THE STATE AND HOUSING PROTEST

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S Y N O P S I S

This study attempts to show that it is myopic to analyse housing
protest by merely considering activity only at the local level. The
causes of housing protest, we shall contend, are not usually local,
and involve wider social and economic forces in society. An analysis
which ignores these is inadequate.

Chapter One looks at five ideal-typical models of the agency towards
which housing protest has become increasingly directed, the state.
Each perspective implies a different view of the state, it's position
in society and it's potential for reacting to institutionalised or
non-institutionalised protest.

Chapter Two considers theories of the local state. As the on-the-
spot provider of housing, the local state is the recipient of much
housing protest, and we examine the efficacy of the five perspectives
for analysing the local state's position. We select three perspect-
ives which have potential for explaining different aspects of protest,
namely - the internal workings of the local state, the protest groups
themselves, and central/local government relations.

Chapter Three examines state involvement in housing, and relates this
to the explanations posited by the five perspectives as a test of their
efficacy in explaining such involvement. We also examine state housing
policy as a basis for protest, and find that such a basis exists in at
least three areas of policy.

In Chapter Four we consider the protest groups themselves, how and
why they form, and barriers to that formation: we also categorise
protest activity according to its source, the level of activity, and
the types of activity.

Chapter Five describes the Gorbals Anti-Dampness Campaign, as an
example of housing protest, as well as drawing out some points from
an examination of the squatting movement. In Chapter Five and Chapter
Six we attempt to relate the theories of the state, and their impl-
ications for analysing protest activity to these campaigns, and draw
some conclusions from this.

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' Chapter One - The State

In this chapter we shall examine the different perspectives
of the role of the state in society and the reasons put forward for its
involvement and provision of collective consumption - housing, infra-
structure provision, and so on. Housing protest, as well as protest
over other issues has increasingly been directed against the state, at
the local as well as the national level. The vast expansion in state
provision of services has effectively politicised many issues concerning
the extent and distribution of such services. (Habermas, 1974) In
housing provision therefore the activity of tenants has been increas-
ingly targeted towards public rather than private landlords. To
understand the nature of housing protest therefore, we must be aware
of the situation of the institution towards which it is directed, for
as we shall see this situation conditions to a great extent, the ability
or willingness of those who represent the state to respond to protest.
We shall consider therefore the role of the central state in capitalist
society and its involvement in the housing field. Most housing protest
is directed towards the local state and the provision of that instit-
ution must be assessed, we shall do this in the following Chapter;
additionaly the relationship between the central and local states also
must be looked at since the actions of each may be contingent on the
nature of this relationship.

During the early stages of capitalist development, the intervention of
the state in the economy was minimal, and mainly geared towards the
provision of basic infrastructure and guaranteed freedom of contract,
trade, and property rights. In 1900 the ratio of public expenditure to
gross domestic product was 14.4%, in 1950 it was 39% and by 1976 it had
risen to 60%. In 1901 5.8% of the working population were employed
directly by the state but by 1975 some 25.8% were so employed. (Dearlove
1979 p.223) The activities of the state have not only increased in
volume, but in their variety: housing, social security, social services,
industrial development, health and welfare form only a small part of an
ever expanding list. In the field of housing provision the expansion
has been massive: even before the First World War the state was involved
in the private housing market by setting minimum standards of building

and service provision. Slum clearance but very little rebuilding,
had been undertaken in many of the large cities. (Gouldie, 1974) We
must consider the implications of this expansion, however, in general
terms. Housing is merely one aspect of the state's activities, and
cannot be seen in isolation from the more general theory of the state.
It is to that which we now turn.

There are various explanations for the expansion of the role of the
state and its position in society. These can be usefully grouped under
five main headings:-

1. REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY
2. PLURALIST
3. MANAGERIALIST/CORPORATIST
4. FUNCTIONALIST/STRUCTURALIST (MARXIST)
5. CLASS CONFLICT/DERIVATIONIST (MARXIST)

Each of these implies a certain view of society and the state, posits
a theory of the rise of the state, and suggests the types of pressure
to which the state may be susceptible. Similarly, these theories
implicitly or explicity suggest methods of research, and areas of inter-
est on which research should be focused. Also, each perspective involves
a view of society which can be classified on an axis of consensus -
conflict. We shall consider each of these theories in turn.

Representative perspectives share in common the view that the state is
neutral and is independent of any class interests. Indeed, the view of
society involved is one of societal consensus and the state of a set of
political institutions outside of society, and open to influence by
any group. It is at the same time omnipotent since it legitimised the
use of force, and subservient, in that it responds to pressure. The
emergence of the British and other welfare states is viewed as the
result of a benevolent state gradually eliminating social evils. Welfare
provision and economic management are seen as having effectively contr-
olled the iniquities thrown up by the play of market forces, in order to
change the system in the interests of all citizens.

Closely related to the representationalist perspective is the pluralist.
In this formulation the state is again seen as neutral and responsive to
pressure, but the pressure comes from groups, rather than individuals.

There are no enduring power elites, and power is widely dispersed
and distributed in communities at both the national and the local
levels. Although elites may exist, they are numerous and no elite
dominates in any given society. The state is seen as a pawn up for
grabs by contenders for political power and again is omnipotent and
at the same time subservient. In a study of the local political system
in New Haven, Dahl (1961), for example, argues that economic class
divisions do not constitute the major lines of cleavage in political
conflicts. Conflicts are non cumulative and so those in opposite camps
on one issue need not necessarily be adversaries over the next. The
picture is one of changing alliances between different groups formed
around different political bases according to the issue at stake at the
time. "Hence it is not only inefficient but unneccesary for entire
classes to mobilise themselves when the preferences of class members are
pressed and often satisfied in piecemeal fashion." (Polsby 1963 p118).
The vehicle for satisfying these preferences is the state: the outcomes
of political conflicts reflects "the relative intensity of preference
among the members of a group" (Dahl 1956 p135). Thus pluralists accept
that some groups are better able to express their preferences, and get
them accepted than others but again, not in a consistent way.

The state therefore is not seen as the instrument of any one group or
class. This neutrality is guaranteed by the plurality of groups and the
diffused nature of power, and also by the electoral process. This
ensures political accountability and ensures that politicians respect
public opinion and are responsive to needs. Thus elections, plus con-
stant competition for leadership ensures popular control over the state.

Both the representative democracy and the pluralist perspectives however
take a consensus view of society. In this view, society is seen as a
system of competing individuals, but between whom there are no fundamen-
tal differences of interest. Class rivalries are considered to have
become subsumed beneath an underlying consensus and agreement on basic
issues.

> "With such a consensus, the disputes over policy alternatives
> are nearly always disputes over a set of alternatives that have
> already been winnoweddown to those within the broad area of
> basic agreement". (Dahl 1956 p132 - 133)

Similarly, although political conflict exists, the ground rules are
accepted by the participants. Dahrendorf (1959) calls this the
institutionalisation of class conflict. The basic ground rules of pol-
itics have become accepted by all in society, and various institutions
have developed to manage conflicts. Dahrendorf's theories are particu-
larly interesting in the context of this study, since they typify the
pluralists approach, and emphasise the management and control of con-
flict by means of institutions, and the acceptance of ground rules.

Dahrendorf sees conflict as being endemic in society, but around certain
agreed norms, within the rules of the game on which participants agree.
Like the traditional pluralists, Dahrendorf emphasises the seperateness
of different spheres of activity, and therefore the improbability of one
group holding power consistently in a number of spheres. He particularly
stresses seperateness of the economic and political spheres and thus
rejects a theory of classes based on economic criteria. All pluralists
tend to stress the acceptance by competing parties of the ground rules
for conflict as indeed do those who propose theories of representative
democracy. Mann(1970) identified the basic tenets of such consensus the-
ories, although different theorists stress different components. 'Core
values' are said to be accepted by members - values such as 'equality'
or 'achievement': social norms, especially a committment to the rules
of democracy are also stressed, as are beliefs in the harmony of society,
and the benevolence of those who lead.

Thus whilst pluralism appears to propose a theory of conflict, this conflict
is narrowly defined, and is limited to conventional politics and the stu-
udy of actual observable conflicts which result in decision taking. The
state in pluralist approaches then, is simply a set of institutions in
which the supply of decisions comes to balance the level of effective
demand. The outputs of governments are therefore merely the results of
the inputs of pressures, and it matters little which persons hold office.
The mechanism through which decisions are made is as anonymous as the
market in the economic model, and the causes of state action lie outside
the state itself. " As a result, no government can fail in the not very
long run to respond to the wishes and demands of competing interests".
(Lukes, 1974). In the concluding section of this chapter we shall criticise

pluralist assumptions and views of the state, as well as consider the
implications for research, which as we shall see are rather narrow.
Meanwhile we will consider the third perspective, the managerialist/
corporatist which takes a different view of society and the state.

While the pluralists see policy outcomes as resulting from external
pressures on the state, corporatist/managerialist perspectives contend
that the state itself is capable of producing change. This perspective
can be traced back to the work of Max Weber, who proposed that there is
no necessary relation between economic and political domination in
modern societies. Weber believed that parties can develop around a wide
variety of social bases, of which class membership is only one, albeit
the most important one. As we have seen in the work of pluralists, for
example Dahrendorf, this separation of economics and politics has per-
haps become over emphasised, to an extent Weber himself never intended.
(Giddens, 1974). A second main tenet of Weber's work has also been ex-
tracted and expanded on to form a theory of the state: Weber believed
that the mode of domination in modern societies is bureaucratic, and
focused on the state. The bureaucracy is considered to be independent
and neutral with respect to class interests and therefore that the state
is not necessarily class biased. Also, the increasing rationalisation
of administration reduces the possibility of effective political control
of the bureaucracy such that the technical experts are able to dominate
with regard to policy formation and implementation. (Weber 1947).

At the level of the national state, the influence of Weber is most obvious
in the work of the corporatists. (See Pahl and Winkler 1974, Winkler,
1976). At the level of the local state, the work of the managerialists
is most obvious, (Pahl 1970) and we shall consider this in the next sec-
tion. In the corporatist view, modern societies are increasingly typified
by a situation in which capital, although privately owned, is controlled
and directed towards certain goals by the state. These goals include
the need for order in the economic sphere, the need for unity in achiev-
ing economic success, and the strong committment to nationalism in
achieving these, as foreign competition increases. (Winkler, 1976).
The state, then has moved from being facilitative of production, to being
supportive of the private sector, to finally directing and controlling
business in terms of setting objectives, controlling resources and so on.

While it is true that the state has become more involved in directing production, and long term economic planning, it would seem to be premature in claiming that the state controlled the private sector, (See Warren 1972) indeed the poor success of such planning indicates that this is not so. However, corporatists see the state as having independent purposes, based on a strong bureaucracy.

The state is therefore autonomous, and dominated by a bureaucracy, the aims of which are economic efficiency, rather than equality or social justice. Thus, in research terms, the proper area of study is the internal workings of the bureaucracy and more specifically the ideologies of the managers involved in decision taking. The democratic institutions are seen to be only a means of legitimating decisions that would have been taken anyway, for technical, rather than political reasons. The corporatists tend to have no specific theory to deal with the local state, but in the form of urban managerialsism, tend to focus research on the personnel of local government. The central state is seen as dealing mainly with production as we have seen, whilst the local state is seen as dealing with consumption issues, generally those which are dealt with by bureaucratic allocation. We shall deal more fully with the urban managerialist perspective in the next section and now must consider a fourth view of the national state, the structuralist.

This perspective is basically a Marxist one, and generally involves a functionalist view of the state. Usually such a perspective also expresses alliegance to a class conflict view of society, in which the state is forced to be responsive to the demands of the subordinate class, such as in the work of Poulantzas (1969), Castells (1977, 1978) and Cockburn (1977). However, these authors and others who share the structuralist perspective tend to emphasise the institutional structure of society, and tend to neglect class action, especially the possibility of effective class action;,

> "this institutional structure is seen to be a seamless web of
> institutions which are unambiguously supportive of capitalism.
> Each institution is 'explained' by being related to the total
> society. Contradictions whether between or within instititions,
> are ignored. More importantly, the development of such institutions

(parliamentary democracy, the welfare state etc.) as a result of
class struggle is ignored in this functionalist analysis. We
have a peculiar Marxism which allows class struggles only in
permitted areas, for example work, grass roots politics etc..."
(Young, 1979).

Whilst this quotation may overstate the position of most structuralists,
for analytical reasons concerned with their respective views of the state,
and the local state, it would be prudent to separate the structuralist
from the class conflict perspective, as we shall call it.

Nevertheless, the structuralist view is a Marxist one, and is based on
a class analysis of society. The state is seen as an instrument, a
thing to be possessed by classes, specific to the mode of production,
is an instrument of class domination, <u>and is chiefly concerned with re-
pression.</u> Poulantzas view of the relative autonomy of the state is
relevant here. (Poulantzas 1969). The state is a representation of the
balance of class forces in any particular society at any given time.
Since, in Poulantzas view monopoly capital is dominant at the present
time it follows that in the long term the state necessarily represents
the interests of monopoly capital, as a fraction of the capitalist class.
Nevertheless, the working class is not powerless and the state generates
policies to favour working class interests, even against the short term
interests of the dominant class. Also, it serves to unify the divergent
interests between fractions of capital, again to protect the long term
aim of accumulation. On the other hand, it serves to fragment the unity
of the working class by arranging concessions where necessary to the dom-
inated classes, to defuse situations of mounting class conflicts. Thus
the state maintains a relative autonomy from all classes, that serves
the interests of the dominant fraction of capital. Therefore the state
could never intervene to fundamentally alter the system of capitalist
property relations, and every reform introduced, no matter how far reaching
must by definition be an attempt to fragment the working class.

It is difficult to see how such a theory of the state avoids an implicit
economic determinism. Poulantzas follows Althusser in seperating three
levels of activity in society, the economic, the political and the ideo-
logical, each of which he claims are relatively autonomous from the others,
but/

that in the last instance the economic is the determinant. As Walton
and Gamble (1972) point out "there is no other way the principle of
determination by the economy in the last instance, could be followed
except by assuming that the economy is also determinant in the first
instance". Thus, it would appear that there is no necessary corres-
pondence between economics and politics, and therefore that the state
may not function in the interests of any one class: it therefore seems
that the state is external to classes, and independent of them.
However, if one accepts the concept of relative autonomy, which struct-
uralists do, then the state becomes a force in possession of the dom-
inant class, and in the end they revert to a functionalist analysis.

