produced social harmony or are taken as evidence of popular radicalism or interest in post-war reconstruction, including town planning. They show that the evidence does not simply point in one direction and that much of the evidence presented in favour of the thesis is unpersuasive. There was a boom in reconstruction literature and a consensus existed among planners and architects that blitzed cities presented a great opportunity to create a better planned Britain but the belief that they were winning over the general public to their schemes was wishful thinking as demonstrated by wartime surveys into popular attitudes to future housing provision. This demonstrated that people wanted houses immediately and were much less interested in longer-term town planning principles. They admit that there was interest in town planning while the Blitz was actually occurring in particular cities but after 1941 this faded away as people tired of hearing about a 'new' Britain that appeared to be just empty talk and the raids became less frequent.²²

Beaven and Thoms, looking at the Blitz and civilian morale between 1940 and 1942, based on the findings in Mass-Observation reports, have argued that in damaged city centres which retained intact the institutions of working-class leisure culture, like cinemas, music halls or public houses, as well as public utilities and city centre landmarks, morale was much more easily maintained than in cities where they had been destroyed. Mass-Observers tended to regard regional or local characteristics supposedly exhibited by the citizens of blitzed cities as responsible for local morale but Beaven and Thoms dismiss this.²³ We have noted the supposed characteristics of Sheffield folk. Walton and Lamb in their book on

the Sheffield Blitz, which is based on information gathered in the aftermath, believed that civilian morale was good in Sheffield despite the destruction of the Marples Hotel when seventy people were killed, for instance.²⁴ This might be put down to the 'down-to-earth' features of the Northern character, but thankfully there were, after all, only two major raids on Sheffield, and Sheffield's forbearance was never tested to the extreme extent it was in London. It could be, however, that Walton and Lamb were anxious to show that Sheffield could 'Take It' just like London and that they had bought into Angus Calder's 'Myth of the Blitz' of stoic Londoners.²⁵ Ministry of Information 'Advice on the Preparation of Broadcasts' about the conditions in blitzed towns in 1941 said that it was important to 'shift attention from the present to the future' stressing 'rebuilding, reconstructing, replanning ... The future will be *better* than the past.'²⁶ But if we accept Beaven and Thoms' argument it was equally about restoring the past so far as citizens were concerned. To civic leaders it was about modernisation and the inculcation of civic spirit. Involvement by citizens in town planning was arguably as good a way of inculcating community consciousness as the impressive new buildings and lay-out planned at a time when a war was being fought for democracy. But town planning's 'Brave New World' rhetoric became less effective when, as in Sheffield, it became apparent that nothing was actually being done to create the reality that the town plans sketched *and* that the public, in contradiction to the ideals of democracy, community and fairness in which the war was being fought, were not being consulted and deliberations were taking place behind closed doors. This is what the Editor of *The Star* complained of in 1943. He then tried to start the debate that the City Council showed no intention of starting or of wanting in the pages of his newspaper. But central government was also not passing the kind of legislation that would materially assist local authorities to buy land easily with a minimum of procedural obstacles to rapid action.

The town-planning schemes advocated in Sheffield during the War were the product of continuity with the past rather than the sudden conversion to town-planning principles that occurred after some cities were blitzed. Town planning in Sheffield was also noted for its 'practicability' due to this experience and by 1940 it had already achieved in comparison with other authorities. Town planning in the inter-war period often focused on the design of the layout of council estates since it was unable to progress with more ambitious plans for comprehensive redevelopment of towns because local authorities could not afford to do so given their existing powers. Housing is an essential part of town planning, though it is sometimes overlooked, and the Collie Plan saw it as the first priority even over the reconstruction of the blitzed city centre. Wartime Sheffield was already suffering an accommodation crisis which was predicted to get worse with the return of servicemen after the war ended. The context of the post-war crisis is dealt with in this chapter. There was also an ideological dimension to housing centred around competing claims made about the efficiency of private or municipal enterprise in building houses and the respective advantages and disadvantages of owner-occupation or of tenants renting from the City Council. Houses were also regarded as the housewives' workplace and the issue was in consequence seen as peculiarly one affecting women. Housewives were also regarded by Labour as symbolizing the norm of womanhood providing an essential element of Labour's electoral support and through the Women's Sections taking on a variety of mundane but essential organisational tasks. The pay-off for

these services was not positions of political power and influence - though locally there were a few women councillors - rather the guarantee that working-class living conditions would be improved.

3.2 - TOWN PLANNING IN SHEFFIELD BETWEEN THE WARS

Town planning in South Yorkshire between the Wars and afterwards was not solely confined to Sheffield though this might be believed from my concentration within this Chapter on the city. However, Sheffield was an early pioneer in this area and the 1945 Collie Plan was not a completely novel development but the culmination and continuation of a process that had begun before 1914. In this Sheffield must be contrasted with the inter-war boom town of Coventry whose town planning schemes only really got underway in 1937 with the election of a Labour Council and a year later with the appointment of the architect Donald Gibson.²⁷

Professor Patrick Abercrombie described the 1924 Sheffield Civic Survey and Plan (which was the precursor of all later Sheffield town plans), the 1922 Doncaster Regional Town Planning Report and the Dundee competition plan he made as 'the foundation of all my town and regional planning work'. He also produced a Sheffield regional plan in 1931 and was retained as consultant to the City Council in the preparation of the 1939 draft City Centre plan.²⁸ Abercrombie was extremely productive of town plans at this period of his life. Lord Holford noted, however, that looking at these plans collectively 'one is made aware of Abercrombie's immense industry and fertility; but also . . . that although they were persuasive, and beginning to be influential, they were not yet backed by administrative power or by economic incentives.'²⁹ That was the frustrating story of inter-war town planning. There was some legislative progress. Local authorities could draw up development schemes for any land as a result of the Town and Country Planning Act 1932, whereas before town planning was restricted to peripheral areas of new development. As late as June 1942, however, only 3 per cent of Britain was covered by such schemes.³⁰ A local authority that had made a resolution to prepare or adopt a town planning scheme was given powers of interim development control which meant that builders or other persons seeking to build on land in the area covered by the scheme had to seek the permission of the local authority for it or else the building constructed could be torn down without compensation. Yet this was a purely negative power. The Act also forced local authorities to place their schemes before Parliament for approval which could take unnecessary time.³¹

Sutcliffe has described Sheffield Labour politics as

curiously conservative, continuing the tradition of civic enterprise from the later 19th century, but recognizing the strong identity of interest between labor and its employers in the city. In these circumstances, it is no surprise that the main focus of municipal activity between the wars should have been on public education and improving the environment. And activity in this latter area, in particular, did much to establish the

context of planning in Sheffield after 1945.³²

This is true. The Labour Party joined with active environmentalist elements who favoured town and country planning in the local Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) branch and achieved much even before the Second World War. This latter body can be regarded in its make-up as representing what Arthur Marwick called 'middle opinion' locally.³³ The interests of the two, however, could not always be guaranteed to converge harmoniously. Sheffield Replanned saw the construction of houses as a first priority in 1945³⁴ but shortages of labour and materials prevented the rapid realisation of this objective in the late 1940s and the City Council clashing with the CPRE. However, the City Council was to come increasingly into conflict with the CPRE in the 1950s and 1960s as the provisional green belt became the only land available for building homes.³⁵ In 1938, however, it had been the Labour Party which in response to the latter's representations from 1936 introduced proposals for a green belt in the face of Municipal Progressive opposition.³⁶ However, it remained a provisional green belt until 1983 because the City Council refused in the 1950s to establish a permanent one as they were invited to do under the Conservative Government's Circular 50/57.³⁷ Patrick Abercrombie was the Honorary Secretary of the national CPRE during the inter-war period and actively campaigned for a similar green belt around London.³⁸ Ravetz points out that the movement for countryside planning led by the CPRE was urban in its bias and sought to preserve landscapes as playgrounds for urban people. This is what one might expect if only from the composition of the membership of the Sheffield branch. By opposing rural industry and by protecting agricultural land from being put to more lucrative uses it turned rural areas into museums and prevented rural inhabitants taking up new livelihoods. This was recognised by Abercrombie himself.³⁹

The organisation did little to prevent the flight from the rural areas into the towns in the inter-war period by helping provide new jobs or to provide affordable homes. The Sheffield and Peak District Branch was particularly concerned with controlling industrial and residential expansion in the Peak District.⁴⁰ It was concerned to outlaw, for example, affordable contemporary materials in Peak District houses if they interfered with the aesthetics of the house built or its place in the landscape. Like many of the inter-war organisations of 'middle opinion', it feared a public uneducated in the what they considered to be the proper use of leisure and saw profit as a dirty word. According to Guy Dawber, a former president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, writing in the Sheffield Branch's booklet Housing in the Peak District published in 1934:

The beauty of our English countryside is daily disfigured, not only by the thoughtlessness of speculative builders, but also through the apathy and indifference of the public, for there are today great numbers of people, many in responsible positions, who think that the present has no obligations either to the past or to the future, and that if a man wants to build a house he need consider only his own convenience or profit, and that it may be as ugly and out of place as he chooses to make it.⁴¹

There was a strong whiff of paternalism within the organisation despite the presence of socialists on its Executive Committee. Ethel Gallimore (later Haythornthwaite), the Branch Honorary Secretary, was the daughter of a Sheffield industrialist, T. W. Ward,⁴² and her family generously provided funds to purchase important pieces of land in the Peak District in the 1930s, often to forestall speculative builders.⁴³ Like local Labour politicians they looked to the inculcation of civic consciousness to preserve the countryside. To quote Dawber again:

The problem of saving the countryside cannot be solved by legislation - it is a matter of goodwill on the part of the public. Had we taught, fifty years ago, the people of this country, adults and children in our elementary, secondary and public schools and universities, the value of our beautiful countryside its trees and scenery, its villages, churches and old buildings, and objects of historic interest - civic pride in fact - we should not to-day be suffering from this spate of ugliness that is overwhelming the whole country.⁴⁴

This view, however, chimed well with the stated views of Conservative politicians like Stanley Baldwin in the inter-war years. In 1924 he had spoken of his nostalgia for:

The sounds of England, the tinkle of the hammer on the anvil in the country smithy, the cornrake on a dewy morning, the sound of the scythe against the whetstone, and the sight of a plough team coming over the brow of a hill, . . . [this is a] sight that has been seen in England since England was a land, and may be seen in England long after the Empire has perished and every works in England has ceased to function. For centuries, the one eternal sight of England.⁴⁵

The CPRE in Sheffield, however, would have been unable to achieve anything without the willingness of Labour in the shape of Alderman Fred Marshall, Chairman of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres and MP for industrial Brightside, to listen and act on their representations. He had joined the Executive Committee of the Branch in 1936 and it was largely due to his efforts that the green belt proposal became a reality.⁴⁶ Labour support is entirely understandable given the ugliness and pollution of the Lower Don Valley that working-class people had to daily experience. It was a place people would want to escape from if they could.⁴⁷ The more energetic ones often did so through the cheap pastime of rambling. Another influential CPRE executive member was George Herbert Bridges Ward who founded the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers Club in 1900 and was the first Secretary of the Labour Representation Committee, the forerunner of the Labour Party in Sheffield.⁴⁸

Sheffield citizens were first informed of new plans for the City Centre in the local press in July 1937. The Star noted that the 'closely-guarded' plan had been kept secret for years (work began in 1934) and

was only revealed in the City Council minutes when Marshall made a report of his Special Committee. The plan involved an area in the centre of the city of about a third of a mile square with the Town Hall at the very centre. The Committee had made enquiries of other Council committees as to buildings which Sheffield would need in the near future and ought to be sited in the Civic Centre. These included new Law Courts and Police Headquarters, a new College of Arts and Crafts, new offices and showrooms for the municipal Electricity Department, an extension to the Town Hall to include the local taxation and licensing offices and a new Medical Centre. The Municipal Progressive leader, Alderman Jackson, supported the plan. He was a member of the Special Committee and wanted a Civic Centre of which Sheffield could be proud. Criticism of the plan came mainly from a well-known Sheffield architect on the City Council, Alderman W. C. Fenton, who believed the Law Courts were being sited in the wrong place and should be made part of a block of existing public buildings in Norfolk Street. The latter would then emulate Cardiff city centre. Fenton's verdict was that, 'The plan is a very small result for the months of labour expended on it'.⁴⁹ 'Current Topics' in the Sheffield Telegraph was also critical that the Special Committee was practically asking for a blank cheque to acquire city centre land which could prove very costly because the private owners could hold out for virtually whatever price they wanted.⁵⁰

On 7 July 1937 the City Centre plan was approved subject to capital expenditure being approved by the Finance Consultative Committee. Alderman Jackson voted with the Special Committee and several other Municipal Progressives also voted in favour. All Labour members supported the plans. The Sheffield, South Yorkshire, and District Society of Architects and Surveyors sent a resolution expressing regret that 'opportunity has not been taken to plan a wide and dignified approach from the Midland Station to the Town Hall' and called for the re-planning of the Station Square. Marshall stressed the need for a new road plan for Sheffield since the main traffic artery, the Moor, was also the main shopping street to ease traffic congestion. Sheffield had some impressive City Centre buildings but they were not a harmonious group bearing little relation to each other and reflecting their haphazard origins. The Plan was an attempt to impose harmony. The Special Committee had wanted a Civic Square similar to that in Cardiff and Liverpool around which the civic buildings would be located but had finally decided it would be too expensive to create one, though it could not be ruled out in the future. The actual plan put forward formed in essence an avenue flanked by impressive buildings.⁵¹

The plan was re-submitted to the City Council in February 1938 after estimates of cost had been finalised and was again adopted. The Council, however, sat for nearly seven and a half hours deliberating over the Special Committee report. The Scheme presented included the construction of new roads, the improvement of others, and the creation of residential, general business, special business, intermediate and industrial zones. The Municipal Progressives were particularly critical of the 'dictatorial' powers involved in the zoning proposals and put down a series of amendments which were defeated.⁵² Marshall in March 1938 argued that Sheffield had been given an opportunity that might not recur. The extensive demolition of slum property had left many cleared spaces in what had been the most congested part of Sheffield.⁵³ The Committee proposed to by-pass the Moor, since it was too costly to widen it, and create

two parallel roads to deal with traffic congestion. There would also be an inner ring road to relieve traffic pressure. It was estimated that the various road proposals would cost £4,278,350 gross and £2,904,386 net. Various street works would cost an extra £508,000. The Sheffield, South Yorkshire, and District Society of Architects and Surveyors commended the plan in principle though it called for flexibility in land use zoning and made minor criticisms of the road proposals. The Chamber of Commerce made some criticism of the proposed roads, called for protection of existing industrial premises in residential zones and fiercely opposed the suggestion that the City Council should be able to buy land adjoining that bought for street widening including business premises compulsorily. It also wanted longer leases of municipal land in order to attract industry and warned about the effect of the already great outstanding debt in respect of street improvements on the General City Rate. An increase in the Rate would not make Sheffield attractive to industry.⁵⁴

This did not mark the end of controversy. In July 1938 Marshall made a 'sensational speech' in Parliament which attacked the heavy compensation local authorities had to pay to make their town planning schemes a reality including the extortionate prices the City Council would have to pay to private owners of slum cleared land in central Sheffield. Marshall said that it was not possible to estimate what the plan would finally cost and that it might take as long as twenty-five years to complete. Local authorities like Sheffield were not extravagant and already were staggering under a heavy burden of expenditure forced upon them by central government with no surplus for the expansion of municipal services. The Ministry of Health merely answered that it was aware of Sheffield's problems.⁵⁵ The Plan was a major issue in the 1938 municipal elections. Progressives criticised the astronomical loan charges Sheffield would have to pay to implement the plan, even hinting that if they were returned it would be reconsidered.⁵⁶ The Sheffield Corporation Bill embodying the plan finally came before Parliament for approval in 1939.⁵⁷ By August 1939 it was an Act and the City Council was presented with the draft of the Sheffield (Central) Planning Scheme.⁵⁸ Unfortunately the date when this occurred was 6 September 1939, three days after the outbreak of the Second World War. Nevertheless, on 9 November 1939 the Scheme was adopted and the Scheme and Map were placed on deposit for public inspection with notices inviting objections published. There were 219 objections but only 28 objectors specifically challenged the Draft Scheme. Despite this, work on town planning virtually ceased during the period prior to December 1940. The Planning Officer was released from his duties to serve in His Majesty's Forces. The Planning Department continued to exist but almost all the staff were engaged on civil defence work. Only one technical officer was left on town planning duties.⁵⁹

3.3 - A NEW OPPORTUNITY ? TOWN PLANNING 1940-1943

During the Second World War on only two occasions did major air raid damage ensue and by common agreement these events make up the Sheffield 'Blitz'. The two raids were on the nights of 12/13th and 15/16th December 1940. Professor J. B. S. Haldane, a celebrated scientist who became a Communist in 1942,⁶⁰ wrote in his book *A. R. P.* (1938) that, 'There is half a square mile of Sheffield which is more

vital for the production of munitions than any other part of Britain'.⁶¹ This area in the East End was the target of the attackers. But, while bombs were dropped on industrial Attercliffe during the second raid, most bombs fell on the City centre. The area around the Moor, High Street, Ecclesall Road and Psalter Lane had a major cluster of bombs and terrible damage was done. Many of Sheffield's major stores were destroyed and were to be rebuilt only in the 1950s. 668 civilians and twenty-five servicemen were killed and 92 people were left missing presumed killed by the raids.⁶² 1,218 commercial and business premises were totally destroyed and 2,255 rendered unusable. 1,000 houses were totally demolished, 2,000 were badly damaged but capable of repair and thirty thousand slightly damaged.⁶³ The Blitz was regarded, however, by planners and by Council members as a new opportunity to correct the past problems of Sheffield's built environment and to create a city that lived up to its fifth-city status within Britain.

The 1951 Government Progress Report on town and country planning blamed the lack of progress of development plans on an inability to assemble a big enough area to develop: 'War damage on the whole was scattered, and even where it was most concentrated there were usually a few buildings left standing, buildings which were as a rule too useful to be pulled down.'⁶⁴ This was the case in Sheffield. Another obstacle was that war damage gave opportunities for land speculators who could pick up choice bargains immediately after heavy air raids and then force local authorities to pay them extortionate prices when they came to purchase the land as compensation. One effect of the Blitz was the permanent loss to the City Council of rateable value of £164,000 by destruction of property. The temporary loss from properties which could not be used immediately was £244,000. For several years the Council lost £408,000 annually in rates.⁶⁵

After the Blitz there were calls for the scrapping of the draft Central Planning Scheme. The Special Committee accepted that it would have to be revised but sensibly believed that its ultimate shape could not be decided until the threat of air attack had disappeared. The Committee was mainly interested in getting an idea of the Coalition Governments policy with regard to reconstruction.⁶⁶ A conference of local authorities in February 1941 had come to the view, which Sheffield agreed with, that the Government should accept full responsibility for the losses of rate income as a result of the destruction of property and that it should be regarded as a national liability and financed as part of expenditure on the War.⁶⁷

The Committee was optimistic at this stage that the Government wanted them to take 'a broad outlook' in the re-planning of the damaged area and not merely put forward a conservative scheme. George Pepler of the Ministry of Health visited in April 1941 and inspected Sheffield's damage:

He intimated that the view of Lord Reith [the Minister of Works and Buildings] was that local authorities whose towns had been severely damaged should when preparing planning proposals or reviewing their existing planning proposals plan boldly but not

recklessly. In other words they should consider whether any opportunity had been presented to them of making a better town.⁶⁸

He congratulated them on their draft Scheme which placed Sheffield in a more fortunate position than other towns when it came to reconstruction, however, while damage to Sheffield was substantial it had not cleared a big enough area for re-development. Alderman Gascoigne, Chairman of the Special Committee, argued that the Council was handicapped because it could not borrow money to buy land to facilitate redevelopment without Government approval. The Committee were unanimous that plans should be completed so work on the rebuilding of Sheffield should start as soon as the war ended⁶⁹ and that nothing should be re-built in a permanent form during the war that would prejudice the final shape of the planning proposals. To restore rateable value as quickly as possible retailers were to be allowed to put up temporary shops on their former sites.⁷⁰

In June 1941 it was decided that the City Engineer, Estates Surveyor, Planning Officer and City Architect should meet fortnightly with representatives appointed by the Sheffield, South Yorkshire and District Society of Architects and Surveyors, including members of the Chamber of Commerce and W. H. Forsdike of the Builders' Federation, to discuss town planning.⁷¹ The representatives formed an eight-man body called the Town Planning Assembly that intermittently issued reports to the City Council. The Special Committee did not always take their advice. In December 1941, it did not accept that there should be a new inner ring road closer to the city centre than was specified in the draft Scheme.⁷²

Throughout 1941 the focus of the Special Committee was on the question of the payments the War Damage Commission would provide to make good war damage.⁷³ If it was economical to repair the damage a cost of works payment could be made and if not a value payment would be paid. Section 7 of the Act allowed the Commission to specify areas where any person seeking to rebuild a property which cost over £1,000 to put right must inform the Commission of the intent to do so. The Commission asked the City Council to make suggestions as to the part or parts of the City that fell under Section 7 but even while the City Council was considering the areas to be included, the Commission went ahead and scheduled the whole of Sheffield as such an area.⁷⁴ Alderman Jackson had specifically objected to just such comprehensive scheduling.⁷⁵ There were complaints that the Council had not been allowed to come to its own judgement.⁷⁶

The Blitz did produce agreement on the re-planning of Sheffield between Labour and Municipal Progressives beyond the Special Committee. Councillor Bearcroft, Secretary of the Progressives, had attacked in 1937 the potential huge expenditure of the planning schemes,⁷⁷ but in January 1942 he said, 'Many things we were formerly frightened to do because of the huge cost involved, we can think of now quite calmly. Hitler did for us what we dare not do.' Many mistakes of the past, he believed, could have been avoided if a long view had been taken by those responsible and much good would follow if consideration were now given to 'something better rising out of the ashes of former deficiencies.'⁷⁸

Agreement between the parties was signalled in February 1943 when Alderman Gascoigne declared that 'dog-fight debates' were no longer a feature of Council meetings.⁷⁹

The Special Committee in July 1942 complained that under interim development control the Council had not full control over the re-erection of buildings damaged in air raids on their existing sites. Except in certain special circumstances, they were in fact powerless. This would affect the redevelopment of Sheffield since factories could be re-erected in an unsuitable residential or general business zone without the Council being able to do anything about it. In order to remove it they would be forced to pay full compensation to the owner. The Committee wanted to have full control of re-erection of buildings and to pay compensation from the date when a resolution was proposed to formulate a town planning scheme. In January 1941, Lord Reith had set up the Uthwatt committee on compensation and betterment. The principle that those who held land which saw betterment should contribute towards the cost of a town planning scheme was accepted but no satisfactory way of assessing and securing this for the local authority had been worked out. The Special Committee noted that an ideal scheme which covered the whole of a built-up area was beyond the financial resources of a local authority. Thus schemes had either to be modest or central government would have to fund it. It believed that to get the financial benefits of development the City Council must own all the land to be developed.⁸⁰

Uthwatt's interim recommendations called for the adoption of a price ceiling for public purchase of land as at 31 March 1939, a central planning authority, and defined 'reconstruction areas' where there had been substantial war damage and the area was likely to be included in a redevelopment scheme. In such areas no building would occur except under licence until the scheme had been prepared. Reith announced that the government accepted these proposals in principle and in November 1941 he produced a draft Town and Country (Reconstruction) Bill for the Cabinet Committee on Reconstruction. When the Committee met it focused its attentions on the proposed central planning authority and for the first time showed the government's fatal indecision. In February 1942, Reith announced that the Government would set up a central planning authority but Reith was to be sacked just a fortnight later due to Churchill's disapproval of him and resistance to planning for reconstruction. The central government became more and more indecisive.⁸¹ The Special Committee recommended a resolution in 1942 which reflected a fear of the regional planning authorities which would implement the decisions of the central planning authority. The Council would co-operate in a National Plan but declared

its opposition to the inclusion in such plan, without the consent of the Local Authorities, of functions at present within their jurisdiction, and further declare[d] its strong opposition to the exercise by a new external authority of control which is restrictive of the maintenance of existing and the establishment of new industry within the City, and of the development as building estates of land which is required to provide housing accommodation for those persons living in the City in conditions which are unsatisfactory.⁸²

By October 1942 a new plan for the City Centre had been prepared. A wide diagonal road would be constructed from the Midland Station to a shopping circus adjoining the existing Moorhead. This would give a dignified and direct approach from the railway station and the new bus station to the City centre. Shopping arcades and pedestrian subways would be built. There would be a vista towards a new spacious square on which the new Law Courts and police headquarters would stand. Another new square would be created in Surrey Street.⁸³ It was proposed by the Progressives on the Special Committee that a large area in the city centre zoned as part industrial, part general business and part residential be re-zoned residential, but Labour defeated this proposal.⁸⁴ In December the plan was approved in principle after three and a half hours debate,⁸⁵ though the Telegraph had noted earlier that neither Council Group were unanimous in their support for it. Some wanted a smaller circus which would be less costly as less slum property would be demolished, others wanted a rectangle while a few Councillors were opposed to all the proposals.⁸⁶ The Progressives wanted a large residential area because they supported the idea of city centre flats which Labour was completely against. 'Current Topics' said, however, that 'we cannot help regarding it [the town planning scheme] as largely a waste of breathe and time, and, what is even more important, of paper, until we know how the central town planning authority is to be constituted and what its powers will be.'⁸⁷

In January 1943 the Editor of The Star invited his readers to take part in the planning of the new Sheffield by calling for their ideas on the subject. He promised that all suggestions would be considered seriously and stated that he wanted all citizens to take an interest whether they were professional people, art students or ordinary citizens. He said, 'Judging from snatches of conversations one hears in all sorts of odd places about the city, Sheffield is simply teeming with would-be town planners.... Planning is a controversial subject at all times but it is being more keenly discussed in Sheffield than ever before.' This would seem to be evidence that contradicts Tiratsoo's thesis that the public were apathetic or conservative about town planning schemes. Supporting popular participation, the Editor said that, 'Town planning is a most fascinating study, particularly when it deals with your own city. You know just how to correct all the wrongs in the lay-out of your district parks, buildings, markets, and roads.'⁸⁸ In February 1943 he then questioned whether the Council was too modest about its town planning schemes. By contrast other badly blitzed cities had been much more forthcoming to their citizens. He gave illustrations from Coventry and Bristol. The Editor saw much to commend in the work of the Special Committee but did not believe it should hide its light under a bushel. He applauded their scheme's practicality and realism and the cautious attitude it had adopted with regard to finance but the public he alleged wanted to know more and were deeply interested in town planning.⁸⁹

On the other side of the argument The Star in 1944 contained an article which differed markedly in its view of popular attitudes on town planning from that of the Editor. Its author was a professional architect, Kenneth J. Lindy, who asked:

How is it that the people who are to live in the towns of post-war Britain have so little to say regarding replanning? Why is it that those of us who desire to know what people are thinking on the vital subject of the replanning of our country have to organise investigations and conduct far-reaching inquiries? The man in the street has a pretty clear idea of the sort of town in which he wants to live and work: but he says little about it. On the other hand, definitely dangerous, out-of-date views on the subject receive an immense amount of publicity.⁹⁰

It remains to look at and sum up the views of some of those who took up the Editor's invitation to write in with ideas about town planning and to evaluate whether they were serious suggestions or simply the residue of well-known popular prejudices. Extracts from some of the letters were published on 6 February 1943. The introduction in The Star described them as giving, 'Striking proof that Sheffield men and women in all walks of life have more than a passing interest in the Sheffield-of-the future'. While, 'The large majority of the suggestions are intelligent and realistic; others are not quite so practical, but nevertheless highly interesting, while a few are ultra-futuristic.' One, for example, wanted to fill in the Sheffield canal between Tinsley and the City Centre and turn it into a more direct road into the City to replace Attercliffe Road. Another influenced by his cinema-going called for the wider roads and broad sidewalks visible in American films. Planners should be cosmopolitan in their ideas which led him to call for emulation of the hotels, theatres and administrative buildings of Moscow and other Soviet cities as well as the boulevards and esplanades of France and Germany with their open air cafes. He opposed blocks of flats and called for more garden cities as well as plenty of playing fields for children and a sports stadium to suit fans of boxing.⁹¹ A new projected stadium for Sheffield was announced by the City Council in March 1943.⁹²

Other suggestions printed were mainly concerned with housing though there was a detailed extract on the problem of the Wicker traffic bottleneck. 'Comfort First' called for housing to have the first priority of the City Council, followed by buildings for educational purposes, then provision for amenities and the transport service. Only when this had been done would more enthusiasm be shown for the idea of a Civic Centre. This latter extract could be taken to show the apathy of Sheffield citizens to town planning despite the introductory remarks of the Star that we have quoted.⁹³ Consciousness of the poor conditions working-class families were having to put up with to stay housed was common to the citizens of wartime Sheffield and had more immediacy than airy talk of a future up-to-date City. In 1944, for example, it's Vicar⁹⁴ and the wife of it's former Conservative MP⁹⁵ publicised conditions in Attercliffe and called for action. The extracts printed must be considered representative of those letters received but in the final analysis they told town planners nothing they did not already know about popular prejudices such as a desire for the private and individual over the collective and public, for houses with gardens rather than high rise flats and for them to be built at once rather than in an uncertain and distant future.

3.4 - THE MANZONI AND COLLIE PLANS

The City Centre plan approved in December 1942 was not the final word. The Special Committee continued to consider proposals for the planning of the rest of the Central Area but the difficulties they encountered were so great that the Planning Officer, C. G. Craven, the City Architect, W. G. Davies, the City Engineer and Surveyor, J. M. Collie and representatives of the Sheffield, South Yorkshire and District Society of Architects and Surveyors were called on to prepare four separate plans containing proposals that could be carried out over the next fifty years. It was decided to submit the plans to an outside adjudicator who could evaluate each plan and suggest ways of combining desirable features from particular ones as well as advise the Committee. Herbert Manzoni, City Engineer of Birmingham, was picked. The plans were delivered to him on 1 February 1944 and he reported on 9 May with a plan which contained elements of the plans but was based on one designated 'RED "O"'. Who authored 'RED "O"' was not disclosed. The Committee recommended on 26 May 1944 that the Council accept the plan in principle.⁹⁶

A 'City Circle' area 500 yards in diameter was to enclose the main civic buildings. Within this area no public transport would ultimately be allowed. A square would be formed of about four acres consisting of gardens flanked by the City Hall, Town Hall and Town Hall Extension, municipal buildings, the Law Courts and other buildings. Enclosing the City Circle would be a ring road. Part of this would be the diagonal road referred to in the December 1942 plan. Roads would radiate outwards from the ring road in all directions. Manzoni attempted to overcome traffic congestion in the Wicker bottleneck by constructing a two-level viaduct. One level would have outbound traffic and the other inbound traffic. Manzoni assumed in his scheme that trams would eventually disappear⁹⁷ - an eventuality alluded to as early as December 1941 in a Report of the Special Committee.⁹⁸ It actually happened as late as 1960. Manzoni said that his plan was produced on the assumption that the priority was to overcome traffic congestion and reinstate blitzed shops and commercial premises as soon as possible.⁹⁹

The Manzoni Plan was adopted in principle by the Council on 7 June 1944 though two Progressives, Councillor J. E. Bennett and Alderman W. J. Hunter, criticised it as 'destructive of rateable value and property'. Another, Councillor Cunningham, pleaded for a model to be created saying that the suggested 'terrible expense' of doing so was nothing compared to the cost of the Plan. A printed brochure would cover the cost of it and help inform the public. By the time their leader Alderman Jackson spoke, half the members had apparently left the chamber for the tea room, but, though he complained about their lack of civic pride and imagination, he nevertheless defended the plan. Alderman Gascoigne pointed out that the Council did not have to agree to every detail of the plan but needed one ready otherwise Sheffield would be left behind when the government provided assistance for rebuilding the blitzed cities.¹⁰⁰

Reactions to the Plan beyond the Council Chamber were hostile. 'Current Topics' took heart that though the vote on the Plan was almost unanimous, 'enough criticisms had been urged against it in detail to

make another plan altogether' and that acceptance 'in principle' actually placed no obligations on a future Council, particularly when it came to spending money.¹⁰¹ Before the Council meeting, the Editor of The Star had called for more public consultation on the Plan¹⁰² and afterwards was critical that the Plan had been approved without such wide consultation and argued that it could definitely not go ahead until more listening had been done by the Council. The Plan sparked much critical comment on the letters page and a critical report was published in The Star by the Sheffield, South Yorkshire and District Society of Architects and Surveyors. The Editor's conclusion was that it was:

'quite clear that very many citizens refuse to approve the plan. It is urged that the portions of the city doomed by it to demolition are not the worst, but the most serviceable, and that problems of shopping are increased and not diminished. Opinions on the scheme have come from citizens of all classes and of many occupations, and the general impression one gathers is that the more they look at it, the less they like it.'¹⁰³

The Managing Director of Stewart and Stewart (Sheffield) Ltd. criticized Manzoni for concentrating on traffic congestion when the real need was to attract shoppers. Civic buildings would not provide rateable value and their concentration in a small area created a dead zone which damaged the existing shopping area by dividing it into three.¹⁰⁴ Another criticism was that he favoured motorists over pedestrians and one letter complained that 'Sheffield seems to be endeavouring to become a second Brooklands'.¹⁰⁵ The report of the Society of Architects and Surveyors echoed all these criticisms and attacked the proposed Wicker viaduct. It argued that 'the central area had been considered not as a place in which to live agreeably and to transact business but as a place in which all forms of transport would be able to travel from one side to another with rapidity'. And 'it revealed not only a lack of appreciation of the other aspects of town planning but displayed a very elementary knowledge of the principles of civic design, especially of the layout and arrangement of buildings.'¹⁰⁶ These were harsh words. It was obvious that the Plan was not the end of the town planning process.

In November 1944 the Editor of The Star was again critical: 'Unfortunately the blueprint for the Sheffield to be is not taking shape with anything like the speed and method we should like to see. There is, in fact, acute disappointment in many minds about the whole matter. It is impossible to get to know anything definite, and if one makes inquiries one gets no further.' He did not put the responsibility for this at any particular door. Planning should not be affected by the excuse that there was a war on and he argued that 'the city of which we are all dreaming will never become anything more than a pleasant dream unless retarding influences - some of almost pre-historic outlook - are forced into the background and a place in the sun afforded those with imagination and prepared to take a chance.' He did not blame the Council or its Committees but instead the 'multitude of Ministries [who] are having a gay time strangling plans and schemes with their endless red tape.'¹⁰⁷

In July 1944 the Special Committee had been dissolved and a new Town Planning Committee established in its place.¹⁰⁸ On 30 November 1944, the Committee discussed proposals for the Central Area. It considered three plans prepared by City Engineer, J. M. Collie, which incorporated amendments of the Manzoni or 'M' Plan and were the results of discussions between Collie and Manzoni on the Plan's detailed application. Plan 'R' produced by the Chamber of Commerce with a report attached was also placed before the Committee¹⁰⁹ though it mainly echoed the criticisms of retailers about the 'M' Plan. Collie criticized the bases of the criticisms of the authors of this 'R Report' because it was based on press reports of the Manzoni Plan. But the fact that they were not familiar with the 'Red O' Plan or the report that went with it is surely testimony to the secrecy of the Town Planning Committee which had not taken into its confidence such an influential body as the Chamber of Commerce.¹¹⁰ Plans 'A' and 'C' were considered by Manzoni and the Ministry of War Transport to solve the Central Area's traffic problems including the Wicker bottleneck. Of the three plans prepared by Collie, Plan 'C' was considered the ideal solution but 'A' and 'C' were not recommended to the Council because of the redevelopment problems and engineering challenges they would create. Plan 'B' was recommended simply because it offered less drastic alteration and while it was not seen as a permanent solution it would improve traffic conditions and cause much less interference with the life of the City. It also allowed for the retention of trams for a longer period.¹¹¹

Plan 'B' or the 'Collie Plan' was approved by the full Council on 6 December 1944. The Star, commenting on the process of town planning up to this point, noted that it had 'been a complicated debate, with numerous aspects - traffic, industry, shopping, and several others; there has [however] been general agreement that the city is in need of reorganisation on a sounder system, but the details have all given rise to lively discussion.' It went on

There have been times [however] when this discussion has not had sufficient regard to the question of time; the process of planning will last many years - few of us, it may be, will ever see its complete fulfilment - and [perhaps reassuringly] during all this period there will be plenty of opportunity for modification of details that may not seem to be working out right.¹¹²

Despite all this, however, criticism was not completely muted. The Society of Architects and Surveyors produced '[f]riendly criticism' of its proposals at the end of January 1945 in an 'exhaustive commentary'.¹¹³ They again reiterated the fears of Sheffield's retailers about the Civic Centre forming a dead area for shoppers. Grandiosely, they said that the central area must 'be "given the individual unity or character which would make as great an appeal to the imagination through the eye as have ancient Athens and Rome"'.¹¹⁴ But, despite such criticism, 'Current Topics' had had enough. He or she accepted there would never be complete unanimity, but argued that if the Society of Architects and Surveyors' criticisms were accepted the whole plan would have to be scrapped: 'Traders cannot contemplate sudden changes of policy by the City Council when they are planning for the next fifty years or one hundred

years. That is why we favour a final settlement of the main features at the earliest possible moment.¹¹⁵

It remained for the Committee to take steps to publicise the Plan and try to enlist the support of the public for the proposals despite it having played little role in the planning process - if it had wanted to play a role. Ravetz questions how welcoming the town planning profession would have been if the public had really wanted to participate and argues that they were largely paying lip service to the idea - they had mastered the arcane technicalities of the subject and as experts expected deference - but it has been argued that the people had nothing to teach them and that the popular prejudices on the subject were well known.¹¹⁶ The people were, after all, represented by elected members of the Council in the process and they were well aware of working-class prejudices about housing and town planning. They had been criticised over the Manzoni Plan decision, however, and now they learned some lessons. In February 1945 the Committee approved a suggestion that a Town Planning Exhibition should be held to inform the public of the Plan.¹¹⁷ It was also decided to publish the illustrated brochure Sheffield Replanned. The Exhibition in Graves Art Gallery was opened by the Conservative Minister for Town and Country Planning, W. S. Morrison, on 19 July 1945.¹¹⁸ The Exhibition took up nearly all the Gallery space and its central exhibit was a model made up in the workshops of the City Engineer's Department of the entire area from the bottom of The Moor to the Wicker Arches as it would look when the re-planning scheme finally came to fruition. There were also models of the completed Cathedral and of modern housing, schools and the new hospital envisaged, as well as many maps and diagrams. Film shows were also used to put across the fundamental principles of planning to the public. According to the Telegraph the 'exhibition clearly demonstrates the supreme importance of housing, the city's greatest need' with a complete section devoted to it. A fully-built temporary prefabricated house was on show outside in the Tudor Street car park and two complete modern kitchens had been built - one having gas fittings and the other electrical fittings.¹¹⁹ Collie reported in August that 60,000 people had visited the exhibition and it was decided to extend it to the end of August. Obviously the exhibition was a success.¹²⁰

How soon would the plan be accomplished? This was addressed in Sheffield Replanned and the Council obviously felt great uncertainty on the score. The brochure warned that while:

Much publicity has been given to the subject of planning in recent years and the public has been led to regard it as a new science which is to transform our cities and our way of life. What is principally new is the suggestion which appears from time to time that Planning Authorities may at last be provided both with adequate powers and adequate funds to execute really ambitious schemes of replanning. This suggestion in its turn arises out of the publicity and the consequent public interest in the subject, for if it is once realised what a well designed city might look like the vision is so attractive that it is natural to suppose that powers will be forthcoming to bring such a desirable state into being. This, however, is far from being the case yet, . . .¹²¹

It noted that the government had not accepted the final Uthwatt proposals though it had produced a White Paper, and the precise meaning of the recent legislation, the Town and Country Planning Act, 1944, was unclear. The Act allowed blitzed land to be compulsorily purchased more swiftly in terms of procedure than before but the extent of the land this applied to was in doubt. It was clear that the Central Area had to be rebuilt, however, as quickly as possible to recover rateable value. The Committee while it admitted that the new powers represented progress felt they were not adequate without a solution to the problem of betterment.¹²² The brochure freely admitted that the cost of the Plan would be very great particularly when added to the cost of other things like the housing programme and that it would mean large-scale borrowing. Under the 1944 Act the central government could provide grants for two years which might be extended for another thirteen.¹²³ There would still be some procedural delays due to the need to hold public inquiries before getting ministerial approval. There would also be engineering problems and problems of obtaining labour and materials.¹²⁴

3.5 - THE WARTIME CONTEXT OF THE POST-WAR HOUSING PROGRAMME

Backwith makes the important point in his doctoral thesis on the politics of council housing in Sheffield and Bristol between 1919 and 1939 that municipal socialism (or more precisely 'municipal labourism') was founded on an ideology that saw local state welfare as social improvement *for* and not *by* the working class. Housing management, for example, tended to be characterised by a strict paternalism and tenants were expected to regulate their behaviour according to the rules devised by the Estates Committee. Tenants were not allowed to participate in, let alone democratically control, the management of their estate.¹²⁵ As Thorpe points out, many of the Labour Group were believers in respectability, sobriety and self-improvement and, though they were sympathetic to the working classes, they were sufficiently working-class not to idealize working-class habits. Thus, they banned the popular working-class hobby of pigeon-keeping on council estates. There was also in the inter-war years a long battle over whether any public houses would actually be allowed on them.¹²⁶

Another feature of municipal labourism was an extreme concentration of decision-making powers in the hands of committee chairmen and their officers over long periods.¹²⁷ In Rotherham, Alderman Caine held the Chairmanship of the Housing Committee for twenty-two years until 1939 and consequently had exerted a strong influence on the housing and slum clearance policy of that Council.¹²⁸ In Caine, it was said, 'Rotherham [had] found a modern Hercules, who has done the cleansing work quite as thoroughly as that carried out in the stables of King Augeas.'¹²⁹ The Chairman of the Sheffield Estates Committee, Alderman Gascoigne had almost as long a reign of seventeen years up to 1944. He was also Chairman of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres from 1941, and of the Town Planning Committee from 1944. He was Lord Mayor for 1945/46 and was the first to be the tenant of a Corporation house.¹³⁰

Council house tenants provided a major source of electoral support for the Labour Party - a fact sourly

noted by Alderman Bearcroft, the Secretary of the Municipal Progressives, in the Sheffield Property Owners' Journal in October 1945, who complained that: 'In terms of votes there is already a "Pressure Group" of about 100,000 Corporation tenants who are susceptible to favours which may be granted to them by those in power.'¹³¹ It was certainly not in the tenants interests to vote Progressive since they had traditionally supported private landlord interests and wanted to increase the numbers in owner-occupation. Most of the two million houses built in England without state assistance in the 1930s had been built for individual buyers and represented the most important form of middle-class saving and the principal middle-class aspiration. Some thought that owner-occupation had actually created a 'new' middle-class whose unity solely depended on having bought a house since 1920, though there is little evidence that such buyers had the socially mixed origins which this presupposes. In Sheffield, an overwhelmingly working-class city, ordinary citizens were unlikely to have the wherewithal to ever own their own home or aspire to do so. The best they could hope for was a secure council tenancy even with the restrictions on their freedom this imposed.¹³²

The Municipal Progressives did support a council role in providing housing for the poorest but were much more convinced of the superiority of owner-occupation and unveiled a plan in 1944,¹³³ which also figured in their 1945 municipal election manifesto, to encourage its wider spread in Sheffield. The Corporation would hold on deposit approved securities, like savings certificates, war bonds or post-war credits, up to the equivalent of half the stake money required by a lender to buy a house. The government would add £100 and the Corporation £50 which would be used solely for buying the house. The value of the house must, however, not exceed a fixed sum and the normal earnings of the purchaser not exceed a fixed amount. The house-buyer had also to live in the house for a fixed period before he could sell. Ex-service people would have their deposit reduced by half with the guarantee for the difference in value given by the government and the Corporation. The Progressives took care to stress the advantages of owner-occupation over a council house. Among them was that ownership gave a feeling of independence and security. An owner-occupier would not have to accept the petty interference of the City Council as a council tenant would.¹³⁴

Despite slum clearance in the inter-war years housing conditions were serious in Sheffield even before the Blitz. In November 1939, the Estates Committee recommended that it was 'essential and in the national interest that the erection of houses in Sheffield should continue, at any rate to rehouse persons living in unfit houses included in Orders which are operative.' It was also recommended, 'That schemes should be prepared and all necessary steps taken which would enable the erection of houses to be proceeded with immediately the war is over, including the earmarking of future land for development when the time arrives.'¹³⁵ Backwith notes that by 1939 Sheffield had become one of the few local authorities to actually exceed its target for slum clearance re-housing as a result of the speeding up of house building when Labour took power in 1926. However, he qualifies this statement by commenting that the quality of council houses was less good and that as World War Two approached poverty and overcrowding were widespread on estates on which former slum residents had been re-housed.¹³⁶ There

was also discontent about lack of amenities. We have already referred to the long-running controversy over whether public houses should be allowed on municipal estates. There were also protests about lack of libraries, parks and community centres. Life on an estate was not to inhabit a paradise despite what Progressives might believe about the political favours Labour gave to tenants.¹³⁷

Housing was actually being built in Sheffield despite wartime conditions until as late as November 1942 (See Appendix 6.1) but naturally completions of houses and the number of workmen allocated to them fluctuated greatly. When building finally stopped, 1,160 houses had been completed since the outbreak of war, but after December 1940 completions slumped and not more than twenty were finished in each subsequent month.¹³⁸ Predictions of a wartime housing shortage began in April 1940 when Alderman Albert Smith, Deputy Estates Committee Chairman, said that the number of arrivals in Sheffield was extraordinary and feared overcrowding in the immediate future unless action was taken. In the Great War more than 14,000 people had come into Sheffield and the government had erected wooden huts for them in the East End. Smith said that no-one wanted to see another similar development and the Council must approach the government to expand the City's house building programme. This did not happen.¹³⁹ A *Times* correspondent in 1941 noted that the influx of people as a result of this war was not as great as during the Great War but that, 'To-day more labour than can be got is needed and the possibility of further withdrawals of skilled men for service with the Forces is causing some concern.' He believed that, 'Steel more than anything else is the raw material of victory - of aeroplanes, ships, tanks, and guns. And South Yorkshire, with its coal and steel, is as vital an area as there could be. Sheffield and steel have long been linked, and more than ever before Sheffield to-day is a steel city, famous for its special alloy steels.' He went on: 'Sheffield and South Yorkshire generally [have] never made a more vital contribution than they are doing at this time. . . . smoking chimneys in scores give promise of a rich flow of the tools needed for victory.'¹⁴⁰

Wartime evidence of poor housing conditions in Attercliffe is given by its Vicar, the Reverend Wardle-Harper, who wrote to *The Star* in 1944 demanding that the highest priority in the re-planning of Sheffield should be given to the re-housing of the people of the East End. However, allegedly poor in quality council housing was far better than what inhabitants of Attercliffe put up with on a daily basis. Abercrombie in 1924 had called for residential housing to be removed from the industrial Lower Don Valley. It was to be proposed in *Sheffield Replanned*. Wardle-Harper wrote that:

'The smoke from the great works and multitudes of domestic chimneys covers the district with a vast and murky pall, which the sun can rarely penetrate, and which deposits enough dirt to break the heart of any self-respecting housewife; whilst the fumes poison the air and nauseate the people.

Huddled round the works lie thousands of tiny houses in many of which a single couple with no children, let alone large families, would be cramped.

With no bath, no hot water, no garden, no indoor sanitation, nowhere for the children to play or see any living thing grow, the outlook is bounded by the drab street in front and in the rear the courts, whose only features are dustbins and grim rows of outdoor lavatories.¹⁴¹

The Star published in 1942 an Ernest Taylor essay indicating the problems the City faced in housing its citizens. He believed that if housing requirements were pegged at 1942 levels then 25,000 new houses would be needed after the war. The shortage was, however, daily more acute as an ever-increasing number of newly-weds added to the worries of the Housing Committee. The Corporation was the largest landlord, owning almost 28,500 houses, yet there was a waiting list of 24,000 and 12,000 slums still remained targeted for clearance from pre-war. Before the war the Corporation built about 3,000 houses a year and thus it would take a minimum of eight years of peace before the 1942 housing requirements would be fulfilled. Taylor believed that Sheffield would get off to a flying start in housing construction after the war in spite of his prediction that the building industry would need time to achieve momentum and need the flow of men and materials to recover.¹⁴² Taylor's prediction was not to be borne out and the attempts of the Council to realise its plans were beset by government delays and red tape.

The Communist City Councillor Howard Hill wrote an article on housing in Sheffield for the March 1945 issue of the Communist Labour Monthly which gives a detailed picture of the situation of the City Council at the war's end. About 40,000 people required houses and the Council had drawn up plans to build 20,000 within the first three years of peace. A figure of 3,000 houses had been produced as a target for the first year. The figure seems optimistic even without knowledge of the difficulties that the Council was to face in the immediate post-war period. It was based on the number of houses produced in 1938, and when Taylor quoted it in 1942 it is obvious that it was the absolute maximum that might be built in one year, yet it remained the basis of Council calculations despite all the predictable problems with government and in getting supplies of labour and materials on time and other expensive commitments they must honour like rebuilding the city centre (though housing would have the first priority). The Council then optimistically expected to build 17,000 houses in the two following years.¹⁴³

The figure of 3,000 is remarkable when everyone expected a Churchill government to continue long into the future and when the actual result of the 1945 General Election appeared extremely unlikely even to many Labour Party members given Churchill's popularity as war leader. The Council was already concerned about the delays that dogged its plans in the latter years of the war due to the Coalition Government. On 5 April 1944, for example, there were protests in the council chamber about the multiplicity of Government departments concerned with the advance preparation of housing sites. Alderman Thraves, Leader of the Council, told councillors that, 'We need a second Dickens to write of the circumlocution as applied to Government departments to-day.'¹⁴⁴ Hill wrote in March 1945 that: 'The gravest doubts ... exist in the minds of every Sheffield Councillor at the shortcomings in the

Government's housing plans. Whilst, no doubt, it has made considerable progress in producing different types of houses, built of materials which lend themselves to rapid construction, and are fairly easy to procure, in every other direction its programme is utterly inadequate.'¹⁴⁵ In May 1945 the Estates Committee passed a resolution:

That, in view of the acute shortage of housing accommodation in the City and the considerable progress made by the Corporation in the preparation of sites for temporary [pre-fabricated] bungalows . . . , the Committee expresses its dissatisfaction with the very limited progress made by the Ministry of Works in installing foundations upon the sites prepared by the Corporation and at the delay in the delivery of bungalows to be erected by the Ministry of Works upon such foundations, and direct that this expression of opinion be conveyed to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Works and that they be urged to accelerate the progress of the works.¹⁴⁶

In the face of this resolution and, no doubt, in recognition of the nearness of a General Election when the housing policies of Churchill's Government would be scrutinised, the Progressives in June 1945 defended the Government and any consensus that might have existed rapidly dissolved. The Progressives blamed delays on labour and material shortages and on the existence of controls in the building industry while Labour responded by asserting that the removal of controls would mean that poorer citizens would get no houses at all. The Estates Committee Chairman, Alderman Smith, said that the Council had done everything humanly possible to hasten the preparation of the sites for the bungalows and they had complied with every suggestion made to them. The Ministries had 'fallen down'. Alderman Jackson said in response that, 'Although I agree that to some extent there appears to have been delay, I am not prepared to put all the blame on the Government or anyone else.' Despite this, the resolution was duly approved and there the matter rested before the 1945 General Election. Just the day before Jackson's assertion, eighteen American-made prefabricated temporary houses bound for Sheffield, the first, were finally unloaded from a ship at Liverpool docks.¹⁴⁷

3.6 - CONCLUSION

The boom in town planning literature during the war reflected an audience that wanted to be reassured and inspired, and 'planning' as an everyday term became ubiquitous due to the need for 'total war' mobilisation. Town planner Thomas Sharp claimed that:

It is no overstatement to say that the simple choice between planning and non-planning, between order and disorder, is a test-choice for English democracy. In the long run even the worst democratic muddle is preferable to a dictator's dream bought at the price of liberty and decency. But the English muddle is nevertheless a matter for shame. We shall never get rid of its shamefulness unless we plan our activities. And

plan we must - not for the sake of our physical environment only, but to save and fulfill democracy itself.¹⁴⁸

The emphasis on 'planning' could only be music to the ears of the Labour Party since it apparently provided a means of delivering social justice with technical efficiency and overcame the wastefulness and anarchy of the free market. Town planning united the utopian impulse evident in the ethical socialism of the early Garden City movement to the technocratic desire to abolish working-class poverty from above, and it could be more readily assimilated into the democratic socialist ideology of Labour than the ideology of liberal Conservatism with its stress on defending economic freedom and inequalities. Labour local authorities also tended to be more supportive of planners than their opponents as the example of Conservative Portsmouth studied by Hasegawa shows. While the process of town planning and the management and construction of council housing which were such a part of 'municipal labourist' discourse were *for* the working classes they did *not* themselves make the decisions which would materially affect either town planning or council housing.

Davies notes, that unlike today, even after the 1947 Act there was no formal requirement for public participation in development plans and it was simply a technical matter for planning committees and their officers.¹⁴⁹ This was also true when housing committees deliberated. Democratic participation effectively meant the participation of members of the City Council who had been elected but in Sheffield their elections were almost a *fait accompli* since so few of the Council Wards were marginal seats. Labour Aldermen controlled the chairmanships of important committees for very long periods and the Aldermanic system itself provided security. Labour members virtually always obeyed party discipline. Criticism inevitably came from the Municipal Progressives which cemented that discipline. There was some superficial consensus since the City had to rebuilt anyhow following the air raids. Both sides also agreed on an interventionist role for the municipality in local politics. In 1944 the The Star noted that the Progressives had a long-term plan for the reconstruction of the City which might mean, apocalyptically, 'a virtual obliteration of Sheffield as it exists.'¹⁵⁰ If nothing else, that example illustrates that planning had become the 'conventional wisdom' in wartime Sheffield, despite Progressive rhetoric supporting free enterprise. It had, however, to be democratic planning by consent rather than by compulsion as in the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany.¹⁵¹

Unfortunately, as Sheffield shows, council secrecy could defeat such pious aspirations. Coventry City Council was much more open but it remains debateable which was more representative of the blitzed cities in this respect and of 'Old Labour' local administrations. Labour was more secure in Sheffield and if anywhere was a significant island of radical fervour in a lukewarm sea of opinion it would be that city rather than Coventry, which Mason and Thompson use as their example to show widespread wartime apathy beyond the ranks of the politically committed members of the Labour and Communist Parties in a city under Labour control.¹⁵² While one might agree with their conclusions about mass apathy, apart from the possibility that relative apathy both before and after the 1940s was probably even greater in

comparison, it is unfortunately the case that Sheffield's Labour Council was equally apathetic in that it did not trust its citizens (including on at least one occasion the Chamber of Commerce) with information during the planning process. It did not use social surveys but merely councillors' intuition and the random soundings they made among the citizens to ascertain popular wants and needs. Thus, despite the genuine humanistic socialism of many councillors, they were still culpable because, whatever good intentions they had, they allowed authoritarianism in practice by rubber-stamping the decisions of the committee chairmen. It is, however, arguable how much information individual councillors possessed who were not on the housing or town planning committees in order to be able to make an independent judgement on either subject had they the bravery to contest the view of a committee chairman. As Hampton notes the party groups had no official standing and could not officially ask the chief officer of a council department to undertake work on their behalf. Therefore the information they received was limited to the report of the committee chairman who could colour it to favour his view. He himself could only base his report on departmental information and had no authority to get information from other chief departmental officers on Sheffield Council so the wider implications could be considered.¹⁵³

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- ³ ASHTON, Joe. Red Rose Blues: The Story of a Good Labour Man. Pan, 2002, p2.
- ⁴ The Times Weekly Edition 12/08/1942.
- ⁵ The Times 13/04/1943.
- ⁶ The Times 01/10/1952.
- ⁷ RAVETZ, Alison. Remaking Cities: Contradictions of the Recent Urban Environment. Croom Helm, 1980, p14.
- ⁸ CANNADINE, David. 'Urban History' in CANNADINE, David. The Pleasures of the Past. Penguin, 1997, p144. This article was originally written in the early 1980s.
- ⁹ TIRATSOO, Nick. 'Labour and the Reconstruction of Hull, 1945-51' in TIRATSOO, Nick (ed) The Attlee Years. Pinter Publishers, 1991.
- ¹⁰ TIRATSOO, Nick. Reconstruction, Affluence and Labour Politics: Coventry 1945-60. Routledge, 1990. See also MASON, Tony and TIRATSOO, Nick. 'People, Politics and Planning: The Reconstruction of Coventry's City Centre, 1940-53' in DIEFENDORF, Jeffrey M. (ed) Rebuilding Europe's Bombed Cities. St. Martin's Press, 1990.
- ¹¹ BARNETT, Correlli. The Audit of War: The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation. Pan Books, 1996, pp246-7.
- ¹² BARNETT, Correlli. The Lost Victory: British Dreams, British Realities 1945-1950. Pan Books, 1996, p128 quotes J. M. Keynes who wrote in 1944, 'the time and energy and thought which we are all giving to the Brave New World is wildly disproportionate to what is being given to the Cruel Real World'.
- ¹³ HASEGAWA, Junichi. 'The Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction in 1940s Britain', Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1999, p160. See also HASEGAWA, Junichi. Replanning the Blitzed City Centre: A Comparative Study of Bristol, Coventry and Southampton 1941-1950. Open University Press, 1992.
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- ¹⁵ MARSHALL, R. J. 'Town Planning in Sheffield' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, pp25-6. Marshall in 1993 was a chartered town planner and senior lecturer in the Department of Town and Regional Planning at the University of Sheffield. Two other studies which deal with the history of town planning in Sheffield at this period to some extent are ESHER, Lionel. A Broken Wave: The Rebuilding of England 1940-1980. Pelican Books, 1983, Ch. 5 on 'Sheffield', who accepts that there was a national 'consensus', and SUTCLIFFE, Anthony. 'Planning the British Steel Metropolis: Sheffield since World War II' in TARR, Joel A. (ed) Pittsburgh-Sheffield: Sister Cities: Proceedings of the Pittsburgh-Sheffield Symposium on Industrial Cities, Pittsburgh, Pa., November 1981. Carnegie Mellon University, 1986.
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- ¹⁷ DAVIES, H. W. E. 'Continuity and Change: The Evolution of the British Planning System, 1947-97', Town Planning Review, Vol. 69, No. 2, 1998, p136.
- ¹⁸ MANDLER, Peter. 'New Towns for Old: The Fate of the Town Centre' in CONEKIN, Becky, MORT, Frank and WATERS, Chris (eds) Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain 1945-1964. Rivers Oram Press, 1999, pp215-227.
- ¹⁹ RAVETZ, A. 1980, p21-4.
- ²⁰ MANDLER, P. 1999, p219, 221.
- ²¹ TIRATSOO, Nick. 'The Reconstruction of Blitzed British Cities, 1945-55: Myths and Reality', Contemporary British History, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2000, p27.
- ²² FIELDING, Steven, THOMPSON, Peter and TIRATSOO, Nick. "England Arise !" The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain. Manchester University Press, 1995, pp36-8.
- ²³ BEAVEN, Brad and GRIFFITHS, John. 'The Blitz, Civilian Morale and the City: Mass-Observation and Working-Class Culture in Britain, 1940-41', Urban History, Vol. 26, No. 1, 1999, pp71-88. See also BEAVEN, Brad and THOMS, D. 'The Blitz and Civilian Morale in Three Northern Cities, 1940-1942', Northern History, No. 32, 1996, pp195-203,
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- ²⁵ CALDER, Angus. The Myth of the Blitz. Jonathan Cape, 1991.
- ²⁶ CALDER, A. 1991, pp130-1.
- ²⁷ MASON, T. and TIRATSOO, N. 1990, pp95-6.

- ²⁸ MARSHALL, R. J. 1993, p22, 24.
- ²⁹ HOLFORD, Lord. 'Abercrombie, Sir (Leslie) Patrick (1879-1957)' in WILLIAMS, E. T. and PALMER, Helen M. (eds) Dictionary of National Biography 1951-1960. Oxford University Press, 1971, p2.
- ³⁰ ADDISON, P. 1994, p174.
- ³¹ ASHWORTH, William. The Genesis of Modern British Town Planning: A Study in Economic and Social History of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954, pp223-4.
- ³² SUTCLIFFE, A. 1986, p187.
- ³³ See MARWICK, Arthur. 'Middle Opinion in the Thirties: Planning, Progress and Political 'Agreement'', English Historical Review, No. 79, April 1964, pp285-298.
- ³⁴ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, p3.
- ³⁵ HEY, David. A History of Sheffield. Carnegie Publishing, 1998, p230.
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- ³⁷ JONES, M. 2001, pp166-9.
- ³⁸ HOLFORD, Lord. 1971, p2.
- ³⁹ RAVETZ, A. 1980, 47.
- ⁴⁰ JONES, M. 2001, p10.
- ⁴¹ JONES, M. 2001, p29.
- ⁴² JONES, M. 2001, p7.
- ⁴³ JONES, M. 2001, p62.
- ⁴⁴ JONES, M. 2001, p30.
- ⁴⁵ JENKINS, Roy. Baldwin. Papermac, 1995, p31. The speech from which this is taken was reprinted as On England in 1926. It was to go through seven further impressions between 1926 and 1937 when it was again reprinted as an early Penguin. Baldwin's views had great resonance with the British public.
- ⁴⁶ JONES, M. 2001, pp135-6.
- ⁴⁷ According to ASHTON, J. 2002, p1: 'The Don Valley when I was growing up was the most polluted place in Europe. Seven miles of stinking, belching chimneys, and 20,000 houses packed together with furnaces, drop forges, steam-hammers, strip mills, bar mills and machine shops.'
- ⁴⁸ Sheffield Daily Telegraph 14/08/1931, p4.
- ⁴⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 05/07/1937, p5.
- ⁵⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 06/07/1937, p6.
- ⁵¹ Sheffield Telegraph 08/07/1937, p4.
- ⁵² Sheffield Telegraph 03/02/1938, p4.
- ⁵³ MARSHALL, Alderman Fred. 'Sheffield's Scheme Makes Town Planning History', Town and County Councillor, March 1938.
- ⁵⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 03/02/1938, p4.
- ⁵⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 29/07/1938, p4.
- ⁵⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 25/10/1938, p8.
- ⁵⁷ Sixteenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 27/04/1939, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1938/39, pp661-2.
- ⁵⁸ Seventeenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, ?/08/1939, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1938/39, p1178.
- ⁵⁹ Eighteenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 21/04/1941, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1940/41, p196.
- ⁶⁰ MCILROY, John, MORGAN, Kevin and CAMPBELL, Alan (eds) Party People, Communist Lives: Explorations in Biography. Lawrence and Wishart, 2001, p242.
- ⁶¹ WALTON, M. and LAMB, J. P. 1980, p1.
- ⁶² WALTON, M. and LAMB, J. P. 1980, p76.
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- ⁶⁶ Eighteenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 21/04/1941, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1940/41, p196.
- ⁶⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 04/02/1941, p1.
- ⁶⁸ Eighteenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 21/04/1941,

- Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1940/41, pp196-7.
- ⁶⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 17/04/1941, p3.
- ⁷⁰ Eighteenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 21/04/1941, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1940/41, p197.
- ⁷¹ Outline of meeting on 30/06/1941 recorded on Interview Form of City Engineers Department, CA655 (16) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁷² Twenty-Second Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, ?/12/1941, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1941/42, p69.
- ⁷³ Nineteenth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 22/07/1941, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1940/41.
- ⁷⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 20/08/1941, p2.
- ⁷⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 07/08/1941, p3.
- ⁷⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 20/08/1941, p3.
- ⁷⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 30/01/1937, p10.
- ⁷⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 06/01/1942, p3.
- ⁷⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 01/03/1943, p3.
- ⁸⁰ Twenty-Third Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 20/07/1942, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1941/42, p253.
- ⁸¹ HASEGAWA, J. 1992, pp7-8.
- ⁸² Twenty-Third Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 20/07/1942, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1941/42, p254.
- ⁸³ Sheffield Telegraph 20/10/1942, p4.
- ⁸⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 28/11/1942, p3.
- ⁸⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 03/12/1942, p3.
- ⁸⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 02/12/1942.
- ⁸⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 01/12/1942.
- ⁸⁸ Star 20/01/1943, p2.
- ⁸⁹ Star 10/02/1943, p2. This view was reiterated in Star 21/04/1943, p2 in an article by Ernest Taylor.
- ⁹⁰ Star 27/03/1944, p2.
- ⁹¹ Star 06/02/1943, p2.
- ⁹² Sheffield Telegraph 01/03/1943, p3.
- ⁹³ Star 06/02/1943, p2.
- ⁹⁴ Star 15/11/1944, p2.
- ⁹⁵ Star 21/11/1944, p2.
- ⁹⁶ Twenty-Fifth Report of the Special Committee re Town Planning and Civic Centres, 01/06/1944, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1943/44, pp208-9.
- ⁹⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 27/05/1944, p2.
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- ⁹⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 27/05/1944, p2.
- ¹⁰⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 08/06/1944, p3.
- ¹⁰¹ Sheffield Telegraph 08/06/1944, p2.
- ¹⁰² Star 02/06/1944, p2.
- ¹⁰³ Star 23/06/1944, p2. The Society of Architects and Surveyors' report was published in two parts in Star 22/06/1944, p2 and 23/06/1944, p2.
- ¹⁰⁴ Star 10/06/1944, p2.
- ¹⁰⁵ Star 17/06/1944, p2.
- ¹⁰⁶ Star 22/06/1944, p2.
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- ¹⁰⁸ Parliamentary and General Purposes Committee, 28/07/1944, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1943/44, pp273-4.
- ¹⁰⁹ Town Planning Committee, 30/11/1944, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1944/45, pp49-50.
- ¹¹⁰ 'Observations and Comments of the City Engineer on the Proposed Plan and Report Submitted by the Town Planning Committee of the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and the Retailers' Advisory Committee on Town Planning', CA659(4) (Sheffield Archives).
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- ¹⁴⁹ DAVIES, H. W. E. 1998, p149.
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- ¹⁵¹ The difference between democratic and totalitarian town planning was explicitly noted in a discussion of the possibility of grouping all Sheffield's main places of entertainment into a 'Theatreland' quarter in Sheffield Replanned. See Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, p33.
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CHAPTER FOUR
THE LABOUR PARTY
IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE,
1939-1945:
EBB AND RESURGENCE

4.1 - INTRODUCTION

Harvie in 1983 noted that Labour's extra-parliamentary organisation and the way it had developed had not been studied by historians and political scientists to the extent it deserved. As a result dogmatic assertions passed as conventional wisdom on the subject. Labour activists, for example, were convinced that left-wing socialist policies pressed on leaders by activists had won victory for Labour in 1945. Harvie felt that political scientists had neglected to do this research because they were preoccupied with the way policy was made and organisation at the centre.¹ This neglect, however, was still a major complaint in 2000 when Chris Williams edited a centenary history of the Welsh Labour Party.²

Harvie criticised Addison, whose The Road to 1945, while counteracting the assertions of the activists strengthened what he described as the 'McKenzie doctrine' after Professor Robert McKenzie. The latter saw the function of local party organisation as being to provide a kind of supporters' club to sustain competing teams of leaders in Parliament from which the electorate would make a choice of rulers in a general election.³ McKenzie's general view of democracy can actually be traced back to Joseph Schumpeter in the 1940s and before him to the anti-socialist Max Weber in 1920s Germany.⁴ Labour activists, however, had a role that went well beyond this. This was especially true in the 1940s when political campaigning was much more labour-intensive. It was the ability to call on unpaid voluntary workers, especially women, that the party capitalised on in elections. But the party because of its fervour for democratic values, (and in contrast to how it saw policy being decided among Conservatives) did also seriously attempt to put such values into practice within its organisation. There was a great emphasis on making socialists through a political education which stressed the values of democratic citizenship.⁵ Trade Unions were similarly concerned to stress their commitment to these values. There was a belief, for example, that trade union members had to be turned into 'Trade Unionists'.⁶ It was recognised that there was great political apathy and ignorance among trade unionists and within the party as well as in the wider electorate and something had to be done about it. Communist zeal to remedy this was one reason why in spite of official Labour policy they were accorded such respect within the Labour movement.

Many Labour members, especially in heartlands like South Yorkshire, could not be described as active members with a sophisticated socialist ideology though in terms of *mentalities* they undoubtedly saw themselves as socialists. Like working-class Labour voters, they often had an unsophisticated tribal class consciousness of 'Us' and 'Them' which grew out of the extreme differences in life opportunities experienced by middle and working-class people. We noted in Chapter Two very briefly the debate on

'Labourism'. Marxist-Leninists regard Labour as marked by a distrust of theory and pragmatism when it comes to ideology, rejecting its claims to be considered a socialist party and seeing it as an obstacle to socialism. Historians sympathetic to Labour are naturally more sympathetic to its claims to be ideologically socialist, as Francis, Tiratsoo, Thompson and Fielding are, even while paying attention to the conservatism and apathy of Labour members and working-class voters. Many Labour activists regarded themselves as 'real' socialists in contrast to un-ideological 'passengers' within party branches. They were similarly critical about working-class people outside.⁷ Tiratsoo, Thompson and Fielding make the point that social activities, like whist drives and dances, and the running of the branch as a club, were often more important to some members than political activity.⁸ But if activists were to be effective, they could not be purists - they had to carry the 'passengers' and attract voters.

One consequence of apathy was that a small circle of people, often the first generation of Labour activists in the area, exercised undue influence over the party and local government. Such people, and they were usually men rather than women, like Alderman George Caine of Rotherham or Alderman Ernest Rowlinson of Sheffield, were regarded with immense respect well outside the Party. Caine was, it was said in 1951, 'affectionately regarded as Rotherham's "Prime Minister"'. He was the first Socialist elected on Rotherham Council in 1906, becoming chairman of the Housing Committee in 1917. He was chairman until 1939, did not resign from the Council until 1955, and at one time had the record of serving on no fewer than thirty-six of its committees and sub-committees. He thus wielded great influence in many matters directly affecting working-class life in Rotherham.⁹ Obviously such leaders in municipal office could not be regarded as the same kind of activist as those of the rank-and-file, circumscribed as they were by the need to do the best for their communities as a whole rather than just politically committed sections. It is probably a slur to believe that having gained office they were not still radicals but this was tempered by responsibility. But office in local government is obviously not the same as office in national government and despite the fact that local government, especially in the inter-war years, had much greater autonomy and powers, ambitions were comparatively modest.

Most of the controversies about democracy between the parties came about because they had differing concepts of democracy, concepts classically delineated by Beer.¹⁰ In the Labour Party, the extra-parliamentary party was theoretically sovereign in policy-making through the Annual Conference. The Parliamentary Party and the National Executive Committee decided on the time and method by which its instructions would be enacted. Resolutions on policy were welcomed from the lowest levels of the party though often presented as composite resolutions, and decisions reached at Conference were thus regarded as especially binding, however much in practice they reflected the will of the leadership due to the trade union block vote. Labour remained a 'federal alliance' or 'hybrid' of pressure groups and organisations, even though, as at the 1943 Conference, for example, 59 Trade Unions with just 364 delegates controlled over two million card votes while 444 Labour Parties with 449 delegates had just under half a million.¹¹ Tory democracy was democracy where the party members and public opinion consented to policy decided at the centre by the Leader alone. The members did not actually give explicit

instructions on policy to the leadership. This was why the commitment to produce 300,000 houses a year forced on the leadership at the 1950 Party Conference was so unprecedented.¹² Conferences were 'more about display than policy'.¹³ There were thus basic differences between the roles of the Party Conferences.

In most Labour parties in the 1940s a state of perpetual war with the leadership and amongst themselves was not characteristic. Press accounts do often emphasise conflict, however, because this was newsworthy and because of their political hostility to Labour. The press was not impartial in cities like Sheffield. Thus the value in Labour eyes of having independent local Labour journals like Sheffield Forward. A Sheffield newspaper editor told Alderman Rowlinson in the inter-war period that 'We aren't in the business of giving you free publicity'.¹⁴ Sheffield Forward complained in 1946 that:

The local Press gives us a very raw deal generally. It does not report Labour Party speeches in the Council; it garbles the accounts it gives and it picks irresponsible statements made by our opponents in heavy type in such a way as to suggest Alderman Jackson and his friends have said the authoritative word. There is nothing we can do about this, except to ask those who are able to attend meetings of the Council, and to take care they do not believe all they see in print.¹⁵

From this distance in time what is noticeable about local newspapers, however, is their generosity towards opponents despite accusations of Tory bias by Labour activists. This is because they felt they had to adhere to a discourse of 'Britishness' which emphasised freedom of expression as against the thought control of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in which official Labour was regarded as an ally.

The mundane work of functioning local parties is not glamorous and newsworthy. A list comprising the activities undertaken by a typical one might include raising money and selecting candidates for municipal and parliamentary elections, electing branch officers, organising May Day demonstrations and public meetings to publicise government or party policy, setting up advice bureaux to deal with questions and issues raised by ordinary members of the public, and passing resolutions for the attention of Annual Conference, local MPs, trades councils, municipal councils and the Prime Minister, which might elicit some practical action or might indeed be simply flights of rhetorical ultra-left fantasy, but which demonstrated democratic involvement in discussion and debate. Parties would elect delegates to conferences and send lucky members to One-Day Schools, paying for their scholarships. They would take the lead in local campaigns on 'bread and butter' working-class issues, introduce new ideas into their communities and take part in social events, like dinners, dances, organised outings and whist drives. This embodiment of democratic values legitimated Labour government policies and helped people to accept policies of austerity which, though perhaps harsh, were necessary and fair. They provided valuable feedback. They were also part of a wider movement including the co-operatives and trade unions which could provide an alternative to those activities and services provided by capitalist bodies,

even if they were not on the scale of the pre-1914 German Social Democratic Party. Local activists helped to build a sense of community feeling which led people to vote Labour. A 1960 survey of over a thousand inhabitants of Wanstead and Woodford, Outer London, found that 'a close community, the extended family, informal and formal collective organisation and socialism are all of a piece'.¹⁶

Bale argues that the grip of the leadership on the extra-parliamentary Labour Party was intensified during the Second World War.¹⁷ The creation of Regional Councils exemplifies this though it could also be argued that they were established because of long-felt regional pressure for devolution. But as long as local parties obeyed Conference decisions and did not fraternise with proscribed organisations they had considerable autonomy.¹⁸ The records of local parties show that all kinds of radical resolutions were sent to the NEC which did not bring down immediate retribution from Transport House. Wisely, it may have considered that the activists who formulated them were simply letting off radical steam. Labour at the centre did not want to rock the boat while it was a partner in the wartime Coalition but it believed that it had not signed up to a 'political truce' that penalised political activity.

The Labour leadership in London during the war years were to make private and unpopular appeals to local parties throughout the United Kingdom to support Government candidates at disputed by-elections (usually Conservatives) despite the understandable reluctance of Labour activists, who saw themselves unable to capitalise on the obvious shift to the left in popular attitudes which these by-elections demonstrated. Labour activists were particularly discontented when, despite their leaders being in Government and the claims these leaders had originally made about the opportunities office would bring for socialist advance, concrete socialist measures, like nationalisation of the coal industry, were vetoed to please Conservatives. This was particularly true of the period before the publication of the Beveridge Report but discontent with the Coalition was present throughout the war.¹⁹ Active support for Tory candidates might be seen as going far beyond any strict electoral truce but the official Labour policy was that maintaining national unity meant that any activity which might disturb relations with the Conservatives was taboo. An NEC memorandum in 1942, for example, asserted that as long as Labour was in the Government, campaigns based on 'party aggrandisement, inter-party controversies, persistent and destructive criticism of the government, naval or military tactics' must be completely abandoned.²⁰

The view of most secondary sources which deal with wartime party organisation, national as well as local, would seem to be that, from the outbreak of war until El Alamein and the publication of the Beveridge Report, party organisation was merely clinging to life in the face of wartime disruption. Then a new phase started with many, if not all, local organisations beginning to recover. They took new heart from the belief that the war's end was in sight and made proposals and plans to prepare for a future general election. Finally, there was the evidence of the success of that recovery embodied in the general election performance in 1945. The interpretation is validated by the evidence of individual membership figures for constituency parties in South Yorkshire, including the figures for female membership, and by the national membership figures (See Appendix 1). Unfortunately, such membership figures in

themselves may be greatly inaccurate and the persistent figure of 240 was the minimum that all constituency parties were supposed to have to be accepted as such and thus they tell us little. Tanner points out that in times of financial hardship constituency parties might affiliate only part of their total membership to avoid paying affiliation fees to Head Office.²¹ Sheffield Central and Hillsborough DLPs were both in arrears throughout the war.²² Figures for Doncaster DLP show that actual membership during any particular year could be volatile and the abrupt decline in membership of the Party from 31 January 1945 with 1038 members to 28 March 1945 with 555 members was simply caused by a sudden increase in individual membership fees.²³ Much depended on individual activists' willingness to go out and collect subscriptions and personality clashes did occur. For example, Mr. Fishburn, President of Sheffield Hallam DLP, in 1941 criticised the 'unbusinesslike way' that collections were handed to the ward treasurer in one ward by certain collectors. He appealed to 'Mr. Hancock and Miss Pointer not to allow their personal dislikes to interfere with the efficient working of the Party, and when it was necessary for them to meet to transact Party business, to treat each other with ordinary civility.'²⁴

The figures for female membership and their proportion of the total membership of local parties do not seem to allow a broad wartime trend to be formulated for South Yorkshire as a whole. But as we have already indicated individual membership figures are not necessarily either accurate or believable. One might, however, have expected to see particularly high figures for 1941 before legislation made all women liable for conscription to war work and they disappeared into industry.²⁵ Men had been affected first and would not necessarily find it easy to keep in contact with the Party if called up into the Forces or forced to work long hours on shifts in essential war industries. Women did keep some local parties functioning in this period. Labour Organiser noted in 1940 that 'SHEFFIELD [PARK] report that a good number of offices are now filled by women members'.²⁶ The Hallam DLP Management Committee after the war gave a vote of thanks to the way Mrs Roper held the Broomhill Ward Labour Party together throughout the conflict and continued to collect membership fees.²⁷ Broomhill Ward was not a Labour stronghold and returned three Municipal Progressives in 1945 with a good majority. It was not contested by Labour in 1938.²⁸ What we do see is that in wartime women were never in greater numbers than men in local parties and that men continued to occupy many offices even if they were older veterans. One means of maintaining Labour organisation would have been to organise party cells within industry as the Communists did but though this was discussed by the National Executive Committee in 1942 the idea was dismissed. This did not prevent the suggestion being taken up in Coventry factories but it did not happen in South Yorkshire.²⁹ Wartime disruption may not have been the sole reason for the decline in Labour membership. There was also, according to Fielding, a strong anti-party mood in popular attitudes throughout the war, though after 1942 it 'was anti-Conservative rather than anti-Labour because it was the Conservatives who were seen more clearly to embody "party" spirit', being unenthusiastic about post-war social reform.³⁰

The formation of the Yorkshire Regional Council in February 1942 must be accounted a significant development of the war years, though Harvie quotes McKenzie who believed Regional Councils played

‘an insignificant part in the life of the party’.³¹ The Regional Council which covered fifty-one constituencies allowed closer supervision of party organisation than was possible for Transport House. It was formed when Labour organisation was admittedly at a low ebb but it could be argued that its formation was thus all the more necessary. But it was also a natural development of the growth of the party machinery in the inter-war years and fulfilled a recognised need.³² It functioned to give advice to Constituency Parties on selecting candidates or agents and provided lists of those approved. It gave its endorsement to selected candidates and tried to suggest ways of increasing individual membership and strengthening party organisation.

Len Williams, the wartime secretary and organiser of the Council, addressing Hallam DLP in 1942, commented that the Council had surveyed the state of party organisation and ‘a very strange state of affairs was discovered’, with the safest Labour seats having the lowest membership figures.³³ But this could hardly be a great surprise in South Yorkshire. The constituencies of the South Yorkshire Coalfield where miners were a preponderant element of the electorate had a long left-wing tradition. The peculiar requirements of industrial organisation and production in the coal industry fostered occupational and communal solidarity and gave a desire for better pay and working conditions which it was believed only nationalisation could satisfy. A concentration in particular constituencies meant successful interventions by miners in parliamentary politics long before it was possible for other unions. Wentworth, Barnsley, Rotherham, Rother Valley, Doncaster, Don Valley, Penistone and Hemsworth were all local constituencies where miners were extremely powerful politically. However, as was noted in 1938: ‘The miners vote is solid. . . [But] there are two unsatisfactory features in most of these [mining] constituencies. In the first place, political, or rather Party, machinery is often of the poorest, or even absent altogether, and secondly, individual membership of a good and paying sort is most frequently conspicuous by its absence.’³⁴

Railwaymen were also a politically important interest in South Yorkshire. This was because the National Union of Railwaymen represented most grades of railway employee, there was much employment (the local railway infrastructure was complex and economically extremely important for the transport of local coal, raw materials and finished steel products), and the ‘Plant’ works of the London and North Eastern Railway, which built locomotives like the famous record-breaker ‘Mallard’ was sited at Doncaster. The railwaymen were very political. The ‘Plant’s’ employees showed remarkable solidarity with the miners during the General Strike, for example.³⁵ The rail unions provided influential local MPs like William Dobbie of Rotherham. They also provided urban district and county councillors like Maurice Creighton of Swinton.³⁶ They produced County Borough councillors and aldermen like Ernest Rowlinson of Sheffield and Alderman Ball, secretary of Rotherham Trades Council between 1931 and 1941.³⁷ The rail unions, like the miners, actively supported nationalisation and went further as convinced advocates of workers’ control after the war.³⁸

Finally, Rotherham, Attercliffe and Brightside were all constituencies where steel workers were

politically powerful. They and members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union employed in local steelworks dominated the composition of Rotherham Council, for instance. The members of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation might be less enthusiastic about nationalisation - they had good industrial relations with local companies like United Steel - but they were loyal to Labour and its leaders. James Walker, for instance, a Glaswegian who had been the first Labour parliamentary candidate in Rotherham, standing unsuccessfully in 1918 and 1922,³⁹ was political secretary of the union between 1931 and 1938⁴⁰ and Chairman of the Labour Party in 1940/1. He was a vehement enemy of Harold Laski and the Left.⁴¹ During the war he was a hard-liner on German war-guilt and attacked those 'quacking round the political pond' in support of the Communist-inspired 'People's Convention'.⁴²

4.2 - EBB, 1939-1942

The following section looks at the difficulties that local DLPs and Trades and Labour Councils (which functioned as Borough Labour Parties in Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley) faced in the early years of the War in maintaining their organisation until the tide of war turned in late 1942. This period could be further sub-divided, as it affected the Labour Party, into the period of 'Phoney War' before Labour entered the Coalition Government under Churchill, the period from then until Russia's entry into the War in June 1941, and the period up to victory at El Alamein and Stalingrad and the publication of the Beveridge Report. Some of this section examines Labour's relations with local Communists and looks at Labour's changing views of Soviet Russia before and after June 1941. It also looks at pacifism as a current inside Labour and attempts to assess its importance given its major pre-war influence in Sheffield.

Pacifism prior to the war had much support in Sheffield⁴³ which had four major figures in the movement in Eleanor Barton,⁴⁴ Arthur Ponsonby,⁴⁵ Cecil Henry Wilson and Henry George McGhee.⁴⁶ Wilson who was MP for Attercliffe until 1944 was very active during the war and took an independent stance which led him into conflict with the Labour leadership. He did not, however, resign from the Labour Party as Ponsonby did.⁴⁷ In the period of 'Phoney War', with Chamberlain still in charge, absolute pacifists could still hope that hostilities might rapidly be brought to a conclusion and appeasement yet be made to work. Allied with them in the desire for peace were both the Independent Labour Party and the Communist Party.

The ILP saw the War as a quarrel between Capitalist states and refused to make a distinction between British imperialism and German Nazism. It refused to give support to a Capitalist state and called for Socialism and Peace.⁴⁸ Cecil Wilson was willing in Parliament to support the unpopular stand of ILP MPs like Maxton, Campbell Stephen and McGovern despite the inveterate hostility of the Parliamentary Labour Party. He voted with them and with George Lansbury against the Emergency Powers Act.⁴⁹ He also opposed conscription⁵⁰ and signed a statement in September 1939 urging labour organisations to stay independent of Capitalism, despite Hitler, to work for Socialism and Peace.⁵¹ He also supported

'Stop-the-War' candidates at two Scottish by-elections.⁵² He and other Labour MPs who gave their support were formally cautioned by the NEC and told to desist.⁵³ In November 1939, he was one of twenty Labour MPs who signed a 'Memorandum on Peace Aims' - the first declaration of the Parliamentary Peace Aims Group. Another signatory was Henry McGhee, the MP for Penistone. Like Wilson he had been in the pre-war Parliamentary Pacifist Group and served on its executive committee. In November 1939 he called for a secret session of Parliament to discuss the continuation of the war.⁵⁴

The Labour Party did see itself as a peace movement but it was *pacifistic* rather than absolute pacifist in intent. The Sheffield Trades Council in its annual report for 1939/40 said it saw war as 'a tremendous evil' but that it also stood for the collective security of all nations against an aggressor. It did not translate a personal revulsion for war, perhaps on Christian principles, into a desire not to resist whatever happened.⁵⁵ It is not surprising that during the war Alderman Frank Thraves, Labour Leader of the City Council between 1942 and 1946, was president of the Sheffield Branch of the League of Nations Union which campaigned for collective security.⁵⁶ Labour Party members had mixed views about those who refused to fight but after Dunkirk public tolerance of conscientious objectors began to evaporate. At a Rotherham Trades Council meeting, with prejudices heightened by the threat of invasion, one member was recorded as saying that 'A man who won't put on the uniform in the present need and serve his country should be drowned'; however, he was contradicted by a woman member who said that she believed that the true conscientious objector was a brave man and did not think they should be persecuted. Another party member regretted that some local authorities, and even members of a trade union, had victimised them.⁵⁷ By July 1940 119 local authorities had decided to dismiss conscientious objectors from their employ or to suspend them while the war lasted. Only sixteen councils had ruled against doing this and they included the London County Council.⁵⁸ The Labour Group on Sheffield City Council in August 1940 passed a resolution that said they would not penalise genuine conscientious objectors in their employ as the 1939 National Service Act had given them legal protection. The Municipal Progressives, however, were less sympathetic and tried to get an amendment passed to dismiss objectors from City Council employment.⁵⁹

Turning to the actual experience of local Labour Parties in wartime we can see they faced sobering prospects, even in early 1940, though Labour Organiser remained ultimately optimistic. It noted the 'serious problems' created by the "blackout", the transference of labour, the calling up of large bodies of men for the Armed Forces and the vast amount of overtime being worked in industrial regions, the widespread evacuation, [and] the "key" members serving in the ARP'. It also noted the problems

of enrolling sufficient members to collect subscriptions regularly. Finance has always been our Party's problem, but the cut in social and money-raising activities has made the problem difficult. Some Parties have had their halls commandeered by the Military Authorities, and have suffered financial loss as a result. Propaganda activities have also been affected in this way.

However, it said that ‘only an odd Party here and there . . . has given up the ghost.’⁶⁰ Thorpe looking at the situation in Sheffield at this time, however, believes that Labour organisation in the city did not fare so well under the impact of war. In 1939 three Sheffield constituencies had full-time agents but by 1942 only Hillsborough had such a full-time official and he was really Co-operative rather than Labour.⁶¹ Also, according to Thorpe, many ward parties were ‘completely inactive’.⁶² The source he gives for his conclusion about the ward parties is an entry in the Hallam DLP management committee minute book for 10 March 1940, and in Hallam Division at least it does appear that that was the case at that stage of the war. But in 1938 Crookesmoor Ward had failed to return a Labour candidate and Hallam and Broomhill Wards did not see a contest⁶³ so ward organisation might not have been up to its full potential even before the war, particularly as the Division had continued to elect Conservative MPs and the area was middle-class and affluent. Whether other ward parties outside Hallam Division were ‘completely inactive’ is unclear.

Labour Organiser reported in January 1940 that, from evidence given by local Labour Parties in their Reports, the position of Parties was excellent in those constituencies which had Labour MPs or prospective Parliamentary candidates who regularly visited them to keep up morale. Labour Organiser gave Doncaster as one example⁶⁴ and in the Annual Report for 1940 the DLP Secretary reported that: ‘My impression [of the Division] is, briefly, one of quiet confidence and some satisfaction. The Division is constitutionally sound, financially healthy, and the active keenness of its members keeps it moving.’⁶⁵ Labour Organiser also commended it for taking the initiative of setting up an ‘Enquiry Bureau’ to help local people with problems due to the War.⁶⁶ Despite all this the Doncaster Party must have suffered badly in terms of morale, and probably direction, from the loss of prominent members of the Party in 1940 and 1941. Personalities did actually matter. Two Labour Mayors - Councillor Herbert Heaviside, who had held the office for three months, and Councillor Andrew Clarke who held it for almost six - died in February 1940⁶⁷ and April 1941.⁶⁸ And on 4 December 1940, the Doncaster MP John Morgan also died.⁶⁹ But it was Heaviside who was the major loss. He had been Secretary of the DLP and then Agent for the Division and was the directing intelligence behind Labour’s organisation in seven Parliamentary elections.⁷⁰ Ernest Gutteridge, who became Labour Party Secretary in 1940, described his loss as ‘a tremendous liability’ and said that he was: ‘An old and valued worker in the movement, he had built up an intricate but highly efficient machinery of organisation [sic], to which only he had the key.’⁷¹

A similar blow to morale came with the death of Alderman Ernest Rowlinson in January 1941. The Telegraph described him as the ‘dominant figure in Sheffield municipal politics since 1926’. A railwayman, leader of the ASRS Midland Station platform branch before 1914, victimised after the 1911 railway strike, he became in 1913 president of the Trades and Labour Council. After being gassed in World War One he became a councillor in 1921 and chairman of the Labour Group on the City Council in 1922. He resigned from the presidency of the Trades Council in 1926 on becoming Leader of the City Council. He managed to turn a ‘rather raw, large party into one which became a model and an inspiration

to struggling Labour Parties all over the country'. His main interest was in education, and beyond Sheffield he was recognised as 'a great municipal administrator' by Government departments and local government associations. He was agent for Park DLP at his death. Had he chosen, he could easily have been a parliamentary candidate, but stayed in local government. He was Lord Mayor in 1937/38 and can be described as the 'Strong Man' of Sheffield Labour politics, as Heaviside had been in Doncaster, Alderman Caine was in Rotherham and Alderman Edward Sheerien was in Barnsley.⁷²

Rowlinson was replaced as Leader by William Asbury, chairman of the City Emergency Committee, and nicknamed Sheffield's No. 1 ARP Volunteer because of his role in developing the city's civil defence services. He had been forced to refuse the Lord Mayor-ship in 1939 because it would have interfered with that work. He had been a councillor since 1924 and had also taken a prominent part in Labour's rise to power. He had been a railway guard until 1930 when he became the agent for Brightside DLP. But he, too, proved a casualty of war though not a fatal one. He was replaced as Leader in 1942 because he was appointed Deputy Regional Commissioner in the Southern Civil Defence Region.⁷³ His deputy, Alderman Thraves, took over as Leader, a post he held until 1946. He also replaced Asbury on the Emergency Committee. He, however, according to Andrew Thorpe, did not provide the same calibre of leadership as his predecessors.⁷⁴ Thraves had been a tram driver before becoming a trade union official. He became a councillor in 1923 and was Lord Mayor in 1935/6. He was also chairman of the Watch Committee which oversaw the police and had been president of the Trades Council.⁷⁵ He relinquished the latter role to Councillor James Sterland on becoming Labour Group Leader.⁷⁶

The electoral truce between the political parties throughout the war was a major issue to Labour activists as we have explained. Independence was a prized commodity and there was confusion that the truce meant a complete end to political activity which would only play into the hands of a superior and better financed Conservative organisation once hostilities ended. Confusion is reflected in the response of Hallam DLP in November 1939 to two party circulars. One gave the provisions of the Bill which would suspend local government elections and the other urged DLPs to keep their election machinery as well oiled as possible and suggested ways of doing so. This was thought paradoxical.⁷⁷ However, in support of the electoral truce, Rotherham Trades Council refused to help fund the lost deposit of the unsuccessful candidate at the Glasgow Pollock by-election in 1940 who opposed it.⁷⁸ A resolution against the truce from a local NUR branch was also defeated in April 1940.⁷⁹ Other Labour organisations took a different position during the 'Phoney War'. In Sheffield, before the Trades Council was reorganised in 1940, Hillsborough DLP produced a resolution opposing the truce,⁸⁰ and the Trades Council as the Borough Party was one of 50 parties who sent similar resolutions to the 1940 Labour Conference.⁸¹

Local parties and MPs obeyed the injunction of Labour Organiser, in calling for an advice bureau in every party, to 'Make your Party a refuge for all who are in trouble'.⁸² They, thus, attempted to demonstrate Labour's socialist values of fellowship and community by practical action. They were seen to be doing their best to help suffering people and not just passing resolutions. Thus, while the 'Enquiry

Bureau' that Doncaster DLP set up might not have had a direct electoral pay-off, it was hoped it would be remembered after the war with gratitude as showing Labour's civic spirit. Labour in Sheffield at the end of the war similarly refused to take sole credit for civic achievements. One was the Information Bureau set up by the Ministry of Information but with much input from the City Council immediately after the Blitz. Following this precedent, a permanent Civic Information Service was set up in 1946 by Sheffield Council.⁸³ This showed surprising longevity continuing until 2003 by which time it was thought to be the oldest surviving service of its type in Britain. The advent of the internet, however, has unfortunately given councillors the excuse to axe it.⁸⁴

Local Labour organisations throughout the war did not lose sight of the need to look after working-class living standards even while they practiced civic-mindedness. Women members were to the fore. In October 1939, the Women's Advisory Council of Sheffield Trades Council set up a Food Committee to monitor food prices. The Advisory Council's secretary was elected to the city's Food Council.⁸⁵ The president of Hallam DLP, Mr. Fishburn, proposed a resolution after the Blitz: 'That we note with appreciation the Yeoman service of the Hallam Women in connection with the Emergency Feeding of Bombed Out people of Hallam.'⁸⁶ The Trades Council's Executive Committee Report for 1939/40 spoke of the added prestige for the Trades Council of being on the Hardships Committee, the Advisory Committee for Conscientious Objectors, a Committee formed by the Ministry of Information and the Food Control Prices Regulation Committee.⁸⁷ Of course, across the country, as Labour Organiser pointed out, representation on wartime committees varied a great deal district to district depending on the degree of Party representation on local councils.⁸⁸ This did not matter much in South Yorkshire where, for example, the formation of a Vigilance Committee in Rotherham was seen as unnecessary because Labour already had a the majority on all official committees monitoring possible working-class grievances.⁸⁹ The Sheffield Trades Council showed its recognition of working people's urgent needs when they decided to submit a resolution calling for an expansion of British Restaurants, which had been so successful in Sheffield in providing cheap meals, to the 1942 Labour Conference, asking for their retention as part of Labour's programme of post-war reconstruction.⁹⁰ Examples of Labour's interest in such welfare work could easily be multiplied.

The entry of the Soviet Union into the war appeared to Britons a symbol of ultimate survival in hitherto dark times. Any previous criticism and hostility towards the Soviet Union was dissipated in a flurry of enthusiasm for 'Aid to Russia' funds and in local expressions of support which went far beyond Labour. There was also a popular campaign for a 'Second Front' that was not limited simply to Communists, though they were the most enthusiastic supporters. It must be said though that while the latter was a good slogan it was less easy to make the demand concrete and foolish to try before victory could be guaranteed as the heavy losses sustained in the Dieppe raid in 1942 seemed to prove. A Rotherham Advertiser leader ironically spelled this out just before the raid.⁹¹ Increased war production and the Second Front were closely inter-connected. It was no coincidence that at a Rotherham Trades Council meeting in April 1942 a resolution was approved from one AEU branch calling for the opening of a

Second Front while another resolution from another AEU branch called on the Government to make production committees compulsory in factories.⁹² By November, William Dobbie MP was saying, however, that further Second Front meetings were superfluous and would not achieve anything much more tangible.⁹³ Even before Dieppe, co-operation between Labour and the Communists over the issue was not automatic. A letter from the local communists asking for co-operation with Doncaster DLP on the subject in July was brushed aside. It explained it could not comply because the vote at Party Conference had been opposed.⁹⁴

Local Communists did increase their individual membership during the war but, even at the peak, the total hardly bore comparison with Labour *at the lowest point* of its wartime fortunes. Fishman provides a figure for South Yorkshire of 1,596 members in March 1942 and this increased to 2,596 by June. This contrasts with a figure for the North Midlands as a whole - which included Sheffield, Nottingham, and North Derbyshire - of 1,000 members in March 1940.⁹⁵ Labour leaders hoped that the change of line of the British Communists in 1939 from supporting the war to total opposition would destroy their membership but the Daily Worker claimed 'facts tell a different story'. This was, however, perhaps not unexpected since many people were groping for some kind of way back to peace at this time for reasons close to those of Chamberlain at Munich. They could not understand the point of going to war for the sake of people of whom they were totally ignorant, and especially for semi-fascist Poland which had profited materially from Czechoslovakia's downfall.⁹⁶ The paper reported in October 1939 that the North Midlands district had recruited 82 extra members and Sheffield had added 22.⁹⁷ The national membership rose from 18,000 in September 1939 to 20,000 in March 1940 reaching a peak of about 60,000 in June 1942.⁹⁸

A hundred delegates from Sheffield and the North Midlands attended the London 'People's Convention' on 12 January 1941.⁹⁹ This started life as the People's Vigilance Committee set up by the disaffiliated Hammersmith Labour Party and Trades Council. Its leading figure was Denis Noel Pritt KC,¹⁰⁰ the Independent Labour MP for Hammersmith North, expelled for pro-Soviet propaganda over the invasion of Finland.¹⁰¹ Its objectives were in line with those of the Communist Party before the USSR was attacked and it campaigned, according to communists Noreen Branson and Bill Moore, for a 'People's Government' that would defeat both the Germans and the 'Men of Munich'.¹⁰² Support for a German defeat was the position of some at the Convention like Hewlett Johnson, the Red Dean of Canterbury, but according to Sheffielder and former communist, J. T. Murphy, working in a London engineering works at the time where three hundred of the workers were Convention supporters, it was 'an unquestionable fact' that it set back the war effort. Its supporters refused to work overtime, discontent was fomented and morale was lowered.¹⁰³ Tribune denounced the Convention as 'mischievous, phony, dishonest, a fraud, a swindle, snare and delusion from start to finish' because it was a Communist front. However it admitted that it

was a great success as a conference. The hall and overflow meetings were packed. The

speeches were able. The audiences were enthusiastic, and mostly composed of good, honest-to-God workers whose attachment to Socialism, democracy and a decent peace and whose loathing of Fascism could not be questioned. Much of what was said was the authentic voice of large and growing bodies of opinion, representing genuine deeply felt and widespread grievances.¹⁰⁴

Most of the so-called 'delegates' only represented themselves in reality. The figure of 1.2 million people they said they 'represented' was fantasy. Yet as Mass-Observation concluded, 'Perhaps the best way of summing up feeling on this subject is that people were "looking for a way out of the present mess".'¹⁰⁵ An American journalist who attended said that the remarkable thing about the Convention, whether it achieved anything or not, was that it was being freely held in a country at war at all. This he saw as the triumph of the democratic spirit. He did not believe that it would have been allowed in the United States under similar circumstances.¹⁰⁶

The Sheffield Trades Council was the subject of a TUC enquiry in February 1940 at which seven full-time trade union officials and Councillor Alfred Hobson, its secretary, met together and 'agreed that the Trades Council had been going off the rails for a long time and [that] the Trades Union Officials had become disgusted with the meetings and the publicity they received. The influence of the Communist Party was apparent.' For instance, the tiny Railway Clerks No. 2 Branch 'submitted a resolution declaring the war to be an imperialist war and demanding the withdrawal of all Labour support to the Government and to conducting the prosecution of the war.' The resolution was referred to 162 affiliated organisations but got just twenty-two replies. Of those replies, six only supported it, while sixteen were against. It had then been put to a delegate meeting of the Trades Council with 115 delegates present: 39 voted for it and 38 against. Yet this resolution, despite the tiny margin of support, was exploited by German radio propaganda as a result. The Women's Advisory Council also met and passed a resolution supporting peace by negotiation. Fewer than twenty people voted for it but it was reported by the Daily Worker and in a Moscow Radio broadcast the next day. The enquiry also found that Trades Council rules were out of date, that organisations affiliated on industrial questions often voted on political questions and vice versa, and that if delegates were unable to attend they were allowed to produce substitutes whose position had not been ratified by their union branch.¹⁰⁷

This state of affairs could not continue and thus a conference was held to reorganise the Trades Council. New officers and a new Executive Council were set up - 'and there is every indication now that the affairs of the Council are in the hands of loyal people'. Hobson remained secretary. Nine people had allegations against them, including Charles Darvill, the Trades Council president. Seven were said to be Communists and the others were said to have attended Communist fraction meetings. It was all denied but only the stories of three were accepted - the statements of the others, including Darvill, being regarded as 'most unconvincing'.¹⁰⁸ Ordinary Sheffielders and many of the party rank-and-file were only told of the seriousness of the Trades Council's difficulties in late April 1940 when a Telegraph and

Independent reporter was told that matters had reached a crisis by a Trades Council member who was also a city councillor.¹⁰⁹ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council was not the sole body affected for seven Trades Councils in London, all joint bodies with the Labour Party, were also reorganised due to ‘disruptive activities’, but only Sheffield Trades Council continued as a joint organisation.¹¹⁰

The 1941 TUC Annual Report noted that Mexborough Trades Council was one where ‘[a]ction has been necessitated ... on account of breaches of the Model Rules relative to proscribed organisations’ and that steps had been taken to remedy the position.¹¹¹ This must be a reference to the story of its secretary the shop-steward, John Mason, who, uniquely for a Communist, was imprisoned without trial under Defence Regulation 18B. This regulation was usually used against fascists and Nazi sympathisers. He allegedly impeded war production, and, as a shop steward, he was certainly in a position to foment discontent among workers against the war. Yet the suspicion of some trade unionists was that he was dealt with for speaking for the workers against a bullying management and had been made an example of *pour encourager les autres*.¹¹² The case was made something of a *cause celebre* because he had not been immediately told why he was being imprisoned, and even when he was told, the explanation appeared to left-wing sympathisers incredible because of his previous record as an active anti-fascist. In truth the position of the Communist Party was anti-fascist but its efforts were aimed at discrediting the ‘Men of Munich’ still in political office rather than being against the Germans who Stalin wished to keep sweet. The ‘Men of Munich’ were an easy target of popular ire, having been attacked by Michael Foot and two other journalists in July 1940 in the pamphlet Guilty Men for military shortcomings after Dunkirk.¹¹³ They were seen by Communists not as misguided appeasers but as actual fascists.¹¹⁴

By stirring up disaffection with their position in Churchill’s government, however, the Communists *were* undermining the war-effort. Chamberlain was leader of the Conservatives until October 1940, they were still the most powerful political factor in the Commons, and Churchill was also a Conservative. Mason was arrested on 15 July 1940 on the orders of Sir John Anderson and was only released on 12 June 1941. His continued imprisonment, like the suppression of the Daily Worker between January 1941 and August 1942,¹¹⁵ was attributed by some left-wingers to the personal enmity of Herbert Morrison, the Minister of Home Security. He was the most anti-Communist of the Labour leaders though even he felt that the Communist Party could not be proscribed despite its attitude to the war and the accusations that it was spreading disaffection. In a Cabinet memorandum he proposed to intern Communists on the grounds of their individual actions and not because they were Communists.¹¹⁶ Mason fell into this category.

Mason was an Amalgamated Engineering Union shop-steward at the English Steel Corporation in Sheffield, aged thirty-seven when arrested. He was convenor of shop-stewards at Baker and Bessemer’s Kilnhurst works before the war and was awarded the Tolpuddle Medal by the TUC. He founded the Mexborough Trades Council and was an active Labour Party member in Mexborough before joining the Communists at the war’s start. In 1938 he stood as a Labour candidate for Mexborough Urban District Council and though not elected got a good vote. He was prominent in raising money for the Spanish

Republic and fought Blackshirts in 1937 when William Joyce, the later notorious 'Lord Haw Haw', addressed a Rotherham meeting.¹¹⁷ A 'John Mason Defence Committee' was set up and questions were asked in Parliament. D. N. Pritt KC, whom we have already met, and Sydney Silverman, maverick Labour MP for Nelson and Colne, represented him in court.¹¹⁸ The National Council for Civil Liberties, then a Communist front, interested itself in his case. Two protest conferences were held in Mexborough in 1940. At the first, one speaker was the chairman of Barnsley Trades and Labour Council.¹¹⁹ At the second, there were 65 delegates including representatives of three Labour Party branches, sixteen AEU branches, sixteen other union branches and eight Trades Councils. A pamphlet was printed giving Mason's life story with a petition attached which sold for one penny.¹²⁰ Many Sheffield steelworks supported the petition as did a variety of union bodies from the Scottish Brass Moulders' Union's Executive Committee, to Edinburgh, Eccles and Stockport and Thornaby Trades Councils, and building trades workers in the London Co-operative movement.¹²¹ The NCCL believed that the immediate reason for Mason's arrest was that he 'had made some strictures on the war in a private letter which had been opened by the authorities.'¹²²

Mason was released just before the invasion of Russia. But at the July 1941 annual meeting of the Sheffield Trades Council there was ambivalence over how to regard the latter. Mr. W. Scholey proposed a resolution calling on all workers to redouble their efforts to increase production so as to ensure an early and complete victory over the Axis Powers. Scholey said that they did not necessarily support everything the Soviet Union had done, but that they were standing loyally and unequivocally with Russia, because they were fighting the same tyranny. He went on to say that he hoped that the little Stalins of this country were going to amend their ways, and that they would not seek to undermine the influence of every trade union leader. This resolution was carried by the meeting but it was criticised by Sidney Dyson of the Transport and General Workers Union who suggested that the mover was asking 'that this Imperialist Government of ours shall once again be allowed to dominate Europe and do what it likes when the peace arrives.'¹²³

Rotherham Trades Council pledged 'itself to carry on the struggle [against Nazi aggression] with renewed energy in the workshops, mines and armed forces side by side with the forces of the USSR until final victory is achieved. Finally we place on record our profound admiration of the magnificent fight the Soviet Army, Navy and Air Force are waging against the ruthless invader.'¹²⁴ At the Trades Council meeting in September 1941 a resolution was passed from the local branch of the steel union which called for the setting up of an Anglo-Soviet Committee and asked the Trades Council to set up a Council of Action 'to promote all possible help to the Russian people in their titanic struggle against Hitler'.¹²⁵

At the Sheffield Trades Council meeting in October 1941 the Telegraph commented that the delegates were so enthusiastic on hearing the first news of the Trades Council's "Aid to Russia" scheme that they had to be told from the chair that the scheme was only four days old and that the sub-committee appointed to deal with it must be given a chance to get into its stride. The sub-committee included

Councillor Hobson, Albert Ballard representing the Co-operative movement, and the vice-presidents of the Trades Council. A special co-ordinating committee was later set up representing DLPs, the Co-operative Party and the trade unions to raise £5,000.¹²⁶ By 29th November they had raised almost £1,000 with the help of cinemas who provided facilities for collections and appeals.¹²⁷ Thousands of pounds, however, went directly from local trades unionists to the National Council of Labour Fund for Russia independently of the Trades Council.¹²⁸ It was in this enthusiastic mood that the Trades Council complained to the TUC General Secretary that it had had only limited contact with a Russian trade union delegation at a conference in Sheffield in January 1942 due to the vigilance of the Ministry of Information. Its representative never left them unattended and whisked them away by road from the meeting as soon as it finished.¹²⁹ The Executive Committee Report for 1943 reported with pride that by the year's start they had raised £5,200 for the 'Aid to Russia' Fund and over £320 for the 'Aid to China' Fund.¹³⁰

The enthusiasm for these Funds was not confined to Sheffield. A circular on the subject from the National Council of Labour was discussed by Doncaster Labour Party's Executive Committee in October 1941 and the secretary reported that he been visited by Dr. Bury about signatures for an Anglo-Soviet Unity Campaign.¹³¹ At a following meeting on the Campaign at the Mansion House, Councillor Cranfield reported that, 'The attendance was poor. All the evidence shows that Dr. Bury, whilst enthusiastic, does not quite realise the tremendous job he has undertaken. It was agreed to ask the Mayor-Elect to issue an Appeal and convene a second meeting. Apart from Mrs. Scargall and Dr. Bury only Labour Party representatives were present.' Miss Sampson who attended a second meeting noted that it was more representative. The Mayor was chairman and agreed to launch an appeal. Subversive political implications arising from helping Soviet Russia were downplayed and 'money, whilst essential appeared to be the predominant feature of the meeting . . . propaganda took second place.'¹³² An independent Labour Party Fund was later set up¹³³ but was wound up at the end of 1942.¹³⁴ A Flag Day in aid of the Mayor's Fund was proposed for 13 December 1941 and fund raising activities were to be held in cinemas.¹³⁵ It was planned that between 27 April and 3 May 1942 there would be an 'Aid for Russia Week'. By the end of January 1942 the Fund had raised nearly £1,000 and plans for the 'Aid for Russia Week' were ambitious. On separate days there would be a dance, a Women's Day, a Lido Carnival, a mass meeting which, it was hoped, would be addressed by Sir Stafford Cripps, another Flag Day when there would be a special Doncaster Rovers' match, and on Sunday special church services and a collection. This was despite reports of some resistance from church authorities.¹³⁶

In Rotherham in October 1941, as an expression of sympathy for Russia and the people of Rostov on the Don ('whose industries are the same as ours'), a book of signatures of support was begun with the Mayor first to sign.¹³⁷ In a letter to the Advertiser, he appealed for £500 to be contributed within a week for the Russian Red Cross Fund. He hoped every citizen would contribute a small sum.¹³⁸ These contributions and their sources were recorded in the Advertiser so we can get some idea of the broad range of people who contributed and what they did to get funds. 3 January 1942 records over £10 each from Allott Bros.

and Leigh Ltd, from the employees of three Communal Restaurants and from the Park Street Kitchen. £10 came from "B" Company of the 58th West Riding Home Guard and £5 2s from the joint efforts of Bethel Road residents. £3 16s 9d was contributed by the East Dene Social Club - the seventh such contribution. £3 10s came from pensioners and customers of Midland Road Post Office. £3 5s 6d was raised by the Rotherham Girls Club Carol Party and 15s 6d by Class III of St. Ann's Girls' School. The published contributions also included tiny amounts by single individuals. By the end of December 1941 over £977 had been raised¹³⁹ and this increased to over £1,323 by April 1942.¹⁴⁰ The Trades Council did not have an independent fund. Money, like the £50 raised from a dance organised by Councillor Mrs. Green for the Women's Federation of the Labour Party, went to the Mayor's Fund.¹⁴¹ This continued throughout the war. In 1943 the Executive Committee 'very strongly recommend that all delegates . . . give their assistance unstintingly to this very worthy cause . . . we whole-heartedly endorse the action of the Secretary in the effort he has taken and the efforts he will make on behalf of the Labour Party to assist the Mayor, the Mayoress and Alderman Dobbie to achieve the target' which now was £3,000 for medical supplies and surgical equipment.¹⁴²

The funds raised appear very creditable but it should be noted there were many appeals to citizens to donate to worthy causes during the war. In Rotherham in 1942 the Russian Red Cross Fund competed with other humanitarian funds like the Mayor of Rotherham's British Ambulance Fund, the Mayoress's Comforts Fund and the British Red Cross Fund.¹⁴³ Yet the sums raised appear tiny compared with the amounts raised during the National Savings Weeks. Rotherham 'War Weapons Week' in 1941 got £758,542 and 'Warship Week' in 1942 got £785,616.¹⁴⁴ The latter had the aim of raising £700,000 to get a destroyer built on Clydebank to be adopted by the town as HMS Rotherham. £5,000 was raised by Advertiser readers in 1940 to buy a Spitfire or Hurricane for the RAF. £1,400 was raised in the first week of the appeal. More than £6,000 was also raised for the same purpose by the Rotherham and District Fighter Plane Fund.¹⁴⁵

4.3 - RESURGENCE, 1942-1945

The president of Sheffield Trades Council, Councillor Sterland, in 1943 praised Stalingrad's defenders, the determination and self-sacrifice of the Red Army, and that of the Allied armies in Africa: 'The final battle is not yet over. Blood, Sweat and Tears remain only too tragically within our vision, but I do not think I shall be accused of undue optimism when I say that there appears on the horizon a brighter Star than we have seen during the past three years.'¹⁴⁶ The Beveridge Report, published three weeks after El Alamein, contributed to this optimism. It gave evidence of light at the end of the tunnel down which the British people had been wearily travelling and expectation not merely of victory but of the better conditions for working people. The Atlantic Charter had already called on nations to unite in 'securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement, and social security' and Beveridge appeared to embody those ideals.¹⁴⁷ Heartened local Labour parties now believed in the possibility of a future general election and planned for it. They were optimistic about Labour forming the next Government for

opinion polls from June 1943 consistently predicted Labour victory.¹⁴⁸ This was in contrast to 1939 or 1940 when a 'sea-change' in popular political attitudes towards Labour and against the Tories seemed unrealistic.¹⁴⁹ Labour reached a low point in 1942 in terms of individual and trade union national membership figures. This was also the case with individual membership figures in South Yorkshire (with the exception of Rother Valley DLP) but this was also going to change.

The desire to spell out what Britain was fighting for by making plans for post-war reconstruction was evident before December 1942. Clement Attlee, speaking at a regional conference of delegates in Sheffield in April 1940, told them that the reconstruction of the country's economic system was a vital necessity and that changes in its economic and social structure must be made to fully realise the kind of society they wanted after the war.¹⁵⁰ Hallam DLP in January 1940 decided to order two hundred copies of the pamphlet What We Are Fighting For, a free copy to be sent to each member.¹⁵¹ In October they agreed to buy four copies of Labour's Aims in War and Peace. They wanted Councillor Bingham to put copies in city libraries.¹⁵² In March 1942 they also decided to buy twelve copies of The Old World and the New Society.¹⁵³ Over town planning, Labour city councillors were making progress even if criticised for secrecy as we saw in Chapter Three. Despite such precedents, however, it was only after Beveridge was published that issues of post-war reconstruction came into their own. This affected public perceptions of Labour and the Conservatives with dividends in 1945 after the PLP revolted in Parliament against its leaders in the government in February 1943.

The Telegraph editorial on 5 December 1942 said that the Report, 'whatever may be its final outcome, is a great State document, and so replete with suggestions that volumes could be written upon it.' It marvelled that such a document could be brought together, published and discussed at the climax of a World War and contrasted it with what brutal regimes on the Continent had to offer.¹⁵⁴ But in January 1943 it also warned: 'Is it wise ... that an increasing number of people, organisations and other corporate bodies should be diverted to the propounding of social and economic schemes, plans and programmes which, whatever their merit, and whatever their ultimate benefit at the moment but serve as serious distractions from the great task in hand?'¹⁵⁵ The Municipal Progressives also seemed lukewarm but this could not be said of Labour. Even prior to publication the Trades Council told its secretary to buy thirty-six copies of the Report.¹⁵⁶ Sheffield Fabians in January 1943 offered to send speakers to local organisations wishing to discuss it.¹⁵⁷ A special conference was held in January 1943 of the Women's Advisory Council at which Clara Adam of Oxford spoke about social security and the Report,¹⁵⁸ and a major conference was organised for 13 March 1943.¹⁵⁹ In the Commons on 18 February 1943, Cecil Wilson, Fred Marshall and T. W. Burden of Park Division all abstained on the Labour amendment calling for implementation.¹⁶⁰ Wilfred Paling of Wentworth and Tom Williams of Don Valley, both in government posts, voted against. Evelyn Walkden of Doncaster¹⁶¹ and William Dobbie supported it. A special meeting of Rotherham Labour Party on 16 February had resolved to accept it in principle though reserving the right to submit amendments.¹⁶² Dobbie said that it was not Socialism but that it would uplift the working man, thus any attempt to shelve it by the government would be grounds for calling for

an election.¹⁶³

Interest in post-war reconstruction among local Labour parties continued throughout the war. Sterland in 1944 was confident that 'There is no doubt that the present order of society is doomed, and that a new social order must be established.' He called for credit and the essential industries to be in the hands of the community and for production and distribution to be organised on a co-operative basis, for the country's resources to be used in the interests of the many and not the few, and for the creation of a Co-operative Commonwealth that would not be beholden to the strongholds of high finance.¹⁶⁴ The Trade Council's sub-committee on Post-War Reconstruction was making plans and reports which involved much discussion and definite progress was being made, it was claimed.¹⁶⁵

A variety of subjects came before delegate meetings of the Trade Council in 1943 including Ernest Bevin's Catering Wages Bill, education, women in prison, the health services, housing and town planning, British Restaurants, Communist affiliation to the Labour Party, Oswald Mosley, German workers and the regionalisation of local government.¹⁶⁶ On education, the Trades Council was opposed to a system of dual control in schools which allowed children to be religiously indoctrinated by the Church, and called for equality of opportunity to be the basis of new legislation. The leaving age should also be raised to fifteen at the war's end and sixteen within three years.¹⁶⁷ Ecclesall DLP had a resolution accepted which urged that women convicted of crimes be removed from prison before they gave birth because of the stigma children born there would bear for the rest of their lives.¹⁶⁸ The Trades Council felt honoured by Manchester Trades Council's request to send representatives to visit Sheffield's British Restaurants. It welcomed the introduction of communal feeding and hoped the Restaurants would be transferred to the City Council after the war.¹⁶⁹ The Trades Council and the Labour Group both opposed regionalisation of the structure of local government as we saw in Chapter Two.¹⁷⁰ In November 1943 the Trades Council and local Communists called for the re-internment of Oswald Mosley and his wife.¹⁷¹

In May 1943 the Trades Council voted to oppose Communist affiliation to the Labour Party at the Party Conference on the grounds that they were unreliable and unfit to become partners in the great Labour movement.¹⁷² This contrasted with the tribute paid to the Soviet Union on "Red Army Sunday" in February 1943 when Stafford Cripps, Minister of Aircraft Production, spoke in the City Hall.¹⁷³ The 'ceremony was awe-inspiring and was responsible for drawing the largest crowd of people seen in our City over a long period of years.' The Trades Council was represented on the platform.¹⁷⁴ Labour in Rotherham, however, was more forgiving of the British Communists and willing to believe that the liquidation of the Communist International showed their good faith. In the first half of 1943 a great debate opened within Rotherham Labour Party over Communist affiliation. Three Rotherham branches of the AEU had voted in favour by the start of March 1943¹⁷⁵ and, while the Rotherham and District Joint Committee of the steel union repudiated a claim by the local Communist Party that it supported their affiliation,¹⁷⁶ the Holmes Mills Branch later did so.¹⁷⁷ The Yorkshire Mineworkers Association

supported it as did Wentworth and Don Valley DLPs.¹⁷⁸ The local Electrical Trades Union and the Transport and General Workers' Union also supported it. The latter believed that affiliation would be an extra guarantee of working-class interests being considered fully in the post-war world. The Trades Council deferred discussion for a month in February 1943¹⁷⁹ and again in March 1943.¹⁸⁰ Finally, in April 1943 it supported affiliation by a margin of three votes, with eight delegates abstaining. It was a decision condemned by the Advertiser.¹⁸¹ Doncaster DLP, on the other hand, was against Communist affiliation.¹⁸² It was more interested in securing as a 'vital necessity' the purchase of the Doncaster Trades' and Friendly Societies' Club 'as a permanent home for the Labour and Trade Union Movement'.¹⁸³

In 1944 a similar variety of subjects was debated by the delegates to Sheffield Trades Council to 1943.¹⁸⁴ These included Regulation 18B, Sunday opening of cinemas¹⁸⁵, a proposal that Labour councillors should retire at 65, a proposal that the Daily Worker should be allowed foreign correspondents, Aid to Russia, that a limited liability company be formed to run Sheffield Forward, the Trades Disputes Act 1927 and Regulation 1AA, education again, environmental protection (they opposed outcrop coal mining in Bowden Housestead Wood which was the only 'green lung' available to the people of the East End of Sheffield¹⁸⁶), Indian self-government¹⁸⁷, the situation in Greece¹⁸⁸, post-war Germany,¹⁸⁹ maternity and child welfare and the medical services more generally.¹⁹⁰

The period between the end of 1944 and July 1945 was marked in Sheffield by preparations for the general election by local Labour, and by calls from the Trades Council that serious steps be taken for planning the transition from war to peace.¹⁹¹ Len Williams of the Yorkshire Regional Council told members of Hallam DLP in January 1945 that only five of the fifty-one constituencies covered by it had not selected parliamentary candidates. This included Hallam. He stressed the importance of fighting even seats that were hopeless for Labour for they would keep opposition workers tied to their own constituencies and not allow them to get involved in contests in strong Labour seats.¹⁹² Hallam called for the Trades Council to set up a Central Election Committee with representatives from each Ward and Division to plan for the General and Municipal Elections on a joint basis over the whole City. There should be a Central Office with a full-time Secretary who would advise on correspondence, speakers and meetings, and a Central Pool of Finance created by subscriptions from each DLP based on membership which would help the weaker Divisions.¹⁹³ It rebuffed Communist calls for discussions on electoral unity¹⁹⁴ but ultimately Communist intervention may have cost Labour the seat. A candidate for Hallam was finally chosen on 28 May 1945¹⁹⁵ and an Agent formally appointed on 11 June 1945.¹⁹⁶

In Rotherham, the Trades and Labour Council in marked contrast to Hallam DLP continued to show sympathy with the Communist Party as it had in the campaign for Communist affiliation. In December 1944, it carried a resolution that it was 'in favour of the Communist Party's suggestion, that progressive Party's [sic] with similar programmes should co-operate to ensure that progressive candidates are returned at the coming General Election.'¹⁹⁷ This was rescinded at the next meeting but the President's

remarks clearly showed him to be sympathetic to the Communist standpoint. He said that he saw nothing in the principle of the resolution to which the meeting could not agree.¹⁹⁸ The potential embarrassment for Labour in its attempts to take on the Tories if it had united with the CPGB was apparent in the fact that the latter by 1944-5 had dropped class politics and was calling for a continuing alliance with progressive capitalists at the behest of Stalin who wanted a long-term accommodation with the Western Allies.¹⁹⁹ A proposal to appoint a full-time Election Agent for Rotherham was agreed on 24 April 1945. Councillor G. A. Brown, the Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, was appointed. Alderman Dobbie was re-nominated as the prospective parliamentary candidate.²⁰⁰

4.4 - THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1945

The following Tables look at the results in terms of turnout of voters in 1935 and 1945 and votes cast both numerically and as a percentage for the various Parties both in terms of the total electorate and the number of electors who actually voted based on the thirteen constituencies which make up South Yorkshire.²⁰¹ Appendix 2 gives further tables of election statistics including the swing to Labour in each constituency from the Conservatives since 1935 which is calculated by finding the average of the percentage Labour gain over 1935 and the percentage Conservative loss added together. The following section attempts to explain Labour's success in South Yorkshire in 1945 where it gained a seat from the Conservatives to make eleven out of the thirteen. It also increased its actual vote by 52,536 over 1935 and took 9.16 per cent more of the potential vote than in 1935. The percentage of actual votes increased by 4.74 per cent on an 8.85 per cent higher turnout, despite the electoral register containing 20,121 less voters, and despite Labour contesting one less seat. In South Yorkshire as a whole there was a swing to Labour since 1935 of 10.84 per cent and a swing to Labour in Sheffield of 13.73 per cent. The latter swing is better than the national figure of 12 per cent but across the country there were wide variations. Leeds, for example, did better with a swing of 17.5 per cent and the West Riding as a whole had a swing of 12 per cent. Glasgow had a swing of just 2.5 per cent while Birmingham's swing was as much as 23 per cent.²⁰² Individual constituencies show a great deal of variety in their percentage swings, from Wentworth with just a 1.5 per cent swing to Sheffield Attercliffe with a swing of 18.6 per cent.