The work of Castells (1977, 1978) illustrates the rather ambiguous view
of the state which most structuralists exhibit. Castells in some works
adheres to Poulantzas' concept of relative autonomy of the state, and
sees the state as a mechanism for organising the interests of dominant
classes. In other work however, he displays a rather more functionalist
view of the state, which comes to be seen as creating the conditions
necessary for capital accumulation. Castells points to the increasing
tendency for the state to intervene in the provision of collective cons-
umption in capitalist societies. By collective consumption he means
the provisions of social goods, which are collectively provided such
as health and welfare, housing, the provision of infrastructure and so
on. Thus, Castells sees an inconsistency between the increasingly
socialised nature of consumption, and the domination of provisi on of goods
and services, in general, by private capital. This increase in col-
lective consumption is viewed by Castells to have been the result of
long term structural tendencies in capitalism, namely the concentration
and centralisati on of capital, its battle against the falling rate of
profit, the growing power of the working class, and the intervention of
the state into the economy.

Very often, and we shall see that this is true with regard to housing,
the provision of collective consumption is not profitable, although
it may be necessary for the reproduction of labour power, and thus for
production. Castells notes that the goods involved in collective
consumption are not special in some way, rather goods become collectively

produced and allocated by the state because they are unprofitable
for private capital. Some goods such as housing may fluctuate from
one category to another, or may be supplied by the state and private
capital simultaneously. Thus, if goods are not profitable,

> "it is at this point that the intervention of the state becomes
> necessary in order to take charge of the services which are
> less profitable (from the point of view of capital) but necessary
> for the functioning of economic activity and/or the appeasement
> of social conflicts." (Castells, 1972 p18)

This intervention is seen to be :-

> "functional and necessary to the monopolies, even though it is
> often done in opposition to some capitalist interests. In effect
> is assures the necessary reproduction of the labour power at a
> minimum level, it lessens the cost of direct salaries.........
> while at the same time easing demands" (Castells, 1972 p18)

So we can see that the intervention of the state for Castells is largely
a matter of necessity. The reproduction of labour power is an essential
function, yet private capital by itself is unable to accomplish it,
so the state steps in of necessity. Allen (1979) lists the categories
of state expenditure in the following way. First, social investments:
this could be otherwise referred to as capital investment and includes
provision of roads, sewers and so on. These have the effect of raising
the rate of profit by increasing the productivity of a given amount of
labour - consider a new road for example. Second, social consumption:
this includes expenditure on education, health, housing, social benefits
and the effect is to lower in theory the costs of reproduction of lab-
our power to capital, by allowing lower direct wages. Third, social
expenses: which includes expenditure on the police, social services and
welfare support services which are not directly productive, but which
serve to maintain the legitimacy of existing class relations. Thus,
social investments are concerned mainly with production issues, social
consumption concerns collective consumption in Castells' terms; and
social expenses concern the maintenance of class relations either by
coercion, or more commonly, by supporting legitimating agencies - social
work, education and so on.

As we shall see later, structuralists tend to distinguish between the

local and central state in terms of the different functions each
fulfills for capital. The central state is relatively autonomous
from all classes yet acts in the interests of monopoly capital. State
intervention can never fundamentally alter class relations, and is
limited to reformism, to buy off the dominated classes. Castells however,
does contend that the intervention of the state raises new contrad-
ictions , around which conflicts will emerge, primarily over issues of
collective consumption. His theory of urban social movements has much
to commend it as a basis for studying conflict and protest at the local
level, even though its view of the state as repressive and non responsive
is perhaps not a fruitful one. We shall consider this later, in the
context of the local state, but for the moment the last perspective, the
class conflict one, deserves consideration. This view has been put for-
ward by Duncan & Goodwin (1980), Foster (1974), Dearlove (1979),
Corrigan (1977) and Gough (1975). It can be seen in a sense, as a reac-
tion to the previous perspective of structuralism. This account lays
less stress on state intervention as a function of economic development
and political dominance by capital, and more on the role of class struggle,
particularly regarding the development of welfare services, including
housing since the war. This perspective recognises the social control
functions of the state and it is not assumed that all interventions
occur as a result of pressure from below. However, such policies are
developed in relation to, and in the presence of, the working class.
Thus, social expenses and welfare provision are partly determined by
the organisation and form of that presence, and they may be able to gain
concessions over and above what otherwise would have been granted. Indeed,
according to Gough, the strength of working class pressure can roughly
be gauged by the comprehensiveness and level of social benefits and
services. (Gough, 1975).

Thus, in this view, the state may be generally controlled by a dominant
class but is forced from time to time to make significant concessions
to the working class.

> "A key feature of the capitalist state is the extent to which
> this threat has been recognised and entrenched in, at the same
> time as it has been legitimised through, the extension of the
> franchise. " (Dearlove, 1978 p225)

This does not mean that the development of the welfare state, for example, resulted directly from universal suffrage, rather that it provided access for the working class to attempt to control the state. Thus, the institutionalisation of class conflict, as Dahrendorf (1959) termed it, can be rather more effective than the structuralists allow. There is a wide measure of agreement amongst historians, that pressure from the working class was one of the main reasons for social reforms in the early 1900's. Barratt Brown (1972) has no doubt that the power of private capital can be challenged by labour. This is most obvious in the production field where successful working class pressure for increased living standards, combined with international competition has resulted in a fall in profits from 25% in 1950 to 21% in 1964 and 12.1% in 1970 in the UK. (Gough, 1975)

If we accept that class action is important in capitalist societies, where does that leave the state? Obviously the state is first of all a set of physical institutions - government, civil service, local government and so on. But in the class conflict perspective it is much more. To quote Elson (1979):

> "Instead of thinking of the capitalist state as an entity or
> area, we should think if it as a social relation in which
> an abstract form of social comparability is established between
> members of society, not as expenders of labour power, but as
> citizens, not though the market, but through the law."

The state therefore, is the product of social relations, particularly relations between classes: but of what do these relations consist?

We should remember that capitalist states have developed historically, as one part of the relationship between subordinate and dominant classes. Thus, although the evolution of capitalist states may function to resolve the interests of capital, we must also remember that dominant class behaviour rests on its relationship with subordinate classes. Capitalist states may fail to carry out such functions, or may invoke the wrong policies, there is no guarantee of functionality. Thus, the state is seen as an historically developed, and developing, form of social class relations. These relations can be seen as legal relations,

revolving around the idea of citizenship and the mechanism of the contract.

> "In the capitalist state real socio-economic relations between classes, sexes or races are transformed into the legal relations of supposedly individual, equal and identical citizens.... The state form reproduces bourgeois relations so that working class consciousness or action becomes transformed into the less threatening behaviour of abstract and atomised citizens."
> (Duncan and Goodwin, 1980).

Thus the social relations embodied in the state help to maintain an illusion of equality in an inherently unequal society (by definition) in the same way as the market does in the economic sphere. Additionaly this involves the separation of the economic and the political. As we have seen the pluralists take this for granted, and Dahrendorf (1959) saw this as being the hallmark of a capitalist society, as do authors of a non pluralist persuasion. (Giddens, 1973). Indeed, the working class in social democracies usually have two seperate organisations for the seperate spheres, a political party as political representative, and trade unions as economic representative. This approach, however, unlike the structuralist allows the possibility of extensive social change via the state as a result of working class pressure even against the interests of capital, with the risk of the domination of capital being challenged, as new forms of social relations develop.

In considering these perspectives on the state, it is important to realise that they are not mutually exclusive, except as ideal types. In practice, there is some cross fertilisation. Most structuralists claim to see the state, for example, as a form of class relations, but in practice tend to resort to analysis of structures. For example, Castells, (1977.)

All the perspectives agree that the state's activity has expanded enormously although they differ with regard to the reasons for this. The representationalist perspective, and the pluralist see the state as neutral and responsive to pressure. For the corporatists, the state is independent of society and dominant although it supports dominant interests. These three theories tend towards a consensus view of

society, in which the rules of conflict are closely defined. The
two Marxists perspectives also see the state as being supportive
of dominant interests. The structuralists however, usually impl-
icitly resort to a functionalist analysis, while the derivationists
stress the pressure of class relations in pressuring the state to
provide more collective consumption than would necessarily be provided
in the interests of capital.

Curiously all the perspectives except the corporatist, see the growth
of representative democracy as being important. The importance of
this for the representational perspectives is obvious, but the Marxists
also stress it. For both, it is a means of institutionalising class
conflict but for the pluralists the class basis of society is denied.
For the structuralists it results in reformism, and the maintenance of
class relations. For the derivationists it is important ideologically,
and forms the basis of the social relations of the state. As such it
is potentially dangerous for the dominant class, as the process of the
reproduction of existing class relations is constantly under threat.
The corporatists see representative democracy as only being important
ideologically also, but as a means of legitimating technical, rather
than political decision making.

The separation of the economic from the political sphere is accepted
by all the perspectives, often implicitly, as in the representational.
Thus, working class protest is split between the workplace via trade
unions, and the traditional political institutions via political parties.
However, only the Marxist perspectives, and to a lesser extent pluralist,
allow consideration of pressure against the state from outside traditi-
onal political spheres. Indeed, the considerable rise in direct action
in much of Europe in the post war period has caused some pluralists to
revise their analysis more toward the conflict model, (see Dahrendorf
1967 for example), albeit one in which there are no fundamental conflicts.

In all the perspectives, the functions of the state are seen to be im-
portant, whether to respond benevolently to needs or to support capital
accummulation. As we have seen, the state has gradually extended its

sphere of activity into collective consumption, as Castells termed
it. Although the local state is responsible for much of this activity
in housing, social services and so on, the central state usually
determines the level of resources to be devoted to collective consum-
ption, and usually sets constraints on actual policy provision such
as housing standards and subsidy types.

The extent of such constraint is in dispute, and varies depanding on
 which perspective we take on the nature of the state. Yet it is
vital to establish this, if we are to assess the ability of the local
state to express local needs, and respond or not to respond to local
protests which centre around collective consumption issues. Much
protest is directed towards the local state as the on-the-spot provider
of such provision. The view we take of the central state conditions
to a great extent the way we see the local state, its functions, and
its relationship to central government. It is to consideration of
these questions which we now turn.

Chapter Two - The Local State, Urban Politics and Housing

Section 1.

Introduction: Theories of the Local State

As the on the spot provider of housing, and as we shall see the inst-
itution towards which much protest is directed it is vital that we
understand the nature of the local state. Local authorities have
considerable autonomy from the central state in the production, mana-
gement and allocation of housing. (Dickens and Gilbert, 1979). However
this autonomy is partial and local authorities are constrained in many
ways by the central state especially via the system of local government
finance and, finally, recourse to law, as we shall see. In this
chapter we shall examine different views of the local state, based on
the perspectives we examined in the last chapter. We shall see that
the view they take of the central state to a great extent conditions the
way these perspectives see the local state, its relation to the central
state, and its degree of autonomy. We shall consider the two Marxist
perspectives in some detail, one which concentrates almost entirely on
protest movements, and one which considers all aspects of urban conflict.
Additionally, we will look at application of the managerialist appro-
ach, which in the field of housing, with its bureaucratic allocation
procedures, has much to offer.

That the local state is a mere arm of the central state is a theme
which tends to dominate orthodox political thought and could be termed
the conventional wisdom.

> "The ideal that local authorities are mere agents of the central
> government has a long history in the orthodox literature of
> local government studies where there is entrenched an explanation
> which centres on the fact that he who pays the piper calls the
> tune." (Dearlove, 1979).

Broadly speaking, with the exception of the derivationist/class conflict
perspective, all the perspectives we examined in the last chapter take
such a view, and see the seperation of local and national state as being
primarily a functional one.

Representationalist perspective tends to echo this: the local state is
concerned with those functions which central government entrusts it.

Local democracy is about the distribution of the resources conceded by central government, and is normally seen as being healthy. The pluralist perspective tends not to have a specific view of the local state. However, it would seem the local state as a focus for the activities of pressure groups, is seen to be concerned with the allocation of resources conceded by central government. Ironically, the structuralist perspective similarly sees the local state as being an arm of the central state, "local councils don't spring from ancient rights of self government, but are, and under capitalism always have been, an aspect of national government which is in turn part of the state". (Cockburn, 1977 p2). Very often, this support is seen to be specially specific in that the local state is said to be supportive of local business, if not controlled by them. (Dearlove, 1979 p215) There is considerable evidence that the local authority in Glasgow, for example, via redevelopment plans has attempted to restructure the infrastructure in the city to facilitate economic development. (Inner Ring Road, Interim Report as an example, 1962) Business controlled pressure groups may influence policy, especially over roads, and the local authority's acceptance of the theory that roads do bring economic development seems to be unquestioningly accepted. (Cable, 1974). To say however, that the local authority is controlled by local business is quite a different matter, and would seem to be overstating the case.

However, it seems prudent to draw out an important consideration which emerges from perspectives which view the local state as an arm of the central state. It is that such an approach at least recognises that the activity of the local state is not isolated from national activity. This is certainly the case in housing policy. Thus, the local state can be seen as "a miniature political system". (Stayner, 1976). Stayner contends that it is theoretically possible to abstract the political behaviour in localities, in the same way that national political systems can be abstracted from the international system. However, as in most systems, the external environment in practice, is seen to affect activity in the miniature system. Thus, the environment in this case is defined as everything outside the system, especially central government. This permits us to consider the autonomy of local government from central

government, and the former's ability therefore to resist central con-
trol. It may be that different policy areas have different degrees of
autonomy, and a fruitful analysis must allow for such a possibility.
We shall now consider an application of an approach which does treat
local government as a miniature policital system, influenced by central
government. The main protagonists however, are bureaucrats, rather
than politicians or protest groups.

Section 2.

Urban Managerialism and Urban Politics

As we saw in the last chapter, the urban managerialists focus on
managers stems from the legacy of a Weberian concern with the growth
of bureaucracy in modern societies, both in terms of scale and power.
Indeed, in his early work, Pahl (1975) referring to bureaucrats as
social gatekeepers was able to state "populations limited in this
access to scarce urban resources are the dependent variable; those con-
trolling access, the managers of the system, would be the independent
variable". (1975 p201). These managers would include not only local
authority bureaucrats, but council members, social workers, building
society managers, estate agents, private landlords and so on. Indeed,
any identifiable group which administered a system of access to any
resource. Thus, research should be focused on such managers, particu-
larly on their ideologies, goals and values which underlie their
decisions concerning the allocation of resources.

Pahl's work has generated a great deal of research on the role of these
social gatekeepers, and especially on the influence of local administr-
ators on decision taking within local authorities. March and Simon
(1959) contend that professional groups bring a bounded rationality to
decision making - a view of reality which is limited by their, and the
organisation's ability to perceive and interpret the world. Such proc-
esses for information on which to base decisions are limited, activity
and value systems are often highly specialised and limit choice and
prevent optimum decision making. Thus, much research has been focused
on actual decision making processes within local authorities, particul-
arly on the committee system. This system which dominates most local
authority decision taking has caused Young to write "the particular
interpretation given by Scottish political groups democratic control is

of detailed decision taking by committees which generally respond to administrative rather than political pressures. " (1974) Dearlove (1979) contends that the re-organisation of local government has potentialy increased the power of professional groups over decision taking with the promotion of corporate management techniques which emphasise organisational efficiency, rather than political decision making. In Glasgow, it seems true that power has moved increasingly into the hands of leading members, in consultation with officers, and away from back benchers. This appears to be a common pattern, following reorganisation. (Dearlove, 1979, Sanders 1979, Young 1974). Issues therefore may be seen as technical, rather than political, as we shall see happened in the anti-dampness campaign.

However, in the later work of Pahl (1977) we can detect a revision of his position. First, toward the study of local authority bureaucrats exclusively because of the increasing importance of the local state's activity in determining outcomes at the local level. (This is parallel in the corporatists view of the increasingly dominant and directive nature of the national state, which we discussed in the last chapter). Second, that such study should take account of the relations between the central and local state. Thus managers are seen as playing a crucial mediating role both between the state and the private sector, and between the central state and the local population. Thus, elected officials tend to be seen to be of little importance in the decision taking process. This parallels the corporatists view of state in general that the electoral process merely legitimates decisions that would have been taken in any case, for technical reasons. Thus the possibility for local democracy is severely limited, even within the conventional political system, and certainly for protest groups which use non conventional methods of protest. This constitutes a major flaw in the managerialist/corporatist approach, and tends to diminish the importance played by community groups and recalcitrant local authorities who defy central government.

Sanders (1979), in a notable attempt to operationalise a managerialist/ pluralist type perspective, lists the constraints which limit the actions of urban managers as ecological, political and those of the

market. Research, for Saunders, is largely a matter therefore of study-
ing independent, if bounded, managers. The boundaries set by ecological
constraints concern the inherent inequalities of space and whether or
not urban managers can effectively determine whether one group or another
should benefit from locational advantages. If we restrict our analysis
to urban managers, these ecological forces are undoubtedly a major con-
straint on their actions. Saunders himself however points out these
ecological constraints are not total and local authorities have consid-
erable powers (via planning controls) albeit negative ones, to determine
special outcomes as well as powers of direction over the provision of
housing, education and so on. In the pluralist type analysis, Saunders
shows how competing groups can help to determine special outcomes, and
therefore that these outcomes are as much the result of power relations
as the result of 'ecological forces'.

A second constraint, those of the political, consist of limitations on
managers' actions which result from the internal organisation of the
local state itself, and the limits imposed by local government's integ-
ration into the larger state apparatus. The first of these directs
us into the relationship between elected officials and the bureaucrats,
and Saunders concludes that "the increasing complexity of local govern -
ment and the growth of corporate planning strategies have served to
insulate council officers from the political pressures exerted by the
elected members". (1979, p192) However, Saunders concedes that leading
members of the majority party may have considerable power and therefore
they must be considered in any analysis.

The third major constraint Saunders cites is the market. By this, he
means the necessity of maintaining the conditions of existence for
private production, and the ability of local authorities to generate
funds for spending on items not directly related to production. On
the first Saunders points out their expenditure on roads, infrastructure
etc. varies greatly between local authorities and concludes that those
who control the state apparatus enjoy some discretion in determining how
best and how far to support capital accumulation. Thus, local variations
in expenditure are the result of decisions taken by those who control
the state, that is, urban managers. Saunders also points out that the
local state is constrained by its reliance on the private sector for

revenue, and a limited revenue base in the locality. Increasingly, councils are constrained by the large repayments of interest charges on capital borrowed, and that all constraints Saunders sees the ability to finance social expenditure as being the most significant of all.

A number of criticisms of the basis of Saunders' work, the managerialist/ corporatist perspective and his empirical analysis can be made. First the managerialist approach is essentially descriptive rather than explanatory and fails to explain why the local state performs the activities it does. We are implicitly thrown back to a functionalist analysis, and indeed, Saunders combines O'Connor's (1973) and Cockburn's (1977) to arrive at a taxonomy of the key functions. Second, such analysis failed to consider why resources are scarce in the first place. Urban managers are merely seen as allocators of such resources that exist. The fact that the scarcity depends on economic, political and social relations in society remains unexplored, although Saunders himself does examine the activity of pressure groups. Third, in the traditional managerialist approach, by concentrating analysis on individuals, each of who is defined by his attempt to maximise his own power and gain, the approach neglects the determination of local policy by general social structures and forces. Indeed, Saunders' work can be looked on as an attempt to define the local state as the unit of study for urban sociology, despite his consideration of external constraints. (Duncan and Goodwin, 1980). Finally, starting off with an identification of the national state as a classless corporate state, the local state becomes a pluralist state of conflicting interests and interest groups concerned with the distribution of consumption. Local political activity therefore becomes "urban politics", isolated from production, and therefore incapable of being analysed in terms of economic class divisions.

However, there does seem to be much of value in the managerialist approach. The national state does appear to be becoming more corporate in nature, labour unions, big business and government involved in economic planning. There is little evidence that the state controls industry, indeed its inability to do so has been well documented. (Warren 1972)

At the local level, we do need to consider the power of urban managers, especially when, as in housing, resources are allocated bureaucratically. This does often involve technical debate, rather than political debate. However, by focusing on urban managers, and the state, the managerialist approach leaves us ho basis on which to consider the activity of protest groups as potentially effective activity. We shall now turn to the perspective which switches the research of this away from the local state and almost exclusively on to the protest groups themselves.

Section 3.
The Local State Again, and Urban Social Movements

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the structuralists tend to see the local state as being an arm of the central state, which performs functions concerned with collective consumption. Cockburn's 'The Local State' (1977) remains an important example of the application of a structuralist approach to the local authority context although we must consider the work of Castells, for an analysis of protest movements.

To Cockburn at least, the position of the local state appears unambiguous and is seen as an arm of the national government which itself is a part of the state, and supportive of capitalism. The local state is a functional derivative therefore of the national state, primarily concerned with the reproduction of the labour force, and the reproduction of capitalist social relations. The first is achieved through state services such as housing, and the second through the provision of institutions for the inculcation of values consistent with the needs of capitalism. There is no doubt a great deal of truth in this, it would seem that the local state does perform functions Cockburn alleges. Yet, to say that this is its raison d'etre is arguable. Unless we accept that the state is merely an agent of capital, Cockburn's analysis tends to remain at the level of the descriptive, rather than being explanatory and explaining why the state intervenes in the way it does.

However, Cockburn's acceptance of the device of relative autonomy, another feature of structuralism, allows what is essentially an ahistorical model of the state to proceed. Thus functionalist analysis effectively rules out potential for gains being made by the working class via the

state that are against the interests of capital and the dominant classes.(?)
The local state, then, is seen as repressive, and unresponsive to prot-
est and Cockburn's analysis tells us little about such movements. For
this we must consider the work of Castells.

Castells, as we saw in the last chapter, also adheres to the view that
the state functions to assist the dominant fraction of capital, monopoly
capital, in the accummulation process. The state is forced to take
over areas of production which although unprofitable are necessary for
production to continue. We shall see in the next chapter that this is
true for housing. The provision of infrastructure is of course one
example, as social investment, but the provision of collective consum-
ption aimed at the reproduction of the labour force is equally important,
and this function tends to be fulfilled by the local rather than the
national state.

Castells defines the city in terms of collective consumption, that is
as a unit of collective consumption, the limits of which are defined
by the limits of commuting. The term 'urban' however, refers to three
specific theoretical fields, the political, politics, and the urban
itself. The first refers to the structures by which a society exercises
control over the system of production, distribution and exchange. Pol-
itics refers to the system of power relations, where power is defined
as the capacity of one social class to realise its objective interests
over another. Of course, as in all structuralist analyses the state is
seen as the major structure, and the major organiser of class relations
in the age of monopoly capitalism. The urban, as well as referring to
the process of collective consumption, also includes more general prob-
lems relating to the social organisation of space, problems which
Castells analyses in his "Urban Question" (1977). Castells follows
Althusser in his definition of the mode of production which consists of
an economic ,political and ideological system, of which the economic is
determinant in the last instance. In the capitalist mode, ownership and
appropriation relations (meaning the appropriation of surplus value)
are homologous. — That is, those who own the means of production and lab-
our power also control the process of production. Also, in the capitalist
mode, the economic system is not only determinant but is seen to be dominant.

The two fundamental elements of the economic system are those of
production and consumption. These are manifested at the level of the
urban, as a specific means of production (factories producing goods,
services etc.) and as collective consumption (housing etc.) Also,
two further elements, exchange and management, derive from the first
two. Exchange refers to the exchanges which take place between the pro-
duction and consumption elements, and within them, such as transport
and shopping facilities, as the urban result of such exchanges. Management
concerns the process of regulation of relations between the first three
elements and include local government and urban planning.

Now, according to Castells, the study of urban politics, that is class
relations at the level of the urban, can be broken down into two dis-
tinct analytical fields, urban planning and urban social movements.
Urban planning concerns the resolution of contradictions between and
within the elements of the social formation. These contradictions arise
spontaneously out of capitalist production, and appear to consist of
inconsistencies within and between each element of production. For example,
Castells cites one contradiction between the economic and the ideolog-
ical systems in the housing field. Economic imperatives tend to induce
the building of large blocks of flats, which can produce alienation or
apathy among the inhabitants, ie produce effects at the level of the
ideological.

Thus, each contradiction throws up a set of problems and these must be
resolved, especially if they arise out of the dominant economic mode.
The state and the local state has taken an active role in achieving this,
via planning,

> "The capitalist state functions as a general palliative and
> steering device, treating practical problems that are immune
> to resolution via the spontaneous, and chaotic rationality of
> a capitalist civil society and leading society onward to collec-
> tively rational options consistent with economic social and
> property relations". (Scott & Roweis p19)

In Castells' view a major contradiction results from the imperative of

the state's increased intervention in the field of collective consumption. The reliance of capital on "the increasingly collective and inter-dependent character of the process of consumption and its domination by the interests of private capital" (Castells, 1972). Thus, major crises can occur over the level of state spending, for example, which private capital needs, but on the other hand is seen to lower the rate of profit, via taxes. As we saw, other contradictions also arise, within the area of collective consumption.

So, the state is seen to be reactive to the needs of capital, via the local state, at the level of collective consumption. Since, as we have seen, structuralists tend to see the state in this way generally, and as serving the interests of the dominant classes, it is hardly surprising that they see the local state as being non responsive to working class pressure, at least within the institutions of conventional politics.

> "A reading of the structuralist studies of urban social movements in France makes clear the emphasis on the role of popular mobilisation and non institutional means in achieving urban effects. By contrast institutional action is de-emphasised.......... this is regretable since it obscures the fact that urban effects may be obtained by institutional as well as by non institutional means." (Pickvance, 1977 p207,209).

We shall define institutional action as action which takes place within existing political institutions - voting, petitions, legal demonstrations, legal action or within the framework of law. Non institutional action therefore includes illegal action - violent demonstrations, direct action and so on.

So, Castells research focus steers us away from the local state itself to the formation of protest groups against the state. Indeed, he sees urban social movements as the source of social change. It is taken for granted in structuralist analysis that the state will not grant changes which threaten the stability of the mode of production. Indeed, it would appear as Pickvance points out, that local authorities and the state will not grant concessions of any scale without the intervention of social movements. (Pickvance, 1977). The state itself is limited to the

resolution of contradictions, and the only source of social change in
fact lies with protest movements. This is of course in direct contrast
to the managerialist approach which focuses attention on the internal
workings of the state, ie the bureaucracy, to the virtual exclusion of
activities external to it. It is however, rather similar in some ways
to pluralist accounts, and is subject ironically to similar criticisms
which we will take up later. Thus we can see that the view of the state,
in each of the perspectives discussed so far conditions the view of
the local state their research focus and their view of protest move-
ments.

In Castells' view the contradictions inherent in collective consumption
result in inequalities in society which reflect wider class relations,
and these form the basis for protest ie within the urban system itself.
As we shall see in the next chapter, the state's intervention in the
housing market, as regulator and producer, can indeed be looked upon as
a basis for housing protest, whether or not we identify contradictions,
and take a Marxist approach. Such contradictions are the starting point
however for the analysis of urban protest movements in Castells' work
not the organisations themselves. Organisations are seen as the means
whereby contradictions are expressed, and are the locus of observation.
The focus of research however, is on "the stakes,issues, or problems"
which the organisation pursues, and the determination of these by the
structure of society. So the form of the organisation is de emphasised
and instead the effects are stressed. Castells defines an urban social
movement as:-

> "the system of practices resulting from the articulation of a
> conjuncture of the system of urban actors and other social
> practices, such that its development tends objectively toward the
> structural transformation of the urban system or towards a
> substantial change in the balance of forces within the political
> system as a whole". (Castells, 1977 p155)

Thus, when these effects are not obtained, by definition the organisation
is not an urban social movement. Therefore, if issues remain within the
area of collective consumption, then the organisation involved cannot
be termed an urban social movement. Such issues must be linked to a

wider political or economic aspect of class struggle - for example to
a political party or to a trade union.