Table A - Potential Electorate, Actual Voters and % Turnout over South Yorkshire

	1935	1935 %	1945	1945 %
Total Potential Voters	688,962	100	668,841	100
Total Actual Voters	510,862	74.15	555,365	83

Table B - Total Votes Cast and % of Total Potential Electorate

	1935 Votes	1935 %	1945 Votes	1945 %
Labour Party	300,721	43.64	353,257	52.8
Conservative Party	178,160	25.86	139,483	20.85
National Liberal	31,981	4.6	38,207	5.7
Common Wealth	-----	-----	12,045	1.8
Communist	-----	-----	6,368	0.95
Liberal	-----	-----	6,005	0.898

Table C - % of Actual Votes Cast

	1935 %	1945 %
Labour Party	58.86	63.6
Conservative Party	34.87	25.1
National Liberal	6.2	6.87
Common Wealth	-----	2.16
Communist	-----	1.14
Liberal	-----	1.08

According to a recent account the foundation of Labour's electoral triumph in 1945 was the hope among working-class and middle-class people alike that Labour's support for welfare reform was not disingenuous, and that by implementing the Beveridge Report and dealing with the acute housing shortage, it would prevent any return to pre-war poverty and insecurity. It was successful not because of its desire to ultimately build a 'Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain' or because it advocated nationalisation but because the example of the Second World War showed that the Conservatives, while concerned to win the war under Churchill, were a party of obstruction in domestic policy.²⁰³ The Parliamentary Labour Party's rebellion against the Government over the Beveridge Report had shown that, as Herbert Tracey wrote in 1948, it was 'proved once again that the "condition of the people" question was still the fundamental dividing issue between the Labour Party and the other Parties.'²⁰⁴ This view is partly accepted by Howell but he is also sympathetic to the argument that the electorate was not just apathetic or cynical about the 'Brave New World' often promised during the war but actually enthusiastic. He uses the phrase 'bread and butter plus a dream' to characterise the wishes of the electorate in 1945. To Socialists and many ordinary voters the creation of an alternative social order did not seem a Utopian pipedream as it might seem today.²⁰⁵ We have also seen in this chapter the great enthusiasm for Soviet Russia among both local Socialists and the less politically inclined. This might have materially assisted the reception of Labour doctrines like nationalisation among local people given the apparent efficiency of a centrally planned socialist economy in winning Russia's war and its similarity to the wartime economy of Britain. Thus the prospect of an alternative socialist order appeared more credible and materially contributed to Labour's victory in 1945. Harold Nicolson had lamented in 1942 'how sad it is that the British public are wholly unaware of the true state of Russia, and imagine that it is some workers' Utopia.'²⁰⁶

We saw in an Chapter Three that over housing and town planning the Coalition Government was criticised for procrastination and red tape. It did appear likely that under a Labour Government the apparent obstacles that prevented local authorities being able to make faster progress would be overcome. As we have seen the situation was desperate. The White Papers produced by the Coalition on issues like housing or town planning were not evidence of a wartime elite consensus based on social democratic nostrums. They were merely convenient bandages to plaster over issues on which there was fundamental disagreement between the parties. They were a classic fudge when visible public disagreement would have greatly damaged the Coalition while it concentrated on winning the war.²⁰⁷ Jefferys argues that despite this, 'The balance of coalition forces produced in effect [however] a series of compromises tilted towards Conservative orthodoxy.'²⁰⁸ Conservatives were confident they would win in 1945. It was only the profound shock of defeat that forced them to fundamentally reassess their social policy.²⁰⁹

Herbert Tracey writing in 1948 describes the Churchill Government as 'not founded upon a coalition of Parties: it was a Government of National Union, and the Parties upon whose support it depended were in a curious way at once its friends and its critics',²¹⁰ but some historians are sceptical of any sort of wartime consensus, whether elite or otherwise.²¹¹ According to Tracey, Churchill's "Four-Year Plan" of post-war reconstruction put forward in 1943 was not the programme upon which he fought the election, and that in the end Churchill had abandoned his leadership of a united nation in favour of being Leader of the Conservative Party.²¹² Of course his supporters in South Yorkshire denied that. They described themselves as 'National' or 'Government' candidates because Churchill had made himself the head, with no argument, of a 'Caretaker Government' once Labour resigned office.

Historians of the inter-war years have made much of the uneven development of Britain in the 1930s, and in reaction to the myth of the "Hungry Thirties" have emphasised those areas, in the South-East and Midlands which boomed during the period, directly encouraged by the policies of the National Government. They also argue that the quality and quantity of life actually improved for the majority of families particularly those in employment.²¹³ In South Yorkshire, the 'National' candidates would be unwise to describe themselves by that label. Unemployment in the Thirties in Sheffield had reached a peak of 58,100 people in 1932²¹⁴ and a record figure of 14,419 people in Rotherham in March 1931. The population of Rotherham in 1931 was 69,691 persons, so roughly 21 per cent of the population was out of work, or one in five.²¹⁵ In Sheffield in 1931 there was a population of 511,757 people, so at its peak unemployment affected just over 11 per cent of the population. Churchill's followers believed, or professed to believe, that 1945 would be another 1931. But it was also believed, wrongly as it turned out, that once peace returned, Britain would again experience a slump and mass unemployment. In 1945 the fear of 'betrayal' in the past had its effects on the popular psyche. Howell, however, has argued that because British voters did not flock to elect Labour in 1935 just after the depths of the depression had been reached, the idea of 'betrayal' contained in the phrase 'never again' had a curiously belated impact

in 1945. This ignores the fact that voters in 1935 did not believe, and Baldwin encouraged this belief, that anything could actually be done to solve unemployment by government means and that the economy must find its natural equilibrium level of employment.²¹⁶ In South Yorkshire, however, with the exception of Sheffield Central, Labour did win in 1935 all the constituencies it was to win in 1945.

In mining areas, like South Yorkshire, nationalisation of the coal industry did have a genuine appeal after the harsh experience of the inter-war years, and it had been a demand made by the miners of the Labour Party for many years. The Yorkshire coal strikes in 1944 also gave a contemporary edge to miners' feelings, embittered locally in 1921 and 1926. Churchill could be held personally responsible for vetoing nationalisation of the industry during the war. Steel nationalisation may have had less appeal but in the three constituencies where steel workers were predominant - Rotherham, Attercliffe and Brightside - there was little sign of rebellion against Labour in 1945, or indeed in 1950 when the Conservatives campaigned even harder against steel nationalisation. In fact after Parliament resumed in 1950 the Labour MP for Attercliffe, John Hynd, disputed that the Conservative MPs for Hallam and Heeley had any right to say they represented steelworkers views on nationalisation even if they were Sheffield MPs, and said that the election had been a referendum on the Iron and Steel Act in the three constituencies.²¹⁷ The Times of 23 June 1945 said that Labour's nationalisation plans in Sheffield were being received 'with interest if not enthusiasm' and optimistically noted that:

The suggestion has been made at some of the Conservative meetings that private enterprise should be given a chance of showing how it has learned the lessons which war-time enterprise has provided. The workers as well as the masters know the advances made, and it will take more than vain repetitions of the cry of nationalization to convince them that a change of system is essential and inevitable.²¹⁸

On 18 June 1945 the Sheffield Telegraph noted that: 'Few areas in the country can provide a more intriguing General Election set-up than Sheffield and the big industrial and agricultural areas surrounding it. To the keen student of political affairs the situation in the Sheffield region - covering large parts of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Notts., and Lincs. - teems with interesting and often piquant possibilities.' In Sheffield four out of five workers were involved in some way with the steel industry and her future prosperity depended on having people who understood her basic industries at Westminster and who would "talk Sheffield" in season or out.' Unless the 'wartime shackles' were thrown off there was 'weighty evidence that if we aren't quick off the mark we shall lose both old and new markets which mean millions in trade for Sheffield.' Housing and pensions were also 'vital subjects affecting the welfare of scores of thousands of Sheffield people.' It noted that servicemen were prominent as candidates throughout the region with at least one service candidate in each division.²¹⁹ Appendix 2 gives the General Election results in 1945 while Appendix 3 gives details of all the candidates so far as they can be gleaned from newspapers and other sources.

The Times noted that: 'In the Hillsborough division there is something piquant in the challenge to the former "ruler of the King's Navee" [Labour's Albert Victor Alexander, previously First Lord of the Admiralty] from a naval lieutenant [Robert Hampdon Hobart, the one Liberal National candidate in Sheffield]. It is one of the products of that British democracy that the foreigner will never understand.' It went on: 'Mr. Alexander's majority was 3,304, which is not too many in an area where there are many private traders and when there is this talk of nationalization.'²²⁰ In fact Alexander's majority rose to 10,556 and he took over 63 per cent of all votes cast, despite his Divisional Labour Party's low minimum individual membership and its arrears in subscriptions to Head Office. But Alexander was the foremost figure in the Co-operative Party in the country and had the advantage of the services of the one full-time agent who had worked throughout the war in Sheffield. He was Albert Ballard, who became a city councillor in 1942 and was originally a railway footplateman.²²¹ There were 145,000 Co-operative members in Sheffield for whom the legendary 'divi' would be a powerful incentive to vote Labour.²²² Alexander called for iron and steel nationalization because,

The cost of iron and steel has risen to almost double that of peace time and we are not going to compete in the world market unless the situation can be improved. The steel industry has reached a point where it cannot operate successfully without amalgamating to a great extent. We would rather have public control than control by a monopoly.²²³

Alexander was not exactly a constituency MP in the modern sense. In fact Hattersley describes him as an 'absentee member' but he was an impressive personage who saw his job not as representing Westminster to his electors but his electors to Westminster.²²⁴ Hobart, like other service candidates standing in Sheffield, had been wounded in action. He lost the sight in one eye in Italy. He said that while foreign policy was his real *forte* his main domestic interest was housing and he was a member of the Town and Country Planning Association.²²⁵

Sheffield Ecclesall was a three-sided contest in which Labour did not field a candidate. It had always been a Conservative stronghold and the victor was Sheffield-born Major Peter Roberts, the barrister son of Sir Samuel Roberts, Bt., a previous Conservative MP for the seat. Roberts was a director of Wombwell Main Colliery and of the Barnsley District Coking Company so he had a vested interest in opposing coal nationalisation. He also had a two thousand acre farm in Norfolk.²²⁶ All the candidates in Ecclesall were servicemen. Lieutenant Sydney Checkland was the sole Common Wealth Party candidate in South Yorkshire and argued in a pamphlet that anyone who would otherwise have voted Labour 'should make sure he or she votes for Checkland.' This led Roberts to describe the statement as 'politically dishonest' since Labour had repudiated Common Wealth in 1943 and membership was incompatible with that of the Labour Party.²²⁷ Checkland was a Canadian who came to Britain to study economics at Birmingham University where he gained a BCom degree with first-class honours in 1941. Between 1957 and 1982 he was to be the first Professor of Economic History at Glasgow University. He

was severely wounded in Normandy.²²⁸

The Common Wealth belief in Christian socialism and service to the community without thought for self was tailored to appeal to the idealism of public sector professional middle-class people who lived in the Division - the appeal had less resonance with the working classes who tended to be cynical about the real aims of middle-class people such as Common Wealth leader, Richard Acland, who admitted that he talked 'like a parson'.²²⁹ Lieutenant-Colonel P. R. Nightingale was the 48 year old Liberal candidate who had been invalided out of the Forces with a tropical skin disease. He had served in World War One and been mentioned in despatches. In the Second War he was at Dunkirk and in the Western Desert and commanded Indian troops in Burma. He owned a catering firm.²³⁰ Roberts achieved a majority of 6,075 votes over Checkland but the latter had a moral victory taking almost 36 per cent of the total votes cast.

Hallam Division saw South Yorkshire's only four-way contest. The victor was the sitting Conservative, Roland Jennings, a chartered accountant from County Durham, who had first won the seat in a by-election in 1939. Jennings had been wounded in World War One.²³¹ Hallam had a swing to Labour from 1935 of over 16 per cent but it was not possible for Squadron Leader J. F. Drabble, the Labour candidate, to dislodge him. The latter worked in Sheffield before the war as a barrister. He served in Africa and Italy.²³² Drabble got 38.5 per cent of the vote. Gerald Abrahams, a Liberal barrister, got 7.7 per cent of the vote. Lieutenant Gordon H. Cree, the Communist, got 6.7 per cent which probably cost Drabble the seat. The Hallam branch of Common Wealth had instructed its members to vote Labour.²³³

It was said to be a blow to the Conservatives that Sir William Whytehead Boulton had decided not to contest his seat²³⁴ due to ill health, but his majority in Sheffield Central had been a wafer-thin 420 votes. Slum clearance and Blitz damage had halved the electorate from 36,709 voters to 18,666 and Labour took it with a majority of 2,473 in a straight fight. This was despite Conservative attempts to organise the votes of the 1,654 business voters on their behalf.²³⁵ Central had the largest number of such voters in the City. Sheffield Park came next but with just 282 such voters.²³⁶ The successful Labour candidate was a fifty-one year old Jewish barrister, Harry Morris, born in Sheffield, who had been a Lieutenant-Colonel in the army.²³⁷ He had previously been a city councillor for Brightside.²³⁸ His election address asked voters to learn from the bad experiences of the inter-war years and vote Labour.²³⁹ The losing Conservative candidate was forty year old Sheffield-born solicitor, Lieutenant-Colonel George Vivian Hunt. He had done much local philanthropic work and was well known in the political life of the Hope Valley in Derbyshire. He had received the OBE for services in Tunisia while in the army and took part in the invasions of Sicily and Italy. He said he was 'wholeheartedly in favour of Mr Churchill, of a rising standard of living, and of homes for all.'²⁴⁰

The other three Sheffield Parliamentary constituencies - Attercliffe, Brightside and Park - all elected Labour Members just as they had in 1935. In Attercliffe, John Hynd won 81.4 per cent of votes cast, a majority of 18,092. It was greater victory for him than his results in the elections of 1950 or 1951 and

probably reflected an increase in left-wing popular attitudes among the Attercliffe working classes due to the revolution of expectations caused by the war. John's brother Harry was also elected in 1945 for Hackney Central.²⁴¹ Both had originally been railway clerks though they became officials of different unions. John was in the National Union of Railwaymen and both were originally from Perth.²⁴² He was notable for his sympathetic attitude to the Germans and for his attempts to prevent, despite the triumph of 'Socialist Vansittartism' within the Labour Party during the war,²⁴³ ordinary Germans being tarred with the same brush as the Nazis for the latter's crimes.²⁴⁴ The recognition of these sympathies led him to being given the post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for German and Austrian Affairs in 1945, a position he kept until April 1947²⁴⁵ despite repeated criticism for being too pro-German.²⁴⁶ In December 1947, he became vice-chairman of the Europe Group of the Parliamentary Labour Party.²⁴⁷ His Conservative opponent was another service candidate. Group Captain Brian Paddon had served in Bomber Command and had been a prisoner-of-war.

Fred Marshall, whom we met in Chapter Three, was re-elected in 1945 for Brightside with 61.2 per cent of the vote in a three-way contest with Lieutenant-Colonel H. Brian Taylor, the Conservative candidate, who got 25.8 percent of the vote, and Howard Hill, the Communist candidate, with 13 per cent. Taylor was a forty-one year old barrister who had served on the headquarters staff of the United States and British Planning Staff in Germany.²⁴⁸ Hill was a former electrician and city councillor for Brightside whom we also met in Chapter Three. He had been elected originally as a Labour councillor but had been expelled from Brightside Labour Party in 1940 for refusing to support national Labour Party policy.²⁴⁹ Finally, Park Division was won for Labour by Thomas William Burden, a sixty-year old East Ham Alderman,²⁵⁰ with 64.9 per cent of the vote and a majority of 13,542 over Wing Commander Geoffrey Stevens, the Conservative candidate and a chartered accountant.²⁵¹ Burden was a Christian socialist. He was a Member of the House of Laity of the Church Assembly after the war and Second Church Estate Commissioner. He had been a railway goods agent educated by the Workers' Educational Association and the London School of Economics.²⁵²

4.5 - CONCLUSION

Outside the Conservative strongholds of Hallam and Ecclesall, Labour had the advantage particularly in organisation. The maintenance of Labour's organisation in wartime despite a supposed 'political truce' was also given as an explanation by Conservatives for their national defeat in 1945, an explanation accepted by Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo, who yet point out that the biggest flaw in this claim is that the majority of voters had decided how they would vote before the election. Labour's superior organisation probably just meant that potential Labour voters were more likely to turn out and vote than Conservatives.²⁵³ This thus has some relevance in explaining the South Yorkshire results, even though full-time Labour Agents had been rare during the war years, because in a largely working-class population there were likely to be more Labour voters than Conservative. In the first two years of the war in Yorkshire the number of Labour Agents had dropped from thirty-three to eleven.²⁵⁴ The war

economy had given the trade unions a major role - as Table 1.8 in the appendices shows, the affiliated membership and organisations of Doncaster DLP increased dramatically during the war from a low point in 1940, following a similar trend to the individual membership. Similar evidence comes from the 1946 Annual Report of Sheffield Trades and Labour Council which noted that since 1938 they had added more than 50 new affiliated societies to their register and the figure had now reached 174. It also reported that there had been a 100 per cent increase over 1936's figure in the finances of the Trades Council. It noted that 'In strength and prestige we have grown from the ordinary to the extraordinary and now take our rightful place among the influential public bodies of our City.'²⁵⁵

Labour also had highly respected local leaders who were national figures, like Albert Victor Alexander of Hillsborough, a jingoistic First Lord of the Admiralty and Churchill fan who, according to his biographer, was the war premier's favourite socialist,²⁵⁶ or Tom Williams of Don Valley, who became Attlee's Minister of Agriculture.²⁵⁷ These men could not easily be caricatured by Conservatives as bloodthirsty revolutionaries or as in any sense unpatriotic. They embodied local patriotism and civic spirit. The Conservatives also claimed that the media were against them in 1945²⁵⁸ but in Sheffield the Telegraph was recognised by Labour Party members as the inspiration of the entire Conservative effort in the city. Viscount Kemsley, chairman of The Sheffield Telegraph and Star, Limited, had more of an *entree* into Sheffielders' homes than Sheffield Forward but they did not take the advice of the Editors' of either of his two Sheffield newspapers.

The efforts of Labour to provide credible proposals for post-war reconstruction in South Yorkshire, including housing, town planning, improved medical services, and to call for a diversified modern economy locally, plus the help Labour MPs and parties provided for those who needed it when faced by wartime disruption, all added to Labour's image as a 'safe' progressive party. In the light of the anti-party popular mood of wartime chronicled by Fielding, it also (unlike the Conservatives) appeared above 'party' in its support for social reforms that the people wanted.²⁵⁹ According to Fielding, Labour deliberately presented itself rhetorically as the 'People's Party' rather than simply a party of the working class in order to cement a coalition of the middle and working classes in 1945.²⁶⁰ The tribal appeal to social class, if not to class war, however, in a mainly working-class areas of South Yorkshire did have a major effect producing a significant rise in numbers voting for Labour even in seats which had always been solidly supportive. Communism was less successful perhaps because of its belief in class conflict. Its popular image was marked by political somersaults as it sought to follow the Soviet Union's ideological line and its emphasis on war production at all costs actually made it less attractive to war weary Britons by 1945. This chapter shows that characterisations of Labour in South Yorkshire during the war as a mere puppet of Transport House cannot be sustained. Friendships made in the masculine atmosphere of the engineering workshop, steel mill or pit created a solidarity that grew from experience of hellish working conditions and the squalid poverty of everyday life lived in the slums of Sheffield's East End. It grew from the simplified class antagonisms of colliery communities which had to create almost everything that makes life bearable by their own effort. All suffered in the world of the 1930s and

1940s from a paucity of opportunities to markedly alter their everyday lives for the better but political mobilisation through the Labour Party offered at least some hope of transcendence. Joe Ashton's account of childhood in wartime Attercliffe (though exaggerated for comic effect) gives the flavour of that world. His home stood

across the street from Jonas and Colver's steelworks and literally 20 yards from a drop-hammer which went crash,bang, wallop 24-hours a day. The row of outside lavs in the yard had not worked since 1899, and all of us walked to the next street to use grandma's. There were at least a thousand cockroaches and maybe a hundred crickets (we never counted the bugs) infecting every house, breeding in the heat, soot, sparks and smoke from the forge.²⁶¹

In such conditions one can see the appeal of 'bread and butter plus a dream'.

- ¹ HARVIE, Christopher. 'Labour in Scotland during the Second World War'. Historical Journal, 26, 4, 1983, p922.
- ² WILLIAMS, Chris. 'Introduction' in TANNER, Duncan, WILLIAMS, Chris and HOPKIN, Deian (eds) The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000. University of Wales Press, 2000, p13.
- ³ HARVIE, C. 1983, p922.
- ⁴ BOTTOMORE, Tom. Political Sociology. Pluto Press, 1993, p16-7.
- ⁵ See the full page advert in the Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council 8th Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for 1949, p107 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section) for the National Council of Labour Colleges.
- ⁶ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1943, p7 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁷ On working-class leisure and socialists, see MCKIBBIN, Ross. 'Working-Class Gambling in Britain, 1880-1939' in his The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950. Oxford University Press, 1991, p136 which notes 'a cross-class alliance' between the leaders of the labour movement (and many rank and file), sections of the administrative-professional middle classes and the Protestant Churches to attack popular betting. A similar alliance was formed against drink. See pp124-5.
- ⁸ FIELDING, Steven, THOMPSON, Peter and TIRATSOO, Nick. "England Arise !" The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain. Manchester University Press, 1995, pp182-3.
- ⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 28/04/1951, p1.
- ¹⁰ See BEER, Samuel H. Modern British Politics: A Study of Parties and Pressure Groups. Faber and Faber, 1969, Ch. III.
- ¹¹ BRANSON, Noreen. History of the Communist Party of Great Britain 1941-1951. Lawrence and Wishart, 1997, p16.
- ¹² RAMSDEN, John. An Appetite for Power: A History of the Conservative Party Since 1830. HarperCollins, 1999, p348.
- ¹³ DAVIES, Andrew John. We, The Nation: The Conservative Party and the Pursuit of Power. Abacus, 1996, p149.
- ¹⁴ WEINBREN, Daniel. Generating Socialism: Recollections of Life in the Labour Party. Sutton Publishing, 1997, p57.
- ¹⁵ Sheffield Forward, January 1946, No. 80, Vol. 6, p2.
- ¹⁶ WEINBREN, D., 1997, p7.
- ¹⁷ BALE, Tim. 'Crimes and Misdemeanours: Managing Dissent in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Labour Party' in BRIVATI, Brian and HEFFERNAN, Richard (eds) The Labour Party: A Centenary History. Macmillan, 2000, p272.
- ¹⁸ The 'Proscribed List' existed between 1930 and 1973. See BRANSON, Noreen and MOORE, Bill. 'Labour-Communist Relations, 1920-1951. Part I: 1920-1935', Our History pamphlet 82, Communist Party History Group, July 1990, pp71-2 for a useful Appendix compiled from Labour Party Annual Reports giving a list of these organisations and when first proscribed. Before the Second World War 19 were proscribed - mainly between 1930 and 1934. During the Second World War 12 more were proscribed making 31 in all - all between 1940 and 1943. Between 1945 and 1951 there were 14 more proscribed organisations (45) and between 1952 and 1954 at the height of the Cold War as many as 22 more (67). Between then and 1973 only 3 were added to the List.
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- ²⁰ ADDISON, Paul. The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War. Pimlico, 1994, p142.
- ²¹ TANNER, Duncan. 'Labour and its Membership' in TANNER, Duncan, THANE, Pat and TIRATSOO, Nick (eds) Labour's First Century. Cambridge University Press, 2000, p250.
- ²² Labour Party Annual Conference Reports 1940-45 (Labour Party Archive).
- ²³ Doncaster Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (DS7/2/8) (Doncaster Archives).
- ²⁴ Executive Committee Meeting 02/04/1941, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁵ HARRIS, Carol. Women at War 1939-1945: The Home Front. Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2000, p7.
- ²⁶ Labour Organiser, January 1940, p3.
- ²⁷ Management Committee Meeting 10/12/1945, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁸ Star 02/11/1945, p4.
- ²⁹ HINTON, James. 'Coventry Communism: A Study of Factory Politics in the Second World War', History Workshop Journal, No. 10, Autumn 1980, p105.
- ³⁰ FIELDING, Steven. 'The Second World War and Popular Radicalism: The Significance of the 'Movement Away from Party'', History, Vol. 80, No. 258, February 1995, p57.

- ³¹ Quoted in HARVIE, C. 1983, p924.
- ³² See GRAYSON, John. Solid Labour: A Short History of the Yorkshire Regional Council of the Labour Party 1941-1991. Yorkshire Regional Council of the Labour Party, July 1991, p5.
- ³³ Executive Committee Meeting 08/06/1942 - Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book 1941-1951 (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ³⁴ Quoted in FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, p8.
- ³⁵ BAGWELL, Philip S. Doncaster Town of Train Makers 1853-1990. Doncaster Books, 1991, p63.
- ³⁶ For Creighton, see South Yorkshire Times 23/02/1946, p17.
- ³⁷ For Ball, see Rotherham and District Annual 1940 and Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council 12th Annual Yearbook 1953/54, p47 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section).
- ³⁸ For example, see article in Railway Review 11/01/1946, p1 which calls not just for a union representative on the Board of the nationalised industry but for workers to have an equal share in the management of the industry and to have training in management.
- ³⁹ SHANE, T. N. 'James Walker' in TRACEY, Herbert (ed) The British Labour Party, Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders: Volume III. The Caxton Publishing Company Ltd., October 1948, p301.
- ⁴⁰ PUGH, Arthur. Men of Steel. The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, 1951, p538.
- ⁴¹ BROOKE, Stephen. Labour's War. The Labour Party during the Second World War. Clarendon Press, 1992, p93.
- ⁴² BURRIDGE, Trevor. British Labour and Hitler's War. Andre Deutsch, 1976, p57.
- ⁴³ Though see FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N., 1995, p14 where they present a passage from HILTON, J., English Ways, 1940, p31 describing a peace procession in Sheffield in 1939 which they say illustrates popular apathy. Pacifism in Sheffield has been extensively chronicled in STEVENSON, David Anthony. 'The Sheffield Peace Movement 1934-1940', Ph.D, Sheffield Hallam University, 2001.
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- ⁴⁵ For Ponsonby, see JONES, Raymond A. Arthur Ponsonby: The Politics of Life. Christopher Helm, 1989.
- ⁴⁶ For McGhee, see MARTIN, David E. in BELLAMY, J. and SAVILLE, J. 1972, p229-230, and Addition to BELLAMY Joyce and SAVILLE, John (eds) Dictionary of Labour Biography: Volume VI. Macmillan, 1982, pxxvii.
- ⁴⁷ JONES, R. A., 1989, p229.
- ⁴⁸ New Leader 13/10/1939, p1.
- ⁴⁹ New Leader 01/09/1939, p4.
- ⁵⁰ New Leader 08/09/1939, p1.
- ⁵¹ New Leader 15/09/1939, p3.
- ⁵² The Clackmannan by-election - see New Leader 13/10/1939, p1 - and the East Renfrew by-election - see New Leader 11/04/1940, p1.
- ⁵³ National Executive Committee - Organisation Sub-Committee Minutes 20/12/1939 (Labour Party Archive).
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- ⁵⁵ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1939/40, p13 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁵⁶ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 18/03/1940, p6. See also Sheffield Telegraph Year Book 1945.
- ⁵⁷ Rotherham Advertiser 27/07/1940, p11.
- ⁵⁸ CALDER, Angus. The People's War: Britain 1939-1945. Pimlico, 1992, p496.
- ⁵⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 06/02/1946, p3.
- ⁶⁰ Labour Organiser 20:221, January 1940, p1.
- ⁶¹ THORPE, Andrew. 'The Consolidation of a Labour Stronghold 1926-1951' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p109.
- ⁶² THORPE, A. 1993, p110.
- ⁶³ Star 02/11/1945 (Fri), p4.
- ⁶⁴ Labour Organiser 20:221, January 1940, p3.
- ⁶⁵ 23rd Annual Report and Balance Sheet 1940 - Doncaster Divisional Labour Party (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁶⁶ Labour Organiser 20:221, January 1940, p3.
- ⁶⁷ Doncaster Chronicle 15/02/1940, p12.
- ⁶⁸ Doncaster Gazette 01/05/1941, p4.

- ⁶⁹ Doncaster Chronicle 05/12/1940.
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- ⁷¹ 23rd Annual Report and Balance Sheet 1940 - Doncaster Divisional Labour Party (Sheffield Archives).
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- ⁷³ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 06/01/1942, p3.
- ⁷⁴ THORPE, A. 1993, p110.
- ⁷⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 14/06/1945, p3.
- ⁷⁶ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 23/02/1942, p3.
- ⁷⁷ Management Committee Meeting 12/11/1939, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD 1564/2).
- ⁷⁸ Rotherham Advertiser 01/06/1940, p10.
- ⁷⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 27/04/1940, p4.
- ⁸⁰ New Leader 24/11/1939, p4.
- ⁸¹ New Leader 14/03/1940, p1.
- ⁸² Labour Organiser 20:219, September/October 1939, p168.
- ⁸³ ANON. Commemorative Brochure to Celebrate Sheffield Information Service 50th Anniversary. Sheffield Information Services, June 1996.
- ⁸⁴ Star 06/03/2003, p15.
- ⁸⁵ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1939/40, p18 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁸⁶ Management Committee Meeting 12/01/1941, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁸⁷ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1939/40, p13 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁸⁸ Labour Organiser 20:220, November/December 1939, p179.
- ⁸⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 28/10/1939, p4.
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- ⁹¹ Rotherham Advertiser 15/08/1942, p8.
- ⁹² Rotherham Advertiser 02/05/1942, p5.
- ⁹³ Rotherham Advertiser 28/11/1942, p10.
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- ⁹⁹ FISHMAN, N. 1995, p282.
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- ¹⁰¹ CALDER, A. 1992, p75.
- ¹⁰² BRANSON, Noreen and MOORE, Bill. 'Labour-Communist Relations, 1920-1951. Part II: 1935-1945', Our History pamphlet 83, Communist Party History Group, March 1991, p11.
- ¹⁰³ CALDER, A. 1992, pp244-5.
- ¹⁰⁴ CALLAGHAN, John. Rajani Palme Dutt: A Study in British Stalinism. Lawrence and Wishart, 1993, p194.
- ¹⁰⁵ CALDER, A. 1992, p246.
- ¹⁰⁶ Picture Post 01/02/1941, p31, 34.
- ¹⁰⁷ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council - Report of Enquiry held 26/02/1940 and 27/02/1940 (MSS. 292/79s/16) (Modern Records Centre).
- ¹⁰⁸ Letter from R.T. Windle to E.P. Harries (MSS. 292/79s/16) (Modern Records Centre).
- ¹⁰⁹ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 24/04/1940.
- ¹¹⁰ 1940 Trades Union Congress Annual Report, p108.
- ¹¹¹ 1941 Trades Union Congress Annual Report, p104.
- ¹¹² New Leader 15/02/1941, p5.
- ¹¹³ CALDER, A. 1992, p86.

- ¹¹⁴ A position still taken by Branson and Moore in 1991. See BRANSON, N. and MOORE, B. March 1991, p11
- ¹¹⁵ For this campaign, see BRANSON, Noreen. History of the Communist Party of Great Britain 1941-1951. Lawrence and Wishart, 1997, pp9-12.
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- ¹¹⁷ The John Mason Defence Committee. A Brief Outline of the Life of John Mason. Venables Ltd., 1940. See also New Propellor, September 1940, p1.
- ¹¹⁸ South Yorkshire Times 26/10/1940, p9.
- ¹¹⁹ South Yorkshire Times 28/09/1940, p5.
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- ¹²¹ New Propellor, September 1940, p1.
- ¹²² FROW, Edmund and Ruth. Engineering Struggles: Episodes in the Story of the Shop Stewards' Movement. Working Class Movement Library, 1982, p152.
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- ¹²⁵ Rotherham Advertiser 04/10/1941, p6.
- ¹²⁶ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 27/10/1941, p3.
- ¹²⁷ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 01/12/1941, p3.
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- ¹³⁰ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1943, p7 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹³¹ Executive Committee Meeting 29/10/1941, Doncaster Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (DS7/2/7) (Doncaster Archives).
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- ¹³⁵ Doncaster Gazette 27/11/1941, p4.
- ¹³⁶ Executive Committee Meeting 25/02/1942, Doncaster Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (DS7/2/7) (Doncaster Archives).
- ¹³⁷ Rotherham Advertiser 04/10/1941, p14.
- ¹³⁸ Rotherham Advertiser 18/10/1941, p7.
- ¹³⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 03/01/1942, p3.
- ¹⁴⁰ Rotherham Advertiser 18/04/1942, p11.
- ¹⁴¹ Rotherham Advertiser 24/01/1942, p16.
- ¹⁴² Executive Committee Meeting 09/02/1943, Rotherham Trades and Labour Council Minute Book 1942-1945 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section).
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- ¹⁴⁴ CROWDER, Freda and GREENE, Dorothy. Rotherham. Its History, Church and Chapel on the Bridge. S. R. Publishers Ltd., 1971, p19.
- ¹⁴⁵ ROSS, Kitty and BRANNEN, Tim (eds) Rotherham 1945. A Time to Remember. Rotherham Museum Service, 1995, pp15-16.
- ¹⁴⁶ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1943, p3 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁴⁷ TIMMINS, Nicholas. The Five Giants: A Biography of the Welfare State. Fontana Press, 1996, p37.
- ¹⁴⁸ ADDISON, Paul. The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War. Pimlico, 1994, p248.
- ¹⁴⁹ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp7-14 give reasons why in their opinion Labour was unlikely to win a general election in 1939 or 1940.
- ¹⁵⁰ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 29/04/1940.
- ¹⁵¹ Management Committee Meeting 14/01/1940, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/2) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁵² Management Committee Meeting 13/10/1940, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/2) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁵³ Management Committee Meeting 08/03/1942, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁵⁴ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 05/12/1942, p2.

- ¹⁵⁵ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 22/01/1943, p2.
- ¹⁵⁶ THORPE, A. 1993, ps110-1.
- ¹⁵⁷ Management Committee Meeting 09/01/1943, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁵⁸ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1943, p9 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁵⁹ Management Committee Meeting 14/02/1943, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁶⁰ Sheffield Telegraph and Independent 19/02/1943, p2.
- ¹⁶¹ Doncaster Chronicle 25/02/1943.
- ¹⁶² Special Meeting 16/02/1943, Rotherham Trades and Labour Council Minute Book 1942-1945 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section). See also Rotherham Advertiser 20/02/1943, p10. These two sources differ. I have used the Minute Book account. The Rotherham Advertiser declares that 80 delegates were present and 12 speakers spoke for an hour and a quarter. The resolution is identical.
- ¹⁶³ Rotherham Advertiser 30/01/1943, p6.
- ¹⁶⁴ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1944, ps4-5 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁶⁵ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1944, p7 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁶⁶ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1944, p6 (A167) (Sheffield Archives). Sheffield Telegraph 30/06/1943, p3 gives some details of a debate over how far the mass of the German people and German workers were culpable in Nazi crimes in the light of the official Labour Party argument that they were responsible. See also Sheffield Telegraph 05/07/1943, p3 and 26/08/1943, p3. The last speculated that the issue would be the main controversy at the Trades Union Congress Annual Congress at Southport.
- ¹⁶⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 28/04/1943, p3.
- ¹⁶⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 29/11/1943, p3.
- ¹⁶⁹ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1944, p6 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁷⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 30/06/1943, p3.
- ¹⁷¹ Sheffield Telegraph 29/11/1943, p3. Cecil Wilson was not sympathetic to Sheffield shop stewards who raised the issue with him, replying that but for their agitation Mosley would have been forgotten and would not have the influence he had - see Sheffield Telegraph 13/12/1943, p3.
- ¹⁷² Sheffield Telegraph 26/05/1943, p3.
- ¹⁷³ His speech was given in Sheffield Telegraph 22/02/1943, p2.
- ¹⁷⁴ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1944, p6 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁷⁵ Rotherham Advertiser 06/03/1943, p10.
- ¹⁷⁶ Rotherham Advertiser 13/02/1943, p9.
- ¹⁷⁷ Rotherham Advertiser 27/02/1943, p10.
- ¹⁷⁸ Rotherham Advertiser 20/03/1943, p12.
- ¹⁷⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 27/02/1943, p10.
- ¹⁸⁰ Rotherham Advertiser 27/03/1943.
- ¹⁸¹ Rotherham Advertiser 01/05/1943, p12,16.
- ¹⁸² General Management Committee Meeting 07/06/1943, Doncaster Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (DS7/2/7) (Doncaster Archives).
- ¹⁸³ General Management Committee Meeting 04/05/1943, Doncaster Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (DS7/2/7) (Doncaster Archives).
- ¹⁸⁴ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1945, p8 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁸⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 28/02/1944, p3.
- ¹⁸⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 26/07/1944, p3.
- ¹⁸⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 01/11/1944, p3.
- ¹⁸⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 20/12/1944, p4.
- ¹⁸⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 29/11/1944, p3.
- ¹⁹⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 30/08/1944, p3.
- ¹⁹¹ Sheffield Telegraph 28/03/1945, p3.
- ¹⁹² Management Committee Meeting 08/01/1945, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁹³ Management Committee Meeting 12/02/1945, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁹⁴ Management Committee Meeting 10/04/1945, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁹⁵ Management Committee Meeting 28/05/1945, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).

- ¹⁹⁶ Management Committee Meeting 11/06/1945, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁹⁷ Delegate Meeting 19/12/1944, Rotherham Trades and Labour Council Minute Book 1942-45 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section).
- ¹⁹⁸ Annual General Meeting 23/01/1945, Rotherham Trades and Labour Council Minute Book 1942-45 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section).
- ¹⁹⁹ HINTON, J. Autumn 1980, p110.
- ²⁰⁰ Delegate Meeting 24/04/1945, Rotherham Trades and Labour Council Minute Book 1942-45 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section).
- ²⁰¹ CRAIG, F.W.S. British Parliamentary Election Results 1918-1949. Political Reference Publications, 1969. I have not included Penistone Division in the calculations, which included large housing estates within the Sheffield City Council boundary, or Hemsworth. It should also be noted that the South Yorkshire Women's Advisory Council of the Labour Party (admittedly as constituted in 1949) only covered eleven of the South Yorkshire constituencies within its ambit (Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council 8th Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for 1949, p55 (Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section)).
- ²⁰² MCCALLUM, R. B. and READMAN, Alison. The British General Election of 1945. Oxford University Press, 1947, pp293-5.
- ²⁰³ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp67-8.
- ²⁰⁴ TRACEY, Herbert (ed) The British Labour Party. Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders: Volume I. Caxton Publishing Company Ltd, October 1948, p204.
- ²⁰⁵ HOWELL, David. British Social Democracy. Croom Helm, 1980, p132.
- ²⁰⁶ NICOLSON, Harold. Diaries and Letters 1939-45. William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd., 1968, p250. See also MCKIBBIN, Ross. Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951. Oxford University Press, 2000, pp532-3 and ADDISON, P. 1994, pp140-1 on the Soviet Union's popularity and its contribution to radical attitudes in wartime Britain and Labour's victory.
- ²⁰⁷ See COX, Andrew. Adversary Politics and Land: The Conflict over Land and Property Policy in Post-War Britain. Cambridge University Press, 1984, Ch.2.
- ²⁰⁸ JEFFERYS, Kevin. 'British Politics and Social Policy During the Second World War', The Historical Journal, Vol. 30, No. 1, 1987, p143.
- ²⁰⁹ JEFFERYS, K. 1987, p144.
- ²¹⁰ TRACEY, H. Volume I 1948, p203.
- ²¹¹ See especially BROOKE, S. 1992.
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- ²¹³ See LAYBOURN, Keith. Britain on the Breadline. A Social and Political History of Britain 1918-1939. Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1998 for a critique of over-optimistic accounts.
- ²¹⁴ HEY, David. A History of Sheffield. Carnegie Publishing, 1998, p213.
- ²¹⁵ Rotherham Advertiser 28/12/1940, p3.
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- ²¹⁷ Hansard, 09/03/1950, column 526, John Hynd (Sheffield, Attercliffe).
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- ²²¹ See TILLEY, John. Churchill's Favourite Socialist: A Life of A.V. Alexander. Holyoake Books, 1995, p13.
- ²²² Sheffield Telegraph 19/06/1945, p3.
- ²²³ Sheffield Telegraph 11/06/1945, p3.
- ²²⁴ HATTERSLEY, R. 1995, pp10-11.
- ²²⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 12/06/1945, p3.
- ²²⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 05/07/1945, p3. On his hostile attitude to coal nationalization see Sheffield Telegraph 19/06/1945, p3.
- ²²⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 29/06/1945.
- ²²⁸ 'Papers of Sydney George Checkland, 1916-1986, Economic Historian - Administrative/Biographical History', Archives Hub, < <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/news/02082106.html> >, p1, 20 March 2003.
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- ²³⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 28/05/1945, p3.
- ²³¹ Sheffield Telegraph 05/07/1945, p3.
- ²³² Sheffield Telegraph 29/05/1945, p3.
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- ²³⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 18/06/1945, p2.
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- ²³⁷ Entry in STENTON, Michael and LEES, Stephen. Who's Who of British Members of Parliament. Volume IV, 1945-1979: A Biographical Dictionary of the House of Commons. Harvester Press, 1981.
- ²³⁸ Sheffield Telegraph Year Book 1936.
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- ²⁴¹ Entry in STENTON, M. and LEES, S. 1981.
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- ²⁵² Entry in STENTON, M. and LEES, S. 1981. See also The Times 29/05/1970, p12.
- ²⁵³ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp65-6.
- ²⁵⁴ HOWELL, D. 1980, p128, however, argues that Labour did not have an organisational advantage.
- ²⁵⁵ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1946, p8 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁵⁶ As expressed in the title of TILLEY, J. 1995.
- ²⁵⁷ His 'contribution to the post-1940 revival of British agriculture made him almost a rival in husbandry to Coke of Norfolk or "Turnip" Townshend.' See JENKINS, Roy. Baldwin. Papermac, 1995, p189.
- ²⁵⁸ See FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp66-7 who do not agree with the Conservative claim and assert that newspaper readers tended to ignore editorials.
- ²⁵⁹ See FIELDING, S. February 1995, pp38-58.
- ²⁶⁰ FIELDING, Steven. 'What did 'The People' Want?: The Meaning of the 1945 General Election', The Historical Journal, Vol. 35, No. 3, 1992, p638.
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CHAPTER FIVE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND THE LABOUR PARTY
IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE, 1945-1951

5.1 - INTRODUCTION

With the advent of a Labour Government, and an unexampled volume of legislation, Local Government is definitely ending one important chapter in its history and beginning another. Municipalisation of so-called trading and other services has been one of the main planks in Labour's platform. Many of these services are now in process of being transferred from municipal management and control to that of centralised or regional control. Many functions are being transferred from smaller authorities to larger, and in the reshuffle it is not clear what the new pattern will be in five years' time. All that it is possible to say is that Local Government is in process of a radical if not revolutionary change. One cycle of Local Government, and it may well be that of democratic government, national and local, has been completed. What the thousands of Labour representatives in Local Government desire to know is how far local interest and participation in local affairs are to be retained, and if in fact the essentials of self-government are incorporated in the new social and political structure now being enacted by Parliament.¹

These are the words of Wright Robinson, Labour Alderman of Manchester City Council, in 1948. He went on to query,

... the increasing centralisation, the transfer of function from a body directly responsible to, and in contact with an electorate, to an *ad hoc* body appointed by and responsible to a Minister. Assuming that hospitals should be administered over a region, why should the Minister Appoint the body, including members of the Local Authorities in the area, and insist that such members should not regard themselves as in any way representative of the Local Authority. Members of the new regional boards will be in no way directly representative or responsible to the public. One of the axioms of democracy surely is that each of us is both master and servant, and finally answerable to the public. The changes that are taking place are largely the transfer of function from elected bodies to non-elective bodies, or less elective than those they have superseded... What is contended is that functional efficiency is one, but not the only test, of good government.²

Even Clement Attlee by May 1950 had confessed that, 'We have taken away too much from Local

Government.’³ It has been said by Francis that ‘it is both unfair and inaccurate to identify Labour’s socialism in the late 1940s exclusively with the centralized state’⁴ but even he notes that there had been a ‘considerable shift in the balance of political power from local to central government’ and that it was ‘significant’ that the 1949 policy statement Labour Believes in Britain promised to maintain democracy not just in Parliament but ‘in the council chamber’.⁵ Tomlinson has argued that the welfare state created by Labour was an austerity product of austerity conditions and that Labour was more concerned to increase economic efficiency to restore prosperity than throw money at welfare: social justice, *pace* Correlli Barnett, was a secondary priority.⁶ Local government under Labour was also marked by austerity but in that case technical efficiency of service provision was paramount with local democracy second.

As we saw in Chapter Two, Labour’s approach to local government was ‘instrumentalist’. Labour councils were to be the agents of the centre in order to fulfill the tasks of post-war reconstruction set out in Labour’s election manifesto Let Us Face the Future despite the desire of some Labour leaders like Herbert Morrison to defend local government autonomy. And Morrison symbolically failed in his attempt to prevent the nationalisation of local authority hospitals. In 1945, the municipal elections and the earlier general election were linked by Labour appeals to the voters. A broadsheet was produced reminding them that ‘the Labour Government at Westminster depends upon your council’, while the National Agent described local councils as bodies who would ‘administer the socialist legislation the Government will put through’. Alongside the changes to local government functions came the ‘nationalization of local politics’ as local political contests were assimilated into the national two-party contest. But it was the Conservatives whose leaders were more willing to become systematically involved in local government as a means of taking the fight to Labour while out of office.⁷ The Municipal Progressives were champions of ‘ratepayer democracy’ and this was also a long-held Conservative tradition allowing the latter to pose much more easily as genuine defenders of local interests against abuse of power and centralisation. An official policy statement in 1949 declared, for instance: ‘The governing principle of Conservative and Unionist policy on Local Government, is that Local Government should be Local, and that it should be Government ... Merely to pass on orders from the central authorities ... is not Local Government.’ Of course this was played down once the Conservatives returned to power, but until 1953 the motto of the party journal The Councillor was ‘centralisation is the death-blow of public freedom’.⁸ Unsurprisingly this was the ground of Municipal Progressive, and, after 1948, Conservative-Liberal, complaints about the Attlee Government and the Sheffield Labour Party. Unlike in Nottingham where consensus between the two major local parties was marked by a formal written pact because neither could achieve the requisite majority to take control of the City Council, and Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships of committees were shared,⁹ this was not the case in Sheffield, Rotherham or Barnsley. In Doncaster matters were, however, less simple and in May 1951 Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships of committees had to be shared because the balance of power between the parties was too finely drawn.¹⁰

Between 1945 and 1951 controversy over the limits of centralisation and how it would affect ordinary people was common within the Sheffield council chamber and in the two main parties' propaganda. A focus of this was the acute housing crisis and the apparent inability of Labour to get the houses built or to allow free enterprise to attempt the task. Middle-class people who wanted to own their own homes felt particularly hard done by compared with working-class people. Owner-occupation was often seen as the defining feature of the middle classes which contributed to recruitment to the Conservative Party in the late 1940s.¹¹ The jealousy towards working-class people is manifest in a speech by Alderman Jackson in 1950 when in the municipal elections he complained that Corporation houses were being occupied not by the poor but by people who could easily afford to own their own homes and did own cars and television sets.¹² To obtain land to put houses on, county borough boundaries had to be extended, which led to the promotion of a Sheffield Extension Bill in 1951, which, however, failed to become an Act of Parliament. A similar one in Doncaster did become law but most of the land concerned was designated green belt. The promotion of these Bills was a consequence of the abolition of the Local Government Boundary Commission in 1949. That body had been the most that local government associations would tolerate in terms of seeking to reform the structure of local government. Council housing and education were the major responsibilities of local government in this period.

A major reason why Labour was able to treat local government as an instrument was because, despite its stated intentions to expand democratic rights, local government, and, symbolically, local government elections, were viewed with considerable lack of interest by voters. This was not altered by the extension of the municipal franchise at the end of the war. Municipal Progressives, indeed, were fearful that that apathy would actually increase as substantial rate-payers felt their views were being swamped by people who had no property to deter them from proposing municipal extravagance. Prominent people would also be less willing to become Municipal Progressive candidates. The extension of the franchise was seen as a party political act by Labour to court the fickle loyalties of the mob. A new cycle of local government had begun but unfortunately for local politics it was also one in which central government sought to increase its control of local government through the increased subsidies which local government had no option but to accept. Local rates could not provide the necessary finance. Rates were easy to collect and assess but it was not an effective means of ensuring that a steady proportion of the new local wealth generated in a district entered a particular council's coffers. This was because it was regressive and fell most heavily on those least able to pay who had often not shared in the increase in prosperity of the area. In a period of inflationary pressures the rate often had to be increased each year because the valuation of rateable value did not reflect an area's greater wealth, and thus opposition was guaranteed to be great in response. Central government refused to reform the rating system which would have allowed greater fiscal independence to the local authorities and remove the need for the government grants.¹³

Gyford describes municipal Labour Parties at this time as being 'municipal labourist' rather than 'municipal socialist'¹⁴ (the Sheffield Labour Group Leader, Alderman Bingham, however, was in no

doubts and did describe what he and his colleagues were doing as ‘Municipal Socialism’). Of course, ‘municipal socialism’ might have nothing to do with the socialism of the Labour Party, as was recognised when the Conservatives in Sheffield took electricity, water, the tramways and the markets into municipal ownership in the nineteenth century. That was concerned with providing utility services cheaper for business than business could provide for itself due to the economies of scale that resulted. ‘Municipal labourism’ as a phenomenon is especially well demonstrated in the politics of council housing and of town planning where the appropriate council committee and the council as a whole were little influenced by the general public in the decisions they ultimately reached. Even if we do see the local citizens as both conservative and apathetic, it is still true that little was actively done in Sheffield at least to survey their reactions, take suggestions from them or even during wartime officially inform them of what was being considered. Their potential to contribute was thus not taken seriously by professional local government officers who retained a faith in their own ability unaided to find the solution to working-class problems or by the amateur Council members who deferred to them. Gyford notes that municipal labourism did secure

considerable real improvements in the material conditions of working-class life. On occasion however it was prone to two weaknesses. It could display a certain heavy-handed paternalism, leading to an insensitivity to the self-expressed interests of ordinary people when these seemed to conflict with the plans or the enthusiasms of senior councillors or of professionals and other experts; and a certain introverted emphasis on political solidarity and discipline could sometimes blind local councillors to legitimate outside criticism or could even be exploited for dubious ends. At its best municipal labourism matched Herbert Morrison’s aspiration to create in local government “an efficient machine for a high moral purpose” and it delivered with competence and compassion a wide range of services to those in need. Usually it did the right things *for* people; but sometimes it could do the wrong things *to* people; and only rarely had it previously discussed either of those things *with* people.¹⁵

Finally, in fairness it must be noted that while the Conservatives and some within Labour’s ranks did allege that local government was being weakened, others inside the Labour Party, like Morgan Phillips saw this as ‘absurdly untrue’. According to Phillips, writing in 1951, ‘some functions have been taken over by the State and some transferred to the county councils from the county districts, [but] other functions have been added or expanded.’ There were good reasons why some municipal functions, like electricity generation or rate valuation, had been taken over by the State. Rate valuation in local hands had produced inequitable results: ‘It was commonplace to find houses built at the same time, within a short distance of each other, and of the same size and with the same facilities, bearing greatly different valuations.’ A uniform nationwide standard of service was necessary for such examples and could only be done via the state. As for the new powers given or extended within county or county boroughs councils they ‘certainly cannot complain that they have nothing worth while to do.’ He gave as evidence

the new town planning powers to control development and the expanded personal health services under the 1946 National Health Act. Similarly the provisions of the 1944 Education Act were being implemented by them and, 'The level of school building has never been so great.' Even some powers of the borough and district councils with regard to housing, public health, recreation and entertainment had been extended since 1945. Phillips particularly stressed the role of local authorities in housing, noting that since 1949 houses could be built for all social classes. Eighty per cent of houses built since 1945 had been built by them. Under the 'famous' section 132, local authorities had also wider powers to provide entertainment for citizens and many were developing civic restaurants. And, according to Phillips, Labour's equalisation grants were much more helpful to poorer authorities than the old block grants as a source of finance. Councillors could also now get allowances for lost wages when serving in local government thus potentially enlarging the pool of people who could be attracted to municipal office. In sum, 'No fair-minded person ... can believe that Labour has weakened local government. The opposite is true.' He did, however, emphasise the need for reform in local government 'to conform with modern day requirements'. Labour was 'waiting with great interest the outcome of the discussions between four of the local authority associations. If agreement is reached between them, then the Government will gladly consider legislation.' Otherwise reform would have to await the return of a new Labour Government after 25 October 1951. He ended by declaring that, 'Whatever proposals are put forward, all can rest assured that Labour will preserve the vitality, independence and democratic element of local government.'¹⁶

5.2 - REFORM OF THE LOCAL STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Coalition Government's White Paper Local Government in England and Wales during the Period of Reconstruction published in January 1945 suggested the setting up of a Local Government Boundary Commission. On the face of it, a radical overhaul of the structure of local government seemed possible with new enlarged county boroughs being created and declining county boroughs being given a more appropriate status. Policy statements within the White Paper, however, seemed to augur a much less radical approach. The terms of reference of the Boundary Commission excluded the consideration of whether the functions of local government units were being effectively carried out. Thus, it could not match area, population, resources or functions to create more standard units. It thus made the finding of *ad hoc* solutions the policy of the government, with Joint Boards and Joint Committees as the Government's solution to achieving the better functioning of local councils in an attempt to avoid controversy. The Boundary Commission was to complain in 1947 that its 'present powers and instructions do not permit the formation of local government units as effective and convenient as in our opinion they should be', and it quoted Bevan who had said that it was 'nonsense to talk about functions and boundaries separately'.

According to Alexander, the attitude of the Labour Government and Bevan, who was responsible for local government, to reform was 'rather confused' despite being the first party to link national goal-

setting to local implementation, necessitating an effective local government instrument.¹⁷ Taylor argues, however, that,

Those [constitutional] reforms which were [immediately] required to expedite the delivery of social and economic reconstruction - mainly in parliamentary procedure, cabinet organisation and, latterly, the Lords - took top billing, whilst those which represented the unfinished business of the first two Labour administrations - electoral reform and the overhaul of local government - whilst closer to the party's heart, did not get special treatment.¹⁸

In 1948-9, Bevan did prepare a radical plan to abolish the existing local government structure and replace it with 240 new all-purpose authorities but he did not press it in Cabinet. In March 1949 he stated that it was not 'practicable to introduce comprehensive legislation on local government reconstruction in the near future'.¹⁹

On 27 June 1949 he then announced that the Boundary Commission would be scrapped. When asked by a Labour MP if a Royal Commission could be appointed instead to look into the functions and areas of local government units, Bevan replied that it would not be appropriate 'as a Royal Commission would almost certainly reproduce in its personnel all the disagreements in local government circles.' A review of the problem of local government though 'a constant preoccupation of the Government' would take up considerable time and since there was little consensus in local government Bevan could not 'tell when that review will fructify.'²⁰ Alexander points out that Britain has never had a Ministry or a Cabinet Minister solely responsible for local government and that Bevan also had the responsibility for the establishment of the National Health Service.²¹ He was also involved in overseeing the critical housing programme. Thus, there were limits to what he could achieve in the time available. Local authorities like Sheffield City Council were thus forced to return to the practice of promoting Extension Bills in Parliament to achieve extension of their boundaries.

Sir Malcolm Trustram Eve had been Chairman of the Boundary Commission. Writing in July 1951, after the Minister of Local Government and Planning had stated in the House of Commons that 'local government reform ... must wait until the next Parliament', he complained of the difficulties experienced by County Boroughs. It was 'to say the least a remote possibility' that a county council and a county borough would agree on an extension of the county borough's boundaries and 'the Government are now pledged to "block" any Boundary Extension Bill of a county borough - the only other available procedure - if the extension proposed is more than "minor".' At the same time, under Section 146 of the Local Government Act 1933 which was revived by the Act abolishing the Boundary Commission, an Order could be made from 1 January 1952 by a Minister after a local inquiry to alter the boundaries and status of an urban or rural district council. If it was on the border of a county borough and it had been made bigger, he complained, it might well prejudice a future extension of that county borough. The

operation of this power had been postponed until 1952 in the hope that a review of the local government structure would have been made and that the Government's proposals would have overtaken any put forward by a local authority. But as Eve pointed out this had led nowhere.²²

One of the major problems that county boroughs like Sheffield faced in 1951 was the fear of the inhabitants of the rural districts threatened by extension that rates would be sharply increased. Thus they were determined to resist it despite the wider range of services potentially on offer to them. The construction of council housing estates for the working classes were also seen as a threat to traditional rural society.²³ On the other hand, even in an Urban District like Rawmarsh, which would have a lower rate and a wider range of services if it joined nearby Rotherham, opposition remained fierce to the latter's boundary extension proposals in 1947.²⁴

In the Second Annual Report of the Boundary Commission for 1947 recommendations were made to create another County Council area in the south of the West Riding, to be called York South. This can be seen as a forerunner in some (but only some) respects of the South Yorkshire County Council set up in 1974 for it did not cover the exact same territory. It would be a two-tier County, including the County Boroughs of Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster as 'New' County Boroughs within it. Sheffield would be outside as a one-tier County Council area in its own right. York South would include all or part of the Rural Districts of Goole, Osgoldcross, Hemsworth, Wakefield and Penistone. Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster did not agree with these recommendations and just before the Boundary Commission was abolished they published a memorandum which set out their joint views. This postulated a position analogous to today's Metropolitan Borough Councils and which dispensed with the whole idea of a County Council. For almost all the area of York South there would be four one-tier authorities based on themselves plus Sheffield. Each separate area would be a County Council area for the purposes recommended by the Commission and each would still be a County Borough Area under the Commission's existing powers. Sheffield was not party to these proposals but it was suggested that Wortley Rural District and Stocksbridge Urban District could be incorporated within it since the 'natural development of Sheffield would seem to be largely in the area of the Wortley Rural District.'²⁵

The arrangement the three County Boroughs advocated would not demand a new set of administrative and specialist local government officers to be appointed to a County Council and no new offices would be needed with 'the consequent struggle for accommodation with existing and expanding Government Departments.' The four new authorities would be able to absorb many officers employed at present in other local authorities and there would be a considerable saving in staff. One-tier authorities would avoid the existing duplication of functions resulting from being governed by a District Council and the County Council and thus benefit the whole of the ratepayers within the new areas. The size of the authority would still encourage the ratepayer to feel close to elected Councillors and the Councillors would not have to travel far to the main seat of administration for meetings. Fewer local authorities would mean greater administrative efficiency. There had also 'long been a natural community of interest

in the areas proposed, and the present County Boroughs are the natural centres of each area for cultural, shopping, amusements and administrative purposes. Each is the obvious centre of development or anticipated development for the respective areas proposed and is the focus of all major activity.’ Finally, all four County Boroughs had, it was claimed, always worked together in harmony on schemes for the benefit of their respective inhabitants and it was felt this would only increase if the proposals were accepted.²⁶

The Commission Report also highlighted the issue of the rivalry between Sheffield and Rotherham - a rivalry probably older than that between Sheffield and Leeds and symbolised by the tradition that Sheffield was once humiliatingly described as ‘Sheffield near Rotherham’.²⁷ The Report said that it had given particular consideration to Rotherham since it was physically joined to Sheffield:

Many of the factors laid down for our guidance point to the uniting of both into one local government unit. The total population, though, would be 600,000 and substantially greater if the dormitory areas near to both were added. We do not favour the creation of one-tier new counties for populations so large. In recommending that Rotherham should be within the area of the new county of York South we realise that the existing boundary between Rotherham and Sheffield is not a good county boundary.²⁸

Rotherham was not impressed by the idea of amalgamation with Sheffield. The attitudes of Labour members of both councils were shown when Alderman Bingham, Leader of Sheffield City Council, had to deny in October 1947, long before the Report was presented to Parliament, that he had suggested to representatives of the Commission that it should take place. However, he lamely admitted that he saw ‘no ultimate alternative to that sort of thing’. Alderman Jackson stirred the pot by confirming what Bingham denied in a municipal election meeting. Bingham then elaborated to The Star that though the time was not ripe for creating an amalgamated unit, and it needed to get Rotherham’s agreement, ‘speaking for myself ... the ultimate set up of local government must inevitably mean that these areas, between which there is little or no distinction, must have some sort of common oversight.’ Speaking for Rotherham Labour Party, Councillor George Brown, the Secretary and Agent, described the idea as ‘a prime example of unparalleled impertinence.’²⁹ When the Report was finally published, it was reported that several Rotherham Councillors said that its proposals ‘while not very satisfactory, are infinitely preferable to Rotherham being taken over by Sheffield’.³⁰

These were not the only plans put forward which would have altered the structure of local government. Wath Urban District Council in April 1945 had the idea of convening a conference to which the Urban District Councils of Conisborough, Dearne, Mexborough, Rawmarsh and Swinton would be invited, plus the parishes of Brampton and Wentworth, with a view to considering amalgamation into one large unit.³¹ The conference met for the first time in July 1945 but its brief was only to stimulate discussion and not

impose an answer. Wath felt it was better that they reform themselves before they were compelled by government. In 1943 when the reorganisation of local government was mooted, larger authorities had asked for extended powers while smaller ones simply asked to be left alone. Though there was no general desire to radically alter the structure of local government by the Coalition, it had been agreed that local government units had to be strengthened for future responsibilities, though local authorities could not agree over how this might be done. Still Wath felt a measure of compulsion was inevitable to deal with post-war reconstruction. County Councils threatened to be given powers previously held by District Councils but if they took matters in hand and voluntarily amalgamated they might recover some of their lost powers. Amalgamation was seen as being financially beneficial since it would be easier for central Government to distribute grants fairly and evenly if there were fewer authorities. A larger authority would have a better fiscal base and would be better able to co-operate with Parliament. It would be easier to ensure that the delivery of public services was uniform over the country and the services would be more efficient with economies of scale. There was, however, dispute over whether the proposed unit would be a County or Non-County Borough and whether it would be based on Mexborough. Fears were also expressed that the County Council had greater financial resources to fight their amalgamation. It was eventually decided to adjourn the meeting so the various bodies could discuss the proposals before they met again.³²

Before the Boundary Commission was abolished, however, Mexborough and Conisborough had decided to submit proposals for their own amalgamation; Wath, Swinton and Rawmarsh were discussing boundary review problems together; and Dearne wanted to absorb Hickleton, Barnburgh and part of Hooton Pagnall district. Wombwell, Darfield, Hoyland and Brampton had discussed amalgamation and South and North Elmsall with Upton and South Kirkby wanted Urban District status.³³ These authorities were not rushing forward, however, to amalgamate with the County Boroughs as envisaged in the joint proposal of June 1949. Barnsley, for example, had produced its own report for the Boundary Commission by October 1946, but the Chronicle predicted 'a mixed reception in the areas affected by its proposals.' It noted that:

We have already heard the first murmurings of the opposition likely to be encountered . . . and several of these small authorities - or, at least, their spokesmen - have declared themselves firmly against the encroachments of what has luridly been described as the "tentacles of the octopus in the Barnsley Town Hall." Resolutions have been passed, pledges given, in an atmosphere resounding with brave talk about "resisting to the last the attempt to swallow us up," and this has been accompanied in certain cases by appeals to the West Riding County Authority for backing. The wooing has not gone too well.