The potential for this because of state involvement in collective con-
sumption is high, but is contingent of course on organisations making
such links. The role of the state and the provision of collective con-
sumption has politicised an' area of life that was previously left to
the market, and was in a sense self legitimating. Habermas (1976)
shows that the invisible hand of the market was accepted as being in
some way "just exchange", but that state intervention both politicises
these areas, and requires some mechanisms of legitimation. The level
of political activity around such issues has grown considerably,
specially since the late sixties, as we shall see in a later chapter.

We can therefore classify protest movements according to their effects.
Castells identifies two lower levels of conflict, "reform" and "control".
The first refers to a change in an element in the urban system without
any change in its relations with other elements. Most protest in the
UK context would be classified as reform under this definition, since
it does tend to be confined to one element, usually collective consump-
tion and not linked to wider conflicts. Squatting is one arguable case
which we shall deal with in a later chapter. Control refers to the
simple reproduction of the urban system, and implies some kind of part-
icipation by protest movements in urban planning, and their incorporation
by the state in its task of resolving contradictions. An example of
this would be public participation in planning. In housing, the prom-
otion of owner-occupation and tenant co-operatives by the state could
also be categorised as being geared towards incorporation, and the
reproduction of existing relations. We shall discuss this more fully
in a further chapter.

We can see that the movement centeredness of structuralist approaches
may tend to over-emphasise the effects of protest movements on policy.
Their view of the state in general excludes analysis within the state,
and therefore ignores the possibility of policy changes emerging from
within the state itself. Dunleavy (1977) makes some telling criticisms

of structuralist and pluralist approaches, which he shows are similar
in some ways. He points out that protest groups are almost always as-
signed importance in influencing policy, although pluralist see decision
makers as being responsive to the electorate whereas structuralists do
not. In both cases, policy changes do not originate in the authority.
Second, Dunleavy criticises both approaches for focusing on issues
and thereby being empiricist. Thus, by concentrating on actual issues,
both approaches fail to consider why grievances do not become issues,
or why they are not seen as grievances at all. Thus, the phenomenon
of non decision making in which the agenda for political debate is set
is virtually ignored by both approaches.

These criticisms bring us rather closer to the class conflict view of
the local state which we discussed in the last chapter with reference
to the central state. In this formulation, the local state is seen as
a particular form of the development of social class relations at the
local level. At the level of locality, social consciousness is assummed
to be extremely important. The development of the state, as we saw in
the last chapter, has been conditioned historically by the relationship
between the dominant and subordinate classes, and particularly a power
struggle between the local and national states, involving the extent of
central control. Thus, as Dearlove (1979) states:

> "The particular problem of local government derives from the fact
> that local government is neither an instrument of business, nor
> a mere agent of the central state.......but the particular and
> enduring problem of local government centres on its relative auto-
> nomy from both the concerns of the central state and the impact
> of dominant classes. Related to this, local government is espec-
> ially vulnerable to working class demands, pressures and even
> control." (p244-245)

Class relations, in this view are not just a given category, but involve
relations and intersubjectivity, that is, an awareness of class divisions.
Consciousness therefore can be seen as a guide to action, and potentially
class based action, as Cockburn recognised. Local democracy is not seen

as being necessarily healthy, as in the representative perspective.
It has however, the potential for class action, because of high class
awareness based on local experiences. As we shall see in chapter four,
housing issues as with other consumption issues, are experienced by
people in everyday local experiences. Thus protest develops on a local
level. The state derivationist perspective however does allow us to
consider the possibility that the local authority itself can protest
and defy central government. More importantly, the local state can
act against the interests of local capital. This is in contrast to the
structuralist perspective in which the state necessarily acts in the
interests of capital and is repressive to local groups.

Duncan and Goodwin (1980) give examples of so-called "red enclaves."
For example, Oldham in the mid nineteenth century, Poplar in the nine-
teen twenties, and Claycross in the nineteen seventies. These "enclaves"
defied central government over various issues, but all three were
committed to high spending on social welfare often at the expense of
local ratepayers. Camden is a more recent example of such defiance
(Panorama, BBC 1, 16/3/81). The Labour dominated council are committed
to the highest standards of service provision, and are also committed
to the redistribution of wealth within the area from the commercial
sector to the domestic sector. Some 65% of Camden's rate income comes
from the former sector, and rate increases of 20-40% have been scheduled
for this year. Thus, we can see that in the case of Camden the local
state can and does act against the interests of local capital. As in
the other three cases of red enclaves I have cited, central government
will no doubt win in the end, by recourse to law, or indeed by changing
the law.

However, probably much scope exists for the local authorities to man-
ipulate legislation and government circulars to their own ends, without
openly defying the government. Thus, Labour councils tend to be high
spenders.

> "Labour councils were more active in services with a significant
> impact on the overall role of government. They were bigger spend-
> ers on the bigger services........they were more active where the
> service appeared to benefit sections of the community supporting

them." (Boaden, 1971, cited in Dearlove, 1979 p235)

The central state has responded to such challenges in various ways, but
usually by attempting to control local spending. Some functions, such
as subsistence, public transport and health services have been withdrawn
from the local state over the past century. Some of these have been
taken over by the central state, whilst others have been given to non-
elected bodies, such as development agencies, water boards, new town
corporations, and more recently urban development corporations and enter-
prise zones. These last two can be seen as attempts to free entrepreneur-
ship from the control of the local state, by reducing state burdens or
planning controls, for example. The 1980 Local Government, Planning
and Land Act, which introduced such non-democratic institutions, also
reformed the system of financial support for local authorities, and
this can be seen as the logical extension of the attempt by the central
state to curb local government spending, especially those authorities
which were defined as being high spenders. In the early nineteen sixties
the government insisted that local authorities develop capital expend-
iture programmes and incremental expenditure for three to five years
ahead. The creation of the rate support grant in nineteen sixty seven,
coincided with the public expenditure freeze that accompanied the de-
valuation crisis. In this system a complex formula is used to match
local needs to central and local resources - and to control local spen-
ing. Since the mid nineteen seventies, cash limits have been enforced
fairly rigorously, and to a large extent can explain large rate incr-
eases as central government's contribution to the local authorities
was cut in real terms, ie from 66.5% in 1975 /76, to 61% by 1977/78
(CSE Group, 1979). The 1980 Act gives central government power to invest-
igate every aspect of local authority spending in order to determine
standard charts of expenditure and deviations from a defined norm.
This appears to be a major step towards central control, where central
government rather than the local authorities themselves assess local need.
Local authorities can be penalised for overspending as defined by
central government.

The above measures can be looked upon as an attempted tightening of

central government control over local authority spending as the need
to cut public spending in general becomes an accepted economic truth.
Decisions as to the levels of spending appropriate can now be taken
at the centre, and enforced. Dearlove (1979) points out that the re-
structuring of local government into larger units and concern over
councillor calibre can be looked on as a means of introducing more
corporate, technical decision making by sensible councillors and of-
ficials. The implication is that if councillors were more responsible,
then "municipal Marxism" ie high spending would not occur. Thus the
battle for local autonomy, and high welfare spending is seen by the
state derivationists as being a form of class struggle, but one in
which the odds are stacked against local government in the long run.

For our purposes however, it is important to note that the implied
research focus is on protest and conflict of all kinds, whether it
be institutionalised or not. It may be between local authorities and
central government or against the local authorities themselves.
Of course, the local state does exist in terms of its institutions,
but its importance for these theorists is that it is a focus of class
struggle. Thus institutional action must be considered and unlike the
structuralists seen as a means of inducing change that can go against
the interests of capital, especially at the local level.

There is much interest in each of the perspectives for a study of
protest. The representational perspective is perhaps less important
as a guide for research, than as an accepted truth - the conventional
wisdom, by which many elected representatives resist protest groups by
saying that they are unrepresentative.as we shall see. The pluralist
perspective directs our attention to the activities of pressure groups
and sees the state as being easily manipulable. As we shall see in the
next chapter this does not bear out the reality of protest, at least
in housing. However, their emphasis on conflict as a means of achieving
change is one worth considering, even although conflict is defined as
institutional action, and is rather more appropriate for interest groups
who undertake extensive lobbying activity, over a long period of time,

than community groups which tend to have a limited life. The corporatist/
managerialist approach, as we have seen, has advantages in that it
tends to focus attention on those who listen to protest, the urban
managers. There is little doubt that urban managers are important in
dealing with the allocation of council housing, and dealing with protest.
In such cases, their reaction can be one of defence of bureaucratic
allocation methods and technical decision taking, as we shall see in the
anti dampness campaign. This approach also gives us some insight into
the influence of managers on policy making, which is probably increased
with the introduction of corporate management techniques. The struct-
uralist analysis is one of two Marxist analyses which we have considered
and provides the most thorough theoretical basis for the study of
urban protest movements. Stakes are important and organisations should
be judged by their effects, rather than the fact that they allow part-
icipation in politics. However, as we have seen, the structuralist
and pluralist approaches are preoccupied with organisational activity,
and fail to consider the importance of activity within the state itself
admittedly for different reasons. As we shall see in the next chapter
the form that organisations take is important in determining the out-
comes of conflict. Also, both the structuralist and pluralist persp-
ectives fail to take account of non-decision making, and the ways in
which issues fail to emerge as issues. As we shall see in the attempt
of the anti dampness campaign, such issues can remain at the individual
level for some time before they become translated into group action.
The state derivationist approach is perhaps the least well worked out
in terms of research consequences, but it allows us to consider inst-
itutional action and non-institutional action as both being potentially
important in achieving change, and that we should not necessarily see
the state as being unresponsive to working class pressure.

However, the question remains as to how local protest groups influence
local government, and the responses of the latter to such influence;
or indeed whether policy changes are the result of protest groups' act-
ivity, or changes in internal policy of the local authority. It seems
that the means of influencing local authority decision making are
governed by rules of access operated by local authorities. Groups which

operate within the rules of the game are more likely to be heard than
those which operate through more direct action, arouse the hostility
of councillors and officials and generally raise the level of conflict.
Perhaps a major achievement in the anti dampness campaign strategy was
to maintain pressure on the authorities, whilst remaining within the
rules of the game, as we shall see in a later chapter.

Activity in these local political systems provides a connecting link
between central government policies and local housing problems. Housing
provision by the state can be seen as part of provision of collective
consumption, and is the subject of political activity. In the next
chapter we shall see how different authorities spend different amounts
and provide different quantities and standards of housing. As an
aspect of collective consumption, housing policy has become politicised
and the subject of conflict at national and local levels. Also however
it can fragment protest, as policies tend towards the reproduction of
class relations. Local authorities are in a sense caught between the
demands of the electorate for better services, and the demands of centr-
al government to keep spending within reasonable levels. Glasgow's
controlling labour group could not be described as an authority as com-
mitted to welfare spending as some authorities who openly defy the
government. Nevertheless, the levels of spending in Glasgow have been
fairly high although this is to be expected with the high levels of
need in the city. The massive re-development of the city is one man-
ifestation of such high spending.

One area of broad agreement among all the perspectives we considered
is that empirical research is necessary to determine the effects of
protest groups on policy. We shall consider therefore the anti-dampness
campaign in Glasgow as an example of a locally based housing protest,
and the UK squatting movement as a country wide phenomenon. In both we
must bear in mind the views of the local state and the national state
we have discussed in these chapters and their relevance for study of
actual conflict. In the next chapter however, we shall consider state
involvement in housing in general, as a basis for such conflicts.

Chapter Three - Housing and The State

In this chapter we shall consider the reasons for state involve-
ment in housing, by looking at the first stages of that involvement.
We shall trace the development of such intervention, with respect
to the extent to which state action in the housing field has formed
the basis of protest. That is, how objective housing conditions,
such as housing shortages, can become issues around which protest,
usually against the state, can develop. The promotion of owner-
occupation, and newer types of tenure will also be mentioned in the con-
text of the potential such developments have for the reduction of
housing protest and conflict. The position of protest groups themselves
will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Section 1.

Getting Involved

The reasons for state intervention vary with the perspective we choose
to follow, as we saw in the previous chapter. We can assume that the
provision of housing, historically was in the interests of capital -
but improved housing was also in the interests of the working class.
However, there seems little doubt that the first interventions by the
state were prompted by motives other than benevolence; extremely poor
working class housing conditions "created specific contradictions for
the existing social order for they reduced the productivity of labour,
brought about the ravages of disease to every social class, created
impenetrable rookeries of criminal violence, and gave strength to the
voices of that subversive tradition which preached revolution" (Merret
1979 p29). Thus, from about the 1850's a series of public health acts
introduced minimal controls on standards of water provision, sewage etc.
and gave local authorities powers to deal with insanitary conditions.
Around the same time local authorities were empowered to clear unfit
housing, and erect new housing, but only enough for 50% of those dis-
placed. Also there was no compulsion on authorities to deal with poor
housing, and there were no subsidies from central government to encourage
them to do so. Some local authority housing had been built by the end
of the century, but only in very small numbers mainly in London and
Liverpool. A few enlightened industrialists such as Robert Owen, in

New Lanark, had provided housing and other facilities for their work-
ers, albeit with one eye on the advantages of such conditions for
instilling labour discipline in the workforce. (Thompson, 1963)
Generally however, conditions for the working classes were appalling,
and the majority were dependent on the private rented sector, as Gouldie
(1974) documents.

At the end of the nineteenth centory some 90% of the housing stock was
in the private rented sector. (Murie et al 1976). The inability of the
private rented sector to produce housing for the working class, especially
lower wage earners was becoming increasingly obvious by the turn of
the centory. Building stock from 130,000 houses per year in 1901 to
60,000 in 1910/14. The public health acts had given local authorities
the power to deal with insanitary conditions, and this meant that
speculative builders were required to meet ever increasing standards.
Yet wage earners were unable to bear economic rents, unless the returns
in housing were lower than in other areas of investment, (such as over-
seas investment), as low as 3.5% per annum. (Gouldie, 1974)

Inflation during the first world war further reduced the incentive to
invest in housing, building costs having quadrupled in the 1914/1919
period. (Cramond, 1966) Wartime inflation and an increasing number of
evictions appear to have prompted the introduction of controls on both
rents and interest rates, which were pegged at their 1914 level by an
Act in 1915. This Act was introduced by the government as a response
to a threat of industrial action by munitions workers in Glasgow, and
a rent strike in protest against speculative increases. (Merret, 1979,
Nevitt, 1970) More generally, the increase in the strength of the
labour movement (trade union membership doubled during the war), and
the return of disillusioned soldiers from Europe resulted in a growth
of social and industrial turbulence after the war. In 1919, for example,
34 million work days were lost due to strikes, compared to 5 million
in 1918. The possibility of social revolution was one which was taken
seriously by the government and promoted action to contain the situation.
(Glyn and Sutcliffe 1972)

House building during the war had almost ceased, and deteriorating
housing conditions and shortages were seen as contributory factors to
mounting unrest, and caused the government to act, when faced with a
potential post war housing crisis. Rent controls were continued after
the war, and the 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act for the first time
introduced an exchequer subsidy for local authority housing building.
After this Act, local authorities were given a duty to assess the needs
of their area, and carry out building to meet such needs, with the
assent of central government. Rents were to be fixed by the local
authority, but again central government had to approve them, and losses
on such transactions would be borne by the exchequer. At the time,
the provision of such subsidy was considered to be a temporary measure
to overcome the post war housing shortage, but exchequer subsidies have
continued, in varying forms and levels, ever since.

Thus we can see that a number of factors were at work, which prompted
state involvement in housing provision. First, the need to have a
reasonably healthy labour force. Second, the inability of the private
sector to provide housing to a sufficiently high standard for such a
purpose, because of low profitability. Third, the threat of social
unrest, of which housing conditions were assumed to be a contributory
factor. It is difficult to say for a given piece of legislation which
of these factors was most important. It is reasonable to say however,
that they were all operative at the crucial first stages of state involve-
ment on any scale in the 1915 - 1919 period. We can see therefore
that the beginnings of state involvement in housing, as regulator and
producer of housing, cannot be looked upon as a benevolent response to
housing need. The state was to some extent forced to take action for
fear of social unrest. The market which provided working class housing
previously had failed, and the state stepped in to fill the gap, by
subsidising local authorities house building.

The local authorities were seen as the natural inheritors of housing
policy implementation, after all they had administered the health acts,
and were best suited to assess local needs. Thus we must reject the
representational perspectives' view of the benevolent state, the state
was forced to step in and fill the gap in the housing market. Nor was

this first step a purely functional step for capital, pressure from the working class itself was a factor. Thus, a functionalist perspective by itself is not sufficient to explain state involvement. We must relate this not only to the needs of industry, but the increased ability of the working class at this time, through universal suffrage and industrial pressure, to force policy changes of a radical nature, against the laissez faire ideology of the time.

Thus it is apparent that housing protest existed before state involvement in the housing market, and was instrumental in causing such involvement, such as in the Glasgow rent strike in 1915. Perhaps we should not make too much of the effect of protest before this point although as Corrigan and Ginsburg (1975) point out, working class struggles on a local scale have been recorded only infrequently, and one can assume that some protests do occur.

However the increased involvement by the state in housing provision this century is undeniable, and the most striking feature has been the changing balance of tenures. As we have seen, in 1900 some 90% of houses were privately rented. By 1947 this had declined to 61%, and by 1972 to less than 14%. By 1972 the owner-occupied sector had grown to some 50% of houses, from less than 10% in 1900. The public sector had grown from an insignificant amount in 1900 to 31% in 1972. In Scotland, the tenure balance is slightly different, being 30% owner-occupied, 52% state and 18% private rented sector in 1971. (Figures from Murie et al 1976). These national figures of course mask regional differences. In inner cities the private rented sector is often dominant - for example inner London, where 50% of the stock is privatly rented in 1965. (Milner-Holland Report 1965) However, even with the increase in the state rented sector, the proportion of rented houses in the stock has been falling, especially since the Second World War, in comparison to owner-occupation, a trend that has been encouraged by governments.

Section 2. The Basis of Protest

We shall consider the implications of this for protest later, but for

the moment we shall concentrate on the state sector, for most housing
protest in the post war period has occured in this sector. We can
divide issues around which protest develops as stemming from three
basic causes. First, shortages of housing, causing homelessness, and
protest around such conditions. Closely related to these actual
shortages are allocation procedures, the effects of which can lead to
iniquities, and the exclusion from many people from the state sector.
Homelessness, coupled with the existance of empty property, much of it
owned by the state, can be seen as a basis for squatting. Second,
issues can develop around the production of state housing, which can be
considered by tenants to be unsuitable for their needs. The produc-
tion of state housing involves central government, local authorities,
and very often private builders, and we should examine the relation-
ships between such agencies. Much modern housing is plagued with prob-
lems such as dampness, and protest movements have centered on such
issues. Third, the level of rents are subject to negotiation between
central government and the local authority. Much protest by tenants
and indeed by local governments, has centered on this issue. We shall
examine each of these in turn.

When assessing the effects and extent of housing shortages, we should
not forget that great progress has been made in this century in com-
bating homelessness and poor housing conditions. In 1914 there were
fewer than 9 million dwellings, now there are more than 18 million, of
which two thirds post date 1919. More than one third of the houses
standing in 1914 have been demolished in slum clearance, redevelopment
and war damage, and a substantial number of the remainder improved, so
that only 15% of households lack the use of sanitary facilities, for
example hot and cold water, wc and bath or shower. Overcrowding has been
cut down drastically, as household size has continued to fall, although
in certain areas especially the connurbations problems still exist.

In aggragate terms then, there would appear to be no situation of hard-
ship, and the vast redevelopment programmes of the post war period
caused many people to believe that the housing crisis had been solved.
Indeed, the UK never allocated more than 4% of gross domestic product,

to housing in the post war decades, less for example than West Germany
or France, but more than some other European countries.

However, these aggregate figures hide shortages especially severe in
large metropolitan areas. Pockets of sub-tolerable housing, often
overcrowded, and occupied by those with no access to the state sector
or means into the owner-occupied sector still exist. Thus, despite a
surplus of some 800,000 dwellings by 1977, the number of people accepted
by local authorities as being homeless is high, and rising at least
between 1976 and 1979. (Wates, 1980) In Glasgow in 1970, for example
it was estimated that, despite a massive clearance programme, 75,000
houses failed to meet the tolerable standard. The 1972 Housing Waiting
List totalled 53,565, an increase over the previous few years, despite
the allocation of some 12,000 dwellings by the local authority in 1972.
(Jacobs, 1976) In the same year 15,863 families were classified as
being homeless in the city, an increase on the previous year. Thus
national figures can conceal local shortages. Other factors contribute
to homelessness, when there is an apparent surplus of housing.

For example, there are between 550,000 and 770,000 empty houses in the
UK, as well as 150,000 second homes. The latter group can contribute
to rural housing shortages and the former to shortages especially in
the connurbations. (Wates, 1980). Official figures on both homeless-
ness and empty property are likely to be underestimates. On homeless-
ness, only those accepted by councils as being homeless are included
in figures, and if the standard of accommodation is taken into account
we find that 700,000 occupied houses are classified as being unfit for
human habitation. Such occupants could be classified as being homeless,
under a wider but probably more realistic definition. Unfortunately,
census data does not distinguish between the public and private sectors
with regard to empty property, but for example a survey by the GLC of
empty property in London, in 1975, found that of 72,000 homes empty for
more than three months, 60,000 were privately owned. (Wates).
We shall consider the reasons why empty property exists in both sectors
in a later chapter when we deal with squatting. For the moment, we

must conclude that a combination of homelessness, especially amongst those marginal to the housing market, combine with the existing existance of empty property and is a basis for housing protest, squatting in particular.

The allocation of housing in the public sector is done bureaucratically. Each council is relatively free to decide who has priority on the waiting lists. This is not the place for a full discussion of allocation procedures, but traditionally the local authority sector has been geared to producing housing for families, that is units with two or three bedrooms. However, the structure of households, has been changing rapidly over the past twenty years. The number of one person households for example has doubled in that period. Because of the size distribution of existing stock therefore and allocation rules which favour families, single people and small households are often excluded from council housing. Especially the single, and childless couples can often be forced to seek housing in the private rented sector. The homeless are very often single people therefore, and this can be an important factor in the genesis of squatting as we shall see.

However, it would be misleading to imply that poor families are excluded from the state sector. Indeed, in the post war period the proportion of households in the bottom quarter of the income distribution has been rising. In 1953 for example, 16% were council tenants, but by 1965 this had risen to 29%, and by 1976 to 43%. Even so, this does still leave a substantial proportion of low income families out of the state sector, and dependent upon the private rented sector, and therefore vulnerable to poor housing conditions. (See the Milner-Holland Report 1965 and Francis Report 1971 for a discussion).

So, the expansion of the state sector in the housing field has by no means solved housing problems, at least in the area of homelessness. Another area of housing problems is of course the standard of accommodation provided. As we have already seen, standards overall as defined in the housing acts have been rising and indeed Britain is rather well off in the level of provision compared with the rest of Europe. (Donnison

1967). We shall now consider the production of housing by the state,
as a potential basis for protest.

The bulk of local authority housing is built by private builders,
rather than by direct works departments. There have been a number of
influences which have affected the volume, standards and form of such
housing. We can usefully categorise these influences as being: trends
in government policy toward high density building; second, trends in
the building industry; third, the subsidy position; fourth, the influence
of the design professionals. Such factors have led to high density
often high rise building, using new materials, and often industrialised
building methods. These factors have led to problems of various kinds
in state housing, and serve as a basis for protest.

Post war redevelopment in the UK generally took place in the large cit-
ies, as in Glasgow, where housing conditions were appalling, and very
often high density. Unless overspill schemes could be instituted, this
implied high density rebuilding. Four methods of overspill were open
to local authorities. First, the establishment of new towns; second,
expanded towns, based on the Town Development Act (1952) which involved
agreements between the exporting and importing towns; third, peripheral
estates could be constructed, and boundaries extended if necessary,
and if permitted by central government; fourth, estates could be built
outwith the authorities' boundaries. All four of these solutions were
applied in post war Britain, and we shall discuss Glasgow's policy in
a later chapter.

Certain factors mitigated against local authorities building outside
their boundaries, and thus the tendency was to build at high density
within their boundaries. Around 1953, the government affirmed its
support of green belts. Thus overspill would have to be at a greater
distance from the local authorities' administrative area, and there-
fore less attractive. Drewett (1973) contends that landed capital was
particularly successful in preventing urban sprawl, and feared migr-
ation of labour voters from towns into conservative strongholds. The
need for conservation was also used as a reason to contain the towns.

The urban local authorities themselves feared that out migration would result in a cutting of the rating base, cuts in central government grants, and the decline in their political base. Thus, although over-spill schemes did go ahead in many cities these were smaller than expected, and made high density building a necessity in the inner cities.

The building industry was, by the mid sixties, geared up to deal with such high density schemes. Since the war, the overwhelming trend in the UK building industry had been towards concentration. By 1975 the largest 24 firms produced 15% of total output. 89% of building firms had fewer than 20 employees, and many were dependent on the larger firms of their sub-contractors. The on-site production process, is of course extremely complex involving a high range of trades and sequential steps. The immediate post war housing crisis had led the government to encourage the use of prefabricated building methods, as a means of overcomming shortages of traditional materials and skilled labour. Indeed, throughout the post war period and up to the early seventies, so-called industrialised building methods were seen as being a solution to the various housing crises to which politicians attention was directed. Otherwise known as system building, these methods implied "construction by the assembly of specially manufactured or prefabricated units, or form work or profiles to produce buildings to standard designs." (Stone quoted in Merett 1980). In the early 1960's the view was taken by central government, local authorities and architects that such methods would rapidly become the chief mode of production of public housing. The National Building Agency was set up in 1964 specifically to promote system building, and vet the many systems (some 400) that had come on the market. Costs, also initially high were expected to fall in the longer term, as increasingly scientific production methods, mechanisation and standardisation rationalised production. (Such a method, used in the Tracoba system in the Gorbals flats is discussed in Chapter 4). However, such methods needed large scale contracts to reach maximum efficiency, and redevelopment of the inner cities on a massive scale became a prime market for systems building. By the mid 1960's, local authorities had to include housing using system building, in order to get loan sanctions from central government. Although there is no documentation of any pressure on government by building firms to use system building, it seems

likely that some of the larger firms encouraged the trend. (Merret, 1980). A few large firms had pioneered the use of system building during and after the war and had imported designs such as the Tracoba. This tended to increase their degree of monopoly. Numerous "package deals" with local authorities were negotiated. These deals included the design and construction of houses and allowed the builders to alter design to increase efficiency. Also, such package deals were in fact used mainly for these large scale contracts for system built designs. (McCutcheon 1975).

The rise of system building methods was accompanied by an increase in the production of flats rather than houses, and an increase in the number of stories in single blocks. The proportion of flats increased to a peak in the mid 1960's and remained stable until the early seventies, at about 50% of new municipal dwellings. The rise of high flats reached a peak also in the mid 60's and declined violently thereafter. Both phenomena coincided with inner city redevelopment.

It is possible to account for these trends, if we consider the subsidy arrangements, and standards of construction laid down by central government. Standards were raised very sharply in the immediate post war period, compared with those before the war, fell during the 1950's and rose gradually after 1961. In 1944 the Dudley Committee recommended a substantial increase in space standards, and the average size of a three bedroomed post war council house rose by 37% on the pre war equivalent. (Merret, 1980). A decline began in 1951 however, under the impact of economic pressures and a need for a greater number of units. This decline was mainly confined to a reduction in kitchen size, but ceiling height was lowered. In London for example, "the statutory insistence on natural ventilation of internal wc's, and the fire regulations were relaxed; the standards of plot ratio and daylighting control were altered to encourage high building." (McCutcheon 1975 p95).