Opposition also came from the Citizen Party on Barnsley Council, which argued that the threatened authorities were separate entities with their own interests and institutions and that Barnsley itself would

lose its own distinctiveness by amalgamation. The increase in the administrative staff of the Council would also place Barnsley under a 'dead weight of bureaucracy.'³⁴

Rotherham Council's motivation for extending its boundaries, at least until 1949, was like Sheffield to allow its housing programme to progress. Over six hundred acres within the Borough at Kimberworth earmarked for housing had been placed in jeopardy by the National Coal Board which had stated that it intended to mine under the area.³⁵ It was only in February 1949 that the NCB decided this coal was not worthwhile and handed the land back. The Corporation renewed their intention of building a large housing estate.³⁶ Thus, by June 1949 and the abolition of the Boundary Commission, the need to extend Rotherham's boundaries was less critical. It did not promote an Extension Bill like Sheffield and Doncaster.³⁷ The reaction to abolition in Rotherham and district was said to be 'one of relief tempered with some resentment at the time wasted.' In Sheffield, Bingham called for an proper inquiry into the whole structure of local government by a body representing the people and not experts - code for elected members of local government bodies.³⁸ This ignored Bevan's observation that it would only replicate the lack of consensus in local government and would get nowhere. But there still remained the possibility that if Labour was re-elected in 1950 with a large majority it would once more attempt to radically reform the structure of local government, as the Editor of the Sheffield Telegraph suggested.³⁹ This is probably why the Clerk of Rawmarsh Urban District Council said that abolition was a relief but only in a sense explaining 'We were going to fight to the end, and now we can just sit back and wait as before.'⁴⁰ Obviously at that point the threat had not yet receded far but it was dispelled by Labour's tiny majority after re-election and final defeat in 1951. Whether the Commission's proposals for a two-tier York South would have worked is conjecture, but the County Council created in 1974 had environmental and structural planning powers and controlled the police, the fire service and public transport. It was centred on Barnsley. Sheffield and the other former County Boroughs lost administrative powers to it though they did increase their territory and ended the Rural and Urban District Councils existence.⁴¹ There were, though, major disagreements between the tiers of local government over planning, for example, which were only settled when the County Council was abolished.⁴²

5.3 - NATIONALISATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS ?

In a municipal election leaflet for 1947 the Municipal Progressives quoted Alderman Bingham: 'We [the Labour Group] are a body which acts in full consultation with each other, and our purpose is the establishment of Municipal Socialism, according to Labour Party principles, allied with the Socialism of the larger type which the Government is moving towards.' This, on the face of it, is a repudiation of the idea that 'Municipal Socialism' had been down-played or dropped as an aspiration of the Labour Group, and that it was taking steps to put it into practice while co-operating with the nationalisation and welfare state measures of the national Labour government. Thus, it agreed with Morgan Phillips' view that it was 'absurdly untrue' to imagine that local government had been weakened since it gained other

responsibilities to make up for its losses. This is not how the Progressives saw this, of course. Under the sub-title 'The Meaning of "Municipal Socialism"', they set out a list of services that had been or would be nationalised and predicted the evil consequences for Sheffielders that would follow.⁴³

According to Phillips, 'The electricity and gas industries were unable to make technical advances beyond a certain limit due to the confines of local authority boundaries' hence the need to take them from individual local authority control in the interests of providing a cheaper service nationwide.⁴⁴ Let Us Face The Future said, 'Public ownership of gas and electricity undertakings will lower charges, prevent competitive waste, open the way for co-ordinated research and development, and lead to the reforming of uneconomic areas of distribution. Other industries will benefit.'⁴⁵ The Progressives were more critical and from a selfish local perspective it is hard not to sympathize at least on electricity nationalisation, as the City Council were not fully compensated and there were problems with the new 'statutory undertaker', the British Electricity Authority, over emissions from Blackburn Meadows power station which they no longer owned.⁴⁶ It would also now have to negotiate over the proposed city development plans with the latter. According to Kenneth O. Morgan: 'Any opposition to the [nationalisation] bill was mollified by the remarkably generous terms of compensation given to private stock-holders, whether companies or individuals, and the full reimbursement made to local authorities for their electricity undertakings. Yet again, a broad measure of goodwill prevailed.'⁴⁷ Yet as Hayes notes in Nottingham, while its Electricity Department had assets of £9.4 million it was not fully compensated. A net loan debt of £3.9 million was cancelled and it got an ex-gratia payment of £80,000. That was all. In 1949, sales of electricity had subsidised the rates by £65,000. They also contributed to central establishment charges and there were gains from tax relief on the profits. The terms of compensation, even slightly improved, 'stretched Labour loyalty' and provoked persistent outbursts for years by Conservatives who saw it as 'legalised theft'.⁴⁸ Sheffield's net assets were valued at £11.7 million with £5 million in debts. Electricity did not subsidise the rates though they contributed £9,000 in central establishment charges plus the tax relief on profits. Compensation was again restricted to the debt. The City Treasurer felt it was 'somewhat unfair that an authority which has always transferred electricity profits to the relief of rates should be just as well off ... as an authority like Sheffield, which has pursued the sound financial policy of redeeming existing debt or avoiding borrowing rather than transferring profits to the state Fund.' It was a policy Labour Rotherham had also pursued. Its undertaking was valued at £3 million pounds and its debt at under £1 million pounds. It would lose £2 million pounds as a result of the changeover.⁴⁹ It is not surprising that as in Nottingham nationalisation was to be a continuing focus of opposition criticism in the future.

The Transport and Electricity Nationalization Acts passed in 1947 did allow councils to continue to get the same rates from the now nationalised undertakings as they had before but this altered under the Local Government Act 1948. Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo argue that it widened municipal power,⁵⁰ but it contained a provision which to the Chairman of the Rotherham Finance Committee 'came as a great surprise'. Government would make a payment in lieu of rates from the nationalised undertakings to be

shared among local authorities according to rateable value. The result according to him 'was to take income away from areas where the hereditaments were and to give proportionately large amounts to rural areas and residential and seaside towns.' The losses to urban Labour local authorities could be great. Rotherham immediately lost £47,900.⁵¹ Barnsley, however, lost just £3,804 for 1949/50.⁵² In Sheffield £190,000 was collected in rates each year from the municipal electricity undertaking before nationalisation but government only paid £133,000 in lieu of rates afterwards, losing Sheffield £57,000.⁵³ It was not the only basis for Rotherham's disapproval in 1948. It was 'scurvily treated by the people responsible for the appointments to the Area Board and district committees of the British Electrical Authority', claimed Alderman Caine. They had not even been consulted whether there was anybody they had who could be appointed.⁵⁴ Despite this Labour in Rotherham was loyal to national Labour's dictates, even if was not the 'blind loyalty' that Thorpe sees as characteristic of Sheffield Labour Group over the various nationalisation measures.⁵⁵ In Sheffield, just a few days after the Electricity Committee disbanded itself and handed over the undertaking, a statement that domestic consumers in Sheffield would have to pay 30 per cent more for their electricity made in a full Council meeting by a Conservative-Liberal went completely unchallenged by Labour.⁵⁶

Finally, we have already alluded to the problems posed by the change of ownership of Blackburn Meadows power station. Unfortunately air pollution in Tinsley was a problem that the Corporation had done little about even when they had the power to do something, so it was perhaps hypocritical to blame the British Electricity Authority for failing to do anything. The BEA complained to a Council deputation that the pollution was due to burning inferior coal, the supply of which was a National Coal Board responsibility, over which they had no control.⁵⁷ This was a municipal election issue in 1949. A Conservative-Liberal leaflet headed 'Tinsley is being poisoned' was printed, alleging Labour inactivity. A response came from a Labour Councillor, Reverend Medcraft, who alleged that, 'The local doctor at Tinsley says it is one of the healthiest parts of this city. He ... says the smoke fumes kill the disease germs, which seems to me quite a sound sort of argument'. He then testified, irrelevantly, to the Tinsley people's healthy moral character, having known them for twenty-five years,⁵⁸ despite the fact that when they went outside they had to hold handkerchiefs over their eyes due to the smoke pall.⁵⁹ Next day, he was ridiculed by the Conservative-Liberal Parliamentary candidate for Brightside who described Medcraft's belief in the health-giving properties of fumes as 'a fantastic proposition'. He called for better coal to be burnt.⁶⁰

Gas nationalisation was irrelevant to Sheffield except that it might actually reduce prices because it had always been a private monopoly. There had been attempts to bring it under municipal ownership as late as 1919 but in order to get an Act of Parliament allowing this, Sheffield City Council would have had to pay what was called 'fair compensation'. Permission at that time would only be granted if the gas company shareholders were paid an annuity of 5 per cent on the company's capital value, but Labour Councillors noted that the dividend had been reduced to 3.5 per cent and thus they opposed municipal ownership on the terms dictated by the government.⁶¹ Alderman Styring, the Electricity Committee

Chairman and an opponent of Labour, however, had, by contrast, wanted to purchase the undertaking at any price at that time.⁶² When the Nationalisation Bill was receiving its Second Reading Sheffield Conservative MPs, Roland Jennings and Peter Roberts, did, however, both speak. Jennings saw nationalisation as a doctrinaire political manoeuvre by Labour, while Roberts saw it as a financially extravagant gesture when the country was in crisis. The Opposition was more concerned about the effect on the export trade of the Bill than on the consequences for municipalities.⁶³ In Rotherham, the Corporation did own the gas undertaking having been in municipal ownership as early as 1870.⁶⁴ It was only the first or second company to be acquired by a local authority under an Act of 1869.⁶⁵ The total value of its assets in 1947 was £450,700, with a net loan debt of £148,000, so it was less important in terms of prestige than the electricity undertaking.⁶⁶ Labour made no attempt to prevent or protest against nationalisation. The Chairman of the Gas Committee, said he had 'a little pang of regret. [But] it was not because they had changed their minds about the principles of nationalisation, but simply because their own particular gas undertaking was going from them.'⁶⁷

According to Rivett, 'The NHS was a different type of nationalisation [to, say, electricity or gas], aiming for a radically new type of service.' However, as both he⁶⁸ and Morgan Phillips point out, nationalisation of hospitals was also a way of bypassing troublesome local authority boundaries in the provision of care.⁶⁹ Sheffield City Council had opposed in wartime creating Joint Area Authorities with executive rather than advisory powers while welcoming the Government's stated intention of creating a comprehensive health service. It viewed 'with great concern the proposals that all hospital services now provided and administered by Local Authorities should pass out of their jurisdiction'. Regional control would be 'a serious threat to the maintenance of Local Government on democratic lines.'⁷⁰ Yet, as Thorpe points out, Sheffield Labour's 'blind loyalty' overrode such concerns after 1945.⁷¹ Herbert Morrison, local government's main defender in Labour ranks, was to point out to Aneurin Bevan that hospital nationalisation was not part of Labour's general election manifesto.⁷² That simply proclaimed, after noting the links between good food and good housing and ill-health, that 'the best health services should be available for all. Money must no longer be the passport to the best treatment.' And that, 'In the new National Health Service there should be health centres where the people may get the best that modern science can offer, more and better hospitals, and proper conditions for our doctors and nurses'.⁷³ The abortive attempt to create a health centre at Firth Park foundered on general practitioners suspicion of it as an attempt to bring them under local authority control, yet the idea of health centres in Sheffield was supported by the Municipal Progressives as well as by Labour. They described Sheffield's health services in 1945 as 'splendid' but saw lack of health centres as the major deficiency.⁷⁴ Labour's 1945 municipal election manifesto took no hostages, however, when it merely declared that 'any variation imposed upon the existing administration of hospital services should be based upon the principle of public ownership and control', which could mean either hospital nationalisation or control of all hospitals by municipal authorities.⁷⁵ This statement was repeated in 1946.⁷⁶ By then the Progressives warned that:

The same danger of inefficiency and lack of sympathy arising out of central or regional control threatens the health service. These services were created by Sheffield. They should continue as Sheffield's responsibility. We welcome the proposals for a general extension of these services and we hold here again that the surrounding areas should be able to take advantage of them and have a share in their management.⁷⁷

Labour critics like Herbert Morrison or Wright Robinson made the basis of their arguments the effect on local democracy. These regional bodies were un-elected, which conflicted with the desire to base socialism on what Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo term the 'Responsible Society' - in other words to build a sense of community around on an active citizenry keen to participate in local government.⁷⁸ But, this aspiration warred with the desire to create the most technically efficient service. Morrison emphasised this:

It is possible to argue that almost every government function, taken by itself, could be administered more efficiently in the technical sense under a national system, but if we wish local government to thrive - as a school of political and democratic education as well as a method of administration - we must consider the general effect on local government of each particular proposal. It would be disastrous if we allowed local government to languish by whittling away its most constructive and interesting functions.⁷⁹

It is argued by Michael Foot that Bevan had nothing in principle against local authority control of hospitals but that he chose hospital nationalisation because he could not wait for reform of the local government structure to create areas large enough to make it superfluous.⁸⁰ The lack of consensus within local government, even in a single area like South Yorkshire, has been exhaustively documented in Section 5.2. Reform had to wait a generation. That Bevan was ultimately in sympathy with Morrison's views is shown by this quote from an article he wrote entitled 'Local Government Management of Hospitals is Best' in the Municipal Journal in 1954 which drew on the plans he had made for local government reform during the Attlee Government but which had remained just plans:

We should wish to revive and maintain local government as a form of government which is truly local and which is so near the people as to ignite and keep their interest.

This interest by the public is important as a spur and refreshment to the governing bodies themselves and for the creation of an intelligent and educated democracy inspired with civic spirit. Quite apart from its value to the individual citizen, it is of incalculable value to the community in any kind of crisis.⁸¹

If some in the Sheffield Labour Group might secretly share the view of the Labour Party critics, there

was, however, the satisfaction that 'the Socialism of the larger type' was being enacted and that the voluntary hospitals which had refused local authority control, despite often getting some of their funding from them, were seriously affronted by being nationalised. Those voluntary hospitals, like the Jessop Hospital in Sheffield, which had been very successful, were profoundly upset because they championed the voluntary principle. Its Board had argued in 1943 against a free health service:

It would indeed be a disaster if the proposed comprehensive health service should be so framed as not to allow for the continued financial support and personal service of those who for so long have thus expressed their faith in the voluntary system. No scheme which removes the incentive to giving and by personal service to helping one's less fortunate fellows is desirable.⁸²

But it was precisely this principle that was anathema to many within the Labour Party in Sheffield. For example, in 1945 Councillor Dyson attacked Trades Council support for the Sheffield Cancer Research Committee which wanted to raise funds by voluntary subscriptions. He said that the Trades Council was a Socialist body backing the idea of a State Medical Service yet it was also supporting a body on which 'captains of industry' controlled policy. And he complained that conducting research 'on a charitable basis' was wrong.⁸³ Similarly there was 'stormy debate' at the Trades Council in June 1948 over continued support for the Sheffield Hospitals Council's penny a week scheme for convalescent treatment. Councillor Scott, a member of the Sheffield Health Committee, said that: 'To support a voluntary scheme . . . would be to erect a monument to the system they had fought for years to break down.' He called for the local authority to provide the service.⁸⁴ This view of the voluntary principle was shared by Bevan: 'It is repugnant to a civilized community for hospitals to have to rely on private charity ... I have always felt a shudder of repulsion when I have seen nurses and sisters who ought to be at their work, and students who ought to be at theirs, going about the streets collecting money for the hospitals.'⁸⁵ It is not surprising then that the commitment of those who had opposed the National Health Service Act to making the NHS work once the Act became law was questioned before it came into being on 5 July 1948. Labour Alderman Buxton of Rotherham commented:

As will have been noticed, all persons elected or nominated by the Minister of Health to ... [the] committees [responsible for carrying out the Act, like the Hospital Management Committees,] ...are not of the same political beliefs as most of us, and in many cases the associations that they represent have not accepted the Act in very good heart, therefore many differences of opinion are likely to arise as the clauses and direction under the Act are notified and discussed from time to time.⁸⁶

Five months after the NHS was set up, he called for yet another committee to be established to ensure that 'there is very close co-operation between the hospitals and the Local Health Authority which is, at the present time, non-existent.'⁸⁷ By 1949, mutual confidence seems to have been arrived at finally and

he noted that, 'Co-operation has been secured with the local Hospital Management Committee in many directions during the year.' Despite what had gone before all sides had reached an understanding to make the Act work whatever the personal political differences between them. Buxton's comprehensive account of Council health initiatives in the Rotherham Trades Council Report for 1949 shows that the local authority, even though it had been divested of its hospital service, was still extremely busy in the health field as a result of the responsibilities it had gained under the 1946 Act.⁸⁸

Less happy was Sheffield City Council's attempt in 1948 to provide England's first health centre at Firth Park. Local doctors who refused to be involved with the local authority's scheme were blamed for its failure. They were criticised because it was alleged they did not want a better health service for the people of Firth Park and feared losing patients to the centre's better facilities and to doctors who had agreed to co-operate with the scheme. Councillor Mrs. Sheard claimed that:

One doctor has even gone so far as to raise as a serious objection, the fact that patients waiting in the centre would be able to get a cup of tea from a mobile canteen. "They don't even get cups of tea even in Harley Street," he said. The same doctor even expressed objection to the presence of the Lord Mayor at the opening ceremony - presumably on the basis that he might act as a lure to patients.⁸⁹

The failure to open the Centre upset the local Socialist Medical Association (SMA) which had campaigned for it.⁹⁰ Dr. Somerville Hastings of the SMA raised the matter in Parliament in May 1951, asking why it was not operational but it did not open in the remaining period of Labour Government.⁹¹ A proposed second centre on the Manor estate had to be cancelled.⁹² Webster has argued that health centres 'came to symbolise the distinction between socialist and non-socialist conceptions of the health service'. The SMA saw them as the physical embodiment of the new order in health care and the 1946 Act which set up the NHS made building them a statutory duty of local authorities. Martin Francis concludes, however, that Bevan's refusal to speed up their creation was due to his desire to appease the medical profession who linked them to local authority interference and a full-time salaried service that would cramp their clinical independence.⁹³ In the sphere of health care, tendencies towards centralisation due to hospital nationalisation were balanced by local authorities being given responsibility for personal social services but local authority health centres were not given the government backing that was needed to make them a success.

5.4 - EDUCATION

No chapter on local government in South Yorkshire could be complete without paying some attention to education. As we saw in Chapter Two, it is one of those public services provision of which, according to many Marxists, along with public housing and health services, characterises the role of local government or 'the local state' under capitalism which is to reproduce the kind of compliant workers that Capital

needs in order to efficiently operate and accumulate surplus value within the capitalist mode of production.⁹⁴ Of course, one could argue, as Correlli Barnett has done, that one of Britain's defects within its education system has been the fact that technical education has not been given the role that it warranted if Britain was to stave off economic decline. This is in contrast with other countries like Germany or the USA whose economic performance has been much superior. This can be linked to the fact that ruthless cut-throat competition in industry was considered 'un-gentlemanly'. Such conceptions can also be seen in prevalent attitudes to competitive sports like tennis.⁹⁵ The case of tennis illuminates attitudes to competition in society generally in the 1940s. Margaret Stacey, in a study of tradition and change in Banbury, found that winning competitions was not the main reason (as it might be in newer, more 'class-less' societies like Australia which produce so many tennis champions today) why most people in that town played tennis. The real reason was to promote a middle-class sociability which reconciled differences between members of the middle classes who were the main players and promoted homogeneous attitudes to the proletarian 'Others' who did not. Ross McKibbin notes that the managerial style of many (especially small) firms emphasised social confidence over expertise. Social origin and education determined promotion prospects. Many public school boys were employed as managers simply because they were good at rugby or cricket. Grammar schools aping the public schools were increasingly providing after 1945 a cut-price version of that kind of games-orientated education for the poor but socially mobile lower-middle-class and bright working-class child who wanted to get on.⁹⁶ Thus, values that taught 'fair play' and the importance of playing rather than winning the game continued to be promulgated among the rising generation with effects on future attitudes to industry.

A criticism made of the Butler Education Act of 1944, the major legislative achievement of post-war reconstruction during the actual war, is that it retarded the momentum to create better technical education in Britain.⁹⁷ Thus, it is arguable that in many areas (though not Sheffield which was going ahead with a new College of Technology (see below)) 'the local state' was not performing the role that theoretically Marxists might predict for it, though education was one of the areas that Morgan Phillips saw as providing evidence of the expansion and addition of functions to (some) local government units. According to Correlli Barnett what the Act provided was 'an open gate to an empty construction site on which local authorities might or might not (depending on their zeal and the effectiveness of the Ministry's nagging) build the technical and further education system that Britain so desperately needed.'⁹⁸

Morgan Phillips also emphasised in 1951 that the old 'Part III' education authorities for elementary education - the district councils - had been abolished by the Act and transferred to county councils. This was because a wider area was needed and greater financial resources to effectively implement such education than many district councils possessed. He noted that the average population of a non-county borough was 30,000, with an average penny rate yield of £958, while urban and rural districts averaged populations of 15,000 and had an average penny rate yield of just £350. On such limited resources the best use of the service could not be made and specialised staff would not be able to be employed.⁹⁹ Prior

to the war, secondary education had been the responsibility of county council and county boroughs and, as with the reform of the structure of local government, there had often been a lack of co-operation between the larger and smaller authorities. Secondary education also had a higher status before the war because it was restricted and this also contributed to the dissension.¹⁰⁰

Phillips noted in 1951 that, 'The level of school building has never been so great.'¹⁰¹ According to Lowe between 1945 and 1954 the priorities of central and local government were to preserve pre-war standards in education and provide the basis for the achievement of 'equality of opportunity'. To keep standards up, a third of school buildings had to be re-built or repaired nationally due to war damage.¹⁰² In Sheffield during the 'Blitz' on the City, 143 schools and educational buildings were affected by damage. In 30 schools damage was so severe that 15,000 school places could not be used, and as late as 31 March 1948 some 7,000 places were still unavailable. It was reported at this time that:

The deficiency in school accommodation continues to be a most serious problem. Much has been done to rehabilitate damaged schools and an extensive building programme was commenced in 1946 for the provision of pre-fabricated hutments to meet the immediate needs, particularly for the accommodation of the additional age groups now the school-leaving age has been raised [to fifteen], but the problem is by no means solved and a considerable number of new schools is an essential requirement for further educational reform.

According to the Education Committee Annual Report, the shortage of teachers was also acute:

... it was only during the year ending 31st March 1947 that the first trickle of new teachers from Emergency Training Colleges gave indication of a steady stream of recruits to the profession which will enable the size of classes to be reduced to a maximum of 30 pupils per class in Secondary Schools and 40 pupils per class in Primary Schools as required under Ministry regulations.¹⁰³

Education was, however, certainly not the first priority as far as total local authority spending was concerned. The first priority was housing as the City's projected expenditure for 1948/49 shows. £2.47 million was thought to be required for Council housing schemes in that year. Education was second with a projected capital expenditure of £386,325. This included £109,000 in order to purchase and prepare a site in Pond and Arundel Streets for the new College of Technology but this idea had been abandoned for another site in the Devonshire Street district. It also included almost £50,000 to be spent on Thornbridge Hall and Thornbridge Manor which were to be converted into a training college for teachers to alleviate the shortage. After education, the next most costly item estimated for expenditure was town planning due to the need to purchase sites on The Moor and Angel Street for re-development.¹⁰⁴ An estimate of expenditure for the previous year 1947/48 put £100,000 as the sum that

would be spent on sites for the educational buildings contemplated by the Sheffield Education Committee, with £40,000 to be spent on the building. As much as £23,500 was estimated in that year for pre-fabricated hutments at the College of Arts and Crafts, the College of Technology, Salmon Pastures Building School, Coleridge Road Club-Institute and the Nether Edge Grammar School.¹⁰⁵ These sums for educational building were not excessive, which reflected the similar austerity conditions that affected council house construction and the redevelopment of the City Centre.

The Development Plan created by the Education Committee said, however, that, 'It has been fully appreciated for many years that extensive reconstruction and replanning of existing schools are necessary in Sheffield and that in many residential areas the present provision must be augmented.' Almost half the schools still in use had been erected in the Victorian era and were in areas scheduled under town plans for industrial development while new sites in populous areas were hard to come by. New primary schools were to be needed to deal with the bulge in population due to the post-war baby boom between 1946 and 1948, and 6,000 extra places had to be planned for.¹⁰⁶ Alderman Jackson during the 1949 municipal elections, however, criticised the fact that not one new school had been built in Sheffield and that all that had been built were a few pre-fabricated huts. He said that the Labour Party was more interested in secondary and adult education than in infants' and junior schools, and certainly the Labour manifesto emphasised, *pace* Barnett, technical education. According to it, the new College of Technology, 'Opens out the chances for the sons and daughters of the working class to take the highest posts in the new nationalised industries. ... The best jobs in transport, electricity, mines, gas and steel have usually gone to directors' friends or sons; they should go to the most suitable and best equipped people, poor or not.'¹⁰⁷ The Conservative-Liberals were still complaining in 1951 at the lack of progress in educational building. They said that Sheffield had one per cent of the country's population and should have had five schools already built by now and ten under construction. In fact, only one school had been built and there were another four being constructed.¹⁰⁸

Thorpe believes that the opposition to Labour had few grounds for criticism on educational matters because of the Labour commitment to grammar schools and that its failure to provide adequate nursery schools was due to reasons that would have found favour with the pre-1926 Liberal Alderman, Sir William Clegg, namely economy.¹⁰⁹ In 1944, the leaders of both main parties did commend the tripartite system of grammar, secondary modern and technical schools of the Butler Education Act based on the report of the Director of Education, Dr. Alexander. There was only one dissident at the meeting of the Sheffield Education Committee which approved it. Labour Councillor Mitchell supported the multilateral school and said that, 'The setting up of three types of schools will perpetuate that hateful intellectual snobbery which we have suffered from so much in times past. ... We should be raising a class of intellectual Pharisees who would thank God they were not like those kids in the Modern School nor those in the Technical School.' He himself was a retired secondary school teacher and he predicted that there would not be parity of esteem between the different types of school in the public mind. Alderman Jackson predictably saw the Alexander report 'as one of the finest pieces of work ever done in Sheffield.

... The committee was right in not tying itself to multilateral schools. Schools could be too big and the head lost touch with the children.’¹¹⁰

According to Francis, ‘Education policy ... demonstrates the importance of not viewing Labour’s [socialist] ideology in 1945-51 with the benefit of hindsight, and the necessity of appreciating the contemporary vitality of definitions of socialism which later generations were to find primitive or inadequate.’¹¹¹ Hence, to most in the Labour Party, as in Sheffield, acceptance of the tripartite system in education in the 1940s was fully part of what they considered socialism to be, though the comprehensive or multilateral school became Labour conventional wisdom from the late 1950s. Most of the development plans submitted to the Ministry of Education were clearly tripartite which reflects the lack of interest by local Labour Parties in the comprehensive. Only where comprehensives met a specific local need as in Southend or Anglesey did they go ahead and then they were supported by Labour’s opponents, for both those Local Education Authorities were Tory-controlled. Even in the London County Council, which was regarded as the most progressive Labour authority, while its development plan included some comprehensives it also intimated that it wanted to preserve grammar schools. Major London figures like Herbert Morrison or Margaret Cole opposed multilateral schools in this period, though Cole had changed her mind by the mid-1950s.¹¹² Equality of opportunity of all children to benefit from a system that had been restricted to the middle-classes was the Labour demand, while ideas of equality of outcome and positive discrimination were still distant dreams not yet articulated by anyone. It was in that spirit that the decision of the Sheffield Education Committee in 1945 to turn the King Edward VII School in Sheffield into a non-fee paying school was broadly welcomed by the Trades and Labour Council, for instance, but it was made clear that there would be no change to the curriculum or staff and no new way of appointing staff would be introduced.¹¹³

The most important figure supporting multilateral schools with jurisdiction in South Yorkshire was the Chief Education Officer of the West Riding County Council from 1945, Alec (later Sir Alec) Clegg. Peter Darvill compares him with another great educationalist, Henry Morris, who had been Chief Education Officer in Cambridgeshire in the 1930s and had started the village colleges in that county, and claims that both

saw schools as a source of social progress which could improve the lives of individuals and communities. Neither saw their departments as part of a framework of local government devoted solely to the efficient realisation of the policy decisions of elected members. Both realised their positions enabled them to influence policy and to accelerate, or slow down, those aspects of change which could improve or threaten the quality of education in schools or colleges. They lived in, and wrestled with, the ambivalence of their jobs. Their ideas had an impact far beyond their own authorities for both charted new routes for educational progress.¹¹⁴

Darvill has described Clegg's early years in his post, particularly between 1949 and 1952, as resembling 'the situation of a builder putting up foundations in stormy weather', and Clegg himself said in 1949 that, 'West Riding education, in my relatively short experience of it, has been very much the subject of fairly strident political views.'¹¹⁵ The Development Plan proposed a large number of comprehensives, and when the contents of the plan became public, the Conservatives expressed concern at 'a tendency to 'level down' the grammar schools and ignore the value of their fine traditions in an attempt to equalise conditions throughout the area'. The Labour Chairman of the Education Committee was to himself lose his seat to a businessman campaigning against multilateral schools. Labour lost control of the County Council in 1949 and, while they did not abandon the Development Plan, the Conservatives insisted that multilateral schools would only be introduced if local people in particular areas professed a preference for them.¹¹⁶ Clegg himself was to be accused of introducing multilateral schools by the backdoor in the school building programme of 1949/50¹¹⁷ but it was not until after 1952 when Labour re-took office that any comprehensives were actually built and only two had been begun when Labour again lost power in 1955.¹¹⁸ Clegg was not convinced that there would be parity of esteem between the various schools within the tripartite system and was very sceptical that pupils aptitudes for particular kinds of education could be decided at eleven by Cyril Burt's tests. The Development Plan quoted with approval the views of the Advisory Council of Education in Scotland 'that the scheme will end not in tripartite equality but in dualism of academic and technical, plus a permanently depressed element' and that

even if the tripartite scheme were wholly feasible, is it educationally desirable? If education is much more than instruction, is in fact life and preparation for life, can it be wisdom thus to segregate the types from an early age? On the contrary, we hold that school becomes colourful, rich and rewarding just in proportion as the boy who reads Homer, the boy who makes wireless sets, and the boy without marked aptitude for either are within its living unity, a constant stimulus and supplement one to another.¹¹⁹

Rotherham had submitted a Development Plan costing £1.8 million¹²⁰ to the Ministry of Education as early as June 1946 but the Ministry did not accept it as it stood and a second Development Plan involving capital expenditure of £1.5 million¹²¹ was submitted in April 1948. The major stumbling block was how Rotherham would make provision for enacting the tripartite system of secondary education. In the first Plan the two existing grammar schools would be retained, while the secondary modern schools would offer a distinct technical bias in the last two or three years of education. There would be no separate technical schools. This was unacceptable to the Ministry and as a result separate technical schools for boys and girls were to be opened in 1952 and 1953. It was not until 1956 that the first indication came that Rotherham Education Committee was thinking of alternatives to the tripartite system, and the trend only became public in 1959 with heated debate in the press and among the general public. Even in 1960, the two grammar schools retained their selective status in a reorganisation and it was 1963 before the Education Committee was directed by the Council to look at implementing total

comprehensivization of secondary schools. As in Sheffield, what counted in local Labour Party circles was that the two grammar schools would no longer be fee-paying.¹²² When Alderman Sam Hall completed twenty-one years as Chairman of the Education Committee in November 1949, looking back, he emphasised that in his time the education rate had risen from 3s. 9d. in 1928 to 8s. 5.5d. in 1949. And he said that, 'These figures are in some measure an indication of the evolutionary process that has been going on over the years until we are fast approaching the time when the child is no longer fitted to the requirements of the school, but the school is required to meet the needs of the child.'

What was happening after 1945 was often actually the catching up with projects that had been prevented from being implemented in the inter-war years. Rotherham proposed building an Open-Air School for Physically Defective Children in the mid-1930s, and though most of the building was completed by 1939, it was held up by the war and opened in 1948. Economic retrenchment was, as in Sheffield, to slow nursery school provision though the first one in Rotherham was opened in December 1948.¹²³ It too had been proposed in the 1930s.¹²⁴ Austerity conditions meant only gradual new development; it was December 1949 before the first post-war primary school was opened.¹²⁵ A second was opened in July 1951.¹²⁶ Overall Rotherham had to be grateful for such small mercies as at least a token of better times to come. Like so many other local authorities, including Sheffield, Labour Rotherham willingly accepted the tripartite system as fully realising its conception of socialism.

5.5 - CONCLUSION

This Chapter has looked at the various proposals produced to alter the local structure of local government, particularly the idea of creating a York South County Council, and has shown the lack of consensus even within South Yorkshire about local government reform. The ultimate outcome was satisfying to nobody. The county boroughs were largely unable to extend their boundaries to encompass more land for council housing, while the West Riding County Council and the district councils felt they had only won a pause in the perpetual conflict between local authorities - the county boroughs were unlikely to give up their territorial ambitions. Electricity, gas and hospitals were nationalised, taken out of local authority control, and handed over to unaccountable non-elected regional quangos. Despite the stated intent of many important figures within the Labour Government about the need to preserve local democracy, the actions of that Labour Government belied those intentions. There were contrary trends and some extra responsibilities were given to local authorities, but this opposing tendency was weaker than the tendency to centralisation and regionalisation. It was in some ways ironic that the regionalisation of local government had been fiercely attacked as undermining local democracy but that Labour local authorities like those in South Yorkshire could give away important symbols of municipal enterprise that had long been accountable to their own citizens and, what is more, in the case of electricity and gas, not be adequately remunerated for those municipal enterprises. Is it too cynical a suspicion to believe that the latter was acquiesced in because the Labour councillors remained more personally powerful and honoured even after nationalization than they would have been under the

general diminishment of their powers that would have been the case if Sheffield and Rotherham had become secondary authorities under a regional government ?

Nationalization of local government services was described as 'Labour's great mistake' in 1987.¹²⁷ David Blunkett believed this in the light of his experience as leader of Sheffield Council at a period when it was more ideologically left-wing than its predecessors and fighting the Thatcher Government. He saw nationalization as the first step on the road to rate-capping and the emasculation of local government by Thatcher. Ironically he was to be in 2002 a senior member of a government that announced even stricter control by Whitehall over local government in order to more efficiently deliver public services. It remains an open question whether municipal enterprise as an alternative form of socialist public enterprise could have fulfilled the goals that led Labour in 1945-51 to push nationalization to the extent it did. It is likely that it could not have done so. In electricity, gas and health, an untidy patchwork of provision would have continued due to the dilatoriness of Conservative local authorities. Nationalization in the form of the Morrisonian public corporation can be seen, however, as being a relatively conservative solution and not sufficiently thought out. Public enterprise could conceivably have been made competitive with private firms within the same industry to bring down costs instead of existing as monopolies that did not aid national economic planning. But this, though a solution put forward in the 1960s and 1970s, was destined never to be realised.

Under nationalization, each Briton theoretically owned a share in the nationalized industries, though it is unlikely they felt any real sense of ownership of such remote bodies and neither did the workers in them. Nationalization is often attacked because even in industrial relations, it is said, it did not necessarily bring about an atmosphere in which workers would work harder in the interest of the wider community. When this is said, the nationalized coal industry and the exaggerated socialist hopes placed on it by the Attlee Government is often focused upon. Tory newspapers in 1947 gleefully publicised the un-official 'Stint Strike' begun at Grimethorpe Colliery in South Yorkshire, which was to involve much of the South Yorkshire Coalfield in sympathy strikes.¹²⁸ However, this was equally true of municipal enterprise, even had it been a contender as an alternative democratic form of public ownership. Workers were primarily concerned about wage packets and differentials with other workers. Despite the appeals of Rotherham Council, for example, its transport workers struck on nine successive Sundays in 1946 in order to get increased payments of time-and-a-half for working on that day. This was despite a general agreement reached among local authorities with the Transport and General Workers' Union head office to pay only time-and-a-quarter.¹²⁹

- ¹ ROBINSON, Alderman Wright. 'Labour and Local Government' in TRACEY, Herbert (ed) The British Labour Party: Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders: Volume II. The Caxton Publishing Company Ltd., October 1948, p182.
- ² ROBINSON, Alderman W. October 1948, p185.
- ³ FRANCIS, Martin. 'Economics and Ethics: The Nature of Labour's Socialism, 1945-1951', Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1995, p232.
- ⁴ FRANCIS, M. 1995, p233.
- ⁵ FRANCIS, M. 1995, p232.
- ⁶ TOMLINSON, Jim. 'Why So Austere ? The British Welfare State of the 1940s', Journal of Social Policy, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1998, pp63-77.
- ⁷ GYFORD, John. 'The Politicization of Local Government' in LOUGHLIN, Martin, GELFAND, M. David and YOUNG, Ken (eds) Half a Century of Municipal Decline 1935-1985. George Allen and Unwin, 1985(a), pp84-5.
- ⁸ GYFORD, John. The Politics of Local Socialism. George Allen and Unwin, 1985(b), pp69-70.
- ⁹ See HAYES, Nick. Consensus and Controversy: City Politics in Nottingham 1945-1966. Liverpool University Press, 1996.
- ¹⁰ Doncaster Gazette 24/05/1951, p5.
- ¹¹ For a discussion of middle-class discontents after World War Two, see MCKIBBIN, Ross. Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951. Oxford University Press, 2000, pp62-9.
- ¹² Sheffield Telegraph 29/04/1950, p3. The latter consumer items were the equivalent of the fur coats and pianos whose possession by members of the working classes so scandalised elements of the right-wing popular press like the Daily Mail read by the lower middle classes during and after World War One - see MARWICK, Arthur. The Deluge: British Society and the First World War. Macmillan, 1991, p165.
- ¹³ SUTCLIFFE, Anthony and SMITH, Roger. History of Birmingham Volume III: Birmingham 1939-1970. Oxford University Press, 1974, p59.
- ¹⁴ GYFORD, J. 1985(b), p10.
- ¹⁵ GYFORD, J. 1985(b), p10.
- ¹⁶ PHILLIPS, Morgan. 'The Labour Party and Local Government', 1951, General Secretary's Department, Box 15 - Local Government/10 (Labour Party Archive).
- ¹⁷ ALEXANDER, Alan. 'Structure, Centralization and the Position of Local Government' in LOUGHLIN, Martin, GELFAND, M. David and YOUNG, Ken (eds) Half a Century of Municipal Decline 1935-1985. George Allen and Unwin, 1985, pp54-5.
- ¹⁸ TAYLOR, Miles. 'Labour and the Constitution' in TANNER, Duncan, THANE, Pat and TIRATSOO, Nick (eds) Labour's First Century. Cambridge University Press, 2000, p166.
- ¹⁹ ALEXANDER, A. 1985, p55.
- ²⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 28/06/1949, p1.
- ²¹ ALEXANDER, A. 1985, pp55-6.
- ²² The Times 24/07/1951, p5.
- ²³ Sheffield Telegraph 31/05/1951, p3.
- ²⁴ Rotherham Advertiser 20/09/1947, p5.
- ²⁵ South Yorkshire Times and Express 18/06/1949. This was reflected in the actual provisions of the Sheffield Extension Bill in 1951.
- ²⁶ South Yorkshire Times and Express 18/06/1949.
- ²⁷ For example, this topic was raised in a letter to the Sheffield Telegraph in 1943 questioning the veracity of the legend. An article in the Rotherham Advertiser 28/08/1943, p8, however, asserted that 'it is beyond dispute that Sheffield in days gone by was officially looked upon as being near Rotherham' alleging as evidence that Rotherham had a stone church long before Sheffield, and that Rotherham Church itself was of greater antiquity than the Cathedral.
- ²⁸ Rotherham Advertiser 10/04/1948, p8.
- ²⁹ The Star 31/10/1947, p5.
- ³⁰ Rotherham Advertiser 10/04/1948, p8.
- ³¹ South Yorkshire Times and Express 07/04/1945, p1.
- ³² South Yorkshire Times and Express 28/07/1945, p5, 11.
- ³³ TRICKETT, Harold Robinson. 'A Geographical Study of the Urban District of Swinton (Yorks.)', City of Leeds Training College, 1948-50, pp139-40 (Manuscript in my possession. A copy, however, has been placed in Rotherham Archives and Local Studies Section).
- ³⁴ Barnsley Chronicle 12/10/1946, p1.
- ³⁵ Rotherham Advertiser 20/09/1947, p8.

- ³⁶ Rotherham Advertiser 05/02/1949, p8.
- ³⁷ In Doncaster, like Sheffield, it was decided to promote a Parliamentary Extension Bill because land was needed to continue the council housing programme. See Finance and General Purposes (Local Government Reform) Sub-Committee, 14/07/1949, Doncaster Town Council Minute Book 1949/50, p170. Unlike Sheffield, Doncaster was successful, though of the extra 570 acres it was agreed that most should be preserved as part of the green belt. The extra population and rateable value gained was minor. WORMALD, H. R. Modern Doncaster: The Progress and Development of the Borough from 1836 to 1973-4. Doncaster County Borough, 1973, p13.
- ³⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 28/06/1949, p3.
- ³⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 28/06/1949, p2.
- ⁴⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 28/06/1949, p3.
- ⁴¹ HEY, David. A History of Sheffield. Carnegie Publishing Ltd., 1998, pp248-9.
- ⁴² MARSHALL, R. J. 'Town Planning in Sheffield' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993 Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p28.
- ⁴³ 1947 Municipal Progressive Election Leaflet (Sheffield Local Studies Library).
- ⁴⁴ PHILLIPS, M. 1951, p1 (Labour Party Archive).
- ⁴⁵ CRAIG, F. W. S. British General Election Manifestos 1900-74. Macmillan, 1975, p127.
- ⁴⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 30/04/1949, p3.
- ⁴⁷ MORGAN, Kenneth O. Labour in Power 1945-1951. Oxford University Press, 1986, p103.
- ⁴⁸ HAYES, N. 1996, p59.
- ⁴⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 29/01/1947, p3.
- ⁵⁰ FIELDING, Steven, THOMPSON, Peter and TIRATSOO, Nick. "England Arise !": The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain. Manchester University Press, 1995, p107.
- ⁵¹ Sheffield Telegraph 08/04/1948, p3.
- ⁵² Civic Review, No. 4, April 1949, p2.
- ⁵³ Sheffield Telegraph 10/05/1951, p3.
- ⁵⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 08/04/1948, p3.
- ⁵⁵ THORPE, Andrew. 'The Consolidation of a Labour Stronghold 1926-1951' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993 Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p114.
- ⁵⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 08/04/1948, p3.
- ⁵⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 30/04/1949, p3.
- ⁵⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 10/05/1949, p3.
- ⁵⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 30/04/1949, p3.
- ⁶⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 11/05/1949, p3.
- ⁶¹ BLUNKETT, David and JACKSON, Keith. Democracy in Crisis: The Town Halls Respond. The Hogarth Press, 1987, p48.
- ⁶² MATHERS, Helen. 'The City of Sheffield 1893-1926' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993 Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p55.
- ⁶³ Sheffield Telegraph 12/02/1948, p1.
- ⁶⁴ Kelley's Directory 1944, p1291.
- ⁶⁵ GUMMER, George. Reminiscences of Rotherham: A Retrospect of Over 60 Years. Henry Garnett and Co. Ltd., 1927, p295.
- ⁶⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 29/01/1947, p3.
- ⁶⁷ Rotherham Advertiser 30/04/1949, p10.
- ⁶⁸ RIVETT, Geoffrey. From Cradle to Grave: Fifty Years of the NHS. King's Fund Publishing, 1998, p28.
- ⁶⁹ PHILLIPS, M. 1951, p1 (Labour Party Archive).
- ⁷⁰ Health Sub-Committee, 29/08/1944, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1943/44, pp294-5.
- ⁷¹ THORPE, A. 1993, p114.
- ⁷² HENNESSY, Peter. Never Again: Britain 1945-1951. Vintage, 1993, p139.
- ⁷³ CRAIG, F. W. S. 1975, p129.
- ⁷⁴ The Progressive Party's Programme of Practical Reforms, 1945 Municipal Election Leaflet, CPR 8 (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁷⁵ Labour Will Lead in Civic Progress, 1945 Municipal Election Leaflet, CPR 8 (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁷⁶ Labour Has Accomplished, 1946 Municipal Election Leaflet, CPR 8 (Sheffield Archives).

- ⁷⁷ Vote Progressive - We are Pledged to Meet Needs with Deeds, 1946 Municipal Election Leaflet, CPR 8 (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁷⁸ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P. AND TIRATSOO, N. 1995, p102.
- ⁷⁹ HENNESSY, P. 1993, p139.
- ⁸⁰ FOOT, Michael. Aneurin Bevan 1897-1960. Indigo, 1999, p299.
- ⁸¹ BLUNKETT, D. and JACKSON, K. 1987, p66.
- ⁸² MATHERS, Helen and MCINTOSH, Tania. Born in Sheffield: A History of the Women's Health Services 1864-2000. Wharncliffe Books, 2000, pp101-2. Bevan visited the Jessop in 1946 but this did not reassure the Board who feared their high standards would be compromised.
- ⁸³ Sheffield Telegraph 26/09/1945, p3.
- ⁸⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 30/06/1948, p3.
- ⁸⁵ FOOT, M. 1999, p299.
- ⁸⁶ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Sixth Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for the Year Ended 1947, p51.
- ⁸⁷ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Seventh Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for the Year Ended 1948, p51.
- ⁸⁸ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Eighth Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for the Year Ended 1949, pp43-5.
- ⁸⁹ Sheffield Forward, Vol. 6, No. 138, November 1950, p4.
- ⁹⁰ News Chronicle 16/10/1950.
- ⁹¹ Hastings, Dr. Somerville, Hansard, Oral Answer, Hilary Marquand, 03/05/1951, Columns 1394-5.
- ⁹² Sheffield Telegraph 04/10/1950, p3.
- ⁹³ FRANCIS, Martin. Ideas and Policies Under Labour, 1945-1951: Building a New Britain. Manchester University Press, 1997, p106.
- ⁹⁴ COLLINGE, Chris. 'The Dynamics of Local Intervention: Economic Development and the Theory of Local Government', Urban Studies, Vol. 29, No. 1, 1992, p61. Collinge believes in contrast to other Marxists that local government has had an equally important role in the sphere of capitalist production and, like Barnett, he notes that services like education provided by local authorities had social *and* economic consequences (p58).
- ⁹⁵ BARNETT, Correlli. The Audit of War: The Illusions and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation. Pan, 1996, Ch. 11.
- ⁹⁶ MCKIBBIN, R. 2000, p95, 97.
- ⁹⁷ LOWE, Rodney. The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945. Macmillan, 1993, p199, 200.
- ⁹⁸ BARNETT, C. 1996, p291
- ⁹⁹ PHILLIPS, M. 1951, p2.
- ¹⁰⁰ LOWE, R. 1993, p197.
- ¹⁰¹ PHILLIPS, M. 1951, p4.
- ¹⁰² LOWE, R. 1993, pp203-4.
- ¹⁰³ City of Sheffield Education Committee Survey April 1939-March 1947 and Annual Report for Year Ending 31st March 1948, p6, 8.
- ¹⁰⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 26/01/1948, p2.
- ¹⁰⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 09/11/1946, p3.
- ¹⁰⁶ HEY, David. 'Education in Sheffield: Sheffield Schools, 1918-60' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993 Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p321.
- ¹⁰⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 30/04/1949, p3.
- ¹⁰⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 10/05/1951, p3.
- ¹⁰⁹ THORPE, A. 1993, p114. According to HEY, D. 1993, p321 plans for nursery provision were made under Attlee, yet (p323) even in 1957/9 there were in total places for just 750 children in Sheffield.
- ¹¹⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 24/10/1944, p3.
- ¹¹¹ FRANCIS, M. 1995, p226.
- ¹¹² FRANCIS, M. 1997, pp148-9.
- ¹¹³ Sheffield Telegraph 25/04/1945, p3.
- ¹¹⁴ DARVILL, Peter. Sir Alec Clegg. A Biographical Study. Able Publishing, 2000, p6.
- ¹¹⁵ DARVILL, P. 2000, p23.
- ¹¹⁶ BARBER, B. J. and BERESFORD, M. W. The West Riding County Council 1889-1974: Historical Studies. West Yorkshire County Council, 1976, p174.
- ¹¹⁷ DARVILL, P. 2000, p22.
- ¹¹⁸ BARBER, B. J. and BERESFORD, M. W. 1976, p174.

- ¹¹⁹ DARVILL, P. 2000, p25.
- ¹²⁰ Figure from Rotherham and District Annual 1947.
- ¹²¹ Figure from Rotherham and District Annual 1949. The Plan was published on 2 October 1948.
- ¹²² CATER, P. M. 100 Years of Education in Rotherham. Rotherham Education Committee, 1970, pp18-20.
- ¹²³ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Eighth Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for the Year Ending 1949, p35, 37.
- ¹²⁴ CATER, P. M. 1970, p17.
- ¹²⁵ Rotherham and District Annual 1951.
- ¹²⁶ Rotherham and District Annual 1952.
- ¹²⁷ BLUNKETT, D. and JACKSON, K. 1987, p64.
- ¹²⁸ For the strike see FISHMAN, Nina. 'Coal: Owned and Managed on Behalf of the People' in FYRTH, Jim (ed) Labour's High Noon: The Government and the Economy 1945-51. Lawrence and Wishart, 1993, pp68-71.
- ¹²⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 20/04/1946, p8.

CHAPTER SIX
NEW JERUSALEM
POSTPONED ?
TOWN PLANNING AND
HOUSING PROVISION,
1945-1951

6.1 - INTRODUCTION

In 1957, Henry Foster, Sheffield City Engineer, Surveyor and Planning Officer, summed up the experience of town planning since 1945 by quoting the poet Robert Browning:

*The common problem, yours, mine, everyone's
Is - not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be, - but, finding first
What may be, then find out how to make it fair
Up to our means.*

He went on:

It is this common problem . . . that the Town Planner is tackling: and it is because he is tackling it in this seemingly prosaic way that planning has lost much of its public appeal. In the heyday of theoretical planning, after the end of the war, when many town and city plans were prepared, most of their authors enjoyed themselves fancying what was fair in life, without even stopping to consider whether it could be. This did a great dis-service to planning; for it gave the impression that planning was soon to lead us from the gloom of the war years into an exciting brave new world. The point was made in 1945, in "Sheffield Re-planned," that "there is no sense in preparing a plan which, though ideal in conception we cannot ever hope to carry out." It is now becoming more widely understood that our plans cannot solve our problems overnight; that, long in the making, they will be longer in the doing: and so the fire of popular enthusiasm which they originally kindled has quickly burned itself out.¹

This would seem fair comment, though it has now become legitimate to ask whether popular enthusiasm for town planning ever existed in the 1940s, except immediately after the Blitz, given the conservatism expressed in insistent demands for building new housing even if it was contrary to the longer term needs of communities expressed in their town plans. Foster seems to agree with Barnett about the pernicious influence of 'New Jerusalemist' attitudes and the need for economic realism, but he does not believe that planning in Sheffield even in 1945 can be criticised for not recognising this. The Collie Plan, it was said, 'differed from most plans . . . in that it rejected the idea of a fixed "master plan" in favour of a flexible

scheme which would allow for progressive adjustment to accord with current needs and legislation.’ This was ‘implicit in the 1947 Town Planning Act, which call[ed] for a “programming” of all development plans and for five-yearly revisions in the light of experience of them.’ The ‘conception of flexibility and practicability which underlay its plan has since been generally accepted.’ These virtues grew out of Sheffield’s long experience of producing plans. However while this had made ‘much positive progress possible within the limits of national conditions’ it was ‘felt, however, that more might have been done if there had been greater local freedom to build’ and that the City Council was

frankly disappointed at the progress in rebuilding the main shopping centre in The Moor and High Street. Two city stores have been partly completed and opened to trade, and the first instalments of two more are in progress, but the council, while appreciating the difficulties about materials and licences, feel that the city has not received the treatment merited by the damage it suffered.²

This feeling was common to many blitzed cities between 1945 and 1951 despite a Labour Government being in power and most of them having elected Labour Councils which might have appeared to smooth matters. In fact, central government caution and petty interference was just as marked as under the wartime Coalition government in both town planning and house construction. In terms of the City Council’s housing programme, it can be compared with that of Rotherham County Borough which got underway more rapidly and was more efficient in producing permanent houses. As both suffered from government red tape and indecision this must be due to the degree of war damage sustained which delaying the start of Sheffield’s programme, as well as better co-ordination between the Rotherham Council departments. My research tends to support Tiratsoo and Hasegawa’s conclusions about the reasons for the slow implementation of town planning, and those of Nicholas Bullock on housing. Bullock has looked at Finsbury in London and the success of its post-war housing programme. He argues that the critics of Bevan who argued against reliance on local authorities to build houses and called instead for a national housing corporation were wrong. Any failings were due to the inadequacy of the central planning of the housing programme. There would have been a considerable further time-lag in production if a national housing corporation had been handed the job afresh and it is not clear that it would have been any more successful in solving the imbalance between the volume of houses approved and labour and materials.³

Though municipal elections resumed in 1945 and Labour was again accountable to voters, Labour in Sheffield or Rotherham was never in any danger of losing control of policy-making and implementation, and the continuity of policy in housing and town planning is very visible. Popular participation in these areas of policy was not a formal legal requirement placed on the Council even under a Labour Government and it remained a technical matter for Council members and their officers.⁴ Housing, however, was prioritised even over city centre reconstruction. Most 1940s surveys showed that this accorded with public opinion, though the two Councils made none of their own, probably considering it

superfluous. Labour was pledged to get rid of slums because, as Sir Stafford Cripps said, they 'only too often [produced] slum minds and slum habits' which were barriers to the inculcation of socialist attitudes and behaviour in the wider public. There was thus a direct link between the physical environment and the creation of social consciousness, which led Labour to support the creation of 'neighbourhood-units' to attempt to create community-feeling on the new housing estates.⁵ Social justice was a Labour aspiration often expressed, but it is not hard also to find reasons of economic efficiency behind the desire to re-house the inhabitants of Sheffield's slums particularly in the Lower Don Valley where they occupied land long-earmarked for industrial expansion. The views of some Labour politicians like Herbert Morrison on the need for creating an 'active democracy' as expressed in a speech in 1948 also imply this. Fielding notes that, 'His vision of active democracy was that of a society in which individuals worked harder for their elected representatives. A closer relationship between rulers and ruled meant, in this instance, a more efficient work-force: it did not imply a government more open and willing to take account of popular initiatives.' This was expressed in an article in 1991, which also instructively notes the unwillingness of Labour in government to employ public relations to 'sell' people its message, is evidence that Labour did not genuinely accept the legitimacy of popular participation, despite all that Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo say in their book of 1995 about its desire to increase participation and diminish helplessness among ordinary citizens by creating a 'Responsible Society'.⁶ Tiratsoo may believe that the town planners were mild reformers often frustrated by popular conservatism and apathy and that they wanted to work as far as possible in harmony with the citizens they served, but their Labour masters, and they themselves too, often, as in Sheffield, failed to involve them directly except in the most perfunctory way before the plans had been drawn up.⁷ On the other hand, it is true that Alderman Charles William Gascoigne, chairman of the Town Planning and Estates Committees in 1945 was a council house tenant and a gas-fitter whose work had allegedly brought him into thousands of homes so he would directly understand the grievances of Sheffield citizens.⁸ It is not true that all council tenants were not interested in participation either in town planning or in the formal government of their council estates, as this proves, though most were probably not bothered. We simply do not know for they were not asked.

Labour may have had the universalist philosophy of citizenship classically stated by T. H. Marshall that called for the expansion of the social rights that underpinned the welfare state, but it has been criticised by many critics, including those of the Left, as fostering a 'dependency culture'.⁹ Meller argues that the concept of civic citizenship was diminished in the 1940s precisely because of the implementation of the equality in social rights characteristic of this 'bureaucratic welfarism'. Pride in one's city was no longer measured in terms of the deeds enacted by local volunteers and philanthropists as in the nineteenth century. They had been directly interested in the betterment of their local communities because they lived within them and were affected by the plight of 'their' poor. Civic pride was now measured through the actions of professional and local government administrators who believed on the basis of technical expertise that they knew what should be done when, for example, city centres needed to be rebuilt or houses designed.¹⁰ Ravetz has argued that they ignored the idea that there was a complex and

interdependent link between people and their environment, enacting a 'clean sweep' style which treated the city as a thing whose past urban fabric could simply be jettisoned without any loss to its citizens.¹¹

Tiratsoo¹² and Hasegawa¹³ have done much to show the falsity of the Barnett thesis of 'Parlours before Plant'. In South Yorkshire, labour shortages meant that housing had to be built around Sheffield for steelworkers and in the South Yorkshire Coalfield for miners whose activities were vital to a government trying to create an export-led economic recovery. Thus, there was an economic rationale for the local housing programmes since they increased labour flexibility. While Barnett does briefly note in parenthesis that housing could have economic value when specifically linked to industrial expansion,¹⁴ he never provides an estimate of what he considers should have actually been spent on housing as against spending on new factories or infrastructure when making his criticisms. He does not give a figure for economically useful housing as against wasteful housing. He also criticises the Labour pledge to build four to five million new houses after the war¹⁵ as the 'loveliest dream' of New Jerusalem,¹⁶ but this was never achieved while Labour was in office. From 1948 overall numbers of new housing completions actually declined year on year from 227,000 in 1948 to 194,000 in 1951, and the Ministry of Health which had the responsibility for allocating housing was actually restraining local authorities like Sheffield or Rotherham from building all the houses they would have liked to have built.¹⁷ The economy, not public housing, was the most important priority to the Labour government. Contemporary witness from sources like Picture Post¹⁸ as well as many secondary accounts of the period note the overlapping responsibilities for housing between different Government departments which actually prevented effective co-ordination and the overloading of Bevan by his responsibilities for both housing and the National Health Service.¹⁹ This is seen as a mistake of Attlee which went against the manifesto pledge to put housing in a ministry with town planning.²⁰ This, however, also gives the lie to Barnett that housing was the number one priority.