However, such a decline appears to have provoked a counter reaction, and in 1959 a committee under Sir Parker Morris was set up. The committee reported in 1961 and recommended a 6 point improvement plan including increased space, minimum heating standards and imrpovements

in fittings. Although a number of local authorities did institute
Parker Morris's recommendations the standards only became mandatory,
and then only the space and heating standards, in 1969. Even so,
by 1967, 85% of new local authority dwellings incorporated the two
point standard. Unfortunately, the circular which introduced these
standards in 1967, also introduced new cost norms, based on current
tenders, expressed in terms of building costs per bed space to be re-
viewed annually. (M.H.L.G., 1967)

Central government could refuse loan sanctions if tenders exceeded
110% of the cost yardstick. "Thus the new design regime was a com-
bination of mandatory minima in terms of space and heating and man-
datory maxima in terms of permitted cost." (Merett, 1980). Tender
prices were rising rapidly at this time, and the cost yardstick as it
was called tender to become quickly out of date. The likelihood is that
bad design was the result, as architects attempted to meet these
contradictory imperatives. Cost yardstick also applied only to capital
costs, and excluded continued outlays for maintenance - and many of
the designs in vogue, such as high rise flats, incurred higher maint-
enance costs than more traditional designs. Thus,

> " In many cases the effect of the yardstick was to secure short
> term economies in capital outlay at the expense both of higher
> expenditure on running costs, and tenant dissatisfaction over
> questions such as dampness, condensation, noise level and ill-
> fitting doors and windows." (Merret, 1980 p105)

Thus new materials and designs were used, often in all inclusive pack-
age deals. Very often the provision of communal facilities was reduced
or eliminated in an effort to cut costs. This has proved to be part-
icularly disastrous, especially in high flats, and has contributed to
tenant dissatisfaction. (Jephcott 1972)

Additionally, systems building was suited to the erection of high flats,
a design concept much in vogue in the 1950's and 60's. High rise build-
ing was encouraged by central government in subsidy arrangements. In
1956, an additional government subsidy was introduced for flats above
6 storeys, although above this height the subsidy began to level off.

There is little doubt that architects also encouraged systems building
and high rise designs. Le Corbusiers/ influence was great: he argued
that technology could be used to liberate man, and proposed hugh tower
blocks with excellent facilities, near the city centre yet with room
for open space. This conception was to influence architects during the
1950's and 60's, when redevelopment schemes were in full swing. However,
even by the mid 1960's sociological work had highlighted the adverse
effects of high living on tenants, especially young children. The col-
lapse of the Roman Point flats perhaps contributed to such disillusion-
ment. (See Dunleavy, 1977). The same circular which introduced the
cost yardstick also removed the extra subsidy for flats over 6 storeys.
In any case, government policy was beginning to favour rehabilitation
of older housing rather than large expensive redevelopment projects.
(See Paris, 1977).

So, we can see that there were a number of influences at work which
determined the type, quality and quantity of state housing produced
in the post war period. Large redevelopment schemes themselves prod-
uced urban protest, as we shall see in the next chapter, but the issues
of homelessness and issues around the standards and form of housing
served as a basis for housing protest. The third aspect of policy
around which protest has developed has been over levels of rent. A
convenient starting point in looking at rents is the housing revenue
account (H.R.A.). Since 1935 each local housing authority has been re-
quired to keep in a standard form a single account for expenditure and
income for the houses it rents out. Expenditure of course includes
supervision and management costs, repairs, debt charges on capital bor-
rowed and so on. Income includes rents, exchquer subsidy and a contri-
bution from the rates. The need for subsidy has been dealt with earlier
in this chapter, and is based on the inability of the average wage
earner to pay the full economic costs of housing. The report of the
EEC (cited in Cramond) puts this succinctly,

> " as is commonly accepted, the maximum proportion of income to
> be paid in rent that is regarded as socially desirable is
> 20%, then the annual charges on the house, including repayments
> of capital and interest, repairs, insurance, management and maint-
> enance must not in the UK exceed 7% of the capital cost. When the

interest rate alone is around 6%, this is manifestly impossible. "
(1966, p 13) In effect, the exchequer contribution is paid by central
government, the rate contribution by local government, and the rent
income by tenants.

It is around the proportions each should pay that conflict has developed,
not only between tenants and government, but between local and central
government. Rent levels are generally set by the local authority on
the basis of housing being able to cover the residue when the rate
fund and exchequer contributions have been accounted for, to make the
HRA balance. The rent for each dwelling is based on its use value
rather than its market potential, or debt liability. The number of
rooms, amenities, floor area and so on are assessed, and the rent set.
Thus rents are pooled so that those in older housing with low debt
charges (or none at all) are in effect subsidising those in newer more
expensive (in monetary terms) houses. This system of rent pooling is
seen by many local authorities as an important contribution to social
justice, since it allows subsidies to be spread among all tenants.
Much conflict has occurred around this issue. Successive governments
have attempted to concentrate subsidies on low income tenants, by means
of rent rebates, on the pretext that higher income tenants do not need
such large subsidies. (Little, in such debates is said about subsidies,
through tax relief on mortgage interest to owner-occupiers on high
incomes). This of course means, if no higher exchequer subsidies were
forthcoming, higher rents for all tenants, although those on lower
incomes could claim rebates. Rate fund contributions of course could
be altered to switch the burden of income between rate payers and ten-
ants. Labour councils tended to set higher subsidy than Conservative
councils. Scottish, Labour controlled councils made an average contr-
ibution of 35% of expenditure, compared to 5-10% amongst English councils.

It is obvious then that such arrangements have a potential for conflict,
between all of the parties involved. This potential has been realised
on a number of occassions, the 1956 Subsidies Act, the 1972 Housing
Finance Act, and the recent legislation. The issues at stake around
these pieces of legislation have centred on the respective contributions

of the protagonists in conflict. The results have been a number of
rent strikes, civil disobedience, and at least one local authority
defying central government.

We have also seen that the first interventions of the state were as
much a result of pressure from the working class as benevolent state
action, for a need to reproduce labour power. The impression may have
been given in this chapter that the local state in housing policy is
merely an agent of central government. This is not so: such conflicts
around rent levels particularly have shown that local government has
considerable ability to defy central government. Local authorities can
and do distort government policy to their own ends, within certain
limits. Labour authorities in particular tend to be bigger spenders
on services including housing, and to be committed to welfare often
against the wishes of the central state to cut spending. Indeed,
deepening economic crisis during the 1960's and 70's can be seen to be
behind attempts to cut spending, by lowering standards and switching
to rehabilitation rather than redevelopment. (Paris, 1977) Also, sales
of council houses and the promotion of owner-occupation by central
government have been seen as a means to cut spending. It matters little
whether such actions actually cut spending. What is important is that
governments saw all these measures and others, as being means of doing
so. But they were not totally successful in meeting proposed cuts
(which they appear not to have been so far) and this is due to a number
of factors. At least one is the momentum of state spending via the
local authorities, and the fact that these authorities are to some extent
autonomous, and able to defy central government policy or exploit it
according to their respective policies. The importance of local democracy -
whether or not it is a sham as some claim - may be that it underpins
the ability for resistance by local authorities. Democracy also however,
is used to justify central government's policies, and thus the relation-
ship between the two is constantly under negotiation as we saw in the
last chapter. This is as true in housing policy as in other policy
areas.

This account of state policy has been biased towards the negative aspects

of the government and production of housing. It has been mentioned
of course that considerable achievements have been made in increasing
the standards of state housing, and in decreasing homelessness.
Also, local authorities have recently been more flexible in their all-
ocation policies to allow previously excluded groups access to state
housing. They still of course find themselves constrained by the phys-
ical structures they manage, many of which were intended for the
traditional family. Thus, the actions of the state in providing more
and better housing may actually reduce the basis for protest. Similarly,
as we shall see, the promotion of owner-occupation, housing associations
and tenant co-operatives by the state may also tend to reduce protest.

Nevertheless, housing protest is fairly common and increased in incide-
nce during the late 60's and early 70's. There is little doubt that
the inadequancies of state policy served as a basis for this. Redevel-
opment itself became an issue. Homelessness and its effects, combine
with the existence of empty property to make squatting possible. The
use of new designs and materials threw up new problems of dampness,
poor insulation and amenities in the 70's and numerous protest move-
ments grew up around these issues. It is to the nature of such protest
that we now turn.

Chapter Four - Housing Protest in the United Kingdom

Section 1. - The Growth of Protest

There seems little doubt that there was a general rise in protest during the 1960's, especially towardsthe end of the decade, and that this protest continued into the 1970's. The incidence of strikes rose rapidly in Western Europe during the late 60's. In Britain the number of days lost per year more that trebled in the five years leading up to 1970 and the increase continued until early in the next decade. (Binns, 1977) Activity extended beyond the workplace however, and Sandbach (1980), has documented an increase in the discussion of environmental matters, during this period. "Without doubt historians of the future will regard the late 1960's and early 1970's as a period when most industrialy developed countries became deeply concerned about environmental problems." (1980 p1) This could be seen using a variety of indicators - news media and literature, public opinion and social survey data, pressure group involvement and the introduction of environmental legislation in many western countries. However, such groups generally tended to be composed of the middle classes, as Sandbach points out, and much of this protest centred on issues around the redevelopment of the large connurbations which was in full swing by the late 1960's. In Glasgow, as in other cities in Britain and Europe obsolete city forms had been bulldozed and rebuilt. Urban motorways were a particular focus for protestors, as Aldous (1972) and Sandbach (1980), amongst others have pointed out.

Also around this time, "the rediscovery of poverty" became a catch phrase, and homelessness became an accepted problem and issue. Squatting as a response to homelessness became fairly common, especially around the London area. A great deal of this protest was directed at the state and around the issue of provision of collective consumption - roads, housing, social services etc. After all, the state had extended the range and scope of its activities in these areas during the post war boom. In housing, for example, it was the main regulator of the market, a large producer of housing, and redeveloper of cities. The massive redevelopment which took place in Glasgow was a pattern which was repeated in many other cities in the UK. Many issues arose over compulsory purchase orders and so on which brought groups into direct conflict with local

authorities.

The state was expected to be able to solve urban problems, and had
been found to be wanting by many groups in society. Economic crisis
and resultant stringency over public spending further reduced the
state's ability to cope with such problems. As we saw in the last
chapter the central state had been on the one hand advocating high
standards of building in the council sector, while at the same time
introducing increasingly stringent cost controls. Promotion of
systems building was intended to reduce costs in the longer term. A
switch from redevelopment, to rehabilitation also may have been promo-
ted with cost cutting in mind. (Paris 1977) Eventually, in the late
1970's, drastic real cuts in council house building were instituted.
Indeed, by 1975 the government was urging local authorities to cut
costs in rehabilitation,

> " It must be accepted - and willingly - that some houses of low
> quality meet a real need for cheap accommodation, a need which
> might not otherwise by satisfied. It would not always be sens-
> ible to press for the immediate rehabilitation of all dwellings
> in an area to the full (10 point) standard or more, or to clear
> them until they cease to fulfill their present social function."
> (DOE 1975)

This admission of inadequacy is in considerable contrast to the grand
schemes of the labour government some ten years earlier, to build some
500,000 houses per year up to 1970. This scheme was abandoned shortly
after its inception due to the devaluation crisis and the resulting
economic stringency. Thus as Castells has noted, a major contradiction
exists, between the need for state spending, and the ability of private
capital to meet such needs.

It could be argued that coinciding with the increase in inability of the
state to meet such need, the public were becoming more aggressive,

> "in the 1960's many organisations found that they were dealing with
> a more demanding public......These changes have many caused, rang-
> ing from a collision between the inflationery expectations and the
> harsh economic realities of the times, to the appearance of a new

generation lacking the deferrence to authority which their elders
had learnt from depression and the war." (Donnison, 1980 p14)
In housing the effects of the gap between the ability of the state to
meet such needs, and the perception of that need by those in the com-
munity, often led to the establishment of campaigns to champion various
causes. It is the nature of these campaigns we shall now consider.

Section 2. - Types of Housing Protest

We can categorise housing protest activity according to a number of
criteria.

(A) First, whether protest comes from people inside the housing system,
or from those who are excluded from it. Thus, in the first categ-
ory there would often be a perception, among those involved of a
worsening of their own position. This would involve a change in
the status quo, such as a rent increase, or a decline in dwelling
conditions, or a threat to the market value of owner-occupied
property. We would therefore include anti dampness campaigns in
such a category. In the second category, of those excluded from
the existing housing system, we would include the homeless, or
indeed those living in overcrowded conditions. In this case, the
conditions people experience fall below some nationally or locally
defined minimum standard. Squatting is one response to such con-
ditions.

(B) Such protests, may or may not be group protests. Thus, we can
further categorise activity on an axis of individual protest or
group protest. Obviously the latter type implies the existence
of an organisation, and usually a campaign. The individual prot-
est may take the form of actual complaints to, say housing depart-
ments. We could however consider applications for transfers, and
the existence of difficult to let housing as an expression of dis-
satisfaction with existing conditions, on an individual level. In
many cities, transfer request from those within the local authority
sector are high, and can be looked on as a kind of protest. There
may of course by other reasons for requesting a transfer, such as
being in too large or too small a house, but the incidence of
requests for high amenity area suggests a certain dissatisfaction
with conditions in some areas. (Glasgow Housing Management Annual

Report 1979). Similarly, vacancy rates in some areas confirm
an unwillingness to occupy low amenity housing. In one area of
Glasgow, pockets of undesirable housing have been identified with
vacancy rates of over 16%. (Glasgow Housing Management Report
1979). It would seem, that little work has been done to assess
the extent to which such figures can be seen as individual prot-
est, and therefore our analysis will concentrate on the phenomenon
of group protest. We shall also consider how protest can escalate
from the individual to the group level, by examining how community
organisations form, as in the anti dampness campaign.

(C)   A third means of classifying protest activity is one which we have
      already discussed in chapter 2 and concerns the level of the
      activity. Activity can be institutionalised, or direct. Instit-
      utional action includes activity which takes place within existing
      political institutions and is legal - voting, petitions, lobbying,
      legal demonstrations, legal actions etc. Non institutional action
      includes illegal activity - violent demonstrations, occupations etc.

These three means of classifying protest activity can be summarised thus:

A SOURCE OF ACTIVITY	WITHIN MARKET/ STATE SECTOR	EXCLUSION FROM MARKET/ STATE SECTOR
B TYPE OF ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL	GROUP
C LEVEL OF ACTIVITY	INSTITUTIONALISED	DIRECT ACTION

In general, we can say that in the UK, housing protest activity of
the group type has been institutionalised rather than having taken the
form of direct action, with the notable exception of squatting. (For
a review see Basset and Short 1980). Also the bulk of protest appears
to come from those within the housing market, especially protest directed
against the state. Similarly, housing protest tends to be of a local
nature, based on local issues, and directed towards the local state.
As Corrigan (1979) has noted, "the consciousness of the great mass of
working people is around local issues". These local issues are of course
manifested as housing shortages, poor conditions and so on. However,
as we noted in the last chapter, the causes of such problems are not local

but national, and based on central government policy and changes in
the wider housing and economic systems. Protest is therefore often
based on issues which were seen to be the result of the actions taken
by the local state, as the on the spot producer and regulator of hous-
ing and housing markets. Much protest therefore is directed towards
the local state. As we have already seen the local state has some
autonomy in the housing field. Local housing authorities are democ-
ratically elected bodies, legally independent of central government.
Responsibilites for housing provision set out in statute are often ill-
defined and leave some scope for variation. Although local authorities
are required to consider housing need locally, the responsibility for
direct provision of council housing to meet these needs is limited in
general terms to situations where alternative forms of suitable accomm-
odation do not exist, or are not likely to be provided by the market.
Local authorities are also free to a great degree to manage and allocate
their houses as they see fit, and a great deal of protest has taken
place over these issues.

Given that local authorities are democratically elected, and are in
that sense accountable to the electorate, why has there been an in-
crease in housing protest in the 1960's and 1970's and protest based
on community groups, rather than on local political parties?
Hindness (1971) points to what he calls the weakness of labour party
o ⌣ Hindness (1971) working class areas of the large cities. Hindness sees
the labour party in working class areas being based often on constit-
uencies with a varied social mix. Such organisations are often dominated
by middle class constituents. Housing issues tend to be discussed in
general policy terms. Day to day problems, which are important to working
class members who live in council housing tended to be seen as not being
political, and those who raised them at meetings as being parochial and
overly self interested. "At best [these complaints] were individual cases
which the councillor would look into, but there was nothing to be disc-
ssed at ward party meetings." (Hindness 1971 p76) Thus as Hindness
concludes the increasing professionalisation of politics at national and
local levels, represents a real loss of power for some sections of the
community. This is especially true for those groups which do not comm-
unicate in professional terms. Such groups have little alternative

therefore but to form community groups, centred on specific issues,
which are outside traditional party politics. Such a case occurred in
the Gorbals, where the local Labour Party failed to take on the issue
of dampness. The situation was further complicated by the fact that
had it done so, it would have been involved in a conflict situation with
its own municipal party, who consistently had held office in Glasgow.

Section 3. - Group Formation and Non-Protest

However, we should not infer that if dissatisfaction exists, say in
housing, that a protest group will automatically be formed. The first
stage leading to collective action is a perception by consumers of
housing that there is an unmet need, or need for action by the managers
of housing to rectify a situation. Next, must come an appreciation
that organised action is both possible, and likely to be productive.
We can add to this the proviso that individual action will often have
failed. Further, the will to act collectively must be developed, and
potential supporters mobilised.

The development of a community group, of course requires not just prov-
ocation by external factors ie issues, but internal inputs, in terms
of organisation and financial backing, and often facilitative help of
an administrative nature. This is often undertaken by community workers,
who may have skills of organisation and administration not possessed by
the local community. Many groups do have community work input, and
the resources that such professionals bring may be crucial to the suc-
cess of groups. (CDP Inter Project Report 1974).

However, such professional skills, are geared towards different strat-
egies depending on the view the professionals take of society. Gurin
(quoted in Butcher 1980), cites three types of strategy, adopted by
professionals. First, is "locality development and organisation".
The goals of this approach are to induce self help and integration in
the community. The problem is seen as being a lack of communication,
and the view of society taken is a consensus one. Second, is "community
planning". The focus is on problem solving in regard to substantive
social problems. Either a consensus or conflict model of society can
be used, and a basic assumption is that change can be brought about
through rational decision making. Third, is "community action". The

goal in this approach is to change power relationships in the community. The problem is seen as being a structural one, and the strategy is to engage in conflict orientated action against the power structure. Broadly, these three strategies and views of society correspond to the representative perspective, the pluralist perspective, and the structuralist or derivationist perspectives, respectively. The type of action taken in each strategy may vary between the institutionalised and direct action as we have defined it. The Gorbals anti dampness campaign had a community work input, which was based on the third of these strategies, that

> "local working class communities must define and solve their own
> problems, control decision making, and provide the leadership
> and spokesmen for the organisations which emerge. Community action
> is the means through which working class groups gain the knowledge,
> skill and confidence to protect their own interest." (Jacobs,
> 1976 p13).

This knowledge and skill of course includes the ability to communicate effectively with the recievers of protest, in lobbying, information collection, organising petitions and so on. The reality of protest may steer groups, whichever strategy is favoured by them, toward institutional rather than direct action, initially at least. Dearlove (1973), has shown that those groups which at least get a hearing from the local authority tend to be those which councillors and officials see as being co-operative and helpful.

Thus, any groups which propose high cost measures, or indeed attempt to pressurise councillors are seen as unhelpful, self interested, and disruptive. It has been noted that much protest in the UK has started off as being based on institutional methods. Faced with an unresponsive local authority however, such protests can escalate to direct action. In such cases the protest may eventually peter out, unless as in the anti dampness campaign, the stakes are high. The costs, in terms of time and money to the protestors may be high. The local authority on the other hand has considerable resources to resist protest, as Dunleavy (1977) points out. In such cases, the groups may scale down their demands, or initiate self help schemes if they are campaigning for the provision of some kind of facility.

Such self help schemes often eventually become supported by the local
authority, and as Mason (1977) shows, this may be a case of the incor-
poration of protest. Donnier (in Mason 1977) defines incorporation as
"the complex of many pressures by which the local authority has been
able to progressively transform the aims and functions of an externally
constructed organisation with specific purposes and uses, in order to
ensure that it conforms to its own plans and needs." (p 94) This
"take over" is effected by a subtle mixture of selective attention to
acceptable demands and groups, by controlling grants and subsidies to
groups, and by allowing participation only by co-operative groups.
Again, it should be pointed out that when the stakes are high, this in-
corporation is less likely. In the anti dampness campaign for example
the only acceptable solution to the problem remained rehousing.

Section 4. - Non Protest

So far, we have concentrated on overt action, either by groups them-
selves or by local authorities. We must now consider how the basis of
protest can exist, but activity either remains at the individual level,
or fails to take place at all. We cannot necessarily assume that the
absence of protest activity implies satisfaction with existing cond-
itions, so there may be obstacles to the development of the group
consciousness, which is necessary for group action to begin.

We can first of all speculate that there may be perceived, or actual
differences of interest between those in a community, which could
mitigate against group action. Indeed, as Lambert (1975) points out,
one group in a community may see another as the cause of a problem
rather than the cause being the local authority, or government, or the
system. She cites the scapegoating of immigrants for problems in a
redevelopment area, and the diverse interests of tenants and owner-
occupiers, as making effective organisation against the council very
difficult. We can add to this, an acceptance by the working class, of
what we shall call an 'ideological hegemony'. Values are transmitted
downwards, through education, the media, politics etc. These values
tend to be supportive of those who control the institutions which
purvey values. Parkin (1972) has suggested that there are three value
systems in society - the dominant, the subordinate, and the radical.

Groups draw on these as a guide to meaning, and as a way of making sense
of the social world.

The dominant ideology, relevant to our purposes, can be considered as
the notion of 'citizenship' - that all persons are equal, and have
certain rights. This suggests individual solutions to problems, and
the promotion of self help schemes by the state. (Dearlove, 1974) The
subordinate value system is one which Parkin sees the majority of the
working class as having accepted. It is a system of compromise with
dominant interests, as expressed (in the economic sphere) as economism
in trade unions. Thus, demands are limited to wage increases, and
form no fundamental challenge to dominant interests. The radical value
system involves a structuralist analysis of the reasons for working
class conditions, and is based on local issues, and in the locality.
In housing protests, the issues are certainly perceived and expressed
locally. However, the dominant ideologies of individual help, and
citizenship, mitigate against a structuralist analysis of society, and
more militant action.

We can also consider overt action on the part of the state as being a
means of reinforcing a dominant ideology, and thereby tending to
reduce protest. In housing, the self help ideology finds expression in
the promotion of owner-occupation, as the preferred tenure. Conservat-
ive politicians are quite explicit about the positive effects of home
ownership on stability, "property ownership is valuable in itself, en-
courages independence of character, acceptance of responsibility, as
well as the savings habit." (1957, Conference Report, in Murie 1975).
At the same conference another speaker outlined the prospects if people
were not encouraged to buy their homes, "if they are not, the chances
are that the country will be littered with council estates, and that
class consciousness will increase". (Murie 1975). The idea of the
property owning democracy has been pervasive in conservative thought,
and has culminated in compulsory sales of council houses to those who
will to buy. The state sector has become a symbol of inefficiency and
bureaucracy, and increasingly the sector of the last resort. The Labour
Party, when in government has to a great extent accepted such ideology,

although there is resistence to sales of public assets at knock down prices.

Regardless of the finer points, public tenants have come to be seen, as a highly subsidised group. It seems that some council tenants have internalised such a notion. To protest therefore for more, for better housing would seem to be ungrateful. (Dearlove 1974) This could only mitigate against protest of a collective kind, and possibily of an individual kind as well. (Corrigan and Ginsburgh 1975). This is not to say that owner-occupiers do not protest. Indeed, the hugh redevelopments of the inner cities in the late 1960's precipitated many conflicts, especially over compulsory purchase orders and planning blight. (see Aldous 1972). However, generally it does seem that protest among owner-occupiers is fairly low, especially when related to housing specifically. The state housing authority is an identifiable target for protest, as the main and often the only landlord in some areas. A similar situation existed in the early part of this century, when the private rented sector was dominant. The landlords were easily identifiable as a target for protest. This is not so in the owner-occupied sector in which building societies usually have a dispersed clientele.

A number of studies have however, rejected the notion that the working class unquestioningly accept dominant values. (Moorhouse 1973, 1974, Mann 1970, 1973). These authors point to the dissillusionment of working class people with traditional democracy. This results, in a feeling of powerlessness, or pragmatic acceptance of existing social conditions, because of their powerlessness to create change. Moorhouse (1973) has however identified the basis of a counter ideology among the working class. In a survey of rent strikes in London, over the 1972 Housing Finance Act, he concluded that dominant attitudes to property were being questioned. A majority, for example, did not think that people should be allowed to own more than one home when others were homeless. 75% accepted the need for direct action by homeless families to occupy empty houses. This appears to amount to a rejection of market principles, and instead a committment to allocation on the basis of need, even where private property is involved. Mann (1970), in a literature review,

concluded that value consensus did not exist to any significant extent among the working class. Indeed, the lack of value consensus within the working class constituted a barrier to protest activity. However, he did find that the working class is more likely to support values against dominant ones, if these could be related to concrete everyday life, rather than abstract political philosophy. This would seem to be borne out by the fact that protest over collective consumption issues takes place in localities and is usually directed at the local state.

To summarise, we have seen how an increase in protest activity in the late 1960's and early 1970's can in part be attributed to the state's inability to meet ever increasing demands for higher standards by the public. The huge redevelopment schemes of the period themselves were a basis for protest. Their aftermath, in terms of poor housing conditions and so on also created dissatisfaction. Although a basis for protest may exist there is no automatic reason why protest groups will emerge. Protest may not be expressed at all, and we can assume that ideological factors do tend to inhibit protest to an extent, or protest may remain at the individual level. Crucial to the formation of protest groups appears to organisational and administrative skills, and these can be imported into a community by outsiders. These include skills in communication to make grievances heard effectively. The receivers of protest, normally the local authorities, are well placed to hold out, and attempt to undermine the protest group. Faced with such intransigence the protest group can either scale down its demands, or resort to more militant action. Overall however, protest tends to be institutionalised, even if groups use a variety of tactics. Rarely it seems, is illegal direct action used, and local authorities tend to listen groups they see as being co-operative and reasonable. We must not however see a local authority as always forming a united front. Different departments, councillors and officials, may have different interests and protest groups may be able to use this to their advantage.

Much of this, of course depends on the stakes involved. The local authority would doubtless be more willing to concede small demands. But then, the larger the stake, the more likely it is that a protest group

will form, so long as there is some reasonable chance of success. It is probably true however that much housing protest goes unrecorded, although this has been much less true in recent years, with increasing interest in protest. In the next chapter we shall examine two campaigns, the Gorbals anti dampness campaign and the squatting movement. The first as an example of protest from within the state sector, manifested locally, but part of a wider problem of dampness in post war council housing. The second we shall examine mainly in terms of Castells' theory of urban social movements, and its relevance to the UK context.

Chapter Five - The Campaigns

The Gorbals Anti-Dampness Campaign

Section 1. - A Background: Redevelopment in Glasgow

We have seen that the State's involvement in the economy and urban
development grew enormously during the post war period. In order to
understand the state's role in the housing market, and the resultant
production of built forms, we must consider urban redevelopment policy
as a whole, rather than merely housing policy itself. This is part-
icularly true in Glasgow, a city which embraced redevelopment whole-
hartedly, and utilised various types of legislation - not just the
housing acts - to facilitate redevelopment.

Up to 1969, for example, the Corporation issued more than 15,000 closing
orders, 17,500 demolition orders and actually cleared a total of about
33,500 dwellings. (Municipal Journal, November 1969). Doubtless the
poor housing conditions in Glasgow prompted the civic leaders to under-
take such massive clearance, but there were other influences at work.

Clearance of slums had progressed steadily between the wars in Glasgow
as well as in other cities. Under housing legislation, however, slums
were demolished on a worst first, piecemeal basis. Also, in the imm-
ediate post war period slum clearance was virtually abandoned, because
of pressure on resources from two over-riding aims. First, the need to
construct war damaged areas. Second, the need to solve the housing
shortage by new building.

Two reports, the Barlow Report (1937) and the Uthwatt Report (1941)
were to have profound consequences for forthcoming planning legislation
and urban renewal. . The former report stressed the need to reduce
journey to work time by redeveloping large areas at a time, at high
densities, and thereby improving the functioning of urban areas. The
Uthwatt Report sought to ease post war reconstruction by recommending
comprehensive compulsory purchase powers in war damaged areas and rec-
ognised the inadequacy of housing legislation for such use. Both
reports stressed the need for comprehensive planning, to replace so
called obsolete areas with spatial layouts which were seen to be more

conducive to economic development.