6.2 - TOWN PLANNING IN SHEFFIELD, 1945-1951

In October 1945 Collie, the City Engineer, said to Alderman Thraves, Leader of the City Council, of the plan to redevelop Glasgow city centre that: 'The proposals are of a major character, and the scheme, as a whole, is perhaps, as imaginative and far-reaching as any I have seen. Certainly it goes much further than the present Sheffield proposals, though I think there is much more hope of the latter being carried out.'²¹ We noted in the Introduction the emphasis on the practicability of Sheffield's planning and it thus might seem surprising that with all the stress placed on that more was not actually done to advance the implementation of town planning in Sheffield than was actually the case. In November 1945, Collie wrote to the Regional Planning Officer of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning to say that he was preparing a general development plan for the City and asked for approval of his approach. One reason for limited accomplishment by the Council was that he had only had a limited staff to work with. To prevent unnecessary work he was concentrating his detailed attention on areas of the city which would be developed in the near future and sketching the road pattern and land use zones. He again stressed that

his detailed work bore 'clearly in mind the essential concept of practicability' and asserted that 'Industry is the basis of all our planning'.²²

A broad overview of planning aims and strategy was given in a talk for the BBC's Northern Programme in 1946. The planners were referred to as 'energetic people with a real vision of what can be done with this great smoking, toiling city of the industrial North, where half a million people work and live.' One of their problems was

whether the city is to remain busy and prosperous. On that everything else depends. This is realised by those responsible for the planning of the city. I was greatly impressed by the sense of reality with which the problems are being approached. First, to decide what kind of city and what size of city was wanted. Afterwards, and only when that had been clearly reviewed, to get down to details.²³

There is unmistakable deference to the expert here, with the assumption that because he (and it was usually he) had the technical expertise, then his professional competence to plan a whole city so as to solve all the problems of its citizens and promote economic prosperity went unquestioned. Henry Foster was less starry-eyed when he discussed town planning in 1957. He remarked that 'it has been found much easier to state a problem than to provide a solution.'²⁴

Amongst the assumptions of the planners were that the city population would remain static at half a million and that the city would remain the same size and would not need to swallow up surrounding districts.²⁵ The static population assumption, though it proved wrong (for the population had actually fallen by 1961), was taken at the time as further evidence of the Sheffield plan's practicability.²⁶ The area of Sheffield remained the same until 1967²⁷ and Collie in November 1945 claimed that Sheffield presented a problem very different from Leeds, Plymouth or Manchester, having still within its borders an undeveloped area sufficiently large to accommodate some 35,000 new houses.²⁸ Part of this land in the Handsworth-Woodhouse area had just been compulsorily purchased, and, in its recommendations in March 1945, the Town Planning Committee had called for 'the creation of a new town with a population of approximately 80,000, which is considerably larger than some County Boroughs'. This estate represented the second and third years of the post-war housing programme.²⁹ Yet at the end of 1947 the Corporation had built only 912 temporary dwellings and land was thus not an immediate practical problem. It was a problem of the future.³⁰

The Council, however, then discarded the static area assumption, and their proposals to the Local Government Boundary Commission called for the incorporation of areas including Wortley Rural District and Stocksbridge Urban District to provide fresh land for future building.³¹ It cannot be a coincidence that in 1947 J. E. Edwards of the Ministry of Labour told the Sheffield Trades Council that there were over a thousand vacancies in Sheffield's steel industry which could not be filled locally and

proposed a conference of Labour organisations to compile a lodgings list so new recruits could be rapidly accommodated. The Ministry appealed to working-class Sheffielders to help as a service they could perform for the export drive: 'I want everybody to be mustered into a drive for lodgings in Sheffield, acting as 'door knockers' to their neighbours, and getting enthusiasm and a feeling of doing the right thing out of a job that is essential at the present time.'³² Conditions of labour shortage continued into the 1950s with full employment and a booming local economy, but obviously such short term expedients as a lodgings list were not good enough particularly given the existing long waiting list for council houses, and there was great need that extra houses be built to improve labour flexibility. The Handsworth-Woodhouse project had also run into problems in 1947. The housing programme was menaced because the Ministry of Fuel and Power wanted to start open-cast coal extraction on the land. 'Current Topics' was sceptical of the ability of the Labour Council to stand up for Sheffield's interests against a Labour Government:

We may be certain, however, that whatever Whitehall wants Sheffield will not protest as long as the Socialists are in office at the Town Hall. Sheffield's interests come before support of the Socialist Government. Those interests are not being cared for or maintained at present. Hospitals, electricity, and transport are all to be handed over to remote rulers, and local government itself is being destroyed.³³

The Local Government Boundary Commission was abolished before Sheffield's wishes were met and the only route left open was a Parliamentary Extension Bill. In September 1949, the Council produced a Bill which would extend Sheffield's area into Wortley and Chesterfield Rural Districts.³⁴ The latter proposal meant extending the boundaries into Derbyshire, and Fred Mulley, Labour M.P. for Park, who introduced the Bill on its Second Reading in March 1951, amusingly said in favour of it that it would 'extend the area of birth qualification to play for Yorkshire. It may be that another Len Hutton, Hedley Verity, Wilfred Rhodes or Herbert Sutcliffe may, in this way, qualify to play for Yorkshire.' The real reasons were that it would provide enough land for the further house building programme which would last six to seven years under existing conditions (though the Council wanted to speed this up) and cut procedural delays that arose from the need to get permission from other councils when wanting to build houses for Sheffield citizens beyond its borders.

Sheffield MPs all supported the Bill in Parliament but they were opposed by Henry George McGhee, Labour M.P. for Penistone, who made interesting allegations about the Council's motives. He was interested in land reform and had lived in Sheffield for twenty-five years. He alleged that there was 2,493 acres of building land available in the West End but that the affluent inhabitants did not want council houses in their areas though they exploited the working classes for their livelihoods. The Council did not want to put houses there as it would decrease the City's rateable value. He alleged that the great hereditary landlords of Sheffield, the Howards and Fitzwilliams, in order to get around the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 which would force them to sell their land at

present use value if the Council wanted to develop it, so losing them any betterment value, had decided not to sell land and to convert it to leasehold. The Council, however, refused to apply compulsory purchase orders against the Duke of Norfolk or Earl Fitzwilliam because it was frightened of them, yet it was a different story when encroaching on districts outside their boundaries. There it went much further with legal action and sought eviction orders against sitting tenants like the small farmers of Wortley district who were weaker prey.³⁵

However true these allegations were, the Bill was eventually thrown out by the House of Lords because of the large amount of land in Sheffield designated as open space by the planners that could potentially be built upon. This led the Council into conflict from 1952 with the Sheffield and Peak District branch of the CPRE which favoured a distant satellite town or building on blitzed inner city sites rather than encroachment on the provisional green belt which it had campaigned so actively for in the 1930s. At a public inquiry in 1952 into the Council's plans to acquire land in the green belt for housing, the Town Clerk said that for the loss of 2.5 per cent of the green belt, 33,000 people on the waiting list would have to wait just two extra years to be housed. He then offensively contrasted the membership of the local CPRE which was under 1,200 people with the city's population of over half a million, and summed up the issue as 'The view for the few - or houses for the many'. The latter demonstrates the arrogance of Council attitudes and the marked change in them since the green belt had been provisionally delineated despite influential Labour Party members like Fred Marshall on the CPRE executive and the use of the countryside for amenity purposes like rambling by local working-class people. Rambling had long been a radical left-wing movement, sometimes taking direct action as at the famous Kinder Scout Mass Trespass in 1932, and it was a relatively inexpensive hobby.³⁶

In July 1947 Ernest Taylor wrote a Star article entitled 'Plan For New Sheffield Now Operating', in which he reminded readers who might believe nothing was happening that the Sheffield Plan was actually being very slowly implemented. He admitted, however, that there had

been no spectacular developments. And at the risk of being proved wrong, I doubt if there will be for years to come. But the fact remains, the plan is taking shape. Those who expected a new Moor, Civic Circle, or other major development overnight - it was foolish anyway - have been disappointed. On the other hand, have you noticed the factories being erected here and there in the city? Well, they are part and parcel of the ultimate plan. They are being built only in specified areas.

Taylor informed his readers that Sheffield was actually regarded as the leading planning authority in the North-Eastern Planning Region despite this lack of progress.³⁷

Housing was still unashamedly the aspiration that had first priority which was no doubt a reason why the Council was commended for the 'practicability' of its Plan.³⁸ Concentration on this actually provides

evidence of a refusal to support visionary 'New Jerusalemism' in town planning whatever its effect on industry. But the needs of the local economy were being met first. The Council Estates Surveyor was also its Industrial Development Officer and in 1946 a separate office was set up within his department to deal with the large number of firms making inquiries about land for post-war industrial projects. The need to rebuild and modernise factories was clearly recognised by the Council and because of the great demand for land the Council was forced to buy much more for leasing to industry.³⁹ In 1948 the Council information sheet Civic Record noted that:

When the war ended everyone hoped to see a new and finely planned Sheffield arise on the ruins of her central streets. The plans are there, and in due course fine, modern buildings will replace those destroyed. But the economic crisis, and the shortages of labour and materials make it unlikely that any major building schemes - *except perhaps those concerned with industrial development* [emphasis added] - can be completed for a long time to come.⁴⁰

It was feared that Sheffield was being fatally damaged as a shopping centre by the slow progress of reconstruction. It was an issue in the municipal elections of 1947. Progressive Councillor Oliver S. Holmes argued that if the Labour Council had taken a stronger line with Whitehall then The Moor would not still be a desolation of rubble and stagnant water. He alleged that the problem lay in the protracted discussions over whether The Moor was to be a main traffic artery or a shopping centre. If the Council had insisted on the latter from the start, good progress could have been made. It was not material shortages but an artificial barrier of red tape, forms, permits and restrictions that was holding up progress.⁴¹

The Council's own complaints about Government red tape and bureaucracy were set out in a long letter by Collie to the Town Clerk in May 1949. He complained that:

The exercise of control by Government Departments has increased greatly during the post war years, and there is no doubt that there is greater delay in getting things settled than existed pre-war. Generally, I would say that Government Departments concern themselves with too much detail. This has the effect of choking their organisation and leaving insufficient time to consider the major questions.

Taking the Ministry of Transport as an example, this Ministry has had a Regional organisation since its creation, and in pre-war days the Regional Officers concerned themselves mostly with the bigger road schemes. Today, the smallest road matter exercises their attention and generally requires a personal visit by an officer of the Ministry.

But it was the delays with major works that were particularly inconvenient and he singled out the Tinsley Bridges scheme.⁴² The scheme was first considered in 1928 but work started in 1938 at an estimated cost of £120,000. Work was suspended by the Ministry despite the Council's protests in 1941 with 60 per cent of it completed at a cost of £79,000. As soon as hostilities ceased, the Council agitated for the scheme to be restarted. In September 1947, it was estimated that the final cost to complete it would now be £182,000 given the scarcity of labour and materials.⁴³ Approval to re-start, however, had only been given 'within the last few weeks.'⁴⁴

It was, however, The Moor and the adjacent shopping streets that sparked the greatest concern. A public inquiry was held in December 1948 and January 1949 over a Declaratory Order to allow the Council to compulsorily purchase 198 acres of land in central Sheffield which included these streets. 300 objections were lodged which had to be dealt with individually.⁴⁵ Then the Council had to wait for approval by the Government which was only given in November 1949 after ten months of delay.⁴⁶ Without approval, The Moor could not be redeveloped but ultimately only 92 acres were approved when the decision was announced.⁴⁷ The decision did not please the Sheffield Labour movement. Sheffield Forward complained that 'if we are ever to have any town planning at all here or anywhere else, this kind of unconscionable delay has to come to an end. The circumlocutory methods of Government departments have to be straightened out and shortened, or the "British way of life" will get a rude shake-up.' It continued,

There can be no Town Planning worth the name, or country planning either, until competent authorities have powers to deal with these matters without delay. At present local authorities are involved in enormous expense and a fearful waste of time, only to result in a crippling of their plans. Even the old Radical Party stood for land nationalisation more than fifty years ago, and Socialists must not forget that that is the fundamental principle of their policy.⁴⁸

Central government was equally important in helping to advance or retard re-development through its control of financial purse strings. In August 1950, for example, Sheffield was allocated as little as £350,000 out of the total of just £4 million pounds authorised by the government in the form of licences for rebuilding on bombed sites in eighteen blitzed towns in 1951. This money could not be used for buying land, clearing it or laying on roads and services and progress would be reviewed by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning who would amend the allocations made if the whole allotment was not being used as agreed.⁴⁹ The Communist Daily Worker said that each town might just be able to 'get one, but no more than two new buildings next year' and that it was 'not even pin money'.⁵⁰ In the period 1949-51 Sheffield was given a grand total of £802,500 in 'blitz allocation' by the Labour government and used it to start re-building two flagship city centre stores, Woolworths and John Walsh's.⁵¹

The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 gave planning authorities the power to purchase land before it

was developed and retain the freehold, but ultimately only the blitzed cities had the means to do this.

Yet as Ravetz points out even where massive landholdings were achieved a new kind of urban order was not created.⁵² This, though, certainly seems to have been what some members of Sheffield Labour Party intended:

The Labour Council has sought to acquire land for this [housing] and other purposes with the intention of retaining it for all time as public property. Land which was common property less than 160 years ago is now having to be purchased for the City's urgent needs at as much as £50 per square yard. What would this have meant to the people of Sheffield to-day had we adopted Labour's policy 100 years ago? The saving in our Town Planning scheme alone is almost immeasurable. It is only common sense, then, to suggest that land thus acquired will not be re-sold.⁵³

The 7th Earl Fitzwilliam⁵⁴ and the Duke of Norfolk⁵⁵ were presidents of Sheffield Conservative Federation in the 1940s and the principal landowners in Sheffield so land purchase by the Council could have potential party political overtones. Their ownership of Sheffield land had long been contested and in the nineteenth century the Mayor of Sheffield had led opposition to the leasehold system.⁵⁶ However, it was only to be expected that the Fitzwilliams, for example, would have additional personal political antagonism to Labour due to the open-casting for coal of Wentworth Park which continued into the early 1950s. Jones has noted that, 'To many observers the open-cast operations at Wentworth looked like a personal vendetta by Emanuel Shinwell, the Minister of Fuel and Power, against Earl Fitzwilliam, a representative of the old order.'⁵⁷ The tragic death of the 8th Earl in a plane crash in 1948⁵⁸ also meant heavy death duties which the Labour government had made more stringent,⁵⁹ and ultimately led to the sale of the contents of Wentworth Woodhouse and its conversion into a teacher-training college.⁶⁰ In addition though compensated the Earl's coal mines had been nationalised in 1947. Of course, it has been argued that the aristocracy had little influence in local politics by this time and it could be argued that the positions they held in local Conservative Associations were ornamental and honorific but they still had widespread local respect.⁶¹ Admittedly Sheffield folk, despite Henry McGhee's allegations about the Council referred to earlier, were not always deferential. The Duke of Norfolk was badly heckled at one meeting when he tried to speak during the 1945 General Election.⁶² McGhee acknowledged the failure of the 1947 Act to assist development by the Council. The nationalisation of development rights took away all incentives for developers to develop land and for landowners to sell it. Labour when criticising the Town and Country Planning Act 1944 had believed that councils should be able to undertake their own development but with state curbs on spending, the limitations on construction due to building licences, and rationing of steel, local authorities, like Sheffield, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, tended to limit themselves to statutory obligations like housing provision and expanding education through building new schools. To get developers interested in city centre re-development they had to set ground rents at levels not beneficial to themselves.

As Ravetz points out, however, the official mind often refused to accept that it was undermining the attempts of local authorities to reconstruct city centres and believed there was a simple physical reason for the lack of progress, namely that the areas assembled for re-development were not large enough. The government argued that 'War damage on the whole was scattered, and even where it was most concentrated there were usually a few buildings left standing, buildings which were as a rule too useful to be pulled down.'⁶³ As we have seen, the Declaratory Order of 1949 cut the area that the Council wished to buy compulsorily in central Sheffield in half and was thus a prime reason why a large enough area for development was not assembled. Procedural delays, including lengthy public inquiries, were also important in retarding progress as was the necessity of getting the permission of other local authorities though the 1947 Act drastically cut the number of planning authorities. The 1947 Act for the first time forced all planning authorities to begin the work of producing development plans for their areas which would be revised every five years. Fresh surveys had to be undertaken in consequence. None begun in South Yorkshire, however, were finished before 1951 and both Sheffield⁶⁴ and Barnsley⁶⁵ had to ask in early 1951 for a longer period to complete the surveys. This placed greater pressure on the limited staffs of town planning departments and in Sheffield there was probably sympathy with a comment of Sir George Pepler, the Honorary Secretary of the Town Planning Institute, in 1949 that:

Here we are once more carrying out surveys and making plans. We seem to have done this before and no doubt we shall do it again and again before we are through. Perhaps some of us on our more irritable days, discerning the millennium as far off as ever, feel a touch of the chill hand of despair as we struggle on.⁶⁶

The Sheffield development plan which was submitted in 1952⁶⁷ had to go through another public inquiry in 1953⁶⁸ and ministerial approval was only given in 1957.⁶⁹ The experience of other South Yorkshire county borough councils was similar but obviously the potential disruption to those towns was greater because they had not been war-damaged.⁷⁰ Despite the evidence we have mustered which blames the Government for much of the slow progress in post-war reconstruction, this is not the general conclusion of Hasegawa. He argues that the original 'boldness of a city centre plan hinged on a city council's belief in radical town planning, the plan, and the planner, and its determination to foster a local pride, if not patriotism, about the plan' but, apart from a few celebrated examples like Coventry and Plymouth, this determination was not apparent among many city councils even if Labour was in control. Local Labour Parties in most places were keener to prioritise people's immediate wants such as housing than city centres and this was true of Sheffield. For most Labour councils, he argues, the reconstruction of the city centres was a vexed question to be avoided not least because they did not want to raise local rates.⁷¹ On the last point it is the case that in Sheffield the rates rose from 17s 6d in 1945/6 to 20s 0d in 1947/8 but that the rates were then held at this level until 1952/3.⁷²

6.3 - HOMES FOR HEROES ?: THE HOUSING CRISIS, 1945-1951

Willmott and Young put their finger on the problem for Labour of attempting to build community through altering the built environment:

The physical size of reconstruction is so great that the authorities have been understandably intent upon bricks and mortar. Their negative task is to demolish slums which fall below the most elementary standards of hygiene, their positive one to build new houses and new towns cleaner and more spacious than the old. Yet even when the town planners have set themselves to create communities anew as well as houses, they have still put their faith in buildings, sometimes speaking as though all that was necessary for neighbourliness was a neighbourhood unit, for community spirit a community centre. If this were so, then there would be no harm in shifting people about the country, for what is lost could soon be regained by skilful architecture and design. But there is surely more to a community than that. The sense of loyalty to each other amongst the inhabitants of a place like Bethnal Green is not due to buildings. It is due far more to ties of kinship and friendship which connect the *people* of one household to the *people* of another. In such a district community spirit does not have to be fostered, it is already there.⁷³

The rich community life of working-class industrial districts like Attercliffe or Newhall in Sheffield in the 1940s and the endemic poverty and pollution is well attested in autobiographies like those of Ashton⁷⁴ and Farnsworth.⁷⁵ Pollard describes the number of Sheffield working class families that were politically apathetic as growing between the wars, due to the decline of local political initiative with the nationalization of issues like poor relief, housing and education and the dilution of the fervent pre-1914 socialist groupings by a mass membership, yet he says that they had found their voice and were less concerned to solve crying injustices than to gain through their representatives narrower advantages in negotiation with employers.⁷⁶ Working-class Sheffielders may have been apathetic about formal politics, and many did vote Labour unthinkingly based on the tight discipline and solidarity of a skilled trade unionism located in steelworks and concerned with protecting working conditions and raising wages, but their attitude to the practical politics of everyday survival was sometimes enterprising, particularly under conditions of austerity. This is clearly shown by the activities of the squatters movement in South Yorkshire in 1946.

Unfortunately the initiative that the squatters showed was not encouraged by the Council on their housing estates where working-class people were circumscribed by petty regulations. Because the houses were given to the neediest, the middle-classes, who might have been more willing to complain about Council despotism, were entirely absent. Bevan ultimately wanted council housing to be the tenure of choice for all classes and successfully got the 1949 Housing Act to drop the requirement, evident in pre-war

legislation, that such housing be constructed solely for the working classes. He said 'that it is essential for the full life of a citizen ... to see the living tapestry of a mixed community'⁷⁷ instead of estates segregated by social class which was 'a wholly evil thing ... condemned by anyone who has paid the slightest attention to civics and eugenics. It is a monstrous affliction on the essential psychological and biological one-ness of the community.'⁷⁸ However, council housing was unpopular with the middle-classes precisely because of the potential intrusion of the local state and they did not wish to live with working-class neighbours. To attract the middle-classes, Bevan wanted superior council houses that were a cut above those of inter-war Britain, but he also believed that nothing was too good for the working classes and was described as 'a tremendous Tory' in consequence by those who had never had to live in working-class discomfort. He believed that, 'We shall be judged for a year or two by the *number* of houses we build. We shall be judged in ten years' time by the *type* of houses we build.' His approach was a long-term one. He did not accept that the housing crisis could be solved by a quick short-term fix though he could have produced more houses simply by lowering his housing construction standards as Dalton and Macmillan were later to do.⁷⁹

Housing was the first priority as an aspiration of the City Council above that of reconstructing the city centre. This showed the Council's shrewd recognition of practical working-class needs, though whether it could be achieved was another thing. Town planning was geared towards housing provision.⁸⁰ A report on the planning of the outer areas of Sheffield in 1946 stated that:

In the proper guidance of the housing drive, through the machinery of planning control, lies the greatest power for the ultimate good of the community which local authorities can exercise at the present time. The prime object of the General Development Plan, therefore, is to provide a framework into which detailed housing proposals can be fitted as they mature, in such a way as to provide the possibility of satisfactory living conditions for all.⁸¹

Sheffield Replanned was frank about the problems of creating new communities, though by accepting the 'neighbourhood unit' concept it accepted that by altering the physical layouts of estates this could be done. Fifteen were to be created at the Handsworth-Woodhouse development. But it declared that,

It would be a great mistake to believe that housing means merely the provision of a specific number of houses to meet the needs of the City's population; to have a roof over one's head is not enough; for it is man's nature to be social, and from time immemorial this has tended to make him live in social groups, for example the village or parish or ward; here he developed and to a large extent controlled, all the various social requirements within his group. These social requirements have changed and increased, particularly on the educational side; but in essence the need remains the same - to provide for the convenience, education, recreation and industry of the group

or neighbourhood.

A new neighbourhood would consist of between 5,000 and 10,000 people.⁸² Sir Charles Reilly who pioneered the 'neighbourhood unit' idea posited an estate layout consisting 'of houses round greens, as in pre-Industrial Revolution England, and the greens themselves arranged like the petals of a flower round a community building, the modern equivalent of the village inn'.⁸³ The Council report on the planning of outer areas in 1946 gave the main principles determining the boundaries and sizes of such neighbourhoods in the City. The primary school was to be the main factor. It should be centrally located. No child should need to cross a main road to get to school or walk more than half a mile to get there. The unit must be surrounded by open space or some other natural barrier like a highway or river to physically delineate it from others. At the focal point of each unit, shops, places of amusement and other communal facilities should be provided within ten minutes walk of every home to cater for daily needs. Industrial plants should be excluded from residential areas but not so far away that they were impossible to travel to. No main traffic artery should cut through one of the neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods would be combined into a "community" of up to 80,000 people.⁸⁴

The units were supported, despite the taint of social engineering, by the Progressives also, who stated that, 'We are opposed to the segregation of people of any class. The older townships contained people of all classes and types, and thus became a community in the best sense.'⁸⁵ Sheffield Replanned noted that previous housing estates had 'not acquired that sense of "continuance" which was one essential of village life' because they were formed of one income group and one type of house. Villages that formed gradually were more beautiful, 'arising out of the individuality and creative instincts of the people who built them.' And in older villages people had the feeling of "running their own show" via the parish or village council. Gaining a sense of 'continuance' was hard because it was a 'compact of tradition, association, habit and memory, which time alone can give', but the grouping of shops, houses, and schools could create a sense of belonging, it was believed, given time. Unfortunately while, 'The layout plans will be co-ordinated by the Planning Authority . . . that Authority has no power to insist on the building of the necessary centres for social life and activities or on anything more than the minimum standards of construction and workmanship in the houses themselves.' This was to prove the nub of the problem given the shortages of building labour, materials, finance and will.⁸⁶

To foster community feeling and give a sense of 'running their own show' the Council established Community Associations. There were fourteen by 1948. These were defined as

organisation[s] of neighbours based on the idea that the personality of men and women can develop to the full only as men and women serve a community which in turn serves them and their development. ... [They were] democratic fellowship[s] of individuals and organisations bound together by one common purpose - the common good. It includes people of all ages and both sexes and embraces all interests which contribute

to the well-being of the individual or the community.

Their functions were to co-ordinate neighbourhood organisations, to help provide extra social, cultural or educational activities demanded by the neighbourhood, to help local authorities provide neighbourhood services and, finally, to 'offer the people of the neighbourhood an opportunity to make their contribution to achieving a full and democratic way of life.'⁸⁷ The Council helped through the provision of community centres. The Manor community centre opened in 1933 was the first in England where the local authority bore the entire initial cost.⁸⁸ Alderman Bingham said 'they were needed if the city, and the country as well, was to keep its place in world affairs.' They thus showed that Sheffield was a modern and progressive local authority and that Britain too, if it followed Sheffield, would be in the vanguard of progressive movements. Bingham also said they would 'provide opportunities for housewives to air their grievances and put forward their views on all sorts of matters of interest to the city' and provide a similar function for the elderly who at present could only talk things over in huts in the parks.⁸⁹

The Manor centre had actually opened in order to give the unemployed in the Slump somewhere to go. Malcolm Mercer gives some idea of the other functions besides airing complaints that such centres could offer. In 1934/35 there was a Women's Adult School discussing Christianity and family topics on an unsectarian basis in the Manor centre. An attempt was also made to hold Workers' Educational Association classes. The Manor Men's Co-operative Guild held gramophone recitals and concerts followed by pie and pea suppers. There was a Musical and Dramatic Society putting on plays and musicals. Fishing, rambling, boxing, bowls and tennis clubs were affiliated to the centre. There was a debating society and the local Ward Labour and Conservative Parties held their meetings there. There was also a choir. The Community Association which had grown out of the Manor Garden Guild had an annual membership charge of six shillings. This covered a man and his wife, and in 1938 there were between 600 and 700 married couples who were members. The Association held its own dances, sing-songs, whist drives and concerts for members. Patrick Bond writing in the Sheffield Independent in 1938 said that, 'It is no exaggeration to say the centre is a model of what its type should be and a credit to Sheffield Corporation and the estate'.⁹⁰ Fielding, Thompson and Tiratsoo use the example of community associations to illustrate Labour's lack of success in building community since they could not turn themselves into a successful national movement and remained parochial and uninterested in wider issues. Their leaders, they say, were often unrepresentative busybodies drawn from a narrow social group and economic conditions meant the community centres could not be built.⁹¹ The associations certainly did not directly manage the estates or make decisions about rents, for these were responsibilities in Sheffield of the Estates Committee and the Council, which employed a housing manager, but it is untrue, if the Manor Association can be taken as representative, that they could not build community spirit.

Sheffield City Council was optimistic in the latter stages of the war about producing 30,000 houses

within three years of peace and began preparing sites for temporary houses before the war ended. It had the land it thought it would need at Handsworth-Woodhouse. There was also land at Parson Cross and German prisoners of war from Redmires Camp were employed to lay down roads and sewers there⁹² after the Housing Sub-Committee agreed to their use in July 1945. This was an expedient that had to be undertaken because of labour shortages. A group of local authorities led by Sheffield and including Rotherham was founded in 1944 by the Ministry of Health to get housing sites prepared in advance before the war ended. Representatives of the authorities all agreed to recommend prisoner-of-war labour to their Councils because all recognised that otherwise there would be a long delay in getting sites prepared.⁹³ Rotherham Housing Committee stated that, 'It was clear that if maximum progress were to be achieved in the present building season, the employment of prisoners was imperative'.⁹⁴

What is very apparent is the difference in the rate of progress between the neighbouring local authorities, Sheffield and Rotherham, in their respective housing programmes. These can also be compared with that of Finsbury where rates of completions of permanent houses were even less rapid. Sheffield was obviously a much bigger authority than Rotherham and needed to build more houses which may be a reason for the slower pace but it would equally have had as high proportionate resources. In June 1944, it was estimated that Rotherham had to build 5,000 houses over the next ten to twelve years at a rate of 500 a year.⁹⁵ Sheffield wanted to build 3,000 houses in the first year of peace and 17,000 in the following two years. Rotherham also needed to find sites for the proposed houses and though it wanted to purchase land in May 1943 it needed Ministry of Health and Treasury approval and the Ministry said that Rotherham already had enough land for a two-year programme.⁹⁶ The Council produced a resolution in 1943, similar to a Sheffield City Council resolution moved at the same time,⁹⁷ calling on the government to prepare and announce plans so that an adequate supply of land, labour, materials and equipment would be available with financial assistance so it could provide houses up to existing standards and not above existing rents.⁹⁸ In February 1944, it told the Ministry that it would erect 350 houses as the first post-war year's housing programme at East Herringthorpe.⁹⁹ In March a circular was received informing the Council that while the government was relaxing its embargo on land purchase it still would not sanction purchase of large areas of land for a long term programme. The Council was, however, allowed to buy land at East Herringthorpe and Thorpe for the first two years of the programme.¹⁰⁰ Some 700-800 houses were planned for the first two years of peace with 570 at East Herringthorpe and 150 at Thorpe.¹⁰¹

As a result of the Housing (Temporary Accommodation) Act 1944, the wartime government's attempt to deal with the housing crisis, pre-fabricated bungalows ('prefabs') were to be built from surplus materials in aircraft factories.¹⁰² At first they were to be steel-built and were named after Wyndham Portal, Minister of Works, who said half a million would be built as an emergency measure. However, steel was later in short supply so they were built of aluminium.¹⁰³ Sheffield originally asked for 2,000 in 1944¹⁰⁴ while Rotherham asked for 500.¹⁰⁵ They were supposed to last ten years though the ones actually built after the war lasted considerably longer and were very popular. Bevan, however, described them as 'rabbit

hutches' and switched resources to constructing permanent houses once in office.¹⁰⁶ Sheffield built 2,066 (See Appendix 6.2.1) but one was unfortunately lost when a runaway wagon collided with it at the bottom of a hill at Arbourthorne.¹⁰⁷ The first one completed was opened by the Conservative Minister of Town and Country Planning, W. S. Morrison, in July 1945 but was built for demonstration purposes as part of the Exhibition which informed the public of the Collie Plan.¹⁰⁸ The last ten bungalows were completed in November 1948.¹⁰⁹ It had been decided in 1947 to stop new construction in Sheffield and switch it to the mining districts where increased production of coal was vital to the export drive.¹¹⁰ In Rotherham, construction of roads and sewers at East Herringthorpe commenced in February 1945, the first pre-fabricated bungalow was begun in March, and it was occupied in August. Sixty-nine bungalows had been built by November 1945,¹¹¹ while Sheffield had built fifty-eight.¹¹² Rotherham was to build 280 in total - all completed by the end of 1947 - though another hundred permanent aluminium houses were also later built.¹¹³

Sheffield Council itself made efforts during the war to advance experimental ways of house construction and permanent pre-fabricated types of houses so the post-war housing crisis could more speedily be overcome. In 1943, the City Council took the initiative in non-traditional building when, after the Estates Committee inspected experimental housing in Glasgow, it approved £3,600 for research and the construction of two experimental permanent prefabricated houses¹¹⁴ by W. Malthouse Ltd., of Sheffield, on the Manor Estate. The firm would use 'foamslag', a by-product from blast-furnaces, as an aggregate for concrete units for floors, roofing and sound-proofing, and it held the patent for a way of casting sections of brickwork into panels to suit the design of houses. Alderman Gascoigne believed that the methods used would 'make a revolution in the production of houses and mean a very short period to provide the houses required.'¹¹⁵ The houses were erected in 1947 but an air of secrecy and mystery surrounded them as they were being built, as Ernest Taylor reported in The Star, since the houses were not open for public inspection and were surrounded by sheets of corrugated iron.¹¹⁶ The houses were one-offs though the firm eventually had built 206 permanent prefabricated three bedroom non-parlour houses and 110 four bedroom non-parlour houses at Parson Cross by October 1951. Fifty of the most widely produced non-traditional built house, the British Iron and Steel Federation three bedroom non-parlour house, were also built at Parson Cross by that time.¹¹⁷

Hayes argues that it was formerly believed that the adoption of prefabrication and systems construction was not a rational decision by public authorities but the consequence of the acceptance of myths put about by self-serving interests such as building firms that non-traditional housing expressed modernity and efficiency. Hayes argues, however, that many architects, local authorities and other decision takers were sceptical about these claims of modernity despite Modernist ideologues among the manufacturers and other architects. The actual decisions to build non-traditional housing, he believes, were made as a response to an urgent necessity and were conditioned by economic factors, rational views of what constituted the national interest and the best advice that was possible. He also says that non-traditional housing was produced efficiently, contrary to the claims of earlier historians, and that its production was

constantly reviewed.¹¹⁸ I agree with part of Hayes argument in the case of the Malthouse experimental houses but also accept some of the views of those he disagrees with. The houses were rationally and efficiently using an abundant waste product of the local steel industry in their construction and the outcome for the firm was a proven success in that it led to the contracts for the houses built at Parson Cross. There was full support from both political parties for the experiment given that it *was* part of a solution to the acute housing problem that the council faced, *but* the council also saw itself as a progressive pioneer and was convinced that use of these methods of construction symbolized its status as an up-to-date local authority willing to take a gamble. The later influence of Le Corbusier's Modernism on high-rise flats built by the Corporation at Park Hill and Hyde Park in the 1960s was also undeniable and demonstrated the modernity of the Corporation, but equally the decision to construct them was made because they were an apparently workable and cheap solution to the persisting urgency of Sheffield's housing problem.¹¹⁹ The Housing Committee as a means of overcoming the housing shortage had already begun to consider the feasibility of constructing blocks of flats in 1949 but these were not yet on the scale of Park Hill or Hyde Park.¹²⁰ Their investigations did, however, lead them to look at Scandinavian flats in the search for inspiration.¹²¹

Despite these initiatives the traditionally-built low density suburban council house, which was pioneered between the wars and owed its genesis to the garden city principles set out by the Tudor Walters' Report, remained dominant numerically among the houses built between 1945 and 1951. The chief difference with the estates of the inter-war years was set out in the Dudley Report of 1944, which called for estates of mixed housing types including flats and maisonettes.¹²² Rotherham took the lead over Sheffield in producing the first completed permanent traditionally-built houses by any local authority in the post-war period in December 1945. They had been produced under a apprenticeship scheme for boys promoted by the Ministry of Works and the National Joint Council for the Building Industry.¹²³ Construction of the six houses at East Herringthorpe began on 25 April 1945 and Rotherham disputed with Bournemouth whether it was the first local authority to start such a scheme.¹²⁴ The scheme was to be used by other local councils as a way of getting new houses built and training the labour to build others. It was an answer to the acute labour shortage. The houses were opened by the Minister of Works himself. The Mayor put this promising start down to teamwork and the close liaison of the staffs of the Borough Engineer and Architect and the supervising local firm.¹²⁵

In Sheffield, the first tenders for permanent houses were accepted by the City Council subject to ministerial approval only in September 1945.¹²⁶ Ninety-eight war-damaged council houses were re-built between February 1946 and July 1947 (see Appendix 6.2.2). The re-building of such houses was an immediate priority of Bevan once in office. Sixty thousand were re-built in 1945.¹²⁷ Rotherham had little war-damage so it could immediately start on brand new houses. The first eight new permanent houses in Sheffield were completed as late as August 1946. This, however, compares well with Finsbury in London where 91 per cent of the total residential housing stock had been damaged in some way and 11 percent of the dwellings had been totally destroyed. Thus tenders for new permanent

housing were approved as late as July 1946 and the first twenty-two were completed in December 1948. By that date Rotherham had completed eight hundred and Sheffield 2,247 new permanent houses of all types.¹²⁸

The criticism which the Municipal Progressives/Conservative-Liberals heaped on the heads of Labour in Sheffield in the period 1945-51 over the housing issue was much more aggressive than that of the much weaker Independents in Rotherham and probably prevented constructive dialogue between the two sides on speeding up the programme. They lined up along party political lines on the issue. In December 1945, the Progressives moved a resolution viewing ‘... with alarm the serious delay in starting its [the Council’s] post-war Housing programme caused, mainly, through the lack of decision on the part of the Government in important respects.’ Labour responded by voting down the resolution and expressing its confidence in the Labour government.¹²⁹ The Council was usually attacked on the grounds that it was the agent of the remote alien power in Whitehall and not standing up for the interests of its citizens. We noted this earlier in the response of ‘Current Topics’ to the threat of the Ministry of Fuel and Power to open-cast for coal land purchased by the Council for housing at Handsworth-Woodhouse.¹³⁰

Another reason for Progressive displeasure was the decision of the City Council after the war to revive its direct labour Public Works department to build council houses since the department had an advantage over private builders in that any losses it made could be underwritten by the rates and it would thus be enabled to undercut the latter. Relations with private builders were not made any better by the ultimate aspiration of the Council which, according to Alderman Bingham in 1948, was ‘to develop the Public Works Department until there is nobody else building houses for us.’¹³¹ Rotherham Council, on the other hand, refused to form such a department despite the desire of the Trades Council in 1948 to see one building houses for Rotherham people.¹³² There was also criticism from the Progressives over how the houses once built would be let and who would have them. The following Table gives an idea of the scale of the problem of the Council waiting list:

Table A - The Sheffield City Council Waiting List¹³³

DATE	NO. OF PEOPLE ON WAITING LIST
JUNE 1942	C.24,000
1946	35,000
JANUARY 1949	28,000
31 MARCH 1949	22,270
31 MARCH 1950	26,511
APRIL 1950	26,537
OCTOBER 1957	35,387

Many of those on the waiting list were former service personnel and the lack of respect shown them by the refusal to operate a ‘points’ system of letting houses was a grievance of the Progressives and of organisations like the British Legion and the Soldiers’, Sailors’ and Airmen’s Association. The Sheffield

representative of the last organisation at its annual conference in 1946 declared that the city was,

one of the most ghastly places in the country in respect of housing. The Housing Committee have 35,000 names on the list. We have taken deputations to the Housing Committee over and over again, and they will not give us any priority for fighting men. All we can get is that out of the prefabricated houses they will share fifty-fifty. They thought that was a great concession. In Sheffield they will tell you the servicemen did not win the war, it was the munition workers, so we cannot get any priority for servicemen as a reward for their services.¹³⁴

Municipal Progressive Alderman Bearcroft alleged corruption at one typical meeting on housing in the Council Chamber in October 1945. He had been 'in the Housing Manager's office not long ago when a member of the Council rang up giving instructions about a certain person who claimed he had a right to a house. Influences were brought to bear and everybody knew it was done.'¹³⁵ There was a major scandal in Barnsley. An ex-Mayor of Barnsley and Labour Alderman, Arthur Jepson, made accusations of 'favoritism' against the Housing Committee which had allowed the Mayor's Chaplain to let a council house after only a few months residence in the town.¹³⁶ A storm blew up with protest meetings,¹³⁷ letters in the Barnsley Chronicle,¹³⁸ and controversy in the Council Chamber. Jepson was ostracised for having voted against his colleagues and eventually resigned from the Council.¹³⁹

Alderman Caine in Rotherham persuaded his Labour colleagues to accept a 'points' system reversing the recommendation of the Housing Committee. He described it as 'valuable from a psychological standpoint' while Councillor Dickinson for the Independents asked whether this meant the Labour Group thought 'there was some degree of wisdom in the Opposition, because in committee the Opposition were in a small minority and were flatly turned down.'¹⁴⁰ Such was the dissatisfaction of ex-servicemen in the Dearne Valley that 'British Legion Candidates' with the official sanction of the local Legion stood in the Mexborough Urban District Council elections in 1946 and were elected specifically to overturn housing policies deemed against their interests.¹⁴¹

But the most important symptom of disquiet was the squatters' movement of 1946. Hinton sees the phenomenon of people taking direct action, by commandeering disused army camps and, in London, empty blocks of flats that Conservative councils were not willing to requisition as accommodation, as a missed opportunity for the Labour Government. If they had been willing to accept direct action, despite it being seen as somehow 'un-British' and not respectable by staid Labour leaders, he believes popular radicalism would have been encouraged. That was necessary to maintain the momentum of a Government menaced by Conservative vested interests and the propaganda of the Tory press. The latter viewed the squatters, despite Communist involvement, as exemplifying Conservative individualism, self-help and family values in their attempts to find accommodation. Had not the Conservatives emphasised the virtues of home-ownership to the middle class? Labour's remote and authoritarian bureaucrats and

planners were unable to produce the vast number of houses required by even the neediest, Conservatives said, because of socialist controls and red tape. They were unwilling to allow free enterprise to build houses for middle-class families who could pay for them and who would never be allowed a council house because they were not seen as needy. Hinton argues that the Communists attempted to implement a strategy that allowed the initiative and native enterprise of ordinary working-class people to be tapped in the search for solutions to the housing problem instead of waiting for the directions of authority *and* of creating an understanding among desperate people of the problems Labour faced in finding accommodation for them given, as was the case in London, the deliberate reluctance of Conservative councils to inconvenience rich private landlords. The Communists also successfully drew attention to the fact that the housing crisis was not being given the serious attention it deserved by Labour. The actual squatters, however, were not usually very politically motivated. They were ordinary people impatient with unacceptably long waiting lists like the one in Sheffield. They wanted a roof over their heads now and not in some distant future.¹⁴² The squatters' movement was a revolt against 'municipal labourism' as we have defined it since in the absence of an adequate supply of council housing there was nothing to be lost by needy working-class people in taking direct action and in not accepting the instructions of authority, particularly since the latter could only counsel a patience which given the long waiting lists was unacceptable. Instead they took their own initiatives.

The first Sheffield squatters took over an anti-aircraft gun-site at Shirecliffe in July 1946 forcing the Council to negotiate with the War Office which controlled the site so it could be restored.¹⁴³ Soon after squatters took over a camp at Beighton to the south-east of Sheffield¹⁴⁴ and then the gun-site at Manor Lane.¹⁴⁵ From then on the movement spread across South Yorkshire. In Rotherham squatters took over camps at Thrybergh, Brinsworth, Whiston Grange and Wentworth Park. The response of the public was positive. As the Advertiser said, most people considered

the step taken by the squatters as a justifiable means to an end. It is felt that the squatters are acting in the wrong way, but doing the right thing morally ... the readiness of the State to take over surplus private accommodation for the benefit of the homeless cannot be forgotten, nor that it contrasts strongly with the reluctance to relinquish its own.¹⁴⁶

The Communists rapidly got involved. In Rotherham, John Mason, the Mexborough shop steward who was imprisoned during the war under Defence Regulation 18B and was now South Yorkshire Area Organiser of the Party, presided over a meeting of squatters organised by Rotherham Communists and suggested a joint co-ordinating committee of squatters across Rotherham which would allow them to present their case to the local authorities for elementary services. He declared that the Communists were not seeking political advantage and simply wished to stand behind the squatters.¹⁴⁷ Communists were also involved in putting the squatters case for them when those at Manor Lane in Sheffield faced eviction and they won a victory in getting those squatter families that had children transferred to a camp at

Norton.¹⁴⁸ Alderman Albert Smith, Chairman of the Estates Committee, said that he had cut through official delay by instructing the Council to take over the camp 'and damn the consequences.'¹⁴⁹

The squatters were anxious to emphasise their non-political views despite Communist help and 'to make it clear that they are concerned solely with getting settled into their new homes ... party politics do not come into the question at all', or so alleged Jane Akrill, a social worker who had dealt with the re-housing problems of servicemen for a service organisation and who also helped present the squatters' case. She told the Telegraph that the Communists were using the squatters grievances for their own ends¹⁵⁰ and got the squatters to promise not to attend a Communist Party meeting at Burngreave to discuss Sheffield's housing problem.¹⁵¹ Finally, in September 1946 with Communist activities in London continually splashed across the front pages of the Telegraph, culminating in the headline 'Squatters Marked Queen Mary's London Home', and with reports of violent clashes with police, there was a concerted attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the Communists in local eyes by the newspaper with the now real threat to private and royal *and not government property* brought to the fore.¹⁵² Hinton's interpretation seems realistic as the Progressives, while attacking Labour for lack of decisiveness over the housing programme, including not allowing private builders free rein, asked why Alderman Smith had not been willing to 'damn the consequences' and commandeer the camps much earlier.¹⁵³

From the Sheffield City Council Minute Books we can gain a definite idea of the progress of the city's housing programme between 1945 and 1951 (which is set out in Appendix 6), while for Rotherham I have had to rely on local newspapers and the contributions of Alderman Harper, Chairman of the Housing Committee, in the Trades and Labour Council Annual Reports from 1948. In Sheffield, the peak production of permanent houses in any one month was in May 1948 when 205 houses were built. This contrasts with February-March 1947 when for the only time due to one of the worst winters on record no permanent houses were completed at all (see Appendix 6.2.3). As we said in the Introduction, from 1948 the national total of houses produced continually declined and local authorities were held back by the government with the number of houses to be built strictly allocated. In May 1949, for example, eight hundred extra houses were allocated to Sheffield bringing the 1949 allocation to 1,300 houses, but that allocation was exhausted by September. As a result, the Council applied for five hundred more and got 350.¹⁵⁴ Sheffield could have greatly increased its output but for this central control. By December 1947 with the inclusion of the 98 war-damaged houses, Sheffield had built 936 houses, by December 1948 1,409 had been added, and in 1949 only 735. By December 1950 an extra 1,391 had been built and by December 1951 1,656 more. There was a grand total by 14 December 1951 of 6,127 houses built since the war's end. By the end of December 1947, 501 permanent houses had been built in Rotherham since the war's end, another 299 had been built in 1948, 234 in 1949, 240 in 1950 and 304 in 1951 making a grand total of 1,578 houses. The following Table shows the number of houses produced in the two county boroughs per thousand of population between 1945 and 1951 using estimates of population from the Sheffield Telegraph Year Books, the 1951 Census, estimates from the

Table B - Houses Built per Thousand of Population, 1945-51

TIME PERIOD	NO. OF HOUSES BUILT PER 1000 OF POPULATION IN SHEFFIELD	NO. OF HOUSES BUILT PER 1000 OF POPULATION IN ROTHERHAM
1945-47	0.65	2.14
1948	2.8	3.67
1949	1.45	2.85
1950	2.7	2.9
1951	3.22	3.69
1945-51	1.77	2.8

In both cases the number of houses built per thousand of population slumped in 1949 due no doubt to the continued balance of payments crises nationally and to the curbs on public investment which Bevan had to accept from Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps.¹⁵⁵ The number of houses rose in the following years but we can see that in every year, and for the period in its entirety, Rotherham was a more productive local authority in terms of houses built. Such was its achievement that in 1947, when it had built its 600th house, it was visited by the Minister of Health himself.¹⁵⁶ One explanation put forward for the earlier start in Rotherham was that the various council departments were simply better co-ordinated with better teamwork. This probably continued. Rotherham was probably also in better standing with local firms of builders since it refused to create a direct labour department. There was less vocal opposition in Rotherham Council Chamber with a numerically weaker Opposition. Labour was also willing to listen to it, as shown by the acceptance of a 'points' system for letting houses. There was more party political point scoring in the Sheffield Council Chamber, which did not allow a consensus to be easily reached, and entrenched political positions, due to both sides taking on the stances of their Westminster counterparts.

6.4 - CONCLUSION

There is a difference of interpretation about the characteristics of the Labour Party which is personified in the views of historians Nick Tiratsoo and James Hinton. Hinton believes that Labour tried to control and dampen popular radicalism rather than encourage it. This was because Labour feared the activities of the masses who were uneducated about their responsibilities to the rest of society and did not behave in a respectable manner. Labour did not produce in reality the 'Responsible Society' that Tiratsoo speaks of because, whatever it may have said it intended, such as promoting greater civic consciousness and an active citizenry. It was actually more interested in the bureaucratic and technocratic solutions to working-class problems that the Fabian philosophy had pioneered. This placed a stress on the role of the professional middle-class expert and the supremacy of representative rather than direct democracy.

Michael Young, the director of research for the Labour Party in the late 1940s, was to resign because the NEC refused to publish his final report which said that the Party should recognise the needs of women and neighbourhood concerns to a far greater extent. As he showed, he was the one figure in the Labour Party at this time who really believed in attempting to achieve popular democratic participation in decision-making. He was later in 1958 to publish a satirical book The Rise of the Meritocracy which as an iconoclastic essay the Fabians had refused to publish. This attacked both equality of opportunity and the intellectual aristocracy that it and the Labour Party had helped create in 1945-51.¹⁵⁷

Town planning was an answer based on middle-class guilt to working-class problems of ill-health, poverty and an ugly environment but, despite Tiratsoo's view that planners worked in harmony with the expressed needs of the public wherever possible, there is truth in the popular conception of planners' arrogance since town planning was also about maintaining the social order in the interests of the middle classes. Town planners were after all middle-class people with middle-class views of those below them in the social structure. They could see the workers as objects of compassion but they could also be threats. Working-class people continued to be residentially segregated from the middle classes on council estates and thus controlled spatially and socially while their everyday needs were not always met since austerity conditions prevented the building of community centres, libraries, health centres and shops between 1945 and 1951. We noted, however, in Chapter Two when we looked at the work of William Hampton on politics in post-war Sheffield, that the link between communities in the social sense and civic consciousness was tenuous, that the greater the social attachment to a working-class neighbourhood, the less political awareness existed.

Labour councillors who owed their position to a party rather than a community in which they were born or even resided naturally felt loyalties to the city of which they were the 'political community' rather than to ordinary people from whose wishes they were isolated by the electoral system, the structure of the council and the allegedly collectivist *mentalitie* created by the trades unions. Labour councillors knew enough about their own class not to overestimate its virtues, but town planners like Thomas Sharp, president in 1945 of the Town Planning Institute, also felt that the working classes could not be trusted to take part in the process of creating plans because of their lack of technical expertise. Town planning was regarded as solving technical problems through the allocation of zones on a piece of paper. In Sheffield at least, the Council had not surveyed in a detailed way the real needs and wishes of working-class people during the war but simply assumed them to be well known. This continued to be the case between 1945 and 1951. One reason for not doing this was that it was feared that technical efficiency would be compromised and planning would simply take longer to do given a limited planning staff and limited budget if such niceties were observed.

But town planning had also been seen in the inter-war years as a way of remedying the deterioration in the genetic quality of the 'white race' that, according to eugenicists, living in huge cities encouraged. In the emphasis placed by town planners on open spaces, well designed buildings and curing traffic

congestion there is embodied the view that the genetic health of the British race could be enhanced and protected. It was also feared, despite the short-term baby boom caused by the Second World War, that the population was falling, which would threaten Britain's military capabilities in a future war. Family allowances and the whole apparatus of state welfare were means of encouraging population increase at a time when Britain contained proportionately more aged people than ever before and it was feared there would be fewer and fewer workers to pay for future welfare provision. But the government was concerned with the quality as well as the quantity of the race. Prominent Fabians - Shaw, Wells, the Webbs - all supported eugenicism in the inter-war years.¹⁵⁸ Harold Laski had supported eugenics and, according to his biographers, 'would forever vacillate between images of the poor as either unfit and ignorant or exploited and oppressed.'¹⁵⁹ Many Marxists with scientific interests supported the movement. Evan Durbin has recently been noted as a wartime supporter.¹⁶⁰ This link with socialism is hardly surprising for as Sidney Webb noted, 'No consistent eugenicist can be a *laissez-faire* individualist unless he throws up the game in despair. He must interfere, interfere, interfere.'¹⁶¹ And according to Andrew Roberts, 'racist views were almost universally held until around the end of the 1950s'. Churchill's speeches during World War Two were full of references to the British Race. He was an unashamed white supremacist and Anglo-Saxon triumphalist formed by late Victorian imperialism.¹⁶² Labour's Hugh Dalton in 1950 similarly saw nothing wrong in referring to the colonies as 'pullulating poverty-stricken, diseased nigger communities'.¹⁶³ Tiratsoo and Hasegawa do not explore this aspect in terms of town planning in the 1940s but race was obviously still relevant. According to Weight speaking of World War Two:

The issue of race is rarely confronted in histories of the 'People's War', perhaps because it is a reminder that a belief in democracy was not the only thing that bound the Scots, Welsh and English together. Much older, darker and contradictory ties of racial unity did so too. In a war against fascism it was impolitic for those ties to be overtly celebrated, but they existed in millions of minds nonetheless.¹⁶⁴

- ¹ Sheffield Telegraph 16/10/1957, p4.
- ² The Times 01/10/1952.
- ³ BULLOCK, Nicholas. 'Fragments of a Post-War Utopia; Housing in Finsbury 1945-51', Urban Studies, 26, 1989, p58.
- ⁴ As DAVIES, H. W. E. 'Continuity and Change: The Evolution of the British Planning System, 1947-97', Town Planning Review, Vol. 69, No. 2, 1998, p149 notes.
- ⁵ FIELDING, Steven, THOMPSON, Peter and TIRATSOO, Nick. "England Arise !": The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain. Manchester University Press, 1995, pp102-4.
- ⁶ FIELDING, Steve. "Don't Know and Don't Care": Popular Political Attitudes in Labour's Britain, 1945-51' in TIRATSOO, Nick (ed) The Attlee Years. Pinter Publishers, 1991, p119.
- ⁷ TIRATSOO, Nick. 'The Reconstruction of Blitzed British Cities, 1945-55: Myths and Reality', Contemporary British History, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2000, p27. To be fair, Tiratsoo (p39-40) gives town planner Thomas Sharp's 1945 view of what constituted consultation and democratic involvement, but this was to be criticism after the plans had been prepared and not participation in the actual act of planning.
- ⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 31/07/1945, p3. He was the first council tenant to be Lord Mayor in 1945.
- ⁹ As BOTTOMORE, Tom. Political Sociology. Pluto Press, 1993, p96 notes.
- ¹⁰ MELLER, Helen. 'Urban Renewal and Citizenship: The Quality of Life in British Cities, 1890-1990', Urban History, Vol. 22, Part 1, May 1995, pp76-8.
- ¹¹ RAVETZ, Alison. Remaking Cities: Contradictions of the Recent Urban Environment. Croom Helm, 1980, p23.
- ¹² See TIRATSOO, Nick. 'Labour and the Reconstruction of Hull, 1945-51' in TIRATSOO, Nick (ed) The Attlee Years. Pinter Publishers, 1991 and TIRATSOO, Nick. Reconstruction, Affluence and Labour Politics: Coventry 1945-60. Routledge, 1990.
- ¹³ See HASEGAWA, Junichi. Replanning the Blitzed City Centre: A Comparative Study of Bristol, Coventry and Southampton 1941-1950. Open University Press, 1992.
- ¹⁴ BARNETT, Correlli. The Lost Victory: British Dreams, British Realities 1945-1950. Pan, 1996, p155.
- ¹⁵ BARNETT, C. 1996, p153.
- ¹⁶ BARNETT, C. 1996, p163.
- ¹⁷ MORGAN, Kenneth O. Labour in Power 1945-1951. Oxford University Press, 1986, p167.
- ¹⁸ Picture Post 28/09/1946 quoted in ADDISON, Paul. Now The War Is Over: A Social History of Britain 1945-51. Pimlico, 1995, p60. The article was entitled 'Ten Cooks are Spoiling the Broth'.
- ¹⁹ For example, CAMPBELL, John. Nye Bevan: A Biography. Hodder and Stoughton, 1994, pp154-5.
- ²⁰ RAVETZ, A. 1995, p149.
- ²¹ Letter dated 02/10/1945 'Town Planning - Glasgow', Collie, J. M. to Thraves, F., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives)
- ²² Letter dated 14/11/1945 'Replanning of Sheffield', Collie, J. M. to Voyce, E. R., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²³ Copy of forthcoming talk by Mr. Travers-Hutchin for Northern Programme of BBC enclosed with letter dated 18/03/1946, Heys, J. to Collie, J. M., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 16/10/1957, p4.
- ²⁵ Copy of forthcoming talk by Mr. Travers-Hutchin for the Northern Programme of the BBC enclosed with letter dated 18/03/1946, Heys, J. to Collie, J. M., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 17/01/1946, p2.
- ²⁷ CROOK, A. D. H. 'Appendix - Population and Boundary Changes, 1801-1981' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p483.
- ²⁸ Letter dated 14/11/1945, 'Replanning of Sheffield', Collie, J. M. to Voyce, E. R., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ²⁹ Special Meeting, Town Planning Committee, 26/03/1945, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1944/45, p177.
- ³⁰ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. Town and Country Planning Act 1947 Development Plan for the City and County Borough of Sheffield: Report of the Survey - Written Analysis. Sheffield City Council, December 1952, p20.
- ³¹ Civic Record, No. 3, October 1947, p1.
- ³² Sheffield Telegraph 01/10/1947, p1.
- ³³ Sheffield Telegraph 01/03/1947, p2.

- ³⁴ MARSHALL, R. J. 'Town Planning in Sheffield' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, pp26-7.
- ³⁵ House of Commons Debates, Hansard, Columns 1616-28, 14/03/1951. For McGhee see MARTIN, David E. 'McGHEE, Henry George (1898-1959)' in BELLAMY, Joyce and SAVILLE, John. Dictionary of Labour Biography: Volume I. Macmillan, 1972, pp229-230.
- ³⁶ JONES, Melvyn. Protecting the Beautiful Frame: A History of the Sheffield, Peak District and South Yorkshire Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. The Hallamshire Press, 2001, p101, 115-6. The 70th Anniversary of the Mass Trespass of 24/04/1932 was celebrated on 28/04/2002. See Yorkshire Post 27/04/2002, p11 and for its significance to present day ramblers see ASHBROOK, Kate. 'A Day That Changed Our Walking History', The Rambler, No. 11, Spring 2002, p18.
- ³⁷ Star 14/07/1947, p2.
- ³⁸ Star 14/07/1947, p2.
- ³⁹ Civic Record, No. 9, April 1948, p1.
- ⁴⁰ Civic Record, No. 7, February 1948, p1.
- ⁴¹ Star 30/10/1947, p2.
- ⁴² Letter dated 24/05/1949, 'Local Government Manpower Committee', Collie, J. M. to Heys, J., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁴³ Civic Record, No. 2, September 1947, p1.
- ⁴⁴ Letter dated 24/05/1949, 'Local Government Manpower Committee', Collie, J. M. to Heys, J., CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁴⁵ Star 07/12/1948, p1, 09/09/1949, p9.
- ⁴⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 23/11/1949, p2.
- ⁴⁷ Civic Record, No. 31, February 1950, p1.
- ⁴⁸ Sheffield Forward, Vol. 6, No. 128, January 1950, p1.
- ⁴⁹ Star 16/08/1950, p5; The Times 05/08/1950, p4.
- ⁵⁰ HASEGAWA, Junichi. 'The Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction in 1940s Britain', Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1999, pp153-4.
- ⁵¹ Sheffield Telegraph 11/12/1952, p3.
- ⁵² RAVETZ, A. 1980, pp35-6.
- ⁵³ Woodseats Ward Labour Municipal Election Address, November 1945, CPR8 (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁵⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 16/02/1943, p3.
- ⁵⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 30/06/1945, p5.
- ⁵⁶ CANNADINE, David. The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy. Yale University Press, 1990, p61.
- ⁵⁷ JONES, M. 2001, p103. Maude, Countess Fitzwilliam, the wife of the 7th Earl, was also President of the Rotherham Conservative and Unionist Association - See Rotherham Advertiser 06/09/1947, p3. Other aristocrats involved in local Conservative politics included the Earl and Countess of Scarborough - See Rotherham Advertiser 05/07/1947, p5.
- ⁵⁸ Rotherham Advertiser 15/05/1948, p6.
- ⁵⁹ For the problems of aristocrats under the Attlee Government see CANNADINE, D. 1990, pp637-44.
- ⁶⁰ Rotherham Advertiser 18/06/1949.
- ⁶¹ For the alleged decline of aristocratic influence in local politics from the 1880s see CANNADINE, D. 1990, pp139-67.
- ⁶² Sheffield Telegraph 30/06/1945, p5.
- ⁶³ RAVETZ, A. 1980, p36.
- ⁶⁴ Meeting, Town Planning Committee, 19/04/1951, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1950/51, p629.
- ⁶⁵ Civic Review, No. 28, June 1951, p1.
- ⁶⁶ Quoted in CHERRY, Gordon E. The Evolution of British Town Planning: A History of Town Planning in the United Kingdom During the Twentieth Century and of the Royal Town Planning Institute, 1914-74. Leonard Hill Books, 1974, p147. For Pepler, see OSBORN, Frederic J. 'Pepler, Sir George Lionel (1882-1959)' in WILLIAMS, E. T. and PALMER, Helen M. (eds) Dictionary of National Biography 1951-1960. Oxford University Press, 1971. At the time of this remark he was helping prepare the outline plan for the north-east development area (p804).
- ⁶⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 04/03/1952, p3.
- ⁶⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 08/07/1953, p3.
- ⁶⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 04/06/1957, p4.
- ⁷⁰ Barnsley got ministerial approval for its plan earlier than Sheffield in 1955 - see Civic Review, No. 71, April 1955, p1. The first draft of Rotherham's development plan was approved by the Borough Council

in 1952 - see Rotherham Advertiser 10/05/1952, p1. A public inquiry was held in 1953 - see Rotherham Advertiser 03/10/1953, p14. Ministerial approval came in 1955 - see Rotherham Advertiser 13/08/1955, p9.

⁷¹ HASEGAWA, J. 1999, pp159-60.

⁷² See Sheffield Telegraph Year Books.

⁷³ YOUNG, Michael and WILLMOTT, Peter. Family and Kinship in East London. Pelican, 1962, pp198-9.

⁷⁴ ASHTON, Joe. Red Rose Blues: The Story of a Good Labour Man. Pan Books, 2002.

⁷⁵ FARNSWORTH, Keith. A Sheffield Boy. Breedon Books Publishing Company, 1999.

⁷⁶ POLLARD, Sidney. A History of Labour in Sheffield. Liverpool University Press, 1959, p268.

⁷⁷ TIMMINS, Nicholas. The Five Giants: A Biography of the Welfare State. Fontana Press, 1996, p144.

⁷⁸ CAMPBELL, J. 1994, pp163-4.

⁷⁹ TIMMINS, N. 1996, pp144-5.

⁸⁰ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. Sheffield Replanned. Sheffield City Council, 1945, p22.

⁸¹ Report on the Planning of the Outer Areas of the City, dated 10/01/1946, p4, CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).

⁸² Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, pp54-5; Civic Record, No. 9, April 1948, p4.

⁸³ CHERRY, Gordon E. 1988, p152.

⁸⁴ Report on the Planning of the Outer Areas of the City, dated 10/01/1946, p4, CA655 (17) (Sheffield Archives).

⁸⁵ Municipal Progressive Party. Progressive Post-War Policy: The Sheffield Municipal Progressive Party's Programme of Reconstruction. Municipal Elections on 7th November 1945. Municipal Progressive Party, 1945, p8.

⁸⁶ Sheffield Town Planning Committee. 1945, pp54-5.

⁸⁷ Civic Record, No. 6, January 1948, p4.

⁸⁸ Unfortunately the Manor community centre was destroyed in the Sheffield 'Blitz' in 1940 and was not completely re-built until 1954. See MERCER, Malcolm. A Portrait of the Manor in the 1930s': The Evolution of a Council Estate. Pickard Publishing, 1999, p180.

⁸⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 12/02/1946, p3.

⁹⁰ MERCER, M. 1999, pp129-34.

⁹¹ FIELDING, S., THOMPSON, P and TIRATSOO, N. 1995, pp127-8.

⁹² HUGHES, Vincent M. History of the Growth and Location of the Corporation Housing Schemes. Sheffield City Council, 1959, pp14-5.

⁹³ Sheffield Telegraph 13/07/1945, p3.

⁹⁴ 17/07/1945, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

⁹⁵ Rotherham Advertiser 08/06/1944, p3.

⁹⁶ 18/05/1943, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

⁹⁷ Sheffield Telegraph 02/09/1943, p3.

⁹⁸ 21/09/1943, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

⁹⁹ 15/02/1944, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

¹⁰⁰ 21/03/1944, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

¹⁰¹ 24/08/1944, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

¹⁰² HUGHES, V. M. 1959, pp15-6.

¹⁰³ ADDISON, Paul. The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War. Pimlico, 1994, p247.

¹⁰⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 07/09/1944, p3.

¹⁰⁵ 24/08/1944, Rotherham Corporation Housing Committee Minutes.

¹⁰⁶ ADDISON, P. 1995, pp57-8.

¹⁰⁷ HUGHES, V. M. 1959, p16.

¹⁰⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 19/07/1945, p3.

¹⁰⁹ 17/11/1948, Housing Committee, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1947/49.

¹¹⁰ 16/04/1947, Housing Committee, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1946/47, p261.

¹¹¹ Surveys, (Building Edition), Vol. 1, No. 5, August 1951, p26.

¹¹² 08/11/1945, Estates Committee, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1945/46.

¹¹³ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Eighth Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Directory for 1949, p41.

¹¹⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 04/08/1943, p3.

¹¹⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 05/08/1943, p3.

¹¹⁶ The Star 07/01/1947, p2.

- ¹¹⁷ Annual Housing Department Report for Year Ended 31 March 1952, p44.
- ¹¹⁸ HAYES, N. 1999, pp282-309.
- ¹¹⁹ HEY, David. A History of Sheffield. Carnegie Publishing, 1998, p232; ASHTON, J. 2002, pp55-6.
- ¹²⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 30/04/1949.
- ¹²¹ Sheffield Telegraph 28/06/1949.
- ¹²² RAVETZ, A. 1995, pp154-5.
- ¹²³ Surveys, (Building Edition), Vol. 1, No. 5, August 1951, p26.
- ¹²⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 29/06/1945.
- ¹²⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 21/12/1945, p3.
- ¹²⁶ 05/09/1945, City Council, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1944/45.
- ¹²⁷ FOOT, M. 1999, p265.
- ¹²⁸ BULLOCK, N. 1989, p49, 47. The Medical Officer of Health in Rotherham in 1946 saw the condition of existing houses as 'a matter of concern', however, due to lack of maintenance and repair during the war years. He noted that 'Rotherham was not seriously damaged by falling bombs but the blast from those that did fall in the Borough and from gunfire weakened numerous house structures so that very little is required to cause roofs to leak and ceilings and plaster to fall.' Certain houses in the town had reached the stage where repairs were 'satisfactory to no-one'. BARR, Dr. William. Medical Officer of Health Report for Rotherham 1946. p30.
- ¹²⁹ 05/12/1945, City Council, Sheffield City Council Minute Book 1945/46, p63. See also Sheffield Telegraph 06/12/1945, p4 for report of meeting.
- ¹³⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 01/03/1947, p2, 3.
- ¹³¹ Sheffield Telegraph 10/11/1948, p3.
- ¹³² Rotherham Advertiser 01/05/1948, p6.
- ¹³³ Table 6.1 is constructed from the following sources:- Star 12/06/1942, p2; TURNER, Barry and RENNELL, Tony. When Daddy Came Home: How Family Life Changed Forever in 1945. Hutchinson, 1995, p204; Star 05/01/1949, p2; HUGHES, Vincent M. City of Sheffield Estates Committee Annual Report of Housing Manager 1948/9; HUGHES, Vincent M. Annual Report of Housing Department for Year Ended 31 March 1950, p10; Sheffield Telegraph 17/10/1957, p4. I have not included the 8,762 on the separate old people's waiting list which would bring the 1957 total up to 44,149 people.
- ¹³⁴ TURNER, B. and RENNELL, T. 1995, p204.
- ¹³⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 04/10/1945, p3.
- ¹³⁶ Barnsley Chronicle 18/01/1947, p1.
- ¹³⁷ Barnsley Chronicle 01/02/1947, p1.
- ¹³⁸ Barnsley Chronicle 18/01/1947, p8.
- ¹³⁹ Barnsley Chronicle 12/07/1947, p1.
- ¹⁴⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 04/10/1945, p4.
- ¹⁴¹ South Yorkshire Times and Express 11/05/1946, p16.
- ¹⁴² HINTON, James. 'Self-help and Socialism: The Squatters' Movement of 1946', History Workshop Journal, No. 25, Spring 1988, pp100-126.
- ¹⁴³ Sheffield Telegraph 18/07/1946, p1.
- ¹⁴⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 23/07/1946, p3.
- ¹⁴⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 24/07/1946, p3.
- ¹⁴⁶ Rotherham Advertiser 24/08/1946, p5.
- ¹⁴⁷ Rotherham Advertiser 31/08/1946, p8.
- ¹⁴⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 27/08/1946, p3.
- ¹⁴⁹ Sheffield Telegraph 28/08/1946, p3.
- ¹⁵⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 30/08/1946, p2.
- ¹⁵¹ Sheffield Telegraph 02/09/1946, p3.
- ¹⁵² Sheffield Telegraph 14/09/1946, p1.
- ¹⁵³ Sheffield Telegraph 05/09/1946, p3.
- ¹⁵⁴ 18/05/1949, 21/09/1949, 19/10/1949, 'Record of Principal Events', The Sheffield Telegraph Year Book 1950; Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1950. p13.
- ¹⁵⁵ MORGAN, K. O. 1986, p168.
- ¹⁵⁶ Rotherham Advertiser 24/05/1947, p8.
- ¹⁵⁷ The Guardian 16/01/2002.
- ¹⁵⁸ LELLIOTT, Jonathan. 'Sex and the City', BBC History Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 3, March 2003, pp34-5.
- ¹⁵⁹ KRAMNICK, Isaac and SHEERMAN, Barry. Harold Laski: A Life on the Left. Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1993, p37.

¹⁶⁰ NUTTALL, Jeremy. "Psychological Socialist"; 'Militant Moderate': Evan Durbin and the Politics of Synthesis', *Labour History Review*, Vol. 68, No. 2, August 2003, p245.

¹⁶¹ KRAMNICK, I. and SHEERMAN, B. 1993, p40.

¹⁶² ROBERTS, Andrew. *Eminent Churchillians*. Phoenix, 1994, p211.

¹⁶³ MORGAN, K. O. 1986, p194.

¹⁶⁴ WEIGHT, Richard. *Patriots: National Identity in Britain 1940-2000*. Macmillan, 2002, p83.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE LABOUR PARTY
IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE,
1945-1951:
IDEOLOGY, CULTURE, ORGANISATION
AND ELECTORAL SUCCESS

7.1 - INTRODUCTION

Herbert Morrison, contrasting in 1924 the four-fold increase of the Labour vote in London since 1918 with the poor showing ten years earlier, said that before the war 'London was the despair of the Labour movement'. London socialists were '... a gassy, protesting, quarrelsome, cantankerous crowd, very good at cursing the enemy and cursing ourselves, but no good at effective fighting against the well organised political parties.' Even London Labour Party propaganda simply benefited the Liberals. He gave a simple explanation for this state of affairs, namely, that no one had been willing to put effort into organisation. This had altered and the

... change - approaching a political revolution - has been achieved by hard work, constructive education methods and sound organisation from the polling districts upwards. Had we followed the advice of our so-called revolutionary counsellors, this substantial move toward a political revolution would not have taken place to anything like the extent shown by the figures. This is further indication of the fact that the so-called revolutionary tactician has in general a reactionary effect.¹

In 1949 the Rotherham Advertiser similarly explained Labour's success in municipal elections in the Borough, when it actually gained a seat from its opponents in an inauspicious year, under the heading 'Socialists' Lesson in Organisation': 'Those who thought the change of polling days from dismal, dull and foggy November to the merry month of May would induce greatly increased numbers of electors to exercise their votes have been sadly disappointed.' Little had altered and 'a most deplorable feature is the indifference of a large number of voters in matters which directly concern their own welfare.' It believed that 'nothing short of a catastrophe' would alter their apathy and saw no evidence of 'the landslide from Socialism in other areas' - indeed 'in the Rotherham area - borough, urban and rural - there is every indication of a strengthened Labour Party.' It went on:

The secret of the Labour Party's success in Rotherham is its all-the-year-round work and its highly efficient organisation, and whatever one's political colour may be one is bound, in fairness, to admit that the anti-Socialists have a lot to learn from their opponents in that sphere of activity. As much as it may hurt the organisers of other political parties and associations to say so, they cannot hope to win elections while

slipshod methods of campaigning continue and while there is such apathy among their own so-called supporters.... We must give credit where it is due - and in organisation that credit goes to the Labour Party.²

I have quoted these examples - from a partisan of Labour and from a source which radical Socialists in Rotherham saw as opposed to it - to show the emphasis that is placed on organisation as an explanation of Labour's success. The Advertiser makes the traditional complaint about apathy in a local election but it cannot avoid explaining the election outcome as a consequence of Labour's local organisational structure and its concentration on the task of winning votes all year round. This particular election saw a turnout of 55 per cent - the peak turnout between 1938 and 1952. The low was in 1950 with 31 per cent. Thus, perhaps the paper had less right to criticise Rotherham's electorate for apathy. However, the 1945 General Election saw a turnout of 76.4 per cent³ which in 1950 rose to 87.3 per cent. It fell to 84.2 per cent in 1951.⁴ The respective national figures were 73, 84 and 83 per cent.⁵ Thus, there was a difference between turnouts in the two kinds of election but, even in the latter, Rotherham voter turnout was higher than the national figure, so there was hardly apathy.

The source of the Morrison quote is from Marriott's important book on Labour in the East End of London between the wars which concentrates on West Ham. Marriott has some relevant points to put and his insights which derive from an academic Marxist perspective are persuasive and germane to my work. Similarly useful and also derived from the Historical Materialist perspective is the work of Savage on Labour in Preston between 1880 and 1940,⁶ and Williams on Labour in the Rhondda valleys between 1885 and 1951.⁷ All three have made a pioneering contribution to locality studies as distinct from histories that simply concentrate on politics at Westminster or Whitehall. Forester in 1976 said that there was 'a sense in which the achievements and failings of Labourism at the national level are mirrored at the local level, a sense in which constituency Labour parties are a microcosm of the national Labour Party.'⁸ Savage, Marriott and Williams all disagree with that belief. According to Savage, the 'nationalisation' of politics which produced more uniform patterns of working-class political activity was due to the convergence of the local in different parts of the country and not imposed from above.⁹ Hence it is the locality that is important and not the national for the development of practical working-class politics.¹⁰ A possible criticism of these studies are that they are atypical and unrepresentative of local Labour Party development but Williams claims any presumption of typicality would rest on little knowledge of actual Labour parties. He does not believe that the average or typical experience is any more meaningful than any other, and argues that the atypical experience can cast new light on developments which would otherwise be hidden.¹¹ However, Williams does believe that by the 1930s and 1940s national and international factors, the rise of European Fascism, the Second World War, the reforms of the Attlee Government and the Cold War, took precedence as stimuli in local politics in the Rhondda.¹²

According to Eric Hobsbawm, 'the world and culture of the working classes is incomprehensible without

the labour movement, which for long periods was its core.’¹³ This is particularly true of the so-called ‘traditional’ working class created between the 1880s and 1914 whose culture

probably reached its peak between 1945 and 1951, for this was the period when trade union membership (as a percentage of the labour force), the electoral strength of the Labour Party (both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the total electorate), attendance at football matches and cinemas, and perhaps also the mass circulation newspaper appealing specifically to a proletarian audience, were at their maximum.¹⁴

Similarly he speaks of, what he calls, the ‘Andy Capp working class’ as

recognizable not only by its headgear, . . . but by the physical environment in which they lived, by a style of life and leisure, by a certain class consciousness increasingly expressed in a secular tendency to join unions and to identify with a class party of Labour. It is the working class of cup-finals, fish-and-chip shops, palais-de-dance and Labour with a capital L.¹⁵

It is thus obvious that any attempt to examine the strength and development of the Labour Party in South Yorkshire must look at cultural factors though this is not to say that on their own they completely explain such developments. Hobsbawm, however, has been criticised for being overly deterministic in his thesis even though he admits the influence of social, political and economic factors in the development of the Labour Party. Neville Kirk, writing in 1991, ultimately comes down on Hobsbawm’s side after noting the range of critics and criticisms of his thesis, but also criticizes it for being a narrow and deterministic interpretation which ‘combined with his underestimation of the appeals of Conservatism and ‘moderation’, indeed Conservative ‘traditionalism’, within ‘traditional’ working-class communities . . . weaken[s] his general case.’¹⁶ Among the views which Kirk criticizes are those of Gareth Stedman-Jones, who saw ‘traditional’ working-class culture as it developed from the 1880s as resisting middle-class attempts to manipulate it but at the same time being politically apathetic and resigned to the subordination of the workers to capitalism. The Labour Party was the ‘apotheosis’ of the ‘enclosed and defensive world of working-class culture’. ‘The Labour Representation Committee was the generalisation of structural role of the trade union into the form of a political party.’¹⁷ Thus, we see the features of one kind of Marxist critique of the Labour Party referred to in earlier chapters as the critique of ‘Labourism’. Hobsbawm, though a long-term Communist, is much more optimistic about the Labour Party in tribute to men like the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain President and Barnsley FC supporter Herbert Smith who stood up to the coal-owners and the government in 1926 not because of socialist ideology but because of his ‘experience of the miners’ struggle, and . . . [because] the socialist demanded what he thought the miners needed, a legal eight-hour day, a guaranteed minimum wage and better safety.’¹⁸ There was apathy, indeed, but class-consciousness meant that as Beatrice Webb put it in 1915: ‘The power of the Movement lies in the massive obstinacy of the rank-and-file, every day more

representative of the working class. Whenever this massive feeling can be directed for or against some particular measure, it becomes almost irresistible. Our English governing class would not dare overtly to defy it.’¹⁹

Michael Savage would be a critic of Hobsbawm. He believes that concentration on working-class culture as a factor in the development of the Labour Party is unhelpful to an analysis of what he calls the dynamics of working-class politics, because it is difficult to work out what the precise nature of working-class consciousness was in specific historical periods, and because he believes questions of strategy and tactics rather than moral issues or perceptions of how society actually worked dictated political practices and actions.²⁰ He also would say that Hobsbawm’s thesis is too deterministic believing that ‘People have a variety of beliefs about different elements of their lives, and there is no reason to suppose that there is any coherence about these beliefs.’²¹ Thus, it is possible for more than one political response to come from very different people arising out of the same cultural phenomenon and culture as a category of explanation of political developments is thus incoherent.²²

Savage also believes with Antonio Gramsci that ‘common sense’ working-class notions of the world are much more closely linked to the material world than to the different elements of a culture (i.e. to the economic base than to the cultural superstructure of Marx’s building metaphor), and he quotes Anthony Giddens on the differences between practical and discursive consciousness. The first consists of things which people know tacitly about social relationships without being able to give direct expression in words as to what they mean, while the latter consists of aspects of social life that can be directly accounted for by social actors in language. Giddens believes the two forms are not necessarily tied together in any social actor. Thus, Patrick Joyce’s view that experience of worker subordination to employers in the labour market necessarily leads to a set of deferential belief systems with wider political applicability is conceptually misleading. Forms of practical consciousness linked to particular activities can often have no wider implications.²³ Thus, he does not believe that changes in work practices can necessarily be linked to the growing politicisation of the skilled worker after 1900 and to support for the Labour Party. Savage believes that particular forms of working-class politics have to be examined through study of diverse social practices with their attendant forms of practical consciousness.²⁴

Savage bases his classification of Labour politics on the assumption that particular individuals undertake political activity and the forms that go with it on the basis that it will further their interests.²⁵ However, he believes that a given set of interests can give rise to divergent political forms.²⁶ He also distinguishes ‘formal politics’ from ‘practical politics’,²⁷ arguing that the former is relatively autonomous while the latter develops out of the interest of the working class in reducing the material insecurity inherent in the capitalist labour market. Savage posits three kinds of working class practical politics. The first - ‘Mutualism’ - is the attempt by the working class to develop alternatives to capitalism through provision of their own jobs and services, for example Owenite producer co-operatives or the retail co-operatives founded by the Rochdale pioneers and expanded by the prospering Co-operative movement in the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries.²⁸ The second - 'Economism' - refers to the attempts of workers to improve their conditions within the framework of capitalism through, for example, trade unions and free collective wage bargaining.²⁹ Finally, 'Statism' - the attempt to enlist the intervention of the central or local state in order to remove worker insecurity and to de-commodify labour. This is done through the provision of a social wage, whereby various services are provided by the state, paid for to a lesser or greater extent by taxation of the wealthy. It can mean direct employment of the working class by the local or central state or financial support like a minimum wage.³⁰ At a local everyday level differing levels of these three kinds of struggles go on at any one time in any one place and in fact they can be interdependent but certain ones can be more dominant in particular locales.³¹ He uses these to develop his study of the detailed development of the Labour Party in Preston.

John Marriott³² and Chris Williams,³³ are more appreciative of culture as an explanatory factor and are also more appreciative too of the insights that the so-called 'linguistic turn' has brought into the discipline of history with its emphasis on political language as constitutive of particular political formations or coalitions through concepts like 'class', 'the People' or 'gender'. They look in their respective 'micro-historical' studies of West Ham and South Wales at the relative success or failure of these differing identities in the mobilisation of support behind Labour in those localities. Amy Black and Stephen Brooke similarly seek to show, for example, how a masculinist, producer-oriented 'Labourist' discourse, despite espousing the welfare state, only viewed women as traditional mothers and wives and not as married full-time workers. As a result, a newer language of women's interests and by implication, gender roles, was not understood in Labour discourse and an organisational structure which would have given women greater significance within the Labour Party could not be created.³⁴ The result was a gender gap in General Elections which the more flexible Conservatives happily exploited in the 1950s and 1960s through the conscious construction of a political rhetoric that did appeal to women.³⁵ Black and Brooke argue that because party politics is made up of both structure (organisation) and discourse then both must be examined. To examine one without the other is insufficient.³⁶ The problem with their explanation is that it misses out the role of working-class culture in explaining why this political language was not created by Labour.

Emphasis on the role of organisation as the sole explanation of Labour's rise (as in the earlier quote from Herbert Morrison) is too neat and simple for John Marriott as it can lead to Whig interpretations of history that assert that given the existence of good organisation it was inevitable that Labour would take power. Better organisation, though important, will not lead to inevitable success for Labour if the voters are not convinced that they should go out to vote, particularly if Labour is not the incumbent party in office. Similarly, poor organisation will not necessarily lose a political party votes as long as it has popular support.³⁷ He argues that local Labour parties are part of a political response to *local* working-class experience. This political response he gives as his definition of 'Labourism'.³⁸ He distinguishes it from both 'Labour socialism' and Marxism. Labourism was rarely antagonistic to other classes but saw itself as having a corporate interest within capitalism often articulating the politics of moderate trade

unionism.³⁹

Chris Williams does not accept either Marxist interpretations of 'Labourism' which deny the Labour Party any role in promoting socialist consciousness or non-Marxist interpretations of it which see Labourism as responsible for the successful development of the Labour Party because the working classes are happy with the existing social order and refuse to support militantly socialist political parties like the Communists as a result. He does accept the subjective perception or *mentalitie* of Labour activists and voters who saw themselves as 'socialists' in the 1930s and 1940s, however vague and incoherent that 'socialism' was. One should not prejudice the 'meanings' in the language, values and beliefs of such people but should try to understand them as best one can on their own terms. Working-class consciousness has never been 'pure' and has always needed careful analysis to tease out its complexity.⁴⁰ It is obvious that Labour Party members in the 1940s must have seen themselves as socialists, though this is disputed by Roy Hattersley who says that nobody in Hillsborough Division described themselves so. The correct appellation was apparently 'Labour men' or 'Labour women' though that may tell more about Hattersley's own politics or may be something to do with the strength of the Co-operative Party in Hillsborough. 'Labourism' as a discourse that places an emphasis on the politics of working-class experience always underlay Labour Party members beliefs that they were socialists and was more important than a socialism based on ethics or ideology.⁴¹ It is telling that Duncan Tanner describes the beliefs and values of the Labour rank-and-file as neither Marxism nor Liberalism but 'a socialism rooted in experience'.⁴² To describe Labour as being simply pragmatic or opportunist and having a distaste for all theory is wrong. Labour, unlike the Communists, may not have possessed a rigid dogmatic philosophy to give it direction and strength but as Fielding says 'it is possible that ideology has played a greater role in giving shape to Labour's sense of purpose than has hitherto been considered'.⁴³ Hattersley, an important witness to the Sheffield Labour movement, is, as we have seen, less convinced about the importance of ideology in the 1940s since the 1945 General Election was more a victory for Labour's ameliorators. He argued in 1987, however, that due to the success of right-wing free-market Thatcherite ideology a democratic socialist ideology was now indispensable for Labour success and tried to construct one out of the remnants of Croslandite revisionism. This was, however, not borne out in 1997 or 2001 when the New Labour Modernisers ignored Tony Crosland's belief in positive freedom as a means of greater equality and maintained both the grammar schools that had survived, made university the natural province of the wealthy, and continued tax cuts for the very rich.⁴⁴

7.2 - IDEOLOGY AND CULTURE

Harris believes that those in Labour's ranks who had some kind of theory about socialism were more interested in drafting programmes and policies than in engaging in critical analysis of the structures of power within society. Understanding Labour views of the latter can only be gleaned from assumptions underlying the former.⁴⁵ Labour was less influenced by abstract theories and much more by a view which saw the state as dominated by unaccountable vested interests who used it as an instrument to achieve

their own selfish ends. Despite roots in Lib-Labism, many Labour trade unionists held that view which echoed the eighteenth century 'Tory' philosophy of 'interests'. Such a viewpoint also had affinities to that of Marxists who saw the state as an instrument of the naked force of the dominant class though they believed that a violent revolution might have to take place to get power.⁴⁶ The challenge for Labour was to control the state in the interests of workers unjustly denied their rightful place in society by those who already controlled it. The state as an institution in itself was considered by Labour to be neutral - all Labour had to do was win elections to wrest that control from its opponents. Labour's discourse was one of 'Class' but it was also articulated through concepts of 'the People' which reflected the legacy of nineteenth century struggles against 'Old Corruption' as well as concepts of the 'Nation'. Hoggart has shown how the Leeds working classes distinguished between 'Us' and 'Them'; the latter being socially undifferentiated and applied to all those in authority.⁴⁷ This view was reflected among Labour voters and party members in South Yorkshire. Hattersley claims that members of Hillsborough DLP did not call themselves socialists but 'Labour men' and Labour often described itself as the 'People's Party' having united under its banner 'the producers, the consumers, the useful people'.⁴⁸ Its rhetorical emphasis on being the Party of 'The People', according to Steven Fielding, united the middle and working classes in 1945 and had helped win the general election for Labour.⁴⁹ The working class were also the main body of the 'Nation' who had fought Hitler in the interests of national survival sacrificing themselves as part of a broader community that should reflect the exercise of social consciousness.

Less apparent was a language which reflected the particular views of women outside the home or which was sympathetic to homosexuals. Heterosexist male chauvinism was a product of the language of skilled trade unionism. This placed great emphasis on the dignity of labour and heroic toil. There was also the religious injunction placed on Adam after being thrust out of Eden that men should earn their bread by the sweat of their own brows which, combined with the fact that Christ had been a carpenter, made toil seem a religious sacrament for those from the nonconformist sects that supplied so many of Labour's leaders. The 'common sense' fact that the world was a male world ruled by men (and indeed in most respects still is today) naturally influenced how the members of local Labour parties saw the world. The language of Labourist politics was buttressed by the ideology of 'separate spheres' for men and women which left women confined to the home and dependent on a male bread-winner - though in the home they held a position of power and respectability. Homosexual acts were illegal and homosexuals were forced underground in order to protect themselves from the authorities. It is true that in 1928 the Sheffield Labour Party offered the freedom of the City to Edward Carpenter but it is unlikely that this was as a result of his authorship of The Intermediate Sex which had tried to make homosexuality (or being 'Uranian') seem scientific and respectable.⁵⁰ After Guy Burgess defected to Russia, homosexuals were also viewed as potential traitors by the press and right-wing politicians, as their activities left them open to blackmail. This was also probably the view of many members of the working classes.

The language of racism, as we said in Chapter Six, was all pervasive in British society in the 1940s, but to the credit of local Labour there is evidence of some sympathy for black people even though the black

people for which sympathy was expressed were overseas in the British Empire. The position might have been different had blacks been closer at hand and seen as an apparent threat to jobs, as Italian miners were locally in the late 1940s. The response of Labour more widely during the First World War to threatened imports of black labour⁵¹ and similarly after immigration began in earnest during the 1950s⁵² is not reassuring in that respect. Rotherham Labour Party was outraged by attempts to violently suppress trade unionism in Trinidad by a British police commissioner, though this probably demonstrates the sense of producer solidarity of Labour in Rotherham as much as anti-racism.⁵³ It also attacked racial discrimination in South Africa and opposed South Africa's attempt to annex Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland through a resolution it sent to the 1950 Labour Party Annual Conference. 'Vulcan' in the Advertiser did not approve showing the condescension that British middle-class people typically had for black Africans:

Quite a number of resolutions come from this area and deal with questions which, by comparison, range upon the humdrum. Thus, the Penistone Labour Party is concerned with management in the steel industry, the Don Valley Labour Party is agitated about industrial injuries, and their colleagues in the Dearne Valley are busying themselves with such commonplace topics as the capital levy and nationalisation of the land. It is left to the comrades in Rotherham to lead the delegates from these well-beaten paths to the trackless expanses of the Dark Continent.⁵⁴

Much local 'socialism' took an ethical form that reflected the influence of humanitarian impulses and the effects of religious doctrines that could be construed as being innately socialist, like Christ's commandment to love thy neighbour. It was not confined to the crudely materialistic considerations that led to acceptance of Marxist concepts of class war. According to Keir Hardie, 'Socialism makes war upon a system, not upon a class'⁵⁵ and it was believed that rational argument undertaken in a peaceable manner as well as appeals to their better nature as human beings could better change the minds of employers and rulers than crude insults. Socialism was regarded as a Truth that only the actually evil or the mentally sub-normal would fail to grasp. Socialism was regarded as a moral crusade that would convert the useful people in the community - the unproductive drones like rentiers who lived without effort or those who depended on the old school tie for easy berths did not matter. Again, according to Hardie, socialism was 'a handmaiden of religion, and as such entitled to the support of all who pray for the coming of Christ's Kingdom upon earth.'⁵⁶ Hence Labour's socialism also often had pronounced Utopian characteristics. There was often little difference between the beliefs and values of many nonconformists and many Labour Party members (often one and the same in Sheffield). This is shown by their joint abhorrence of certain kinds of exploitative capitalist activity, like providing gambling facilities or selling alcohol, on the basis that it depraved or corrupted people and undermined family life. Reid argues that in Sheffield by 1900 there had developed an independent working-class culture free of the 'ethic of respectability' that had united elements of the middle and working classes in the nineteenth century against 'rough' working-class elements. This new culture was focused around the pleasures of

the public house, the music-hall and the football ground. It came to be regarded as the 'traditional' culture of the working class in the 1950s by writers like Richard Hoggart just as it appeared to be being eroded by mass affluence. Yet despite Reid's view, an 'ethic of respectability' still seems characteristic of Labour councillors in the 1940s, uniting them across the council chamber with their opponents who were often similarly active in chapel or church.⁵⁷ This earnest puritan ethic meant that both believed in discipline and conformity to social norms and both frowned on 'rough' working-class habits that seemed too spontaneous and uncontrolled.

Even the Church of England in Sheffield, despite traditionally being seen as 'the Conservative Party at prayer', was through the personality and inspiration of Leslie Stannard Hunter, Bishop of Sheffield between 1939 and 1962, willing to go a long way to build bridges with organised labour. In fact Sheffield was transformed into the most forward looking and progressive diocese in the Anglican Church. Hunter surrounded himself with a gifted team of clergymen including Oliver Tomkins and Alan Ecclestone who shared his beliefs.⁵⁸ This was partly an outcome of the strength and rivalry of nonconformity in Sheffield,⁵⁹ as well as Hunter's desire to reach out to those alienated working-class people who failed to be moved by any religion. Hunter and his co-workers recognised the need for social reforms to ameliorate working-class grievances and to more effectively integrate the working classes within society.⁶⁰ Ecclestone, the most radical local Anglican clergyman in Sheffield, and the Vicar of Holy Trinity, Darnall, went far beyond this when after being a Labour Party member he joined the Communist Party in February 1948. He believed that Labour had 'made it clear that its concern for Socialism at home and abroad was quite dead'.⁶¹

Leslie Hunter was president from 1946 of the Sheffield District of the United Nations Association which tried to influence public opinion to bring about world peace and understanding. Alderman Frank Thraves, Leader of the Labour Group between 1944 and 1946, was president of the Sheffield Branch and chairman of the Sheffield District in 1946. His successor as Leader, Alderman Bingham, was honorary treasurer of the Association. Many Sheffield clergymen were involved on the Executive.⁶² Support for the Association and its aims was actually part of a cross-party consensus seeking to unite the whole city. The Association was very ambitious and organised numerous cultural events to raise funds and recruit members throughout the late 1940s. In United Nations Week 1946 it

... obtained the support of the leading figures in the city and of all the larger clubs and organisations. Our programme was the most ambitious in the country ... [I]t included among many other events, a Cathedral Service, a Mass Rally, at which the Lord Bishop, the Lord Mayor and five of the City's Members of Parliament spoke, a Meeting for Women's Organisations, another for Secondary Schools, special plays at the Playhouse and the Little Theatre, a performance of the "Threnody for a Soldier Killed in Action" by the Halle Orchestra and appropriate documentaries in a large number of cinemas.⁶³

This consensus reflected support for what Ceadel calls *pacifism* - the belief 'that war, though *sometimes necessary* is always an irrational and inhumane way to solve disputes, and that its prevention should always be an over-riding political priority.'⁶⁴

The peace movement in 1950, when the Second World Peace Congress was held in Sheffield, was increasingly orchestrated by Communists. The Russians had come to see the thrust of Western policy, particularly after the Marshall Plan was announced in 1947, as antagonistic to them and felt the West might unilaterally use the atomic bomb to destroy Soviet power. Churchill and even Bertrand Russell, later a founder member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, in 1948 seriously suggested the threatened use of atomic weapons before the Soviet Union also gained them to make the latter give up their gains in Eastern Europe.⁶⁵ As pacifists rather than absolute pacifists, Communists wanted to prevent the use of atomic weapons by the West, at least until Soviet Russia also possessed them. The movement they created to gain time was described as a 'Peace' movement thus winning the support of absolute pacifists who could not see or ignored the cynical use to which their support was put since the Soviet Union would never get rid of its armed forces and was at the time using espionage to gain access to Western nuclear secrets. The Congress attracted the support of at least one respected local Labour Party member from the absolute pacifist wing of the party who seemingly ignored the contradictory motives behind the Communist 'Peace' movement. She was the idiosyncratic Lady Mabel Smith, sister of the 7th Earl Fitzwilliam and a practicing Christian Socialist and vegetarian.⁶⁶ She attended St. Cecilia's Church in Sheffield which was staffed by monks from the Anglican monastery of Kilham. Though a socialist, she retained the 'High Anglicanism' of her aristocratic family.⁶⁷ Until she retired in 1949 she was a County Alderman of the West Riding County Council.⁶⁸ She was well known as a lecturer of the Workers' Educational Association having joined the movement as early as 1906.⁶⁹ The South Yorkshire Times and Express paid tribute when she died in September 1951:

The death of Lady Mabel Smith leaves the whole of the West Riding the poorer by the loss of one who was a gentlewoman in the truest sense of the word. Apart from her splendid record of County Council service, particularly in the field of education, she was the friend of many homely people in simpler and more intimate circles. Her forthright habit of expression won appreciation as well as respect all over the county, and especially in the environs of Grenoside where she worked in civil harness with many of homelier conviction though of equal integrity of purpose. There has been no-one quite like Lady Mabel and there will be none. Her contribution to the social history of the district was as unique as her personality.⁷⁰

On the other hand, not all Anglicans in Sheffield could be considered sympathetic to socialism by any means. Reverend E. G. Thorpe, Vicar of Dore in the West End of Sheffield during the 1950 General Election, condemned socialism from his pulpit as 'the most deadly thing in the history of the world'.⁷¹

Albert Victor Alexander, Co-operative and Labour Member of Parliament for Hillsborough Division, combined his socialism with nonconformist religion as a Baptist lay-preacher.⁷² The need for all human beings to co-operate in order to further their ends was the essence of the view of the world taken by Sheffield's strong Co-operative movement and it was equally a religious imperative. Alexander told to a Sheffield audience during the 1945 General Election that Britain had won the Second World War because it had fought 'according to the example of the two wise donkeys' - the heroes of a Co-operative cartoon. Tied together by a six-foot length of rope they knew that they could not reach the two bales of hay which a thoughtless and cruel farmer had set ten feet apart, but synchronising their movements in the same direction they could reach each feast in turn.⁷³

His Agent, Albert Ballard, was also a nonconformist, being a Wesleyan lay-preacher, and his life exemplifies the desire among some working-class people for respectability and self-improvement.⁷⁴ One of the most important and influential men in the Labour and Co-operative Movement in Sheffield, Ballard was born in Suffolk in 1888 and came to Sheffield when one year old. As The Star commented: 'he carved out a career in public service that has few equals'. He left school at thirteen and took only two examinations in his life, but rose solely by his own efforts to become nationally known as an authority on education.⁷⁵ When he was made a Freeman of Sheffield the Lord Mayor Alderman Mrs Sheard said: 'Those who know Dr Ballard's erudition have to remind themselves that he, like so many of his contemporaries, acquired most of his education through the Workers Education Association and through the public libraries.'⁷⁶ Roy Hattersley adds that he

. . . was one of those self-educated men who never let their education end, and as well as quoting from the Thomas Hardys and George Eliots of his WEA past he could produce long passages from the fashionable authors of the day - Hemingway, Waugh, Huxley, Orwell and, above all, Bernard Shaw - with a facility that the City Grammar's teachers could not match.⁷⁷

Ballard's view of education and that of many local socialists can perhaps be gathered from this extract from a book on which he collaborated, The Equipment of the Workers by Arnold Freeman,⁷⁸ published in 1919:

The Fabian philosophy would appear to be that the norms of human life and progress reside ultimately in physical things like food, clothing, fuel and shelter: Fabians contend, in the words of Bernard Shaw already quoted, "What is the matter with the poor is poverty" (and by poverty *they* mean material poverty); and they have half-convinced the community that the solution of Labour Unrest lies solely in a materialistic amelioration of the lot of the four fifths of the nation who are poor. Our own contention is that the ultimate sources of human life and progress are in spiritual

things: that what is the matter with the poor (and the rich) is spiritual poverty and that the fundamental solution of the problem ahead of us is education.⁷⁹

Ballard was the first full-time secretary of the Sheffield Co-operative Party, in office from 1919 until 1954. He was elected a councillor for Manor Ward in 1942, which seat he held until he became an alderman in 1952.⁸⁰ He was co-opted onto the Education Committee in 1926 and was a member until his death. He was chairman of that committee from 1953 until 1967 when he retired from the City Council. He was also chairman of Sheffield Fabian Society in the 1940s and secretary of the Sheffield Co-operative Ramblers. He was Lord Mayor in 1957.⁸¹ Ballard was very versatile. He was editor of the Sheffield Co-operator, the organ of the Co-operative Party,⁸² an occasional actor at Arnold Freeman's Little Theatre,⁸³ and thought nothing of writing a pageant 'A Salute to Co-operation' as part of International Co-operative Day celebrations in 1943. Some 200 children took part representing the different nations of the world and it was set to music and presented by Miss Gertie Lewis.⁸⁴

The Forewords contributed by Joseph Madin, president of the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council and vice-chairman of the Sheffield Fabian Society,⁸⁵ to Trades Council Reports from 1946 onwards give an indication of some of the literary influences on one Sheffield Labour leader's world-view. He quoted from the Book of Common Prayer in 1949⁸⁶ and from Leviticus and Exodus in 1950.⁸⁷ Other influences mentioned include Robert Blatchford, William Morris⁸⁸ and Ralph Waldo Emerson.⁸⁹ Like Ballard, Madin had probably had no more than elementary education and was self-taught or else had taken adult education courses with the Workers' Educational Association or the National Council of Labour Colleges.

The world of the autodidact is celebrated by Jonathan Rose in his landmark book The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes. Rose has argued that you can gain an understanding of Labour's views about the structures of power within society from how its members responded to the canon of classic nineteenth century literature which functioned for them as a substitute for an ideology like Marxism. Literary texts provided members with a starting point for critically considering how society should ideally be structured. That explains Labour's respect for the wider provision of adult education. Previously limited to the highest orders of society, education in the classics of literature had given the latter their critical mental apparatus and the knowledge to rule. Labour wanted the widest possible diffusion of most kinds of knowledge, including English literature, since knowledge was obviously power.⁹⁰ The effect of this populist political aim meant that adult educationalists in the 'Great Tradition' of the WEA frowned on providing adult education for directly vocational purposes. According to the extra-mural lecturer, Richard Hoggart,

almost anathema to us was the idea of certification within liberal adult education. You did it for the love of God or the relief of man's estate. We . . . often found that what people thought we were going to do was give them socialist literature - George

Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* - but though we might be of the Left politically, we did not intend to introduce books labelled of the Left. In so far as we were Literature tutors we thought nothing but the best was good enough for our students, we gave them Shakespeare and great authors.⁹¹

The working-class autodidacts were culturally conservative in this preference for pre-twentieth century English literary classics, which they read rather than attempt the Modernist literature that was coming from Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury, for example. They lagged behind the educated middle classes by a generation in reading tastes.⁹² Rose and John Carey argue that Woolf and other Modernists deliberately tried to restrict the appeal of their books to the working classes in order to maintain their own status as 'high-brow' intellectuals by making them less easy to understand.⁹³ Copyright restrictions also meant their books were less cheap and less accessible than the kind of books pioneered by Everyman's Library for working-class readers.⁹⁴ Despite this the books that were read by working-class people, even if they were not cutting edge literature, did foster political radicalism and had a genuinely liberating effect on their minds.

Another local Labour figure about whom we have some evidence as to his intellectual tastes and hence his political outlook is the former miner Tom Williams, who was Member of Parliament for Don Valley constituency for thirty-seven years between 1922 and 1959, and Minister of Agriculture under Clement Attlee. He was born in 1888 and men of his generation formed some of the more senior Labour leaders in South Yorkshire in elected office. Tom was educated to elementary level at Swinton, near Mexborough, and as neither of his parents were literate he read to them frequently as a boy.⁹⁵ This latter activity probably had the subversive and liberating effect on him that Rose says it had on J. R. Clynes, whose political awakening came from being paid as a boy to read newspapers to three old blind men.⁹⁶ Williams was another autodidact. He extended his education through a correspondence course and by private study which gave him the qualifications of a pit deputy, but his intellectual horizons were widened, it is said, simply by interaction with the customers of the Wath Working Men's Club where he was steward between 1912 and 1914. The books which influenced him most included Jack London's *Iron Heel*, Robert Blatchford's *Merrie England*, and R. B. Suthers' *Mind Your Own Business*.⁹⁷

Blatchford's 1893 book sold over a million copies, it was claimed, in Britain alone and in a census at one northern Labour Club in the 1890s it was found that it had converted forty-nine out of the fifty members to socialism.⁹⁸ Blatchford's newspaper *The Clarion* had a circulation of over 80,000 by 1908,⁹⁹ before its decline due to his rabid anti-German stance during the First World War.¹⁰⁰ Like his book, its socialism had been un-theoretical, non-dogmatic and non-sectarian. He had started a movement which in its various guises tried to pre-figure life under socialism, but it was probably more important to many readers for the recreational activities it fostered than for its politics. Blatchford exalted 'pre-industrial values' having become a socialist after making passionate journalistic exposures of Manchester slum life.¹⁰¹ The National Clarion Cycling Club, always the centre of the movement, which continued to exist,

still operated the Clubhouse at Dore,¹⁰² which had been opened in 1920 by the Sheffield Clarion Cycling Club.¹⁰³ There were also Easter Meets at Buxton in Derbyshire in 1944¹⁰⁴ and 1950¹⁰⁵ but the national membership was not above a few thousand and its political influence locally was probably negligible.¹⁰⁶ Merrie England continued to be widely read in the 1940s. When Roy Hattersley read it for the first time as a young socialist he ‘thought of Shalesmoor when salmon still swam within walking distance of its then unspoilt hillside.’ Shalesmoor was a dilapidated slum district of Sheffield that came to represent for Hattersley ‘all that Blake and Cobbett had written about the ravages of the Industrial Revolution, the Enclosures and the dispossessed who were driven from rural Yorkshire to cough themselves to death in the cutlers’ shops of nineteenth-century Sheffield.’¹⁰⁷

The Sheffield Clarion Ramblers probably had a greater if narrow impact on local Labour politics even though they were no more than a few hundred strong and their constitution meant that formally they were open to people of all political beliefs. Their political activity was focused on getting wider access to the natural environment around Sheffield, especially the Peak District, but this involved political mobilisation of Labour on their behalf. This was done by their revered founder and leader, George Herbert Bridges Ward, who had fingers in many other associational pies. He was the first secretary of the Sheffield Labour Representation Committee, the forerunner of the Labour Party,¹⁰⁸ and a life-long socialist. He had founded the Ramblers after placing an advertisement in the Clarion in September 1900 for a ramble around the Kinder Scout plateau in Derbyshire.¹⁰⁹ He was also a central figure in the creation of the Sheffield, Peak District and South Yorkshire Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. He formed the local Youth Hostellers Association and helped create the Ramblers’ Association. He lived until 1957,¹¹⁰ presenting his views on the environment and much detailed local historical and topographical knowledge in The Clarion Handbook which he edited each year.¹¹¹ That knowledge, particularly of the history of rights of way, was a weapon in the armoury of the access movement and was the product of original research in local archives. He was particularly jubilant about the creation of the Peak District National Park in 1951,¹¹² the product of a much desired Labour Government.

The Clarion Ramblers were one part, though a central one, of the Ramblers Association (Sheffield Area) of which Ward was Chairman. Ward was influenced by Walt Whitman, Longfellow, Wordsworth¹¹³ and Edward Carpenter. In a 1939 poem, he related the lack of access to the mountains to the displacement of the common people from the land in the early nineteenth century and to the selfish power of vested interests. That power had just been revealed when an Access to Mountains Bill introduced by Labour MP, Arthur Creech Jones, had been cynically emasculated by National Government MPs in the Commons:¹¹⁴

Access to waste heathlands and to moors,/ Is denied by those selfish, unsocial boors,/ Who turned the cattle and the sheep away;/ And made a Desert where good men should play,/ And find ‘National Fitness’ on their leisure day./ They stole the tracks where the

Ancient Britons trod,/ They allowed the braken to kill the green sod;/ And made
Peakland Moors less useful than/ Before our Victorian factory life began,/ And the
Common was stolen from the countryman./ How long shall perhaps less than five
hundred men,/ Who added nought to moorland lore by public pen,/ Say to active folk
who love both hill and hey,/ “Though millions be your number, you shall stay/ On the
road, and smell the petrol, *on your holiday.*”¹¹⁵

Rambling was an extremely popular activity in Sheffield in the 1930s and 1940s, due in part to cheap and accessible transport services provided by the City Council which connected the East End with the Peak District. Even many of the local churches organised rambling excursions.¹¹⁶ But there was always a radical political edge to the hiking movement in its attempts to give working-class people the freedom to roam. However, the access that the Clarion Ramblers wanted always entailed obligations on themselves out of respect for the environment which they freely accepted. For example, when access was agreed in 1948 between Sheffield Council and the District Ramblers Federation to nine paths across Burbage Moor, they accepted the job of wardening the area and protecting the area from fire damage on weekends and Bank Holidays.¹¹⁷ Their movement was one of respectable and rational recreation. The public should be taught to use leisure wisely and not to think it had a licence to do anything it wanted such as drop litter or start fires on the moors. This does not mean, however, that trespassing on the moors before the creation of the National Park was necessarily frowned on by them as long as no damage was done. It had in fact become a popular sport, adding extra excitement to a ramble. Ward described rambling as ‘the gentle art of trespass’ and in 1923 had a writ served on him making him apologise for past trespasses on Kinder Scout and to promise not to do it again. This he gleefully described as ‘a greater honour than the OBE’.¹¹⁸

Particularly sympathetic to the Clarion Ramblers was Fred Marshall, the first Town Planning Committee chairman of Sheffield Council responsible for Sheffield’s provisional green belt.¹¹⁹ MP for industrial Brightside between 1935 and 1950, he was Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Town and Country Planning between 1945 and October 1947.¹²⁰ He was a special guest at the Ramblers’ Golden Jubilee Dinner on 30 September 1950, making a speech at the event, which was attended by 135 members of the Club. He was presented with an inscribed barometer-thermometer in recognition of his great services to them.¹²¹ Marshall was president of the Hallamshire Footpaths Preservation Society of which Ward was also secretary¹²² and a member of the executive of the local CPRE.¹²³ He was not the only Sheffield MP to give his support to rambling. A. V. Alexander was president of the Sheffield Co-operative Ramblers (founded 1924) and Ballard was secretary.¹²⁴ In the wider Labour movement beyond Sheffield there were many who were passionate ramblers like Hugh Dalton who in 1948 became President of the Ramblers’ Association.¹²⁵ It was ultimately thanks to him when he became Minister for Town and Country Planning in 1950 that the Peak District National Park finally came into existence.¹²⁶

South Yorkshire working-class people did not allow themselves to be ground down by appalling

environmental conditions. In 1941 Tom Williams MP had contributed a foreword to a book on the lives of the miners in the Don Valley by Dr R. W. L. Ward entitled Old King Coal. Ward favoured coal nationalisation of the mines and was sympathetic to the problems created by miners' living conditions. He included descriptions of local mining towns like Swinton, Denaby, Mexborough and Wath. Mexborough was described as 'much maligned' even though it was an 'unlovely-looking town' where the 'houses look frowsy, the streets are narrow and winding, grimy and busy... I cannot recall a single fine tree or flower bed within a mile of the town's dirty centre. Most of the factories look derelict and its places of worship short of paint and pride.' However, he noted that 'Yet it has a virile population, interested in cheap education, drama and other arts, and shops, where you can buy economically and well.'¹²⁷ The Labour Party in South Yorkshire grew out of that 'virile population' and its cultural thirst. Sheffield Forward in summing up what it saw as Sheffield Labour's ultimate aims in health care said significantly that Labour looked 'forward, not merely to providing remedies for people who are sick, not even merely to the prevention of sickness to a much greater degree, but to a larger measure of health and *a more abundant life, full of vigour and joy for all* [emphasis added].'¹²⁸ The words in italics state what Labour's socialist ideology was really based around - not the arid debates on Marxist dialectics that characterised the theoreticians of the Communist Party, with their references to what Lenin, Stalin, Marx or Engels supposedly said. In some ways it was a weakness, for Marxism-Leninism always provided answers to questions raised by the faithful and a sense of the line to be followed which comforted most Communists. However, that line was often rigid and dogmatically held, only to suddenly force political somersaults on those who held it, as the strategic needs of the Soviet Union altered. Labour's ethical socialist ideology, given ballast by the pragmatic philosophy of the moderate trade unions which stressed negotiation and compromise in the practice of free collective bargaining, was much more flexible (or as Marxists saw it opportunist). Labour believed the means used were every bit as important as the ideological ends.

7.3 - ORGANISATION

Recent research on Labour organisation in the 1950s and 60s by Steven Fielding¹²⁹ and Lawrence Black¹³⁰ give an impression of an inefficient and out-of-date party machine. Harold Wilson's Report into party organisation, a response to the General Election defeat of 1955, observed that 'compared with our opponents, we are still at the penny-farthing stage in a jet-propelled era, and our machine, at that, is getting rusty and deteriorating with age.' An unnamed MP said, 'When the tide is with us our bad organisation relatively to the Tories doesn't matter: when the tide is against us our bad organisation is fatal.'¹³¹ This statement implies that Labour had bad organisation in the 1940s as well as in 1955, and Labour Organiser was certainly full of articles on the same worries and problems that were considered in the Report. However, it should also be emphasised that there was good or adequate organisation and Rotherham is an example. It presented itself as a model from which other parties could take lessons in how to win votes.¹³²

Wilson put forward his view of what constituted Labour's problem in Paragraph (21). I have italicised the part which gives a basis for the idea that there was a culture inside Labour which would obstruct the creation of the kind of organisational structure which has latterly been used so ably by New Labour to win power:

we do not suggest any attempt to copy the Tory election system. Even if sufficient money were available, *we are convinced that an attempt to build up a streamlined professional machine would be offensive alike to our traditions and our principles.* For half a century our Party has relied on voluntary workers, supplemented and assisted by a handful of paid officers. Our problem is not to replace the voluntary workers by professionals: it is to provide sufficient help, in terms of staff, finance, inspiration and advice as will enable constituency parties once again to mobilise to the full the voluntary workers available, and, having mobilised them, to use them more effectively.¹³³

A study of Greenwich in 1950 showed that membership of the party was more burdensome for the individual member than was Conservative membership. The explanation given was that it was a consequence of low party income, yet it was arguably also due to the perception within the party of its ultimate aims. Members working for the 'Great Cause' of Socialism through voluntary effort for the party learned about fellowship and were educated in a 'more vital kind of citizenship'. The self-sacrifice of party workers showed that Socialism already existed. Giving in to professionalism would be an admission that it was not a realistic aspiration.¹³⁴ Increased membership, one would think, would only further the Socialist goal but there was considerable resistance, at least in the 1950s and 1960s, from certain elements within local parties, which Black and Fielding document. How far was this equally true of South Yorkshire parties in the late 1940s? One would imagine, given that individual membership was increasing over our period that steps were being taken to actively promote local membership. However, the figures for attendance at Hallam Ward meetings (Appendix 1.6) show a progressive decline in participation in meetings across the period, showing a decline in interest. The figures for Doncaster Central Ward (Appendix 1.7), which cover a shorter period, show a peak of attendance and interest around the February 1950 general election which was not, however, reproduced during the 1951 election campaign, when Labour actually lost Doncaster to the Conservatives. The attempt to increase participation in Labour's organisation was not for want of initiative by the leadership, according to Fielding. But it failed due to obstruction by party activists and because of the peculiar culture of branch life. Tiratsoo also observes that activists tended to frustrate attempts by the headquarters to make Labour more electable among ordinary voters who had little sympathy for Socialism but were willing to support Labour.¹³⁵

My view is that some South Yorkshire Labour Parties were definitely interested in increasing individual membership and participation in the party life, but cultural, economic and social factors were all

involved in deciding which parties were the most enthusiastic exponents. Barnsley in the centre of the South Yorkshire Coalfield never registered more than the minimum affiliated individual members of 240 (see Appendix 1.1.2). Hillsborough, Central and Ecclesall DLPs in Sheffield were almost as bad. Hillsborough was also often in arrears in paying affiliation fees to Head Office, as was Central Division. Obviously, one might believe that Barnsley and Hillsborough DLPs were bodies where participation was not encouraged. The literature on Barnsley Labour Party would encourage this belief. According to Trevor Lindley, Alderman Edward Sheerien, Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, kept a tight control of the party. Borough Councillors, for example, were usually picked by Sheerien himself or his close associates - not because they would be subservient but because they could win support. Sometimes they were not even party members. One respected alderman was collected on the night of his election for his first party meeting and selected as candidate at that meeting.¹³⁶ The portrait presented in Roy Hattersley's autobiography of Hillsborough Division under Albert Ballard, on the other hand, does not seem similar to that of the non-participatory Barnsley Labour Party portrayed by Lindley. Hattersley was encouraged to develop a passion for the practice of politics from an early age by involvement in the well-organised political machine that Ballard had devised for the constituency.¹³⁷

The Wilson Report echoed what had been said about safe Labour seats like Barnsley many times before. It noted that too many such seats with majorities of over 20,000 took little trouble with membership or organisation and had little thought for the broader interests of the movement. One problem in the 1955 General Election was that the Labour Parties in the safe seats around the Tory marginal of Doncaster sent fewer party workers to help the local party than the Tory associations in those divisions, costing Labour the seat. Tory organisation in safe Labour seats pinned the Labour workers there down and provided coach loads of party workers and cars for the marginal seats. This was one of the factors in the loss of Doncaster in 1951. You can, of course, understand why parties in safe Labour seats refused to make any effort to increase membership. As long as the party elected its own candidate, which was its function after all, the creation of a mass membership might seem unnecessary or considered by those who already held power as dangerous to their status.¹³⁸

Wilson was also 'extremely disturbed' by the situation of constituency organisation in many cities and divided boroughs which were 'withering-away' due to a pattern of over-centralisation associated with council activities. It was worst where a City Party incorporated the Trades Council. The most extreme example was Leicester where for all practical purposes constituency organisation did not exist and all organisation was at City or Ward level. At the other extreme was Birmingham, with a vigorous City Party and active Constituency Parties. Between these extremes organisations varied in their efficiency.¹³⁹ Len Williams, the Regional Organiser, also described the position of Labour Parties in divided boroughs across the country as unsatisfactory in 1946, and said that Sheffield as a whole, despite its successes at municipal and parliamentary levels, was one of the worst, but this was because of membership rather than the division of labour between the different levels of organisation. Out of seven divisions in Sheffield, five had taken only the minimum number of membership cards out in 1945. Hallam was the

only division among the seven to pay its full quota of money to the Election Fund. Some were still in arrears in January 1946.¹⁴⁰ But constituency organisation was certainly not 'withering-away'.

Wilson noted that Labour Party members tended 'to exaggerate the importance of money and large local subscriptions' in Tory success. He argued that, 'It is . . . dangerously misleading to think exclusively in terms of Tory money and to ignore the efficiency of the voluntary organisation which explains a great deal of their success, and which it is not beyond our power to rival.'¹⁴¹ Tory voluntary organisation relied as much on women as Labour did and on the close neighbourhood networks of kith and kindred that women formed in working-class districts as a necessity for family survival. According to Wilson, it was the keeping of a register or card index of previous Conservative voters which produced the success of the Tory machine and the keeping of such a register in every marginal division after a full identification canvass had been made as a first step was a major recommendation. His main emphasis in the reorganisation of the Party was on creating thriving ward organisations and a register was to be part of their allotted task between elections. The Conservatives did canvass at election times mainly to work up enthusiasm and distribute literature. It was mainly done by women and they did it more than Labour. A Gallup Poll taken during the 1951 General Election found that 44 per cent of those questioned said they had been canvassed by the Conservatives and only 37 per cent by Labour.¹⁴² Most organisational work had to be done between elections, as a Gallup Poll taken in 1955, which is equally relevant for the later 1940s, shows. It asked, 'About when did you make up your mind to vote the way you did?' and the following Table gives the percentage responses:¹⁴³

Table A - When Did You Decide to Vote the Way You Did ?

	%
FEW DAYS AGO	3
2-3 WEEKS AGO	5
MONTHS AGO	12
YEARS AGO	30
ALWAYS BEEN	50
ALL VOTING	100

Sara Barker, Women's Organiser for the Yorkshire Regional Council, defended Women's Sections in 1947 against suggestions that were no longer of much relevance to the Labour Party. According to Barker, Women's Sections were necessary because they attracted thousands of women who would otherwise never have joined the Labour Party and since the Party aimed at mass membership any unit of party organisation able to help that membership become a mass movement of trained and alert minds had to be worthwhile.¹⁴⁴ Their real role, however, was to act as cheap labour.

Besides canvassing and doing most mundane clerical tasks on polling days women were mainly involved in raising money to fund branch activities and elections. They organised socials and were felt to be useful in collecting weekly or monthly membership subscriptions since they were 'more methodical than men [and] more conscientious in keeping regularly to collecting dates'.¹⁴⁵ According to R. T. Phillips in 1948

who attempted to suggest ways a 'poor' Party could raise funds, 'The first and most important requirement is a well-organised, active, interested and informed Women's section in every ward, or every area of a County division. Their co-operation will make a success of all kinds of money-raising projects.'¹⁴⁶ Doncaster had the largest number of Labour women among the eleven parliamentary constituencies covered by the South Yorkshire Labour Women's Advisory Council in 1949, with eleven Women's Sections - three of which had over 100 members.¹⁴⁷ The Advisory Council was formed in 1924 and celebrated its twenty-first year with a Coming-of-Age Celebration at Bentley near Doncaster on 1 October 1945 which was attended by over 500 delegates representing the constituent Women's Sections.¹⁴⁸

Despite the importance of women members in doing humdrum organisational tasks they did not achieve anything like equality with men in terms of candidatures in safe parliamentary seats or council wards as Mary Morris pointed out in Labour Organiser in 1948. Local parties were still too man-minded and only chose a woman if she had really outstanding qualifications.¹⁴⁹ The following Table B¹⁵⁰ gives the small number of Labour women members of County Borough Councils, including Aldermen, in the area covered by the Yorkshire Regional Council after the 1945 municipal elections:

Table B - Women Representatives on Yorkshire County Borough Councils

C. B. COUNCIL	NO.	C. B. COUNCIL	NO.
BARNSELY	2	HULL	7
BRADFORD	2	LEEDS	9
DONCASTER	4	ROTHERHAM	3
HALIFAX	1	SHEFFIELD	4
HUDDERSFIELD	2	WAKEFIELD	1

Appendix 4.8 gives the figures for female candidates, successful and unsuccessful, in Sheffield municipal elections between 1938 and 1952. It does not include those council members on the aldermanic bench. During the period of the Attlee Government the number of candidates peaked at just eight in 1949 and 1950. Labour's peak success was in 1949 when four out of the five candidates it put up for election were elected. The Municipal Progressives/Conservative-Liberals never elected more than one but in 1950 they fielded the peak number of female candidates at six. Between 1941 and 1946, of 57 individuals who were Labour Council members six were women. Between 1946 and 1951, of 78 individuals who were Labour Council members only seven were women. Hence the proportion of women out of the pool of those who at any time were Council members fell from 10.5 per cent of the Council to 9 per cent during the 1940s.

Labour's man-mindedness is shown by the fact that in 1950 and 1951 general election nationally it was the Conservatives who led in attracting women's votes. Numerically this was significant for in 1951 women made up 51.9 per cent of the population and 53.8 per cent of potential voters. One factor that has been used as a means of explaining this lead is to do with female discontent with rationing and other

consumer issues which was imaginatively seized upon by the Conservatives to discredit the Labour Government.¹⁵¹ To Labour women like Mrs Keers of Doncaster at the Women's Conference in 1947, however, the government was doing a good job and should carry on doing it:

In the debate on rationing they were told something about the beautiful things in the shops which they could not buy. Before the war the shops were full of beautiful things they still could not buy. The working-class had always been rationed by their pockets and she would say on behalf of the women of her area to the Government, "You have done a good job, you have done it well, carry on with the good work."¹⁵²

The typical male Labour response to accusations of man-mindedness was to consider it irrelevant. Johnny Fookes told Labour Organiser:

it's about time for women members . . . to forget that they are women and concentrate on being Socialists.... There is only one good reason for nominating anyone for Party or public office - that is because, out of all the possible people with qualifications for the job, here is the *best* candidate. The fact that the candidate might happen to be a woman is of no importance at all.¹⁵³

Ultimately, this unwillingness to alter the situation of women in the party and to deal with the changing needs of women as they became involved as full-time professional workers in the economy rather than as traditional house-wives was a major organisational handicap for Labour.

In the light of what I have already said, it is not surprising that Labour women who were elected to municipal office tended to be married rather than single women and to be interested in social welfare issues like education or the health of mothers and children which reflected women's supposed special expertise in the sphere of family life. Concentration on such 'feminine' issues provided much of Labour's local support in many areas of Britain before the Second World War. For example, Labour in November 1926 won eight out of nine seats contested in the Rotherham municipal elections after it accused its opponents of stealing the milk of babies.¹⁵⁴ Expenditure on the Assisted Milk Scheme, introduced in 1924 in Rotherham to help nursing mothers and their infants, was cut by the Ministry of Health while the miners were on strike and this was not popular locally.¹⁵⁵ Dealing with mundane issues of welfare among all classes of citizen was considered by Rotherham agent Vernon Thornes to be crucial to gaining votes. According to him,

There is canvassing and canvassing and it might surprise some people to realise that a mass canvas carried out among old people to make sure that they know just what they are entitled to in the way of Supplementary Pensions is a better way to gain supporters, in all quarters, than the orthodox type of canvassing with loads of literature, hours of

talking and explaining and dozens of doorstep interviews.

Labour in Rotherham had ‘. . . built up over the years a system of advice and information which ... [was] most rewarding, both from a human and a political viewpoint.’¹⁵⁶

The profile of male Labour councillors in Rotherham and probably the rest of South Yorkshire was defined by their trade union involvement. The Rotherham and District Annuals give fairly detailed biographical sketches of the most notable people of the Rotherham area and the occupational profile of the Borough Council in 1951 can be formulated with precision. Rotherham Labour Party prior to the 1950 General Election placed great stress on steel nationalisation in their programme and a majority of councillors were still or had been employed in local steelworks and were members of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation or the Amalgamated Engineering Union. No delegate to the Industrial Committee of the Rotherham Trades Council in 1947, to take a year at random, was female. Women delegates to the Political Committee were either delegates for their Ward parties or members of the Women’s Central Committee. None of the Trades Council officers were women either.¹⁵⁷

7.4 - ELECTORAL SUCCESS IN SHEFFIELD

This section looks at the success of the Labour Party in elections for the 25 wards of the Sheffield City Council between 1945 and 1952 and for the seven Parliamentary Divisions of Sheffield in the two General Elections of 1950 and 1951. Appendices 4 and 2 give the respective election results in detail. The electorates of these wards were not equal and could range from, for example, in 1946 Firth Park with 30,029 potential voters to, at the other extreme, St. Peter’s with 5,462. In the 1950 General Election the mean average size of the electorate of a Sheffield Division was 52,552 electors while in other South Yorkshire seats it was 60,427. Redistribution of seat boundaries as a result of the Representation of the People Act 1948 had narrowed the gap between Sheffield Divisions and those in the rest of South Yorkshire, since in 1945 the mean potential electorate of a Sheffield Division was 42,726 while in the rest of South Yorkshire it was 69,037.

Butler in 1947 noted that a 4 per cent swing in the overall votes at the 1945 General Election or a 4.4 per cent swing in the net Labour and Conservative votes would have given the Conservatives the same number of votes as Labour. However, such a swing if equal universally across the country would have only reduced Labour to 332 seats in Parliament, which was still an absolute majority, and increased the Conservatives to just 278 seats. He believed that if this had actually happened there would have been an unprecedented outcry against the first-past-the post electoral system. He blamed this anomaly on the variations in the size of the electorates. Labour had an electoral advantage in 1945 because a Labour constituency had on average 51,000 electors while a Conservative constituency had 57,000. Thus, while in 1945 36 per cent of the electorate had Conservative MPs, only 34 per cent of MPs were Conservatives. 61 per cent of the electorate had Labour MPs but 63 per cent of actual MPs were

Labour.¹⁵⁸ In Sheffield in 1945, however, both Conservative Ecclesall and Hallam were well below the average mean national Labour figure for 1945, but three Labour seats *were* even below the number of Hallam and Ecclesall's electors so there probably was a Labour advantage. It would certainly be easier to be elected in Sheffield than in the rest of South Yorkshire if the sole criterion was size of electorate. In 1950 the range of constituencies within Sheffield was between Labour Attercliffe with 49,650 voters and 56,581 in Hillsborough.

In 1950, the percentage turnout ranged from 83.2 in Neepsend Division to 88.1 in Heeley Division while average percentage turnout across Sheffield was 86 per cent. In 1951, percentage turnout ranged between 79.5 per cent in Neepsend and 84.9 per cent in Hillsborough. The average turnout was 82.5 per cent. Labour's average percentage of votes cast in the Tory seats of Heeley and Hallam was 32.15 per cent in 1950 and actually rose to 34.1 per cent in 1951. The average percentage of Labour votes in the five Labour seats in 1950 was 68 per cent and 68.44 per cent in 1951. Hence the Labour Party in 1951 was actually consolidating its hold on Sheffield in terms of votes while Labour lost power to the Conservatives nationally. There was obviously little evidence of a sea-change in electoral fortunes in Sheffield. Turnout in the municipal elections over our period was much lower than in the two General Elections. In the 1951 City Council elections, for instance, turnout averaged about 39 per cent overall and ranged from 25 per cent in Attercliffe Ward to 49 per cent in Norton Ward. Obviously, General Elections were considered more important by the mass of the electorate because there was the chance of a complete change of national government with far-reaching changes for everyday life. Despite the rhetorical emphasis of the anti-Labour Party on the City Council on the importance of local government being truly local and deciding issues which directly affected local people, like high rates or the method of allocating council houses, municipal elections were not broadly considered as important by the electorate and were seen as quite mundane and unglamorous when dealing with issues like sewerage, water supply or rubbish disposal.

Labour's percentage of the total votes cast in municipal elections tended to be highest in wards like Attercliffe where turnouts were also the lowest (82 per cent) and be least in those wards like Norton where turnouts were the highest (16 per cent). This can probably be related to social class and factors like educational attainment, occupation and housing tenure though it is impossible given the state of information to be really precise for each ward. Hampton in his study of politics in Sheffield which mainly looked at the 1960s, noted that historically Sheffield had exceptionally low turnouts in local elections. Until ward re-organisation in 1967, polls seldom reached 30 per cent while in some wards it was as low as 10 per cent. This statement does not seem to be true for the period of my study, for average turnouts in Sheffield varied between 40 per cent in 1946 and 1952, to as high as 53 per cent in 1947, and at no point was there a turnout as low as 10 per cent in any ward. Neepsend Ward in 1949 was the lowest turnout in the entire period at 24 per cent. In the entire period, only five times did it dip below 30 per cent. According to Hampton there are two main reasons why the turnouts were so low. Firstly, the City was predominantly working-class in social composition and it was much more so than

the national average or than many other large cities and, secondly, the different social groups were rigorously segregated in different areas of the City.¹⁵⁹

Pollard says that Sheffield just after the Second World War was, however, increasingly coming to adhere to national norms, but despite the inter-war decline of staple trades like cutlery, the rise in incomes, shown by much better shopping facilities and other services, the massive house-building and the increase of spending on items locally which all reduced differences within the national statistics, as the 1951 Census showed, Sheffield still had much of the traditional character of an industrial and proletarian city.¹⁶⁰ The social class distribution of occupied and retired males aged fifteen and over still showed that out of a total of 183,204 males only 4,543 could be classed as in Class I - professional occupations or 25 out of every thousand men. This latter figure was admittedly above that of the West Riding as a whole which was 22 out of every thousand men, while Doncaster in South Yorkshire was slightly higher at 26 males per thousand in professional occupations. By contrast in Class III - skilled occupations, Sheffield had 560 per thousand men or 102,687 people. Partly skilled occupations were less than a quarter of the skilled figure while unskilled occupations were just under 30 per cent of the skilled total. Some 27.7 per cent of the working population were in metal manufacture or engineering and 16.7 per cent were in cutlery and tools.¹⁶¹ According to Hampton, working-class people use their vote less frequently than middle-class citizens so it is unsurprising to find lower municipal polls in a working class city.

This is accentuated by the distribution of social classes geographically across the City leading to the creation of wards almost certain to elect councillors of the same party (and almost certainly social class, see the marked occupational class differences in candidates between the parties in a typical year like 1951 in Appendix 5) year after year. Marginal seats were rare and the incentive to vote was further weakened by the perception that the result was a foregone conclusion. Several Sheffield people told Hampton's interviewers that they did not vote because their party always succeeded in winning the seat or because it never did.¹⁶² Were there many marginal seats in Sheffield in our period? According to the range of Labour's mean percentage of the total votes cast in all 25 wards it never had less than 48 per cent of all votes (1951) or more than 55 per cent (1946) between 1945 and 1951, so it had about half of all votes cast. Fourteen wards always returned Labour councillors while six wards always returned Municipal Progressives/Conservative-Liberals. That leaves just five wards where there were fluctuations of seats.

The election of a Conservative-Liberal in Crookesmoor Ward in 1949, when in all the other contests it returned a Labour councillor, can be put down to a costly Labour mistake which also saw it fail to put up a candidate in Woodseats in the same year. Both Labour candidates' nomination papers were not received in time giving the Conservative-Liberals unopposed returns.¹⁶³ Labour had a gain in Hillsborough Ward in 1945 which could be put down to left-wing enthusiasm after the war but it was a close run thing with a Labour majority of just 250 and a 51 per cent share of the vote. Until 1952 it then returned anti-Labour councillors. Heeley had a single Conservative gain in 1951 in an otherwise safe

Labour ward with a majority of 43 votes. It is obvious that there were only two seats, Sharrow and St. Peters, which can be regarded as true marginal wards. Obviously, they had little real influence on the composition of the City Council and on the possibility of the Municipal Progressive/ Conservative-Liberals taking power from Labour, and so Hampton's theory is confirmed. This is also probably true of the Parliamentary constituencies. Certainly Conservative Hallam Division was made up of Hallam, Ecclesall and Broomhill Wards and these were all anti-Labour strongholds.

Between 1945 and April 1949, there were 15 Labour aldermen on Sheffield City Council with 16 between 1949 and April 1952. The Labour councillors fluctuated between 52 and 44. In this period there were between nine or ten anti-Labour aldermen and between 22 and 29 anti-Labour councillors. Given the structural reasons that Hampton puts forward for the stability of the City Council composition, it might even be considered that the policy of the Labour Party did not matter that much. Despite the extreme urgency of the housing issue, its various aspects such as the use of direct labour as against free enterprise and the precise method of allocating council houses and the major point which the Municipal Progressive/Conservative-Liberals made of it in their various municipal election manifestos, it failed to provoke a rebellion amongst the people of Sheffield against Labour. Part of this might be put down to the fact that the Labour Council members were as working-class in origin as most of the City and had direct experience of working-class life.

The Municipal Progressives were well aware of the value as clients with votes of the council house tenants to Labour. Alderman Bearcroft, secretary of the Party, complained in 1945 that, 'In terms of votes there is already a "Pressure Group" of about 100,000 Corporation tenants who are susceptible to favours which may be granted to them by those in power.'¹⁶⁴ The only threat to Labour's hold on the tenants came from the Communist Party which defended squatters and fought increases in council house rents, but its electoral challenge was minimal. Communists tended to fight in working-class wards. Between 1945 and 1952 they fought Brightside under the candidacy of Howard Hill who had been Communist councillor of the Ward until 1946.¹⁶⁵ Hill got 1,530 votes in 1946, and 903 votes in 1947, but his poll had peaked and declined to 211 votes by 1951. Between 1945 and 1950 Burngreave was contested, and Manor between 1946 and 1952, but the Communists did not make any impression. The highest total vote they received across Sheffield was 2,806 in 1946, which was 2.1 per cent of the total votes. The next highest was in 1950 with 2,193 votes or 1.5 per cent of votes cast. In 1946, however, they had just three candidates, while in 1950 in their most ambitious attempt to challenge Labour locally, or perhaps simply to gain publicity for their grievances against the Attlee Government with the worsening Cold War, they fielded ten candidates. Thus, in 1946 they got 935.33 votes per candidate and only 219.3 votes per candidate in 1950. It was not an impressive showing and was echoed in the General Elections of 1950 and 1951. In 1950 four candidates were fielded but all lost their deposits with the lowest poll of the election going to Michael Bennett in Hillsborough with 759 votes.¹⁶⁶ In 1951, Howard Hill alone contested Brightside and got 1,116 votes.

The Communists did not retrieve any influence on the Trades Council in the later 1940s, which might have been electorally damaging for Labour, even though it was certainly concerned about the looming Cold War as the following 1947 resolution shows:

That this meeting of the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council sees with regret the gulf which threatens to divide the world on the issues of capitalism versus Socialism and Totalitarian versus Democratic Socialism in the struggle of the future. It calls upon the Government to implement at all times Socialist Economic Planning without Political tyranny, and to act at all times through UNO in having Forces at all dangerous focal points throughout the world.¹⁶⁷

Councillor Alfred Hobson, secretary of the Trades Council, was not likely to allow Communist subversion willingly. Clause 19 of its Rules prohibited Communist or Fascist membership. By the late 1940s it was true, however, as the secretary of the Trades Councils' Joint Consultative Committee said, that more and more Trades Councils were having to operate such rules. Writing to Hobson to see if the rules were being used, he called 'upon trade unionists to be increasingly vigilant against attempts by the Communist Party to undermine our democratic procedures and to introduce alien and dictatorial methods within our Movement.'¹⁶⁸ The Trades Council file at the Modern Records Centre contains just one piece of evidence that this was ever tested in Sheffield.¹⁶⁹

The Sheffield Labour movement was given a major opportunity to demonstrate its anti-Communism and the respectable nature of its socialism by the Second World Peace Congress which was to be held in Sheffield from 13 to 19 November 1950. Attlee said there was no law against holding the Congress and only delegates who had specific charges against them would be prevented from obtaining visas to visit Britain. However, two-thirds of the approximately 2,000 delegates were excluded and the Congress had to be transferred to Warsaw where it launched a Five-Power Peace Pact Appeal calling for a peace settlement between the Western Powers and Russia. Britain apparently collected just under 2.25 million signatures for this from Communists, Christians, pacifists, trade unionists, Labour Party members and even Labour MPs.¹⁷⁰ According to the Communist Basil Barker, the Labour Government was so 'embittered ... in their attitude towards the progressive movement that they even preferred to use the forces of state to defeat the aims that the peace movement was attempting to achieve. It is a contribution that should be to the eternal shame of the labour movement.'¹⁷¹ The president of the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council, Joseph Madin, was not a supporter of the Congress and did not share Barker's sentiments. In the 1951 Trades Council Report he gave the opinion that: 'Our people in the organised Labour Movement know that the initiative for peace does not lie in our hands, but in the hands of Russia.'¹⁷² Ultimately, the Congress, and the spite of fellow-travellers who would deny Churchill in 1951 the Freedom of the City which the City Council had voted unanimously for during the dark days of 1943 (including Howard Hill), was counter-productive for the Communists.¹⁷³ Alderman Bingham and Madin both sat on the same platform as Churchill on 16 April 1951 when he received his Freedom,

demonstrating the respectability and patriotism of the Labour movement in Sheffield which could do it no harm at the polls.¹⁷⁴

7.5 - CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown the interdependence of cultural, linguistic, ideological, organisational and political factors in explaining the strengths and shortcomings of the South Yorkshire Labour Parties, mainly using examples from Sheffield. Labour grew out of working-class culture though it is also true that working-class culture could also play its part in potentially generating support for Conservatism. Roy Hattersley and Joe Ashton were members of the Labour League of Youth but saw no contradiction in supporting Sheffield Wednesday FC despite the fact that its chairman in 1946 was William Fearnough, Progressive City Councillor for Crookesmoor, and its vice-chairman was James Longden who was a defeated Progressive candidate in Hillsborough in 1945 and was elected for Hallam Ward in November 1946.¹⁷⁵ Wednesday in 1946 was the only club whose players were not in the Players' Union and the Telegraph reported that in some Sheffield factories debates were taking place among football fans who were loyal trade unionists about whether they should continue to support non-union labour.¹⁷⁶ There is no indication of this debate in Hattersley's autobiography. Football matches as an overwhelmingly proletarian pastime had been described by the Conservative Telegraph in 1923 as 'a safety-valve against Communism, fanaticism, discontent, and any worse evils there may be'.¹⁷⁷

According to Hattersley, the Sheffield Labour Party 'owed more to Methodism than Marx'. Most of the Labour councillors and key party workers were nonconformists who preached on Sundays.¹⁷⁸ Certainly religion, Anglican as well as nonconformist, gave a potential doctrinal basis to socialism in Sheffield but Labour's opponents like the Progressive Leader Harold Jackson were also often nonconformists (he was a Methodist). This gave a shared tone of respectability to the council in alliance against 'rough' working-class habits. Generally, socialism in Sheffield was the fruit of the desire through education to spiritually enhance the working classes and through control of vested interests whether they were owners of grouse-moors or industrialists to give working-class people a fuller, more joyous and secure life. Unfortunately the culture of Labour Party branch life and the attitudes of activists meant that Labour remained an organisation of amateurs dependent on female voluntary labour that hindered wider participation. Labour was increasingly in the 1950s and 60s unable nationally to rival a slick and professional Conservative electoral machine. Doncaster was the one marginal seat that in 1951 fell to the Conservatives due to the better organisation of their local electoral resources.

Fortunately for Labour in Sheffield in the 1940s, despite the emphasis placed on local patriotism as against national intrusion and private enterprise against public ownership by their opponents, these sentiments did not appeal to the working classes sufficiently to make them vote for the Progressives. The working classes were residentially segregated in Sheffield from more affluent middle-class districts. Middle-class anti-Labour candidates and councillors often talked an alien political language to their

working-class counterparts. Though their rhetoric was potentially inclusive of the whole community, in practice their language was really slanted towards middle-class aspirations like owner-occupation or favoured economy of expenditure on council services to keep rates as low as possible. The affluent middle classes bought private services that could be provided for the working classes only through state intervention in the free market. Working-class people with little wealth and low incomes and who were forced to live in rented accommodation wanted the highest possible quality public services. Council house tenants formed a large grouping which had a vested interest in keeping rents low and affordable and council houses of the highest quality possible; thus they supported the continuance of Labour in office on the City Council.

The lack of marginal council wards and Parliamentary seats in Sheffield meant that political life was marked by stability with a Labour City Council, five Labour Parliamentary seats and two Conservative seats. The Communist challenge to Labour was easily contained in municipal and general elections. Communist stunts like the Second World Peace Congress which occurred in the midst of the Korean War when British soldiers were being killed by Communists, were unhelpful for them and could only bring further unpopularity. Labour in the 1940s proved itself respectable, patriotic and well organised. The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and the Amalgamated Engineering Union in Sheffield and Rotherham led disciplined workforces conscious of their skilled status and with a pride in craftsmanship. Iron and steel had a good industrial relations history with few strikes. It was the basis of the Labour Party's support in Sheffield.

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- ³ CRAIG, F. W. S. British Parliamentary Election Results 1918-1949. Political Reference Publications, 1969.
- ⁴ CRAIG, F. W. S. British Parliamentary Election Results 1950-1970. Political Reference Publications, 1971.
- ⁵ CLARKE, Peter. Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-1990. Penguin, 1996, Appendix, p408.
- ⁶ SAVAGE, Michael. The Dynamics of Working-Class Politics: The Labour Movement in Preston, 1880-1940. Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- ⁷ WILLIAMS, Chris. Democratic Rhondda: Politics and Society, 1885-1951. University of Wales Press, 1996.
- ⁸ FORESTER, Tom. The Labour Party and the Working Class. Heinemann, 1976, p71.
- ⁹ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p187.
- ¹⁰ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p40.
- ¹¹ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p212.
- ¹² WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p3.
- ¹³ HOBBSAWM, Eric. 'The Formation of British Working-Class Culture' in HOBBSAWM, Eric J. Worlds of Labour: Further Studies in the History of Labour. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1984, p178.
- ¹⁴ HOBBSAWM, E. 1984, p185.
- ¹⁵ HOBBSAWM, Eric. 'The Making of the Working Class, 1870-1914' in HOBBSAWM, Eric. Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion and Jazz. Abacus, 1999, p77.
- ¹⁶ KIRK, Neville. 'Traditional' Working-Class Culture and 'the Rise of Labour': Some Preliminary Questions and Observations', Social History, Vol. 16, No. 2, May 1991, p210.
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- ¹⁸ HOBBSAWM, E. 1999, p98.
- ¹⁹ HOBBSAWM, E. 1999, p97.
- ²⁰ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p3.
- ²¹ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p4.
- ²² SAVAGE, M. 1987, p3.
- ²³ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p5.
- ²⁴ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p7.
- ²⁵ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p8.
- ²⁶ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p9.
- ²⁷ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p11.
- ²⁸ SAVAGE, M. 1987, pp20-1.
- ²⁹ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p23.
- ³⁰ SAVAGE, M. 1987, pp26-7.
- ³¹ SAVAGE, M. 1987, p28.
- ³² MARRIOTT, J. 1991, pp11-2.
- ³³ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p8.
- ³⁴ BLACK, Amy and BROOKE, Stephen. 'The Labour Party, Women, and the Problem of Gender, 1951-1966', Journal of British Studies, 36, October 1997, p433.
- ³⁵ BLACK, A. and BROOKE, S. October 1997, p422.
- ³⁶ BLACK, A. and BROOKE, S. October 1997, pp429-30.
- ³⁷ MARRIOTT, J. 1991, p12.
- ³⁸ MARRIOTT, J. 1991, p5.
- ³⁹ MARRIOTT, J. 1991, p8.
- ⁴⁰ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, pp209-11.
- ⁴¹ HATTERSLEY, Roy. A Yorkshire Boyhood. Chatto and Windus, 1983, p172.
- ⁴² TANNER, Duncan. 'Labour and Its Membership' in TANNER, Duncan, THANE, Pat and TIRATSOO, Nick (eds) Labour's First Century. Cambridge University Press, 2000, p260.
- ⁴³ FIELDING, Steven. 'Labourism in the 1940s', Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1992, p139.
- ⁴⁴ HATTERSLEY, Roy. Choose Freedom: The Future for Democratic Socialism. Penguin, 1987, pp5-6.
- ⁴⁵ HARRIS, Jose. 'Labour's Political and Social Thought' in TANNER, Duncan, THANE, Pat and TIRATSOO, Nick (eds) Labour's First Century. Cambridge University Press, 2000, p9.

- ⁴⁶ HARRIS, J. 2000, p15.
- ⁴⁷ JOYCE, Patrick. Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class 1848-1914. Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp75-6.
- ⁴⁸ FIELDING, Steven, THOMPSON, Peter and TIRATSOO, Nick. “England Arise !”: The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain. Manchester University Press, 1995, p84.
- ⁴⁹ FIELDING, Steven. ‘What did ‘The People’ Want ? : The Meaning of the 1945 General Election’, The Historical Journal, Vol. 35, No. 3, 1992, p638.
- ⁵⁰ Sheffield Telegraph 29/06/1929, p9. Carpenter probably had less influence on the Labour generation growing up in the 1940s than on the Victorian and Edwardian survivors still alive in that decade who had known him before his death in 1929. G. H. B. Ward was one such survivor, inspired by the emphasis Carpenter placed on leading a simple moral life enriched by contact with nature rather than by the ‘Uranian’ writings. However, Ward, like Carpenter, did write poetry and both were influenced by Walt Whitman, another poet now regarded as homosexual, and, though Ward was married, it has been said that he ‘developed a chronic gender-bias that would combat any suffragette, despite the presence of women in the Clarion Ramblers from day one’ - see SISSONS, David (ed) The Best of the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers’ Handbooks: ‘Ward’s Piece’. Halsgrove, 2002, p17. Such a bias was not, however, unique among his generation.
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- ⁵² ROBERTS, Andrew. Eminent Churchillians. Phoenix, 1994, p217.
- ⁵³ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Sixth Annual Report 1947, p34.
- ⁵⁴ Rotherham Advertiser 19/08/1950, p5.
- ⁵⁵ Quoted FOOTE, Geoffrey. The Labour Party’s Political Thought: A History. Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997, p43.
- ⁵⁶ Quoted in FOOTE, G. 1997, p44.
- ⁵⁷ REID, Caroline. ‘Middle Class Values and Working Class Culture in Nineteenth Century Sheffield: The Pursuit of Respectability’ in POLLARD, Sidney and HOLMES, Colin (eds) Essays in the Economic and Social History of South Yorkshire. South Yorkshire County Council, 1976.
- ⁵⁸ WEBSTER, Alan. ‘Hunter, Leslie Stannard (1890-1983)’ in BLAKE, Lord and NICHOLLS, C. S. (eds) Dictionary of National Biography 1981 -1985. Oxford University Press, 1990, p204.
- ⁵⁹ The Sheffield Methodist Mission at Victoria Hall and not the Church of England had the largest individual congregation in Sheffield - see Sheffield Telegraph 24/10/1944, p3. Reverend William Wallace, its popular Superintendent, took a special interest in the welfare of workers - see Rotherham Advertiser 17/03/1951.
- ⁶⁰ WEBSTER, A. 1990, p204.
- ⁶¹ GORRINGE, Tim. Alan Ecclestone. Priest as Revolutionary: A Biography. Cairns Publications, 1994, p116.
- ⁶² United Nations Association (Sheffield Branch) Interim Report - March 1946 (Sheffield Local Studies Library). The executive included the Methodist Reverend William Wallace.
- ⁶³ United Nations Association Sheffield District - Annual Report 1946 (Sheffield Local Studies Library).
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- ⁶⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 26/09/1951, p3. She was criticised for her attendance by other Labour members.
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- ⁶⁸ Rotherham Advertiser 28/05/1949.
- ⁶⁹ Rotherham Advertiser 28/03/1914. The Rotherham Branch of the WEA was formed at this meeting in 1914 at which she spoke at length on the organisation’s objects.
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- ⁷¹ Manchester Guardian 06/02/1950 (Sheffield Local Studies Library).
- ⁷² JARRETT, Clifford. ‘Alexander, Albert Victor, Earl Alexander of Hillsborough (1885-1965)’ in WILLIAMS, E. T. and NICHOLLS, C. S. (eds) Dictionary of National Biography 1961-1970. Oxford University Press, 1981, p15.
- ⁷³ HATTERSLEY, Roy. Fifty Years On: A Prejudiced History of Britain Since the War. Little, Brown and Company, 1997, p6.
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- ⁷⁶ Morning Telegraph 08/01/1969, p14.
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- ⁸⁶ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1949, p4 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁸⁷ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1950, p4 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁸⁸ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1947, p7 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁸⁹ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council Annual Report 1950, p5 (A167) (Sheffield Archives).
- ⁹⁰ ROSE, Jonathan. The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes. Yale University Press, 2001, Ch. 1.
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<http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/adulteducation/latestnews/RichardHoggart.html> >, p1, 21 February 2003.
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- ¹⁰³ PYE, D. 1995, p60.
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- ¹⁴⁰ Special Meeting 07/01/1946, Hallam Divisional Labour Party Minute Book (LD1564/3) (Sheffield Archives).
- ¹⁴¹ Wilson Report, p66.
- ¹⁴² Wilson Report, pp65-6
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- ¹⁴⁴ Labour Organiser Vol. 26, No. 299, February 1947, pp14-5.
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- ¹⁴⁶ Labour Organiser Vol. 27, No. 311, February 1948, p18.
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- ¹⁵⁴ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Twelfth Annual Report 1953/4, p42.
- ¹⁵⁵ Rotherham Advertiser 30/10/1926.
- ¹⁵⁶ Labour Organiser Vol. 30, No. 354, September 1951, p168.
- ¹⁵⁷ Rotherham Labour Party and Trades Council Sixth Annual Report 1947, p1.
- ¹⁵⁸ MCCALLUM, R. B. and READMAN, Alison. The British General Election of 1945. Oxford University Press, 1947, Appendix III, p282, 287.
- ¹⁵⁹ HAMPTON, William. Democracy and Community: A Study of Politics in Sheffield. Oxford University Press, 1970, pp13-4.
- ¹⁶⁰ POLLARD, Sidney. 'Labour' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPERS, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-

1993 Volume II: Society. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p274.

¹⁶¹ Census 1951: England and Wales General Tables. HMSO, 1956, pp176-7.

¹⁶² HAMPTON, W. 1970, p14.

¹⁶³ Sheffield Telegraph 27/04/1949. p3.

¹⁶⁴ The Star 31/10/1945, p3.

¹⁶⁵ Sheffield Telegraph 02/11/1946, p3.

¹⁶⁶ Sheffield Telegraph 24/02/1950, p2.

¹⁶⁷ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council File, Correspondence, 30/12/1947 (MSS.292/79S/16) (Modern Records Centre).

¹⁶⁸ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council File, Correspondence, 26/11/1948 (MSS.292/79S/16) (Modern Records Centre).

¹⁶⁹ Sheffield Trades and Labour Council File, Correspondence, 01/02/1951 (MSS.292/79S/16) (Modern Records Centre).

¹⁷⁰ MOORE, Bill. Labour-Communist Relations, 1920-1951. Part III: 1945-1951, Our History pamphlet 84/85. Communist Party History Group, August 1991, p56.

¹⁷¹ BARKER, Basil and STRAYKER, Lynda. Free But Not Easy. Derbyshire County Council, 1989.

¹⁷² THORPE, Andrew. 'The Consolidation of a Labour Stronghold 1926-1951' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993 Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p113.

¹⁷³ Sheffield Telegraph 28/02/1951, p3.

¹⁷⁴ Sheffield Telegraph 17/04/1951, p1.

¹⁷⁵ Sheffield Telegraph Year Book 1946.

¹⁷⁶ YOUNG, Percy M. Football in Sheffield. Dark Peak Ltd., 1981, p157.

¹⁷⁷ YOUNG, P. M. 1981, p121.

¹⁷⁸ HATTERSLEY, Roy. Who Goes Home?: Scenes from a Political Life. Little, Brown and Company, 1995, p3.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

According to Andrew Thorpe the overwhelming fact about Sheffield's politics between 1926 when the party obtained power and 1951 when the Attlee government fell from office was the city's consolidation as a Labour stronghold.¹ My thesis covering a shorter period comes to the same conclusion. Thorpe's conclusion is similarly valid for Rotherham where Labour's dominance of local politics was if anything even more pronounced than in Sheffield after it took control of the County Borough in 1928. In both towns the once dominant Liberals were almost extinct as a force by 1951. Much more than Sheffield, Rotherham had been a town dominated by the Liberals, with Liberal MPs up to the end of the First World War and a progressive Liberal town council that favoured municipal enterprise. Participation in anti-socialist caucuses in Sheffield after the First World War, in which they were the junior partner to the more confident Conservatives left the Liberals vulnerable to being eventually swallowed up. The Independents, successors to the Liberals in Rotherham, were no threat to Labour. They were pushed back to their sole real stronghold, the South Ward, in the 1940s, in part because Labour's organisation was much stronger and better at getting its voters out, in part because working-class voters were also genuinely attracted by what Labour promised it would do for them. At the same time in Rotherham none of the capitalist parties in the 1940s would give up their independence and unite with the others in local or parliamentary elections to fight Labour, leading to impotence and mutual recrimination. Fascism never got off the ground before the Second World War in either place and the Communists were little more than an irritant in electoral terms in the 1940s, though they had strong support in trade unions like the militant Amalgamated Engineering Union. Labour was also lucky in the leadership qualities and popularity of the individuals that led the party in South Yorkshire. Chris Williams has concluded looking at South Wales that:

It may have been the individual popularity of Labour's candidates, which often stemmed from a much wider range of activities than simply the political, that did most to win party support. All studies of local politics and local communities, however restricted in scope, stress the importance of individual men and women in driving forward political change and social reform.²

Objective conditions such as the overwhelmingly working-class population of both places and strong trade union and co-operative movements were also all favourable factors in Labour's consolidation of its power in the 1940s. The continued free market approach of the Municipal Progressives / Conservative-Liberals / Independents at this time, despite some wartime gestures like support for the comprehensive re-planning of the city of Sheffield after its Blitz in December 1940, meant neither trade unionists nor co-operators were much tempted to desert Labour for their opponents. The Second World War greatly strengthened the influence and prestige of the trade unions in Sheffield and Rotherham. Up to 1951 the affiliated and

individual members of many Labour Parties in South Yorkshire increased following national trends though participation in branch life was less impressive, with power resting among a small number of individuals. Ethnic and religious tensions were minimal in the two overwhelmingly white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant local authorities unlike say the position in Liverpool, Glasgow, Belfast or London in the first half of the twentieth century. Expansion of the local government franchise in 1945 was supported by Labour and may have helped them. Labour in Sheffield appealed for middle-class support and got it in much greater numbers in the 1940s despite not actually winning the overwhelmingly middle-class constituencies like Sheffield Hallam and Sheffield Heeley.

According to Thorpe, however, all this might have been thrown away in Sheffield if the Labour Party's stewardship of the city had been incompetent and it had made ideological gestures that alienated the electorate. Instead it shaped its destiny as far as it could in an extremely positive way. Support was lost because of the incompetence of Labour's national government between 1929 and 1931 but the party in Sheffield had a steady hand on the municipal tiller throughout the period.³ Thorpe might say the same about Rotherham. However, despite Thorpe's account, I would conclude there are some problems with this picture of Labour competence between the years 1945 and 1951. Electorally, Labour dominance was certainly never in danger but the willingness of Labour to support certain actions of the Attlee Government like the nationalisation of electricity generation in the city and the potential nationalisation of the transport undertaking, while understandable, was not in its own interests or that of the city as a whole. The fall in the numbers of people employed by the council threatened part of the coalition of support it built up before the Second World War, while the inadequate compensation the City Council received for the electricity undertaking meant it deserved Municipal Progressive charges of mal-administration. On the other hand, it can be argued that the City Council was unable to behave in any other way given the circumstances, but its resistance was minimal. Hugh Dalton's 1945 Distribution of Industry Act was a real threat to Sheffield's economy. The threat that new industry that would otherwise go to Sheffield would be directed elsewhere did concentrate minds. Sheffield's economy needed diversification and this would be prevented. Fortunately, it was a problem that could be postponed into the longer term due to full employment and full order books in the steel industry with the global need for post-war reconstruction. Thus it was not tackled.

The lobbying of Sheffield Council did not get the city scheduled as a Development Area. However, even areas that were Development Areas did not undergo major diversification. They were just prevented from declining further. For example, coal remained the occupation of 55 percent of the male workforce in the Rhondda in 1957⁴ having dropped from 67 percent in 1921.⁵ It remained vulnerable to depression. Despite the threat of losing industry, Labour and local business still supported Dalton's Bill in 1945. Local business only quibbled about the proposed sources of financial aid to new business, for example. I have not been able to find out whether industry that had been blitzed did re-locate, though I think not, since the damage to the industrial East End in contrast to the pulverizing of the city centre in December 1940 was slight, but new

industry may have been re-directed. Neither experience of the wartime coalition government's decision-making or that of the Attlee government inspired confidence over blitz reconstruction, and the same may have been the case in matters directly concerning industry. Allender ascribes Labour's later failure to imaginatively widen the city's employment and revitalise its economy (apart from a brief period of municipal socialism in the early 1980s) as due to the absence of ideology and the lack of a stated purpose. Thus, Labour took a purely pragmatic approach. But the Sheffield Labour movement found itself powerless to come up with solutions that would effectively defend jobs despite the fact that the interests of labour were fundamental to Labour's *raison d'être*.⁶ I conclude, however, that the 1940s could not have been a turning point in the economic history of Sheffield for the reasons we have noted even if it had been scheduled as a Development Area.

A further example of Labour's pragmatism can be found in the saga of the debates over reform of the local structure of local government in the 1940s. Labour presented a non-political appeal that regional government was a bad idea since the powers of the Council would be diminished and it would be too remote from the citizens of Sheffield for them to adequately affect its decisions about their city. One of the threatened problems was that it would direct new industry away from the city. Labour united with its Municipal Progressive opponents and as a result there was no opposing local lobby to argue for regional government, despite the fact that after 1945 accountability was taken away from health services and the electricity undertaking and given to un-elected regional boards when both were nationalised. Thus, real benefits might have accrued to the people of Sheffield through regional government. As it was, electricity prices were higher for industrial and domestic consumers and one of the attractions of Sheffield to new industry was dissipated. It can be concluded that some at least of the councillors on both sides of the chamber opposed regional government on the grounds that it would have diminished their own personal status as members of Sheffield's powerful 'political community' which had its own vested interests. In any case, the Labour Group could take the decision to oppose regional government or support electricity nationalisation because it was itself a closed community buttressed by the emotional attachments to Labour, which according to Allender, prevent rational calculations being made by individuals.⁷ Ostracism, as happened in Barnsley when the Labour Group was opposed by one of its own Alderman, Arthur Jepson, who alleged 'favouritism' over the allocation of a council house to the Mayor's Chaplain, was the consequence.⁸ Jepson's position became untenable and he soon resigned from the Borough Council. As Allender points out the hierarchical structure of Sheffield City Council paralleled the hierarchical organisation of local firms in the steel industry that employed many of the Labour councillors. According to Allender, 'possibly by default, the [Sheffield Labour] movement instilled in ordinary people respect and even reverence for hierarchy.'⁹ It was symptomatic that city councillors, as in industry, had to serve an 'apprenticeship', for example, before they were fully accepted by their elders.

This respect for hierarchy in turn prevented direct popular participation in decision-making beyond the ranks

of the City Council which saw itself as possessing the sole authority to make decisions because its powers were delegated by Parliament and it had the consent of the electorate through the ballot box. Allender notes that even when tenants representatives were appointed to liaise with the Council Housing Department in the 1980s, real participation was not achieved because the representatives saw themselves as having become part of the inner circle of Council decision-making and thus having a position above those they represented. Thus, they adopted the same manner, the same language and (allegedly) the same briefcases as the council officers.¹⁰ Thus, there was considerable mistrust between council tenants and council officers that Dave Backwith similarly noted in the inter-war years. Mistrust was also a consequence of the huge waiting lists in the 1940s and the inadequate supply of new council houses in Sheffield, with Labour councillors possessing enormous power to decide who got a new house. As the Jepson episode shows, such power could be used tactlessly in a way that caused great indignation among ordinary people.¹¹ There were also at least some Municipal Progressive allegations of corruption over housing allocation in Sheffield.¹² The validity or generality of these charges cannot now be known though they seem relatively rare in the pages of the Sheffield Telegraph, despite the fact that it would have been perfectly willing to embarrass the Labour Council. They would certainly have appeared plausible to disgruntled citizens waiting for a house that might or might not be allocated to them. But the mistrust can also be seen as a healthy and rational reaction to excessive bureaucracy and the creation of a 'dependency culture' among potential tenants. The local squatters' movement in 1946 could be seen as a similar reaction, with local people taking their destiny in their own hands, rather than relying on the local Councils, by seeking shelter within the abandoned army camps that dotted the South Yorkshire countryside.

Comparisons can be made between Labour's pragmatic approach in Sheffield and South Yorkshire in the 1940s with the similar approach of Labour in the Rhondda and in Coventry described by Chris Williams and Nick Tiratsoo.¹³ In both cases the approach occurred but for differing reasons, which reflects the importance of local circumstances in the development of individual Labour Parties. The Rhondda valleys were a society overwhelmingly based on coal mining with a large majority of the male workforce employed in coal extraction or ancillary employment. Other employment was marginal, largely based on serving the needs of the mining population.¹⁴ As a result, it wanted industrial diversification even more than was the case in South Yorkshire because, based on one industry, it was vulnerable to depression. As a result, it did get Development Area status in 1945 and some new industry was introduced which was a particular boon to miners' wives.¹⁵ According to Williams the existence of the Attlee government and what it was visibly providing for the valleys in terms of industry and employment was the prime factor in seeing off the Communist challenge to Labour. This had been far more serious in the inter-war years than was the case in South Yorkshire. In fact the Communist Party was Labour's sole serious competitor for the spoils of local government and parliamentary office and its threat to Labour easily eclipsed that of the Conservatives, Liberals or Plaid Cymru until the late 1940s. In consequence, the local Labour Party was very loyal to the national leadership, and capitalised on the example of Communist opposition to the Second World War until

June 1941 and the danger posed by the Soviet Union in the Cold War, to marginalise the Communists electorally. As a result the Communists collapsed, losing all their representatives on the Rhondda Urban District Council by 1949, losing their individual members, with the cadres remaining rapidly ageing,¹⁶ and polling a vote below that of the Conservatives in the Rhondda East division in the general election of 1951.¹⁷ In 1945 Harry Pollitt had come within a thousand votes of taking the constituency from Labour.¹⁸

Williams sees two strategies at work in the Rhondda Labour movement. There was a pragmatic strategy typified by that of the Labour Party in which the aim was to work the system to maximum advantage while recognising the limits of power. These limits were imposed by finance, the coercive power of central government and their responsibility to those who elected them. There was also a 'rejectionist' strategy typified by that of the Communist Party which was less tolerant of constraints on policy and in terms of rhetoric at least was concerned to carry the fight to central government and to force it in the 1930s to act repressively against the democratically-elected council faced as it was by mass-unemployment. However, he points out that the dividing line between these two strategies was often blurred and that they should actually be seen as poles around which individuals and groups could gather over particular issues, but which might change from one issue to the next. Similarly, there might be tactical retreats from one strategy to the other when the previous strategy no longer appeared sensible.¹⁹ This is a useful way of describing conditions in South Yorkshire where the Labour Party contained loyalists and dissidents as well as competing with the Communist Party to at least some extent in local elections.

Coventry Labour Party as described by Nick Tiratsoo also took a basically pragmatic approach and as far as can be inferred was equally loyal to the Attlee government between 1945 and 1951. According to Tiratsoo, 'The party's commitment [after the war] was not to some amorphous municipal socialism, but rather to a fairly precise programme which aimed to right long-standing defects in local welfare provision and urban form.'²⁰ Thus, it could be said to exemplify Allender's thesis and, indeed, Tiratsoo admits that measured by the standards of left-wing critics who regard Labour as having attempted to restore a capitalist economy and capitalist social relations of production its aims were modest. However, he argues that 'the party's achievements cannot simply be seen as functional to the continuation of capitalism' and that many citizens of Coventry were more concerned to return to life as it was lived before the war as quickly as possible since they placed the concrete provision of houses and jobs for those who wanted them ahead of abstract principles like 'social justice'.²¹ The destruction of the air-raids on Coventry on 14 November 1940, plus the existence of a Labour government, seemed to present an opportunity to create a better planned and more efficient city, but unfortunately 'post-war Coventry remained very much more conservative - indeed Conservative - than had seemed likely in 1945.'²² Added to this, the government wanted to expand industrial production of exports as far as possible in the city for the most limited outlay on welfare services possible and thus had a major impact on the rapidity of reconstruction of the city centre.²³ According to Tiratsoo, there were relatively few convinced socialists among the population of Coventry²⁴ and Labour's appeal in 1937 and

1945 was presented in non-political terms as benefiting the ‘community’ as a whole. Because Labour said it was the representative of no one sectional interest but of *every* citizen, it felt that only it was qualified to pursue reconstruction to the extent needed to achieve its aims.²⁵ As in Sheffield, council house tenants were part of Labour’s coalition of support and the council estates were (not entirely accurately) seen as ‘Labour heartlands’, which undermines the idea that they were ‘apathetic’ dependents of the Labour Council.²⁶ Allied to these were less committed voters attracted by Labour’s municipal programme and especially its stance on the re-development of the city.²⁷ The coalition was obviously less strong than that of Sheffield despite the fact that there was a relatively homogeneous working-class culture in the city, but this was based on escapism and consumerism where possible in austerity conditions and impervious to the Labour’s ethical socialist appeal.²⁸ The Coventry Labour Party because of its electoral weakness attempted to raise public consciousness about the policies of the Council to encourage a better electoral turnout. As Coventry used media like the periodical Civic Affairs to do this, so Sheffield for similar reasons used the Civic Record and Barnsley the Civic Review. But Coventry went further than Sheffield with consultations with a wide range of groups over reconstruction planning, a welcoming attitude among the city councillors to queries by ordinary members of the public at the frequent ward area meetings, and the pioneering use by the Council of the questionnaire survey to determine the citizens’ wishes.²⁹

As with Coventry, there was a consensus during the Second World War that Sheffield must become a better planned, more aesthetically pleasing and less congested city. Sheffield had a longer history of town-planning than Coventry, dating back to Patrick Abercrombie’s Civic Survey published in the 1920s, but limited local government powers and funding meant little materially had actually been achieved by the time of the Blitz on Sheffield in December 1940. Like other blitzed cities, Sheffield took seriously Lord Reith’s call to ‘plan boldly’ a new city but the problems of funding reconstruction remained a barrier with the government dragging its feet during the war on the issue. ‘Planning’ was the buzzword of the Second World War. Naturally this suited Labour, as since the 1930s, the concept had been part of the ‘conventional wisdom’ of the party and the electorate was more likely to turn to them to implement planning than to Municipal Progressives/Conservatives with their traditional ideological commitment to *laissez-faire*. Nevertheless, the latter did embrace the concept in Sheffield. Unfortunately, ‘Labourist’ discourse influenced by the technocratic Fabian philosophy had the effect of denying ordinary people any participatory role in the technical process of making plans for city-wide comprehensive re-development. The Town Planning Assembly, a body made up of members of the Town Planning Sub-Committee of the Chamber of Commerce and the Sheffield, South Yorkshire and District Society of Architects and Surveyors, was involved as advisers to the Council, but as individuals rather than as reflecting the interests of the organisations of which they were members. This reflected the Council’s view that it was the sovereign decision maker, and in fact when the Manzoni Plan was to be amended by the City Council, the Chamber of Commerce was forced to rely on press reports on the earlier Plan as the source of its information before producing its own report and formulating its own revised plan to be considered by the Council. The Sheffield Telegraph and The Star

were also the main informants of the wider public on the town-planning process in the city and the latter newspaper was highly critical about what was taking place particularly on the subjects of the secrecy of the Council and the procrastination of government departments. The Star wanted public debate and involvement in the process of planning.

The Collie Plan, that was eventually presented to the public in 1945, was conceived by the City Engineer rather than by a qualified town planner, though these were thin on the ground in local government employment. As Tiratsoo notes most civil engineers 'saw themselves as experts doing an essentially technical job' and were deeply suspicious 'of planners who were 'up in the air or in dreamland instead of keeping their feet firmly on the ground'.³⁰ As a consequence, the plan was seen as being both practical and achievable and thus different from the kind of visionary plan that other blitzed cities formulated. Thus, the influence of 'New Jerusalemism' on town planning in Sheffield at the end of the war was slight. However, the Plan was never implemented and the effect of the Lewis Silkin's Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 was to force a return to the drawing board. The process of making a new comprehensive development plan for Sheffield had not been completed by October 1951. The actual achievement of all this planning in terms of implementation was thus slight and it was no different in other blitzed cities, where Tiratsoo describes the ultimate result as 'fairly prosaic'.³¹ Sheffield was unable to get sufficient allocations of steel for reconstruction of the city centre despite being the 'Steel City' and the allocations of funds to re-build the flagship retail department stores on The Moor destroyed in the Blitz were grossly inadequate. In the Collie Plan housing construction was given a higher call on resources than the re-building of the city centre, since the need of people for shelter was more of a basic necessity than the need for retail therapy. The needs of industry were not forgotten since it was accepted that a prosperous Sheffield was necessary if the new houses were to be afforded. Correlli Barnett's thesis about the baleful influence of 'New Jerusalemism' on industrial reconstruction as against housing is falsified since the government in Sheffield as in Coventry wanted increased production of exports and armaments for the most minimal expenditure of resources on welfare provision the population would bear. But as Tiratsoo argues for Coventry, and for very similar reasons, we cannot say that the Marxist thesis that Labour was seeking to restore capitalism between 1945 and 1951 is validated either. As an example, Labour in Sheffield visualised an ultimate scenario where the City Council's direct labour department would replace the private sector in building all Sheffield's council houses and also put speculative builders out of business. This was hardly an aspiration to restore capitalism. Sheffield thus conforms to the interpretation of developments in other blitzed cities that Tiratsoo and Hasegawa have advanced in their numerous books and articles.

The concentration on housing as a priority by the early 1950s caused Sheffield City Council to begin to come into conflict with the organised local representatives of what David Matless would call 'recreational citizenship'.³² Collaboration between the local branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and sympathetic local politicians like Labour's Fred Marshall had led to the creation of a provisional green

belt around Sheffield in 1938 with the approval of the City Council, but by 1952 things reached such a pass that a public inquiry was opened to acquire land for housing in the green belt. The abolition of the Local Government Boundary Commission in 1949 meant that Sheffield had had to seek a Parliamentary Bill to expand its territory so it had land for future housing. The Bill, however, failed and as a result the conservationists were forced to oppose the planners in Sheffield well before what Lionel Esher describes as the 'moral revolution' of the 1960s when it became fashionable to excoriate the planners as vandals.³³ The year 1952 was in a sense the end of an epoch. But the attempts to deal with housing also emphasis the pragmatism of the Labour City Council. It was willing to take any expedient to deal with its housing shortage. It backed experiments with pre-fabrication to build houses much quicker, for instance, and began to look at flat-building to ease the problems it had with land. These were pointers to the future when system-built high-rise flats at Hyde Park and Park Hill would be one apparently cheap solution to a housing problem that continued into the 1960s. Labour, however, despite the huge waiting lists and the inadequate supply of new houses being built (a process slowed down after government began to cut back the local authority house-building programme from 1948 and to make precise allocations of the number of houses to be built) had made a promising start in the 1940s. A change of political party in Sheffield would not have been likely to have fulfilled its citizens expectations any faster and would have been forced to introduce similar expedients. It is likely, however, that more flats might have been built, and sooner, since this was the traditional anti-socialist solution put forward in Sheffield to deal with working-class housing needs. Unfortunately for the anti-socialists, a change of political party in either Sheffield or Rotherham was remote and in Sheffield the stage was set for post-war Labour dominance apart from 1968/9 until 1999 when the Liberal Democrats took over. In Rotherham, the dominance of Labour over the town council was even more impressive with a continuity of Labour rule that has lasted up to the present, despite the decline of steel making and coal-mining in the area, both activities which had laid the foundation of Labour dominance years earlier. This, however, shows that structural factors like the economy are necessary but not sufficient explanations of why Labour did dominate politics in both places.

- ¹ THORPE, Andrew. 'The Consolidation of a Labour Stronghold 1926-1951' in BINFIELD, Clyde, CHILDS, Richard, HARPER, Roger, HEY, David, MARTIN, David and TWEEDALE, Geoffrey (eds) The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993. Volume I: Politics. Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, p117.
- ² WILLIAMS, Chris. 'Labour and the Challenge of Local Government, 1919-1939' in TANNER, Duncan, WILLIAMS, Chris and HOPKIN, Deian (eds) The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000. University of Wales Press, 2000, pp149-50.
- ³ THORPE, A. 1993, p117.
- ⁴ WILLIAMS, Chris. Democratic Rhondda: Politics and Society, 1885-1951. University of Wales Press, 1996, p28.
- ⁵ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p15.
- ⁶ ALLENDER, Paul. What's Wrong With Labour ? : A Critical History of the Labour Party in the Twentieth Century. Merlin Press, 2001, pp101-2.
- ⁷ ALLENDER, P. 2001, p141.
- ⁸ Barnsley Chronicle 15/02/1947, p1. He was accused of 'squealing' by the Labour chairman of the Barnsley Housing Committee in the course of a stormy debate in the council chamber.
- ⁹ ALLENDER, P. 2001, p104.
- ¹⁰ ALLENDER, P. 2001, p104.
- ¹¹ Barnsley Chronicle 18/01/1947, p8.
- ¹² Sheffield Telegraph 04/10/1945, p4.
- ¹³ TIRATSOO, Nick. Reconstruction, Affluence and Labour Politics: Coventry 1945-1960. Routledge, 1990.
- ¹⁴ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, pp15-6.
- ¹⁵ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p27.
- ¹⁶ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, pp203-4.
- ¹⁷ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p165.
- ¹⁸ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p161.
- ¹⁹ WILLIAMS, C. 1996, p120.
- ²⁰ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p101.
- ²¹ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p103.
- ²² TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p101.
- ²³ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p102.
- ²⁴ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p111.
- ²⁵ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, pp46-7.
- ²⁶ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p114.
- ²⁷ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p112.
- ²⁸ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p49.
- ²⁹ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, pp112-3.
- ³⁰ TIRATSOO, Nick. 'New Vistas': The Labour Party, Citizenship and the Built Environment in the 1940s' in WEIGHT, Richard and BEACH, Abigail (eds) The Right To Belong: Citizenship and National Identity in Britain, 1930-1960. I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 1998, p144.
- ³¹ TIRATSOO, N. 1990, p109.
- ³² See MATLESS, David. 'Taking Pleasure in England: Landscape and Citizenship in the 1940s' in WEIGHT, Richard and BEACH, Abigail (eds) The Right To Belong: Citizenship and National Identity in Britain, 1930-1960. I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 1998. As I noted in the thesis, the Sheffield Town Clerk summarised the issue at the public inquiry as 'The view for the few - or houses for the many', ignoring the important role played in the Labour movement by ramblers and conservationists like Hugh Dalton or locally by George Herbert Bridges Ward - JONES, Melvyn. Protecting the Beautiful Frame: A History of the Sheffield, Peak District and South Yorkshire Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. The Hallamshire Press, 2001, p116.
- ³³ ESHER, Lionel. A Broken Wave: The Rebuilding of England 1940-1980. Pelican Books, 1983, p72.

APPENDIX 1

LABOUR PARTY MEMBERSHIP

(1.1) TOTAL INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

SOURCE: LABOUR PARTY ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORTS.

NOTE: Membership figures were not collected for the year 1949 due to the effect of the Representation of the People Act, 1948, which redistributed the boundaries of the various constituencies. New Divisional Labour Parties were created, most retaining the old names and local loyalties.

(1.1.1) SHEFFIELD

D. L. P.	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
ATTERCLIFFE	596	600	240	240	240
BRIGHTSIDE	693	542	362	378	459
CENTRAL	240	240	240	240	240
ECCLESALL	240	240	240	240	240
HALLAM	495	358	309	321	421
HILLSBOROUGH	270	240	240	240	240
PARK	1,525	1,106	616	684	886
SHEFFIELD	4,059	3,326	2,247	2,353	2,726

D. L. P.	1945	1946	1947	1948
ATTERCLIFFE	240	240	400	449
BRIGHTSIDE	559	641	712	602
CENTRAL	240	240	304	240
ECCLESALL	240	240	289	302
HALLAM	415	450	429	377
HILLSBOROUGH	240	240	250	250
PARK	934	958	1,511	1,456
SHEFFIELD	2,874	3,009	3,895	3,676

D. L. P.	1950	1951
ATTERCLIFFE	1,050	930
BRIGHTSIDE	790	913
HALLAM	373	400
HEELEY	607	836
HILLSBOROUGH	269	402
NEEPSSEND	549	692
PARK	974	950
SHEFFIELD	4,612	5,123

(1.1.2) OTHER SOUTH YORKSHIRE CONSTITUENCIES

D. L. P.	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
BARNSLEY	240	240	240	240	240
DONCASTER	1,214	935	842	838	962
DON VALLEY	681	453	453	471	548
HEMSWORTH	764	786	772	720	840
PENISTONE	631	472	336	385	477
ROTHERHAM	1,000	500	265	462	669
ROTHER VALLEY	1,073	927	1,450	600	508
WENTWORTH	578	383	322	400	423

D. L. P.	1945	1946	1947	1948
BARNSLEY	240	240	240	240
DONCASTER	1,054	1,269	1,370	1,432
DON VALLEY	534	786	1,263	1,166
HEMSWORTH	820	860	1,037	1,003
PENISTONE	644	1,438	1,482	866
ROTHERHAM	800	1,128	1,362	917
ROTHER VALLEY	682	1,100	2,750	1,890
WENTWORTH	547	739	994	1,004

D. L. P.	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	392	370
DEARNE VALLEY	612	632
DONCASTER	928	918
DON VALLEY	1,994	1,730
HEMSWORTH	1,074	1,060
PENISTONE	958	1,284
ROTHERHAM	952	1,244
ROTHER VALLEY	1,212	1,042

(1.2) FEMALE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

(1.2.1) SHEFFIELD

D. L. P.	1941	1942	1943	1944
ATTERCLIFFE	300	120	70	100
BRIGHTSIDE	236	153	147	187
CENTRAL	100	120	120	120
ECCLESALL	115	100	100	100
HALLAM	138	110	99	159
HILLSBOROUGH	70	90	80	60
PARK	452	245	233	369
SHEFFIELD	1,411	938	849	1,095

D. L. P.	1945	1946	1947	1948
ATTERCLIFFE	120	100	200	225
BRIGHTSIDE	225	229	239	196
CENTRAL	120	100	120	120
ECCLESALL	100	95	122	126
HALLAM	111	125	140	117
HILLSBOROUGH	60	60	50	100
PARK	405	425	536	597
SHEFFIELD	1,141	1,134	1,407	1,481

D. L. P.	1950	1951
ATTERCLIFFE	360	260
BRIGHTSIDE	304	370
HALLAM	127	100
HEELEY	297	341
HILLSBOROUGH	94	79
NEEPSSEND	199	248
PARK	418	349
SHEFFIELD	1,799	1,747

(1.2.2) OTHER SOUTH YORKSHIRE CONSTITUENCIES

D. L. P.	1941	1942	1943	1944
BARNSLEY	120	120	120	120
DONCASTER	435	396	384	423
DON VALLEY	204	204	194	222
HEMSWORTH	370	378	360	380
PENISTONE	152	85	100	142
ROTHERHAM	250	103	174	262
ROTHER VALLEY	324	450	200	208
WENTWORTH	138	135	200	164

D. L. P.	1945	1946	1947	1948
BARNSLEY	120	120	120	120
DONCASTER	457	557	629	645
DON VALLEY	237	263	448	399
HEMSWORTH	340	380	418	440
PENISTONE	183	409	449	217
ROTHERHAM	366	324	500	317
ROTHER VALLEY	326	400	700	718
WENTWORTH	168	172	267	323

D. L. P.	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	138	129
DEARNE VALLEY	237	218
DONCASTER	429	416
DON VALLEY	966	812
HEMSWORTH	406	400
PENISTONE	368	452
ROTHERHAM	146	519
ROTHER VALLEY	543	464

(1.3) % OF FEMALE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

(1.3.1) SHEFFIELD

D. L. P.	1941	1942	1943	1944
ATTERCLIFFE	50	50	29	41.5
BRIGHTSIDE	43.5	42.5	39	40.5
CENTRAL	41.5	50	50	50
ECCLESALL	48	41.5	41.5	41.5
HALLAM	38.5	35.5	31	38
HILLSBOROUGH	29	37.5	33.5	25
PARK	41	40	34	41.5
SHEFFIELD	42.5	41.5	36	40

D. L. P.	1945	1946	1947	1948
ATTERCLIFFE	50	41.5	50	50
BRIGHTSIDE	40.5	35.5	33.5	32.5
CENTRAL	50	41.5	39.5	50
ECCLESALL	41.5	39.5	42	41.5
HALLAM	26.5	28	32.5	31
HILLSBOROUGH	25	25	20	40
PARK	43.5	44.5	35.5	41
SHEFFIELD	39.5	37.5	36	40.5

D. L. P.	1950	1951
ATTERCLIFFE	34.5	28
BRIGHTSIDE	38.5	40.5
HALLAM	34	25
HEELEY	49	41
HILLSBOROUGH	35	19.5
NEEPSSEND	36	36
PARK	43	36.5
SHEFFIELD	39	34

(1.3.2) OTHER SOUTH YORKSHIRE CONSTITUENCIES

D. L. P.	1941	1942	1943	1944
BARNSLEY	50	50	50	50
DONCASTER	46.5	47	46	44
DON VALLEY	45	45	41	40.5
HEMSWORTH	47	49	50	45
PENISTONE	32	25.5	26	30
ROTHERHAM	50	39	37.5	39
ROTHER VALLEY	35	31	33.5	41
WENTWORTH	36	42	50	39

D. L. P.	1945	1946	1947	1948
BARNSLEY	50	50	50	50
DONCASTER	43.5	44	46	45
DON VALLEY	44.5	33.5	35.5	34
HEMSWORTH	41.5	44	40.5	44
PENISTONE	28.5	28.5	30.5	25
ROTHERHAM	45.75	28.5	36.5	34.5
ROTHER VALLEY	48	36.5	25.5	38
WENTWORTH	30.5	23.5	27	32

D. L. P.	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	35	35
DEARNE VALLEY	38.5	34.5
DONCASTER	46	45.5
DON VALLEY	48.5	47
HEMSWORTH	38	37.5
PENISTONE	38.5	35
ROTHERHAM	15.5	41.5
ROTHER VALLEY	45	44.5

(1.4) DONCASTER LABOUR PARTY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

NOTE: The Party was wound up on 12 September 1948 consequent on redistribution of boundaries of constituencies due to the Representation of the People Act, 1948 and a new Party was formed with its first meeting on 14 September 1948. The new Doncaster constituency followed the same boundaries as Doncaster County Borough and Adwick-le-Street and Bentley-with-Arksey Urban Districts were transferred to Don Valley constituency.

SOURCE: DDL P MINUTE BOOKS

DATE	ADWICK-LE-STREET U. D.	BENTLEY-WITH-ARKSEY U. D.	DONCASTER COUNTY BOROUGH	TOTAL
1939	220	176	633	1,029
1940	155	186	519	860
END 1941	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	804
21/04/1943	205	154	329	688
07/07/1943	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	794
28/07/1943	260	164	419	843
01/09/1943	260	164	431	855
09/09/1943	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	875
01/12/1943	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	903
29/03/1944	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	758
17/05/1944	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	814
14/06/1944	235	156	423	814
12/07/1944	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	854
18/10/1944	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	967
29/11/1944	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	997
31/01/1945	305	195	538	1,038
28/03/1945	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	NOT KNOWN	555
28/04/1945	156	86	422	664
24/07/1945	255	149	516	920
07/11/1945	309	196	636	1,141
28/11/1945	332	203	643	1,178
?/12/1945	339	221	669	1,229
02/01/1946	337	222	664	1,223
10/04/1946	108	123	430	661
29/05/1946	168	157	582	907
30/06/1946	195	173	672	1,040
07/08/1946	206	209	708	1,123
04/09/1946	225	211	707	1,143
09/10/1946	265	230	776	1,271
06/11/1946	265	230	776	1,271

DATE	ADWICK- LE- STREET U. D.	BENTLEY -WITH- ARKSEY U. D.	DONCAS TER COUNTY BOROUG H	LEAGUE OF YOUTH	TOTAL
04/12/1946	279	231	789		1,299
08/01/1947	285	242	816		1,343
19/03/1947	141	177	579		897
23/04/1947	206	162	587		955
21/05/1947	216	210	685	15	1,126
18/06/1947	216	214	711	N/K	1,141
07/1947	234	226	738	18	1,216
20/08/1947	246	226	742	18	1,232
24/09/1947	262	228	756	18	1,264
19/11/1947	266	232	787	20	1,305
11/01/1948	283	246	807	20	1,356
14/03/1948	169	140	488	N/K	797
11/04/1948	195	173	516	N/K	884
12/05/1948	195	175	597	N/K	977
16/06/1948	195	260	634	N/K	1,089
11/07/1948	222	292	656	N/K	1,180

DATE	DONCASTER CONSTITUEN CY LABOUR PARTY
26/09/1948	728
14/10/1948	731
11/11/1948	746
09/12/1948	751
13/01/1949	809
10/02/1949	276
10/03/1949	524
07/04/1949	544
19/05/1949	686
16/06/1949	698
14/07/1949	784
15/09/1949	824

DATE	DONCASTER CONSTITUEN CY LABOUR PARTY
13/10/1949	847
14/11/1949	855
10/12/1949	872
12/03/1950	894
14/04/1950	414
15/06/1950	601
16/08/1951	735

NOTE: From 13 July 1950 to 24 July 1951 E. Allison was Secretary/Agent of Doncaster Constituency Labour Party. He eventually left under a cloud but during the period of his office no individual membership figures were recorded in the 1948-1952 Minute Book (DS7/10/1).

(1.5) HALLAM DLP WARD MEMBERSHIP

SOURCE: DLP MINUTE BOOK

DATE	BROOMH ILL WARD	CROOKE SMOOR WARD	HALLAM WARD	WOMEN' S SECTION	TOTAL
14/12/1941	43	74	105	10	232
13/12/1942	32	120	108	12	272
12/12/1943	32	139	101		272
08/12/1947	70	86	188	15	359

(1.6) HALLAM WARD MEETING PARTICIPATION 1945-1951

SOURCE: HALLAM WARD MINUTE BOOK

DATE	MEMBER S	DATE	MEMBER S
05/04/1945	23	04/10/1945	50
07/06/1945	70	12/10/1945	44
02/08/1945	60	08/11/1945	45
06/09/1945	50	06/12/1945	30

DATE	MEMBERS	DATE	MEMBERS
03/01/1946	30	04/06/1948	14
07/02/1946	25	26/08/1948	15
14/03/1946	19	07/10/1948	16
11/04/1946	27	02/12/1948	22
09/05/1946	16	06/01/1949	10
06/06/1946	10	03/02/1949	24
04/07/1946	28	07/04/1949	16
01/08/1946	16	09/06/1949	10
05/09/1946	16	06/07/1949	11
03/10/1946	18	01/09/1949	25
07/11/1946	18	06/10/1949	16
05/12/1946	10	04/1950	12
09/01/1947	14	19/10/1950	14
06/03/1947	16	02/11/1950	12
03/07/1947	16	07/12/1950	12
04/09/1947	24	04/01/1951	15
02/10/1947	17	01/02/1951	16
06/11/1947	12	01/03/1951	22
04/12/1947	20		
05/02/1948	20		
01/04/1948	24		

(1.7) DONCASTER CENTRAL WARD MEETING PARTICIPATION 1949-1951

SOURCE: DONCASTER CENTRAL WARD MINUTE BOOK

DATE	MEMBERS	DATE	MEMBERS
14/09/1949	17	23/01/1949	20
05/10/1949	12	02/03/1950	20
02/11/1949	18	30/03/1950	29
07/12/1949	18	01/06/1950	19
04/01/1950	19	06/07/1950	22

DATE	MEMBERS	DATE	MEMBERS
03/08/1950	16	05/04/1951	14
31/08/1950	21	07/06/1951	12
05/10/1950	19	05/07/1951	12
02/11/1950	14	02/08/1951	14
30/11/1950	11	06/09/1951	14
10/01/1951	12	15/11/1951	14
01/03/1951	11		

(1.8) DONCASTER DLP AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP

SOURCE: ANNUAL REPORTS

	AFFILIATED MEMBERS	AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS
1939	6,096	30
1940	5,428	25
1941	6,320	NOT KNOWN
1942	6,184	29
1943	7,030	NOT KNOWN
1944	7,386	33
1945	7,904	35
1946	9,091	39

(1.9) NATIONAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP

SOURCE: PELLING, Henry and REID, Alastair J. A Short History of the Labour Party. Macmillan, 1996, p198. (*) -Does not include members of the Co-operative Party.

DATE	INDIVIDUAL	TRADES UNIONS	CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES (*)	SOCIALIST SOCIETIES ETC.	TOTAL
1939	408,844	2,214,070	37,333	2,820	2,663,067
1940	404,124	2,226,575	37,333	3,131	2,571,163
1941	226,622	2,320,728	25,200	2,908	2,485,458
1942	218,783	2,206,209	25,200	3,740	2,453,932
1943	235,501	2,237,307	25,200	5,232	2,503,240
1944	265,763	2,375,381	25,200	6,501	2,672,845

1945	487,047	2,510,369	33,600	7,681	3,038,697
1946	645,345	2,635,346	33,600	8,067	3,322,358
1947	608,487	4,386,074	36,960	8,778	5,040,299
1948	629,025	4,751,030	33,600	8,782	5,422,437
1949	729,624	4,946,207	33,600	7,516	5,716,947
1950	908,161	4,971,911	30,800	9,300	5,920,172
1951	876,275	4,937,427	28,000	7,300	5,849,002
1952	1,014,524	5,071,935	14,000	7,200	6,107,659

APPENDIX 2

GENERAL ELECTION AND BY-ELECTION RESULTS 1935-1951

SOURCES: (1) CRAIG, F. W. S. British Parliamentary Election Results 1918-1949. Political Reference Publications, 1969; (2) CRAIG, F. W. S. British Parliamentary Election Results 1950-1970. Political Reference Publications, 1971.

(2.1) SOUTH YORKSHIRE GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

(2.1.1) TOTAL ELECTORATES

(2.1.1.1) PRIOR TO REDISTRIBUTION

	1935	1945
BARNSLEY	52,077	52,211
DONCASTER	66,925	76,539
DON VALLEY	68,816	76,487
ROTHERHAM	57,382	62,949
ROTHER VALLEY	62,530	78,636
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	40,664	36,316
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	47,251	41,913
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	36,709	18,666
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	43,668	44,462
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	44,140	44,579
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	50,474	51,821
SHEFFIELD, PARK	56,121	61,325
WENTWORTH	62,205	67,399

(2.1.1.2) AFTER REDISTRIBUTION

	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	68,905	69,694
DEARNE VALLEY	57,736	58,204
DONCASTER	56,081	57,581
DON VALLEY	61,312	62,345
ROTHERHAM	55,469	56,337
ROTHER VALLEY	63,057	64,243
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	49,650	50,907
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	55,298	55,364
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	50,051	49,989
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY	53,596	53,807
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	56,581	56,415
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND	49,685	49,708
SHEFFIELD, PARK	53,006	54,058

**(2.1.1.3) AVERAGE ELECTORATE OF SHEFFIELD
AND NON-SHEFFIELD SEATS**

	1935	1945	1950	1951
SHEFFIELD	45,575	42,726	52,552	52,893
NON-SHEFFIELD	61,655	69,037	60,427	61,401

(2.1.2) % TURNOUT

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	82.6	80.4	88.9	77.2
DEARNE VALLEY			88	85.9
DONCASTER	77.7	74.5	85.6	86.2
DON VALLEY	70	73.2	87.7	85.9
ROTHERHAM	76.7	76.4	87.3	84.2
ROTHER VALLEY	73.8	75.2	87.4	86.3
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	73	79.4	86.4	82.7
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	68.7	75.5	84.6	81.4
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	74.2	72		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	71	75.5		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	71.7	75.7	86.4	82
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			88.1	84.6
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	76.8	76	87.1	84.9
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			83.8	79.5
SHEFFIELD, PARK	73.2	73.9	85.2	82.5
WENTWORTH	73.4	78.3		

(2.1.3) TOTAL VOTES FOR LABOUR

Common Wealth Party in bold

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSELY	25,318	30,614	42,008	37,523
DEARNE VALLEY			40,420	39,782
DONCASTER	29,963	40,050	24,449	24,621
DON VALLEY	33,220	40,153	39,789	39,687
ROTHERHAM	29,725	35,654	31,211	31,124
ROTHER VALLEY	33,271	44,499	42,222	41,990
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	18,663	23,488	30,726	29,958
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	18,985	19,373	32,542	31,519
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	13,828	7,954		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	8,173	12,045		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	10,346	13,009	11,444	11,988
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			17,856	17,729
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	21,025	24,959	28,925	28,274
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			30,317	28,880
SHEFFIELD, PARK	21,153	29,424	30,558	30,842
WENTWORTH	37,471	44,080		

(2.1.4) LABOUR'S % OF VOTES CAST

Common Wealth Party in bold

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	58.9	72.9	68.6	69.7
DEARNE VALLEY			79.6	79.6
DONCASTER	61.3	70.2	50.9	49.6
DON VALLEY	68.9	71.7	74	74.1
ROTHERHAM	67.5	74.2	64.4	65.6
ROTHER VALLEY	72	75.2	76.6	75.7
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	62.8	81.4	71.6	71.1
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	58.5	61.2	69.6	69.9
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	50.8	59.2		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	26.4	35.9		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	32.7	38.5	26.5	29.2
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			37.8	39
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	54.3	63.4	58.7	59
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			72.8	73
SHEFFIELD, PARK	51.5	64.9	67.7	69.2
WENTWORTH	82.1	83.6		

(2.1.5) TOTAL VOTES FOR CONSERVATIVES/NATIONAL LIBERALS

National Liberal contests are in **bold**

National Liberal and Conservative are underlined

(*) = Parliamentary constituency won. All others had Labour Party victorious.

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSLEY	17,683	11,382	<u>8,480</u>	<u>9,296</u>
DEARNE VALLEY			<u>10,365</u>	10,197
DONCASTER	22,011	16,999	23,571	25,005 (*)
DON VALLEY	14,961	15,832	12,982	13,862
ROTHERHAM	14,298	12,420	14,744	16,317
ROTHER VALLEY	12,907	14,669	12,887	13,470
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	11,034	5,376	<u>12,185</u>	<u>12,161</u>
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	13,467	8,177	<u>13,136</u>	<u>12,433</u>
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	13,828 (*)	5,481		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	22,819 (*)	18,120 (*)		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	21,298 (*)	15,874 (*)	<u>28,159</u> (*)	<u>29,016</u> (*)
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			<u>26,560</u> (*)	<u>27,776</u> (*)
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	17,721	14,403	<u>19,613</u>	<u>19,617</u>
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			<u>11,311</u>	<u>10,655</u>
SHEFFIELD, PARK	19,947	15,882	<u>13,678</u>	<u>13,743</u>
WENTWORTH	8,167	8,670		

(2.1.6) CONSERVATIVE/NATIONAL LIBERAL % OF VOTES CAST

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSELY	41.1	27.1	<u>13</u>	<u>17.3</u>
DEARNE VALLEY			<u>20.4</u>	20.4
DONCASTER	42.4	21.8	49.1	50.4 (*)
DON VALLEY	31.1	28.3	24.1	25.9
ROTHERHAM	32.5	25.8	30.5	34.4
ROTHER VALLEY	28	24.8	23.4	24.3
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	37.2	18.6	<u>28.4</u>	<u>28.9</u>
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	41.5	25.8	<u>28.1</u>	<u>27.6</u>
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	50.8 (*)	40.8		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	73.6 (*)	54 (*)		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	67.3 (*)	61.7 (*)	<u>65.1 (*)</u>	<u>70.8 (*)</u>
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			<u>56.3 (*)</u>	<u>61 (*)</u>
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	45.7	36.6	<u>39.8</u>	<u>41</u>
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			<u>27.2</u>	<u>27</u>
SHEFFIELD, PARK	48.5	35.1	<u>30.3</u>	<u>30.8</u>
WENTWORTH	17.9	16.4		

(2.1.7) MAJORITY VOTES

Conservative/National Liberal in bold

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSELY	7,635	19,232	31,209	28,227
DEARNE VALLEY			30,055	29,585
DONCASTER	7,952	23,051	878	384
DON VALLEY	18,259	24,321	26,807	25,825
ROTHERHAM	15,427	23,234	16,467	14,807
ROTHER VALLEY	20,364	29,830	29,335	28,520
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	7,629	18,092	18,541	17,797
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	5,518	11,196	19,406	19,086
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	420	2,273		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	14,646	6,075		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	10,952	2,865	16,715	17,028
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			8,704	10,047
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	3,304	10,556	9,312	8,657
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			19,006	18,225
SHEFFIELD, PARK	1,206	13,542	16,880	17,099
WENTWORTH	29,304	35,410		

(2.1.8) MAJORITIES AS % OF TOTAL VOTES CAST

	1935	1945	1950	1951
BARNSELEY	17.8	45.8	51	52.4
DEARNE VALLEY			59.2	59.2
DONCASTER	15.2	40.4	1.8	0.8
DON VALLEY	37.8	43.4	49.9	48.2
ROTHERHAM	35	48.4	33.9	31.2
ROTHER VALLEY	44	50.4	53.2	51.4
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	25.6	62.8	43.2	42.2
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	17	35.4	41.5	42.3
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	1.6	18.4		
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	47.2	18.1		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	34.6	8.6	38.6	41.6
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY			18.5	22
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	8.6	26.8	18.9	18
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND			45.6	46
SHEFFIELD, PARK	3	29.8	37.4	38.4
WENTWORTH	64.2	67.2		

(2.1.9) SWINGS TO LABOUR

NOTE: (1) Swing is calculated from the average of % Labour gain and % Conservative loss following the practice in MCCALLUM, R. B. and READMAN, Alison. The British General Election of 1945. Oxford University Press, 1947. Labour figures include Communist and Common Wealth Party votes while Conservative figures include Liberal National votes though not Liberal. (2) It is impossible to calculate the swing between 1945 and 1950 due to the boundary changes resulting from the Representation of the People Act 1948 which altered the constituencies' make-up.

	1945	1951
BARNSLEY	14	- 3.2
DEARNE VALLEY		0
DONCASTER	12.6	- 0.5
DON VALLEY	2.8	- 1.9
ROTHERHAM	6.7	- 1.95
ROTHER VALLEY	3.2	- 0.9
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	18.6	- 0.5
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	15.7	0.5
SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL	8.4	
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	14.55	
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	16.35	1.5
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY		- 1.75
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH	9.1	- 1.2
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND		0.2
SHEFFIELD, PARK	13.4	- 0.5
WENTWORTH	1.5	
SHEFFIELD	13.73	- 0.25
SOUTH YORKSHIRE	10.84	- 0.78

(B.1.10) MINOR PARTIES
(B.1.10.1) COMMUNIST PARTY
(B.1.10.1.1) TOTAL VOTES

	1945	1950	1951
DON VALLEY		1,007	
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	4,115	1,081	1,116
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	2,253		
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH		759	
SHEFFIELD, PARK		909	

(2.1.10.1.2) % VOTES CAST

	1945	1950	1951
DON VALLEY		1.9	
SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE	13	2.3	2.5
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	6.7		
SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH		1.5	
SHEFFIELD, PARK		2	

(2.1.10.2) LIBERAL PARTY

(2.1.10.2.1) TOTAL VOTES

	1945	1950	1951
BARNSLEY		10,799	7,002
ROTHERHAM		2,458	
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	3,391		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	2,614	3,641	
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY		2,779	

(2.1.10.2.2) % VOTES CAST

	1945	1950	1951
BARNSLEY		17.6	13
ROTHERHAM		5.1	
SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL	10.1		
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	7.7	8.4	
SHEFFIELD, HEELEY		5.9	

(2.2) BY-ELECTION RESULTS 1935-1951

(*) Unopposed due to wartime electoral truce and all Labour-held seats.

(2.2.1) TOTAL ELECTORATES AND % TURNOUT

	DATE	TOTAL POTENTIAL ELECTORATE	TURNOUT
BARNSELY	16/06/1938	50,376	72.7
DONCASTER	17/11/1938	68,632	75.4
SHEFFIELD, HALLAM	10/05/1939	44,897	57.8
DONCASTER	06/02/1941 (*)	-----	-----
SHEFFIELD, PARK	27/08/1942 (*)	-----	-----
SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE	21/02/1944 (*)	-----	-----
SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND	05/04/1950	49,586	62.9

(2.2.2) RESULTS

(A) Percentage of votes cast

(2.2.2.1) BARNSELY 16/06/1938

CANDIDATE	PARTY	TOTAL VOTES	(A)
FRANK COLLINDRIDGE	LABOUR	23,566	64.4
H. W. S. HOWARD	NATIONAL LIBERAL	13,052	35.6
MAJORITY		10,514	28.8

(2.2.2.2) DONCASTER 17/11/1938

JOHN MORGAN	LABOUR	31,735	61.3
ALEX MONTEITH	NATIONAL LIBERAL	20,027	38.7
MAJORITY		11,708	22.6

(2.2.2.3) SHEFFIELD HALLAM 10/05/1939

ROLAND JENNINGS	CONSERVATIVE	16,033	61.7
CHARLES S. DARVILL	LABOUR	9,939	38.3
MAJORITY		6,094	23.4

(2.2.2.4) SHEFFIELD NEEPSSEND 05/04/1950

SIR FRANK SOSKICE	LABOUR	22,080	73
JOHN PHILLIP HUNT	NATIONAL LIBERAL & CONSERVATIVE	8,365	26.8
E. LESLIE MOORE	COMMUNIST	729	2.3
MAJORITY		13,715	44.1

APPENDIX 3
CANDIDATES IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE
GENERAL ELECTIONS

(3.1) NOS. OF CANDIDATES 1935-1951

	1935	1945	1950	1951
LABOUR	13	12	13	13
CONSERVATIVE	11	10	4	5
NATIONAL LIBERAL	2	3		
LIBERAL		2	4	1
COMMUNIST		2	4	1
COMMONWEALTH		1		
NATIONAL LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE			9	8
TOTAL	26	30	34	28

(3.2) 1945 GENERAL ELECTION

NOTE: Successful candidates are marked in **BOLD**

(3.2.1) LABOUR CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	RANK	SEAT CONTESTED
ALBERT VICTOR ALEXANDER	LOCAL GOVT. OFFICER	60		SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH
THOMAS WILLIAM BURDEN	RAILWAY GOODS AGENT	60		SHEFFIELD, PARK
FRANK COLLINDRIDGE	MINER	54		BARNSLEY
WILLIAM DOBBIE	RAILWAY COACH PAINTER	66		ROTHERHAM
J. F. DRABBLE	BARRISTER-AT-LAW		SQUADN-LEADER	SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
DAVID GRIFFITHS	MINER	49		ROTHER VALLEY

JOHN BURNS HYND	RAILWAY CLERK	43		SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE
FRED MARSHALL	WAGON BUILDER	62		SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE
HARRY MORRIS	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	51	LT-COLONEL	SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL
WILFRED PALING	MINER	62		WENTWORTH
EVELYN WALKDEN	TRADE UNION ORGANISER	51		DONCASTER
TOM WILLIAMS	MINER	57		DON VALLEY

(3.2.2) CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	RANK	SEAT CONTESTED
JAMES HOWARD BULL	SCHOOLTEACHER	34	FLIGHT-LT	ROTHER VALLEY
MRS. AIMEE LAVENDER GONDOR DOWER	ARISTOCRATIC WIFE OF TORY MP	37		WENTWORTH
GEORGE VIVIAN HUNT	SOLICITOR	40	LT-COLONEL	SHEFFIELD, CENTRAL
ROLAND JENNINGS	CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT	51		SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
BRIAN PADDON	RAF REGULAR	37	GROUP-CAPT	SHEFFIELD ATTERCLIFFE
PETER GEOFFREY ROBERTS	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	33	MAJOR	SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL
JAMES J. A. N. ROSS	SOLDIER	34	CAPTAIN	DON VALLEY
GEOFFREY P. STEVENS	CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT		WING-COMMANDER	SHEFFIELD, PARK
H. A. TAYLOR	JOURNALIST			DONCASTER
H. BRIAN TAYLOR	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	41	LT-COLONEL	SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE

(3.2.3) NATIONAL LIBERAL CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	RANK	SEAT CONTESTED
ROBERT HAMPDON HOBART	REGULAR NAVAL OFFICER	30	LT	SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH
EDGAR HERWARD PHILIPS	JOURNALIST	40		ROTHERHAM
RICHARD JOHN SOPER	TIMBER MERCHANT	67		BARNSELY

(3.2.4) LIBERAL CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	RANK	SEAT CONTESTED
GERALD ABRAHAMS	BARRISTER-AT-LAW			SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
P. R. NIGHTINGALE	OWNER OF CATERING FIRM	48	LT-COLONEL	SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL

(3.2.5) COMMUNIST CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	RANK	SEAT CONTESTED
GORDON H. CREE			LT	SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
HOWARD HILL	ELECTRICIAN			SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE

(3.2.6) COMMON WEALTH CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	RANK	SEAT CONTESTED
SYDNEY GEORGE CHECKLAND	STUDENT	28	LT	SHEFFIELD, ECCLESALL

(3.3) 1950 GENERAL ELECTION**(3.3.1) LABOUR CANDIDATES**

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
FRANK COLLINDRIDGE	MINER	59	BARNLEY
GEORGE DARLING	JOURNALIST	45	SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH
DAVID GRIFFITHS	MINER	54	ROTHER VALLEY
RAYMOND JONES GUNTER	RAILWAY CLERK	40	DONCASTER
JOHN BURNS HYND	RAILWAY CLERK	47	SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE
ARNOLD HARRY JENNINGS	SCHOOLMASTER	34	SHEFFIELD, HEELEY
JOHN HENRY JONES	STEEL SMELTER	55	ROTHERHAM
HARRY MORRIS	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	56	SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND
FREDERICK WILLIAM MULLEY	UNIVERSITY LECTURER	31	SHEFFIELD, PARK
WILFRED PALING	MINER	66	DEARNE VALLEY
HERBERT CHARLES SPEARS	LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICER	50	SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
TOM WILLIAMS	MINER	61	DON VALLEY
RICHARD EMANUEL WINTERBOTTOM	TRADE UNION ORGANISER	51	SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE

(3.3.2) CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
ANTHONY P. L. BARBER	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	39	DONCASTER
RICHARD FRANK STEWART BODY	FARM WORKER	22	ROTHERHAM
W. R. A . BREARE	MANAGER OF WEST RIDING GROUP OF NEWSPAPERS	34	ROTHER VALLEY
DOUGLAS GRAHAM	TORY PARTY OFFICIAL	47	DON VALLEY

(3.3.3) NATIONAL LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
ANDREW MCTURK COOK	STEEL MANUFACTURER		SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND
MRS AIMEE LAVENDER GONDOR DOWER	ARISTOCRATIC WIFE OF TORY MP	42	DEARNE VALLEY
SIR KNOWLES EDGE, BT	CHEMICALS MANUFACTURER		SHEFFIELD HILLSBOROUGH
LIONEL STEPHEN EDWARD FARRIS	MD OF LTD COMPANY		SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE
ROLAND JENNINGS	CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT	56	SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
HAROLD PRYCE	SPRING MAKER		SHEFFIELD, PARK
PETER GEOFFREY ROBERTS	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	37	SHEFFIELD, HEELEY
HAROLD STANLEY VIAN SMITH	ECONOMIST/JOURNALIST		SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE
C. GORDON-SPENCER			BARNLEY

(3.3.4) LIBERAL CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
PHILIP BECKERLEGGE	TOOL AND GAUGE MAKER	33	SHEFFIELD, HEELEY
MRS MAY FOSTER	GENERAL DEALER	58	ROTHERHAM
ALFRED EDWIN JONES	JOINER/T.U. ORGANISER	47	SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
G. HOWARD WALKER			BARNLEY

(3.3.5) COMMUNIST CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
MICHAEL BENNETT	ORGANISER		SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH
ARTHUR FULLARD	BRICKLAYER		SHEFFIELD, PARK
HOWARD HILL	ELECTRICIAN/ORGANISER		SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE
SAM TAYLOR	MINER		DON VALLEY

(3.4) 1951 GENERAL ELECTION

(3.4.1) LABOUR CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
F. W. BEATON			SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
GEORGE DARLING	JOURNALIST	46	SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH
DAVID GRIFFITHS	MINER	55	ROTHER VALLEY
RAYMOND JONES GUNTER	RAILWAY CLERK	42	DONCASTER
JOHN BURNS HYND	RAILWAY CLERK	49	SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE
ARNOLD HARRY JENNINGS	SCHOOLMASTER	35	SHEFFIELD, HEELEY
JOHN HENRY JONES	STEEL SMELTER	56	ROTHERHAM
FREDERICK WILLIAM MULLEY	UNIVERSITY LECTURER	33	SHEFFIELD, PARK
WILFRED PALING	MINER	68	DEARNE VALLEY
SIDNEY SCHOFIELD	MINER	40	BARNSELY
SIR FRANK SOSKICE	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	49	SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND
TOM WILLIAMS	MINER	63	DON VALLEY
RICHARD EMANUEL WINTERBOTTOM	TRADE UNION ORGANISER	52	SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE

(3.4.2) CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
ANTHONY P. L. BARBER	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	40	DONCASTER
WILLIAM G. BLAKE			ROTHERHAM
RONALD HALL	MASTER PAINTER/DECORATOR	31	ROTHER VALLEY
DAVID S. B. HOPKINS	SOLICITOR	27	DON VALLEY
JOHN SIZER	MASTER BAKER	30	DEARNE VALLEY

(3.4.3) NATIONAL LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
ROLAND JENNINGS	CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT	57	SHEFFIELD, HALLAM
HERBERT LAURENCE LAMBERT	CONSULTING AUTOMOBILE ENGINEER AND ASSESSOR	47	SHEFFIELD, ATTERCLIFFE
STANLEY BERTRAM RIPPON	SALES MANAGER		SHEFFIELD, PARK
PETER GEOFFREY ROBERTS	BARRISTER-AT-LAW	39	SHEFFIELD, HEELEY
THOMAS ARTHUR STOBBS	DIRECTOR OF LTD COMPANY		SHEFFIELD, NEEPSSEND
GEORGE WADSWORTH			SHEFFIELD, HILLSBOROUGH
G. WHITAKER			BARNSELY
A. L. WOOD			SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE

(3.4.4) LIBERAL CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
G. HOWARD WALKER			BARNSELY

(3.4.5) COMMUNIST CANDIDATES

	OCCUPATION	AGE	SEAT CONTESTED
HOWARD HILL	ELECTRICIAN/ORGANISER		SHEFFIELD, BRIGHTSIDE

APPENDIX 4

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS 1938-1952

L = LABOUR PARTY, P = PROGRESSIVE, C = CONS.-LIB., I = IND. CONS.

SOURCES: SHEFFIELD TELEGRAPH/ STAR

WARD	19 38	19 45	19 46	19 47	19 49	19 50	19 51	19 52
ATTERCLIFFE	L	LL	L	L	L	L	L	L
BRIGHTSIDE	L	LL	L	L	L	L	L	L
BROOMHILL		PP P	P	P	C	C	C	C
BURNGREAVE	L	LL	L	LL	L	L	L	L
CATHEDRAL								L
CROOKESMOOR	P	L	L	L	C	L	L	L
DARNALL	L	LL	L	L	L	L	L	L
ECCLESALL		P	P	P	C	C	C	C
FIRTH PARK	L	LL	L	L *	L	L	L	L
HALLAM		PP	P	P	C	C	C	C
HANDSWORTH	L	LL	L	L	L	L	LL	L
HEELEY	P	L	L	L	L	L	C	LL
HILLSBOROUGH	P	L	P	P	C	C	C	L
MANOR	L	LL	L	L	L	L	L	L
MOOR	P	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
NEEPSSEND		L	L	L	L	L	L	
NETHER EDGE		P	P	P	C	C	C	C
NETHER SHIRE								L
NORTON		PP P	P	P	C	C	C	C
OWLERTON	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
PARK	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	LL
ST. PETER'S	P	L	I	P	C	L	C	
ST. PHILIP'S	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
SHARROW	P	L	LL	P	C	C	C	L
SOUTHEY GREEN								L
TINSLEY	L	LL	L	L	L	L	L	L
WALKLEY	P	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
WOODSEATS	P	PP	P	P	C	C	C	C

NOTE: (1) Cathedral Ward was an amalgamation of St. Peter's and St. Philip's Wards, Nether Shire Ward was the result of Firth Park Ward being split in two and Southey Green Ward drew its electorate mainly from Neepsend Ward which ceased to exist. (2) * for Firth Park Ward in 1947 column = Labour victory in by-election on 26 February 1948.

(4.2) % TURNOUT

U = UNOPPOSED

WARD	1937	1938	1945	1946	1947
ATTERCLIFFE	32	33	U	U	43
BRIGHTSIDE		38	31	34	51
BROOMHILL			40	39	52
BURNGREAVE	41	43	32	27	43
CROOKESMOOR	49	55	44	44	57
DARNALL	49	47	41	40	50
ECCLESALL			50	49	61
FIRTH PARK	39	42	36	35	40
HALLAM			48	48	63
HANDSWORTH	43	53	45	38	52
HEELEY	49	50	48	45	57
HILLSBOROUGH		52	44	47	58
MANOR		35	U	27	40
MOOR	49	50	44	45	54
NEEPSSEND			33	U	41
NETHER EDGE			43	43	56
NORTON			49	51	66
OWLERTON	46	48	43	40	57
PARK	45	52	42	39	51
ST. PETER'S		50	45	49	54
ST. PHILIP'S	46	43	U	35	38
SHARROW	45	45	45	42	55
TINSLEY	36	39	U	U	49
WALKLEY	46	51	46	43	60
WOODSEATS	50	52	48	51	62
SHEFFIELD	44	46	44	40	53

WARD	1949	1950	1951	1952
ATTERCLIFFE	43	31	25	33
BRIGHTSIDE	51	35	32	34
BROOMHILL	49	39	40	38
BURNGREAVE	45	35	32	39
CATHEDRAL				36
CROOKESMOOR	U	44	40	45
DARNALL	51	34	32	37
ECCLESALL	56	45	45	40
FIRTH PARK	48	34	34	38
HALLAM	57	47	46	44
HANDSWORTH	54	39	36	40
HEELEY	57	46	47	50
HILLSBOROUGH	46	46	44	47
MANOR	46	32	28	37
MOOR	55	42	45	42
NEEPSSEND	24	29	27	
NETHER EDGE	33	44	46	41
NETHER SHIRE				35
NORTON	60	47	49	43
OWLERTON	55	39	41	39
PARK	54	31	38	38
ST. PETER'S	54	48	42	
ST. PHILIP'S	49	40	31	
SHARROW	52	44	42	48
SOUTHEY GREEN				34
TINSLEY	52	43	35	38
WALKLEY	57	41	42	45
WOODSEATS	U	44	44	44
SHEFFIELD	52	40	39	39

(4.3) TOTAL ELECTORATES

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947
ATTERCLIFFE	9,918		11,590	11,632
BRIGHTSIDE	12,245	14,334	14,845	14,924
BROOMHILL		15,350	15,976	16,095
BURNGREAVE	10,573	11,543	12,068	12,025
CROOKESMOOR	9,718	12,617	13,010	13,016
DARNALL	11,303	14,260	14,610	14,601
ECCLESALL		18,753	19,031	18,785
FIRTH PARK	20,850	29,411	30,029	29,822
HALLAM		16,431	16,724	16,480
HANDSWORTH	15,128	22,520	23,294	23,575
HEELEY	10,783	13,524	14,015	13,909
HILLSBOROUGH	12,912	18,953	19,545	19,452
MANOR	14,020		19,999	20,342
MOOR	8,003	6,953	7,532	7,523
NEEPSSEND		27,732	28,808	29,247
NETHER EDGE		11,955	12,328	12,300
NORTON		11,221	11,701	11,724
OWLERTON	9,366	12,179	12,570	12,508
PARK	10,596	11,680	12,689	13,321
ST. PETER'S	4,692	4,924	5,462	5,540
ST. PHILIP'S	5,402		5,808	5,812
SHARROW	10,740	12,179	13,864	13,734
TINSLEY	8,643		11,101	11,080
WALKLEY	10,157	12,736	13,067	13,031
WOODSEATS	12,626	16,982	17,357	17,149
SHEFFIELD	207,675		325,553	347,815

WARD	1949	1950	1951	1952
ATTERCLIFFE	11,576	11,261	11,277	16,587
BRIGHTSIDE	14,814	14,595	14,607	12,719
BROOMHILL	15,888	15,189	15,043	17,040
BURNGREAVE	11,916	11,477	11,300	15,369
CATHEDRAL				15,386
CROOKESMOOR	12,853	12,458	12,329	13,780
DARNALL	14,474	14,338	14,368	18,772
ECCLESALL	18,481	18,634	18,635	16,360
FIRTH PARK	29,684	29,699	29,801	14,164
HALLAM	16,227	16,660	16,025	15,883
HANDSWORTH	24,054	24,416	24,957	16,572
HEELEY	13,718	13,392	13,335	12,945
HILLSBOROUGH	19,180	19,110	19,103	14,645
MANOR	20,255	19,809	21,268	16,339
MOOR	7,505	6,888	6,802	13,269
NEEPSSEND	29,192	28,541	28,397	
NETHER EDGE	12,218	11,877	11,677	13,704
NETHER SHIRE				14,609
NORTON	11,576	11,600	11,824	11,906
OWLERTON	12,363	12,095	12,026	13,213
PARK	13,343	12,830	12,698	11,850
ST. PETER'S	5,499	4,321	4,428	
ST. PHILIP'S	5,793	5,391	5,361	
SHARROW	13,584	13,152	12,978	12,855
SOUTHEY GREEN				18,217
TINSLEY	11,094	10,592	10,539	13,060
WALKLEY	12,976	12,641	12,629	13,667
WOODSEATS	16,914	16,717	16,690	14,623
SHEFFIELD	345,283	367,683	368,095	367,534

(4.4) LABOUR VOTES

NOTE: **BOLD** = Labour-held seats.

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
ATTERC LIFFE	2,187	UU	U	3,840	3,791	2,837	2,170	4,826
BRIGHT SIDE	3,413	3,939/ 3,790	3,447	4,731	5,388	3,793	3,358	4,081
BROOM HILL		1,694/ 1,638/ 1,469	1,730	2,352	1,983	1,299	1,300	1,680
BURNG REAVE	2,877	3,459	2,736	3,335/ 3,306	3,619	2,808	2,371	4,614
CATHED RAL								4,373
CROOK ESMOO R	2,517	3,480	3,322	3,809	C-L UNOPP OSED	2,912	2,566	4,177
DARNAL L	2,896	4,641	4,246	5,067	5,203	3,748	3,239	5,469
ECCLES ALL		2,326	1,881	1,645	1,599	1,130	1,027	1,191
FIRTH PARK	5,445	7,775/ 7,590	7,252		8,788	6,195	5,549	3,509
HALLAM		3,125/ 3,015	2,770	3,301	2,764	2,283	2,034	2,543
HANDS WORTH	4,202	7,382/ 7,364	5,696	7,498	7,726	5,905	5,419/ 5,331	4,906
HEELEY	2,148	3,850	3,517	4,034	4,060	3,310	3,106	4,147/ 4,146
HILLSB ROUG H	2,094	4,387	4,124	5,033	5,248	4,123	3,336	3,410
MANOR	3,820	UU	4,538	6,048	6,742	4,891	4,200	5,210
MOOR	1,918	1,973	1,975	2,064	2,214	1,686	1,688	3,920
NEEPSE ND		7,327	U	8,442	10,025	5,826	5,255	
NETHER EDGE		1,892	1,607	1,837	1,732	1,196	1,108	2,201
NETHER SHIRE								3,992
NORTON		1,876/ 1,870	1,520	1,549	1,318	871	775	1,105
OWLER TON	2,322	3,421	2,934	3,891	3,836	2,697	2,608	3,550

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
PARK	2,869	3,293	3,108	4,200	4,362	3,073	2,822	3,872/ 3,459
ST. PETER'S	618	1,122	1,176	1,248	1,148	899	822	
ST. PHILIP' S	1,366	U	1,307	1,643	1,642	1,400	1,087	
SHARR OW	1,800	3,487	3,138/ 3,041	3,496	3,309	2,787	2,365	3,546
SOUTHE Y GREEN								5,359
TINSLE Y	2,329	UU	U	3,913	4,222	3,536	2,694	4,322
WALKLE Y	2,378	3,909	3,424	4,117	4,099	3,213	2,987	4,410
WOODS EATS	1,607	3,479/ 3388	3,275	4,094	CONS- LIB UNOPP OSED	2,074	1,977	2,444
SHEFFI ELD	<u>48,806</u>	<u>106,43</u> <u>5</u>	<u>71,764</u>	<u>94,513</u>	<u>94,818</u>	<u>74,492</u>	<u>71,194</u>	<u>100,46</u> <u>2</u>

**(4.5) MUNICIPAL PROGRESSIVE/
CONSERVATIVE-LIBERAL VOTES**

NOTE: BOLD = Council seats held by Municipal Progressives/Conservative-Liberals.

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
ATTERC LIFFE	1,166	NOT CONTE TED	NOT CONTE TED	1,195	1,175	622	645	631
BRIGHT SIDE	1,185	NOT CONTE TED	NOT CONTE TED	1,949	1,775	985	1,128	NOT CONTE TED
BROOM HILL		4,475/ 4,362/ 4,234	4,497	5,983	5,889	4,596	4,715	4,194
BURNG REAVE	1,607	NOT CONTE TED	NOT CONTE TED	1,697/ 1,499	1,517	1,079	1,197	1,342
CATHED RAL								1,153
CROOK ESMOO R	2,838	2,136	2,460	3,044	U	2,422	2,330	1,908
DARNAL L	2,482	1,485/ 1,253	1,561	2,251	2,117	1,149	1,366	1,543
ECCLES ALL		7,154	7,478	9,981	8,983	7,171	7,410	5,392
FIRTH PARK	3,415	3,283/ 3,074	3,162		5,586	3,543	4,050	1,859
HALLAM		4,921/ 4,820	5,295	7,068	6,547	5,259	5,293	4,435
HANDS WORTH	3,921	2,857/ 2,780	2,861	4,833	5,137	3,747	3,648/ 3,632	1,666
HEELEY	3,304	2,651	2,782	3,918	3,795	2,862	3,149	2,363/ 2,289
HILLSB OROUGH	4,638	4,137	5,079	6,219	5,906	4,744	5,055	3,396
MANOR	1,141	NOT CONTE TED	NOT CONTE TED	1,498	1,961	1,146	1,440	479
MOOR	2,150	1,116	1,404	1,958	1,928	1,163	1,339	1,696
NEEPSE ND		NOT CONTE TED	NOT CONTE TED	3,521	3,590	2,082	2,548	
NETHER EDGE		3,353	3,687	5,096	4,816	4,029	4,229	3,461
NETHER SHIRE								827
NORTON		4,013/ 3,791/ 3,684	4,449	6,175	5,697	4,625	5,032	3,979

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
OWLERTON	2,242	1,914	1,976	3,214	2,950	1,975	2,371	1,554
PARK	2,724	1,696	1,889	2,612	2,819	1,713	1,988	698/ 631
ST. PETER'S	1,732	1,102	NOT CONTESTED	1,758	1,832	NOT CONTESTED	1,025	
ST. PHILIP'S	1,107	NOT CONTESTED	733	1,189	1,083	749	598	
SHARROW	3,033	2,660	2,877/ 2,713	4,110	3,780	3,010	3,133	2,547
SOUTHEY GREEN								891
TINSLEY	1,074	NOT CONTESTED	NOT CONTESTED	1,476	1,496	884	972	624
WALKLEY	2,810	2,043	2,186	3,174	3,219	2,028	2,309	1,747
WOODSEATS	5,040	4,827/ 4779	5,564	6,565	U	5,336	5,441	4,012
SHEFFIELD	<u>47,609</u>	<u>97,709</u>	<u>62,603</u>	<u>91,983</u>	<u>83,598</u>	<u>66,919</u>	<u>76,043</u>	<u>55,317</u>

(4.6) LABOUR % OF VOTES CAST

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1951
ATTERCLIFFE	65			76	76	82	77	88
BRIGHTSIDE	72	87	69	62	72	74	71	94
BROOMHILL		26	28	28	25	22	22	26
BURNING REAVE	63	90	85	64	68	69	66	77
CATHEDRAL								79
CROOKESMOOR	47	62	57	52		53	52	69
DARNALL	54	77	73	69	71	77	70	78
ECCLESALL		25	20	14	15	14	12	18

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
FIRTH PARK	61	71	70		61	61	55	65
HALLAM		39	34	32	30	30	28	36
HANDS WORTH	52	72	65	73	62	61	60	75
HEELEY	40	59	56	51	52	54	50	64
HILLSBROUGH	31	51	45	45	47	46	40	50
MANOR	77		85	73	73	77	70	87
MOOR	47	64	58	51	53	58	56	70
NEEPSEND		78		71	74	70	67	
NETHER EDGE		36	30	26	26	23	21	39
NETHER SHIRE								60
NORTON		23	25	20	19	16	13	22
OWLERTON	51	64	58	55	57	56	52	70
PARK	51	66	62	62	61	62	59	62
ST. PETER'S	26	50	44	42	39	48	45	
ST. PHILIP'S	55		64	58	58	65	65	
SHARROW	37	57	53	46	47	48	43	58
SOUTHEY GREEN								86
TINSLEY	68			73	74	78	73	87
WALKLEY	46	66	61	53	56	61	56	72
WOODSEATS	24	42	37	38		28	27	38
SHEFFIELD	50	51	55	51	53	52	48	64

(4.7) MAJORITIES

NOTE: Underlined figures in **BOLD** = Labour majorities. Ordinary figures = Municipal Progressive/Conservative-Liberal majorities.

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
ATTEC LIFFE	<u>1,021</u>			<u>2,645</u>	<u>2,616</u>	<u>2,215</u>	<u>1,525</u>	<u>4,195</u>
BRIGHT SIDE	<u>2,228</u>	<u>2,735</u>	<u>1,917</u>	<u>2,782</u>	<u>3,613</u>	<u>2,808</u>	<u>2,230</u>	<u>3,835</u>
BROOM HILL		2,781	2,767	3,631	3,906	3,297	3,415	2,514
BURNG REAVE	<u>1,270</u>	<u>2,745</u>	<u>2,265</u>	<u>1,638</u>	<u>2,102</u>	<u>1,729</u>	<u>1,174</u>	<u>3,272</u>
CATHED RAL								<u>3,220</u>
CROOK ESMOO R	321	<u>1,344</u>	<u>862</u>	<u>765</u>		<u>490</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>2,269</u>
DARNAL L	<u>414</u>	<u>3,156</u>	<u>2,685</u>	<u>2,816</u>	<u>3,086</u>	<u>2,599</u>	<u>1,873</u>	<u>3,926</u>
ECCLES ALL		7,154	5,597	8,336	7,384	6,041	6,383	4,201
FIRTH PARK	<u>2,030</u>	<u>4,492</u>	<u>4,090</u>	<u>1,424</u> (*)	<u>3,202</u>	<u>2,652</u>	<u>1,499</u>	<u>1,650</u>
HALLAM		1,796	2,525	3,767	3,783	2,976	3,259	1,892
HANDS WORTH	<u>281</u>	<u>4,525</u>	<u>2,835</u>	<u>2,665</u>	<u>2,589</u>	<u>2,158</u>	<u>1,771</u>	<u>3,240</u>
HEELEY	1,156	<u>1,199</u>	<u>785</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>265</u>	<u>448</u>	43	<u>1,784</u>
HILLSB ROUG H	2,544	<u>250</u>	955	1,186	658	621	1,719	<u>14</u>
MANOR	<u>2,679</u>		<u>3,733</u>	<u>4,550</u>	<u>4,781</u>	<u>3,745</u>	<u>2,760</u>	<u>4,731</u>
MOOR	232	<u>857</u>	<u>571</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>286</u>	<u>523</u>	<u>349</u>	<u>2,124</u>
NEEPSE ND		<u>5,228</u>		<u>4,921</u>	<u>6,435</u>	<u>3,744</u>	<u>2,707</u>	
NETHER EDGE		1,461	2,080	3,259	3,064	2,833	3,121	1,260
NETHER SHIRE								<u>3,165</u>
NORTO N		2,137	3,929	4,626	4,379	3,754	4,257	2,874

WARD	1938	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
OWLER TON	<u>80</u>	<u>1,507</u>	<u>958</u>	<u>677</u>	<u>886</u>	<u>722</u>	<u>237</u>	<u>1,554</u>
PARK	<u>145</u>	<u>1,597</u>	<u>1,219</u>	<u>1,588</u>	<u>1,544</u>	<u>1,360</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>3,174</u>
ST. PETER'S	1,114	<u>20</u>	<i>(317)</i>	510	684	<u>125</u>	203	
ST. PHILIP'S	<u>259</u>		<u>574</u>	<u>454</u>	<u>559</u>	<u>651</u>	<u>489</u>	
SHARROW	1,233	<u>827</u>	<u>261</u>	614	471	223	768	<u>999</u>
SOUTHEY GREEN								<u>4,468</u>
TINSLEY	<u>1,255</u>			<u>2,437</u>	<u>2,726</u>	<u>2,652</u>	<u>1,722</u>	<u>3,698</u>
WALKLEY	432	<u>1,866</u>	<u>1,236</u>	<u>943</u>	<u>880</u>	<u>1,185</u>	<u>678</u>	<u>2,663</u>
WOODSEATS	3,433	1,348	2,289	2,471		3,262	3,464	1,568

NOTE: (1) **BOLD** italic figure in brackets for St. Peter's Ward in 1946 column = Independent Conservative majority. (2) (*) for Firth Park Ward in 1947 column = Labour victory in by-election on 26 February 1948. (3) Where there is more than one vacancy contested in a Ward the majority of the opposing candidates with the highest votes is shown.

(4.8) FEMALE CANDIDATES

NOTE: **BOLD** figures in brackets = Number of successful candidates.

	LABOUR	M. PROG./CONS-LIB	COMMUNIST	LIBERAL	TOTAL
1938	1	0	0	0	1
1945	3 (1)	0	0	0	3 (1)
1946	4 (1)	1 (1)	0	0	5 (2)
1947	2 (1)	4 (1)	0	0	6 (2)
1949	5 (4)	3	0	0	8 (4)
1950	1	6 (1)	1	0	8 (1)
1951	2 (1)	2 (1)	0	0	4 (2)
1952	5 (3)	2	1	1	9 (3)

(4.9) MINOR PARTIES

(4.9.1) BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS IN 1938

WARD	VOTES
BRIGHTSIDE	141
BURNGREAVE	67
TOTAL	208

(4.9.2) COMMUNIST PARTY

NOTE: The Communists did not contest any seats in Sheffield in 1938.

WARD	1945	1946	1947	1949	1950	1951	1952
BRIGHTSIDE	1,204	1,530	903	335	324	211	246
BROOMHILL	813						
BURNGREAVE	714	471	585	182	176		
CROOKES MOOR					152		
FIRTH PARK					358	410	
MANOR		805	775	506	234	388	307
MOOR					54		
NEEPSEND					395		
NETHER SHIRE							329
OWLERTON					131		
PARK					180		
ST. PHILIP'S				86			
TINSLEY					139		
SHEFFIELD	2,731	2,806	2,263	1,109	2,193	1,009	882
% OF TOTAL VOTES CAST	1.3	2.1	1.2	0.6	1.5	0.7	0.5

(4.10) MISCELLANEOUS CANDIDATES

YEAR	WARD	PARTY	VOTES	% OF VOTES TOTAL CAST IN WARD
1945	NEEPSSEND	EX-SERVICEMEN	2,099	22
1946	HANDSWORTH	INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST	238	2.7
1946	OWLERTON	MUNICIPAL REFORM	118	2.3
1946	ST. PETER'S	INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE	1,493	55.9 (*)
1947	WALKLEY	INDEPENDENT LIBERAL	479	6.2
1950	ST. PETER'S	INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE	874	46.7
1952	BROOMHILL	LIBERAL	631	9.7

APPENDIX 5

1951 SHEFFIELD MUNICIPAL ELECTION CANDIDATES

SOURCE: SHEFFIELD TELEGRAPH 24/04/1951, p3.

(*) = RETIRING MEMBER

BOLD = CANDIDATE ELECTED

(5.1) LABOUR PARTY

	OCCUPATION	WARD
FRANCIS WILFRED ANGELL	RAILWAY TIMEKEEPER	HANDSWORTH
ALBERT BALLARD (*)	SECRETARY	MANOR
CHARLES THOMAS BUXTON (*)	STOCK CHECKER	HEELEY
GEORGE COOPER	CENTRELESS GRINDER	WOODSEATS
LEONARD COPE	TRAVELLER	HANDSWORTH
ARNOLD CROSBY (*)	ATTENDANT	NEEPSSEND
PERCY DINSLEY (*)	MEAT AGENT	OWLERTON
NORMAN ELDRED	CRANE DRIVER	BROOMHILL
MRS FRANCIS MARY GATHERCOLE	HOUSEWIFE	ECCLESALL
GEORGE STEPHEN GOODENOUGH (*)	TOOL MAKER & DIE SINKER	ATTERCLIFFE
REV. ALFRED GREEN	CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER	DARNALL
ALFRED ERNEST HOBSON (*)	SECRETARY	BRIGHTSIDE
HARRY CHARLES LEGGITT	T. U. ORGANISER	NETHER EDGE
JOHN WILLIAM MILLS	ELECTRIC MOTOR MAINTENANCE ENGINEER	SHARROW
KENNETH IRWIN MITCHELL (*)	SOLICITOR	WALKLEY
CHARLES JAMES MOSELEY (*)	ENGINEER	FIRTH PARK
REGINALD EDWARD MUNN	WAGES CLERK	NORTON
SYDNEY THOMAS OAKES	REPRESENTATIVE	HILLSBOROUGH
FREDERICK THOMAS LATHAM PHILLIPS	RETIRED STEELWORKS FOREMAN	ST. PETER'S
ALBERT EDWARD RICHARDSON	BUTCHER	MOOR
WILFRED SECKER (*)	CABINET CASE FITTER	ST. PHILIP'S
MAJOR JOHN SEWELL	PHARMACIST	HALLAM
JAMES WILFRED STERLAND (*)	T. U. ORGANISER	PARK
JOHN THORPE (*)	T. U. SECRETARY	BURNGREAVE
MISS MARIAN VEITCH (*)	INSURANCE OFFICIAL	TINSLEY
SAMUEL WILSON WADE (*)	ENGINEER	CROOKESMOOR

(5.2) CONSERVATIVE-LIBERALS

	OCCUPATION	WARD
STANLEY CYRIL BELL	STEEL WORKS CLERK	DARNALL
HORACE BESTALL	MANAGER	MOOR
ERIC ERNEST BURDALL	REPRESENTATIVE	ATTERCLIFFE
FRANK DUDLEY CLARKE	BUYING MANAGER	NEEPSSEND
ROBERT COLVER (*)	RETIRED STEEL MANUFACTURER	BROOMHILL
REGINALD GILL	IRONMONGER'S MANAGER	TINSLEY
MRS LILY ETTA GRAHAM (*)	PRIVATE SECRETARY	WOODSEATS
OLIVER SPENCER HOLMES (*)	CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT	ECCLESALL
HARRY HOWARD	ENGINEER	ST. PHILIP'S
HERBERT LAURENCE LAMBERT	CONSULTING AUTOMOBILE ENGINEER & ASSESSOR	BURNGREAVE
FREDERIC LLOYD (*)	ENGINEER	SHARROW
MRS EVELYN LUCAS	HOUSEWIFE	PARK
HARRY MERCER	NEWSPAPER REPRESENTATIVE	MANOR
ROBERT NEILL (*)	CONSULTING GAS & ELECTRICAL ENGINEER	NETHER EDGE
STANLEY BERTRAM RIPPON	SALES MANAGER	OWLERTON
ARTHUR SIDDALL (*)	RETIRED MANAGER	HILLSBOROUGH
THOMAS DRURY SMITH	CORN MERCHANT	HANDSWORTH
REGINALD EDWARD STANILAND	MANAGER	HEELEY
JOHN CLIFFORD STEVENSON	SECRETARY-MANAGER	FIRTH PARK
THOMAS ARTHUR STOOBS	DIRECTOR OF LTD COMPANY	WALKLEY
ERNEST TINDALL (*)	ASSISTANT PUBLICITY MANAGER	NORTON
RUBEN VINER	CUTLERY MANUFACTURER	BRIGHTSIDE
BENJAMIN THOMAS WEST	PAINTING & DECORATING CONTRACTOR	CROOKESMOOR
ALFRED VERNON WOLSTENHOLME (*)	SALES REPRESENTATIVE	HALLAM
JAMES MORDANT WRAGG (*)	PROPRIETOR METAL REFINER	ST. PETER'S
KENNETH YOUNG	BANK CLERK	HANDSWORTH

(5.3) COMMUNIST PARTY

	OCCUPATION	WARD
STANLEY ROY DAVEY	ENGINEER	BRIGHTSIDE
ARTHUR FULLARD	BRICKLAYER	MANOR
HOWARD HILL	ORGANISER	FIRTH PARK

**APPENDIX 6
COUNCIL HOUSE CONSTRUCTION
IN SHEFFIELD, 1939-1952**

SOURCE: SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL MINUTE BOOKS.

(6.1) WARTIME HOUSE-BUILDING

NOTE: Original intended number of houses in scheme for completion = 28,015

DATE	TOTAL HOUSES COMPLETED	HOUSES COMPLETED SINCE 24/08/39	NO. OF HOUSES BUILT EACH PERIOD	TOTAL NO. OF WORKMEN
24/08/39	26,725	0		1,161
28/09/39	26,851	126	126	453
26/10/39	26,961	236	110	534
23/11/39	27,035	310	74	441
28/12/39	27,181	456	146	452
25/01/40	27,205	480	24	272
22/02/40	27,205	480	0	50
28/03/40	27,223	498	18	324
24/04/40	27,265	540	42	355
22/05/40	27,337	612	72	312
26/06/40	27,472	747	135	278
24/07/40	27,562	837	90	187
28/08/40	27,601	876	39	151
25/09/40	27,629	904	28	120
23/10/40	27,687	962	58	136
27/11/40	27,733	1,008	46	109
18/12/40	27,739	1,014	6	83
22/01/41	27,745	1,020	4	27
26/02/41	27,749	1,024	4	18
26/03/41	27,769	1,044	20	12
23/04/41	27,773	1,048	4	4
28/05/41	27,791	1,066	18	38
25/06/41	27,801	1,076	10	32
23/07/41	27,801	1,076	0	33
27/08/41	27,813	1,088	12	30
24/09/41	27,827	1,102	14	43

DATE	TOTAL HOUSES COMPLETED	HOUSES COMPLETED SINCE 24/08/39	NO. OF HOUSES BUILT EACH PERIOD	TOTAL NO. OF WORKMEN
22/10/41	27,833	1,108	6	53
26/11/41	27,843	1,118	10	39
24/12/41	27,851	1,126	8	35
28/01/42	27,865	1,140	14	37
25/02/42	27,865	1,140	0	34
18/03/42	27,865	1,140	0	37
22/04/42	27,871	1,146	6	23
27/05/42	27,877	1,152	6	33
24/06/42	27,877	1,152	0	31
29/07/42	27,877	1,152	0	29
26/08/42	27,877	1,152	0	23
23/09/42	27,877	1,152	0	13
28/10/42	27,877	1,152	0	13
26/11/42	27,885	1,160	8	15

(6.2) POST-WAR HOUSE-BUILDING

(6.2.1) TEMPORARY HOUSING COMPLETIONS

DATE	TOTAL HOUSES BUILT	HOUSES BUILT IN PERIOD
08/11/45	58	
30/11/45	82	24
12/12/45	152	70
25/01/46	203	51
26/02/46	270	67
28/03/46	280	10
02/04/46	356	76
01/05/46	447	91
14/06/46	558	111
05/07/46	599	41
02/08/46	599	0
04/09/46	715	116

DATE	TOTAL HOUSES BUILT	HOUSES BUILT IN PERIOD
04/10/46	866	151
08/11/46	1,055	189
06/12/46	1,161	106
03/01/47	1,228	67
07/02/47	1,256	28
06/03/47	1,256	0
16/04/47	1,256	0
14/05/47	1,319	63
12/06/47	1,348	29
12/07/47	1,348	0
02/08/47	1,348	0
12/09/47	1,348	0
10/10/47	1,357	9
13/11/47	1,363	6
11/12/47	1,386	23
15/01/48	1,421	35
12/02/48	1,493	72
11/03/48	1,571	78
15/04/48	1,685	114
07/05/48	1,714	29
10/06/48	1,844	130
15/07/48	1,917	73
??/08/48	1,955	38
10/09/48	2,014	59
14/10/48	2,056	42
17/11/48	2,066	10

(6.2.2) WAR-DAMAGED HOUSES RE-BUILT

DATE	HOUSES COMPLETED	HOUSES COMPLETED IN PERIOD	HOUSES IN HAND	WORKMEN EMPLOYED
10/10/45	0	0	56	47
24/11/45	0	0	71	105
13/12/45	0	0	73	112
25/01/46	0	0	96	114
26/02/46	8	8	88	167
08/03/46	12	4	84	149
05/04/46	24	12	72	142
04/05/46	40	16	56	120
19/06/46	57	17	41	101
11/07/46	60	3	38	71
08/08/46	60	0	38	74
07/09/46	66	6	32	77
11/10/46	72	6	26	66
12/11/46	78	6	20	52
06/12/46	80	2	18	36
03/01/47	80	0	18	27
07/02/47	82	2	16	7
07/03/47	82	0	16	0
09/04/47	82	0	16	4
14/05/47	90	8	8	11
12/06/47	94	4	4	10
10/07/47	98	4	0	0

(6.2.3) PERMANENT HOUSING COMPLETIONS

DATE	HOUSES COMPLETED	HOUSES COMPLETED IN PERIOD	HOUSES IN HAND	WORKMEN EMPLOYED
24/11/45	0	0	6	14
13/12/45	0	0	18	25
25/01/46	0	0	82	67
26/02/46	0	0	186	93
08/03/46	0	0	208	147
05/04/46	0	0	294	252
04/05/46	0	0	332	416
19/06/46	0	0	390	491
11/07/46	0	0	428	548
08/08/46	8	8	466	629
07/09/46	20	12	560	678
11/10/46	56	36	654	898
12/11/46	98	42	902	1,089
06/12/46	152	54	912	1,091
03/01/47	192	40	970	1,245
07/02/47	206	14	1,012	1,080
07/03/47	206	0	1,012	30
09/04/47	212	6	1,070	1,256
14/05/47	276	64	1,132	1,544
12/06/47	342	66	1,304	1,685
10/07/47	410	68	1,492	1,722
01/08/47	486	76	1,466	1,278
12/09/47	538	52	1,470	1,724
10/10/47	628	90	1,506	1,739
15/11/47	746	118	1,432	1,705
12/12/47	838	92	1,342	1,687
15/01/48	964	126	1,216	1,582
12/02/48	1,057	93	1,161	1,632
11/03/48	1,167	110	1,051	1,517
15/04/48	1,262	95	1,056	1,471

DATE	HOUSES COMPLETED	HOUSES COMPLETED IN PERIOD	HOUSES IN HAND	WORKMEN EMPLOYED
06/05/48	1,343	81	1,085	1,396
10/06/48	1,548	205	934	1,371
15/07/48	1,746	198	742	1,281
16/08/48	1,844	98	698	1,175
10/09/48	1,956	112	750	1,087
16/10/48	2,058	102	718	976
17/11/48	2,154	96	648	944
15/12/48	2,247	93	659	911
19/01/49	2,322	75	586	858
16/02/49	2,372	50	584	878
16/03/49	2,424	52	716	978
20/04/49	2,484	60	760	863
18/05/49	2,574	90	678	872
15/06/49	2,628	54	714	877
20/07/49	2,668	40	755	912
17/08/49	2,696	28	815	963
21/09/49	2,772	76	1,038	1,128
19/10/49	2,842	70	1,076	1,320
15/11/49	2,914	72	1,026	1,350
21/12/49	2,982	68	1,069	1,458
18/01/50	3,042	60	1,082	1,480
15/02/50	3,116	74	1,117	1,446
15/03/50	3,222	106	1,117	1,623
19/04/50	3,342	120	1,182	1,678
17/05/50	3,488	146	1,288	1,809
21/06/50	3,641	153	1,281	1,723
15/07/50	3,753	112	1,251	1,583
16/08/50	3,847	94	1,323	1,569
20/09/50	3,959	112	1,383	1,609
18/10/50	4,069	110	1,417	1,688

DATE	HOUSES COMPLETED	HOUSES COMPLETED IN PERIOD	HOUSES IN HAND	WORKMEN EMPLOYED
15/11/50	4,219	150	1,509	1,691
15/12/50	4,373	154	1,479	1,570
12/01/51	4,437	64	1,521	1,518
16/02/51	4,614	177	1,472	1,603
16/03/51	4,735	121	1,499	1,581
13/04/51	4,835	100	1,473	1,600
16/05/51	4,948	113	1,432	1,518
15/06/51	5,150	202	1,248	1,454
13/07/51	5,270	120	1,412	1,450
10/08/51	5,368	98	1,515	1,171
14/09/51	5,522	154	1,529	1,412
12/10/51	5,668	146	1,446	1,421
16/11/51	5,886	218	1,371	1,405
14/12/51	6,029	143	1,534	1,430
11/01/52	6,114	85	1,501	1,400
20/02/52	6,247	133	1,429	1,529
19/03/52	6,362	115	1,434	1,579
04/04/52	6,488	126	1,334	1,563

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