The main recommendations of these reports were embodied in the 1944
Town and Country Planning Act. A further Act in 1947 consolidated the
need for urban planning in the concept of the Comprehensive Development
Area. CDA's, as they were known, could be declared by local authorities
to deal with war damaged or obsolete areas, or to achieve any other
purpose outlined in development plans. Thus, local authorities were for
the first time given powers to redevelop areas even if private develop-
ers were interested. Previously, the local authority could only step
in if private capital refused to develop.

CDA declarations were initially confined to the war damaged areas of
the south east of England. After the post war housing shortage had
been solved, in the view of politicians, attention turned to slum
clearance. In 1954 the Corporation of Glasgow decided that a CDA in
the Hutchesontown area should be established to test the efficiency of
the new powers. These eventually proved to be much simpler and more
effective than the housing legislation in enabling clearance to pro-
gress. By 1957 there were 29 CDA's in Glasgow. These decisions coin-
cided with the government's agreement to permit increased resources to
be devoted to slum clearance, rather than for general needs. In the
view of the Corporation, the Gorbals area, like many central city areas
in Glasgow, "is one of bad layout and obsolete development, and that
the only satisfactory way of dealing with it is to define it as an area
of comprehensive development under the Town and Country Planning Act
1947." (Gorbals CDA written statement 1956). The CDA was to be "a
complete planning unit, bounded by existing or proposed principal tra-
ffic routes, rivers or open spaces, to be developed as central area
precincts." (Hart, 1968).

In Glasgow, as in other cities then, CDA legislation came to be seen as
an opportunity to stimulate industrial and commercial development,
rather than merely for being for slum clearance. The existing spatial
layout was considered to be unsuitable for modern industrial development,

having industrial sites near residential areas, and poor transport
arrangements, particularly poor roads. Industry was to be separated
from residential areas by zoning, industrial sites provided, and
extensive infrastructure installed. This was intended to increase
the inflow of industry to the city, while at the same time improving
the qualtiy of life for the inhabitants. An extensive system of motor-
ways was envisaged for Glasgow, and a proposed inner ring road bisected
a number of CDA's. It was felt that development would take place at
access points to the road, and that the provision of community facilities
combined with new residential areas would make these formerly obsolete
areas prosperous. (Interim Report on Glasgow Inner Ring Road, 1962)

As we have seen already by the late 1950's, government policies and
subsidies encouraged the building of high density, often high rise flats
rather than low density low rise designs. In Glasgow, the Corporation
was anxious to rehouse at densities much lower than the then 400 persons
per acre, but at a higher density than central government considered
desirable. While encouraging slum clearance, the government was also
promoting Green Belts, to contain the cities. Glasgow corporation through-
out the 1950's, feared that overspill schemes, with a consequent loss
of population would weaken the city, and its rating base. Not least,
the Labour administration feared the undermining of their political
power base, as overspill pushed Labour voters beyond the city boundaries.
(Hart 1968).

Therefore, Glasgow during the 1950's maintained pressure on central
government for the approval of higher densities than the 150 rooms per
acre (165 persons) the government advocated. A request by the Corpor-
ation in 1959 for the raising of density in the Anderston CDA to 167
rooms per acre was firmly refused by the Department of Health. It was
pointed out that building at such densities would be extremely expensive
and that open space and sunlighting standards would be reduced to the
minimum. The Corporation therefore had eventually to accept the govern-
ment's density level, one which still required high density building in
the inner city.

This insistence by central government on the maximum density figure
meant that after land had been reserved for other uses, the land
alloted to housing could not contain more than 40,000 dwellings.
(Municipal Journal, November 1969). Thus, we can begin to see the logic
of housing development in Glasgow, inner city redevelopment, the build-
ing of huge peripheral housing estates and a minimal reliance on over-
spill.

The production of housing by the local state is then subject to
numerous influences, from central government, various lobbies, and pol-
itical expediency at the local level. Government insistence on
densities, its subsidy system which encouraged high rise building, and
the imposition of unrealistic cost yardsticks, conditioned the type
and the quality of house building at the local level. The perceived
necessity to maintain a Green Belt, and the political necessity to main-
tain a power base, necessitated high density redevelopment in central
areas, and massive peripheral estates just inside the city boundaries.

A genuine need to replace much sub-standard housing as quickly as possible
combined with a shortage of building labour led to the use of industr-
ialised building systems using new techniques, designs and materials.
This trend, which was encouraged by large building firms and central
government, led to numerous problems after habitation, of which the
Roman Point collapse was the most spectacular. Dampness, if less spec-
tacular is a rather more general problem in system built flats, and
much housing protest has centred on this issue. The situation was further
exacerbated by the installation of electric heating systems especially
in high flats, which low income tenants increasingly found to be too
expensive to operate.

Section 2. The Brave New World: The Gorbals

The Gorbals is situated immediately south of the River Clyde, just to
the south of the city centre. It is divided into two parts,
Laurieston to the west and Hutchesontown to the east. Both areas, still
with CDA status today, are nearly complete, but have had a chronic
lack of community facilities. The total population of the area has
fallen drastically since the 1930's, but especially during the 1960's.

Whilst CDA powers allowed complete redevelopment, clearance actually proceeded on a piecemeal basis, a process which led to the area being blighted for many years. Although redevelopment is almost complete the area induces a sense of alienation in the visitor as in the residents. Like many other redeveloped areas,

> "this is often an area of multi-storey housing, adjacent to factories, with meagre amenities......the whole is put down as scattered individual units in a vast sea of land, lacking the homogeneity which kept cities together in the past, and experiencing a self created micro-climate of wind and cold. It is the world of the car and the bus - pedestrians must pick their way over long distances, through a maze of roads, exposed to wind and rain on the overpass and to physical attack on the underpass." (Finlayson 1977 p8).

Apart from such environmental haz ards, the Gorbals has a variety of social and economic problems. Despite the bold schemes of the sixties, unemployment is well above the national average and has been consistently so for many years. Income levels therefore, tend to be lower than the national average. This is possibly due to the lack of skills in the area, but it has been estimated that one in five of the population are wholly or partly dependent on social security and welfare benefits for their main source of income. (Bryant 1978).

Section 3. The System: Tracoba in the Gorbals

The Hutchesontown 'E' development consists of twelve blocks of 7 storey low rise deck access type and two 24 storey high rise blocks. There are 1,143 flats in the development. 759 are in the low rise, and 384 in the high rise. The flats were built between 1969 and 1973 by the large contractor Gilbert Ashe using a system of building known as Tracoba.

The flats are constructed of pre-fabricated heavy weight concrete panels and solid pre-cast floors, walls and ceilings. The external walls are of sandwich construction, with a filling of polystyrene for insulation. The system was reported to compare favourably with other systems with regard to economy of production. It was developed in France, and is based on the use of a site factory in which large pre-cast concrete

elements are manufactured on site without transport restrictions, "and with only limited capital outlay, largely offset by savings in transport costs." (Daiment 1967 p21). The site factory can therefore be designed to suit the specific requirements of the project, thereby ensuring high productivity coupled with the necessary rate of production. Heating systems can be incorporated in floors at the factory stage, as can windows, external finish and there was no need for plastering of internal walls. The possibilities for cutting labour costs using such systems are obvious, with the potential for increased profitability for private contractors.

Tracoba system flats have been built in France, Algeria and elsewhere in the UK, and the SSHA have built 900 in the city. The system seems to have been successful in France but of course climatic differences make comparisons pointless. The system was improved by a government agency in France in 1958 and first used in 1959. The National Building Agency issued an appraisal certificate for the system in 1966, but this did not include the use of Tracoba for low rise flats.

Section 4. Dampness or Condensation?

The term dampness is used in Glasgow to describe certain symptoms of excessive moisture retention in homes, wet, black walls, fungus on interior furnishings, damp beds and unpleasant smells. The cause of the problem is condensation: this has never been in dispute, but the reason why these particular flats are prone to such effects most certainly has been. It seems that the first complaints about dampness were intimated to the contractors only a few months after the first tenants had moved on. During the first year, the responsibility for the maintenance of the flats rests with the contractor, although the recipient of the complaints would have been a clerk of works employed by the Corporation. Despite numerous complaints, the flats were passed as being fit for human habitation, after being inspected by the new owners. No attempt appears to have been made to ascertain the cause of the dampness, since the cause was considered to be the living habits of the tenants.

Throughout a long campaign, the local authority continued to maintain such a position, despite considerable evidence to the contrary. Officials

accused tenants of excessive heavy breathing, of over occupancy,
of hanging up wet clothes and numerous other unusual actions. The
solution appeared to be, accordingly to the officials, in the hands
of the tenants. They were often told to open all windows and turn
the heating up full. Subsequent events showed that the actual cause
of dampness in these flats was due to construction faults, as well as
the use of dense concrete as a building material. The lack of natural
ventilation, defects in ventilation systems, and massive increases in
electricity charges further exacerbated the problem.

Numerous studies have been made of dampness in these flats: the most
extensive and authoritative was made by the National Building Agency
in 1976. The investigation concluded,

> "the problems of Hutchesontown 'E' are not due to any one factor.
> Deck access type blocks are particularly prone to cold bridging
> problems because of the complicated design and construction details
> around the access decks. As in Hutchesontown, they often contain
> flats which have additional exposed surfaces because of the access
> decks and are, as a result difficult to insulate and heat."
> (NBA Technical Report, 1976).

The so called cold bridging problem appears to be the key problem
however. At the joints between walls and floor the polystyrene insul-
ation sandwich is missing, presumably because of the need for strength
at these stress points. Thus, the flats are difficult to heat,
particularly those adjacent to access decks, or those with many exter-
ior surfaces. Moisture tends to appear round such areas, and the
resultant fungus, smell and so on quickly follow. The living habits of
tenants may have at times exacerbated the problem, but certainly did not
cause it. The Corporation's solution, of heating being turned full up,
with windows open is one that is financially out of reach of most ten-
ants in the area. An architect called in by the anti-dampness campaign
concluded, " It is theoretically possible to remove all the moisture
from a room by means of a high rate of ventillation, but the discomfort
caused by such a system would not be practicable". (Wilson 1975).
In any case, if the rate of air change slowed down - while the tenant
was out at work say - condensation would continue to build up, despite

good heating and thermal insulation.

Before we consider the campaign it is necessary to mention the very
real physical and mental distress that was caused to tenants by the
dampness in these flats. Common sense denotes that such an environment
- mould on walls, damp furniture and beds etc - would not be healthy.
Local GPs felt that the dampness was a health hazzard but they could not
say that it caused medical complaints. Upper respitory disease,
rheumatism, athsma and some other conditions are however made worse by
dampness. The depressive effects of living in such conditions no doubt
affected the house bound and housewives. The constant smell, staining
of decorations and furnishings and so on must have been extremely
frustrating and embarrassing. Some rooms were unusable, thus effect-
ively many houses were overcrowded, with the occupants sleeping in the
living rooms.

It should be added that many other complaints were voiced by tenants
concerning the design and living conditions in the flats. Poor sound
proofing, lack of privacy, flooding of verandas, lifts not working
regularly, and lack of play space made the flats, in many tenant's
opinion a total disaster.

Section 5. The Campaign

It is important to remember as we consider the campaign that the cause
of dampness in these flats lies in construction and design faults and
not with the tenants themselves. Dampness is now acknowledged to be
a widespread problem in state housing in Glasgow and in other cities.
It is to the credit of the Gorbals campaigners that they were instru-
mental in achieving this realisation.

The Gorbals has a history of organised protest. Numerous issues dev-
eloped during the period of redevelopment, especially resistance to
complusory purchase orders. Some tenants held out for various reasons,
often with the help of others, who picketed the property to prevent
sheriff officers from entering. As we have seen, complaints about
dampness emerged shortly after the Tracoba flats were built. It soom
became obvious to the tenants, by word of mouth, and because of arti-

cles in the local newspaper, that the problem was a widespread one.
However the two local tenant associations, decided that a public mee-
ting should be held to assess the severity of the problem and to plan
further action. It should be noted that this step was taken because of
the non-response of the local authority to individual complaints. There
may be a number of reasons why the period of individual protest and
complaint continued for some time ie some three to four years, before
group action was taken. First, many tenants had come from poor hous-
ing conditions and had expected high standards from their new housing.
Perhaps the realisation that dampness was prevalent therefore, was
psychologically difficult for tenants to accept. Second, since damp-
ness is a progressive condition, it took some time for the problem to
be recognised as a widespread one: individual action therefore per-
sisted for some time. Third, a feeling that the local authority should,
and eventually would do something to remedy the situation. The author-
ity was, after all a Labour one, and no doubt many of the tenants in
the area had voted for the Labour Party. They therefore expected that
some action would be taken. Possibly also, ideological factors, which
we discussed in the last chapter as well as the difficulty of organising
contributed to such a delay. However, to counter this is the feeling
among tenants, and indeed among most labour councillors, that public
tenants have a right to expect decent accommodation. A public meeting
was organised by the tenants' associations in may 1975, in a local
school. Officials of the corporation were invited to attend but decl-
ined. This reflected the official line that if there was a problem
it was a condensation problem that existed because of the lifestyles
of the tenants. It is likely, that during the period of individual
complaint, this was the response that tenants received from their local
authority. Again, this could have contributed to lengthening the period
of individual complaint.

120 tenants attended the meeting. A report by a lecturer in building
science (Wilson, 1975), who had been called in by the campaign, confir-
med the tenants' suspicion that the problem was one of design and
construction faults. Also, one tenant had begun to withhold his rent
a few months previously, an action which attracted national publicity.

It was pointed out at the meeting that a threatened eviction had not
taken place, although at this stage no other tenants joined in such
a rent strike.

The major decision which came out of the meeting was that a delegation
of tenants would go to the City Chambers with a petition, the specialist
report, various press cuttings and photographs of the living conditions.
As far as the campaignmers were aware, no action was taken by the local
authority even after this visit.

There having been no response from the local authority, a further meet-
ing was called in October 1975, at which at least 150 people gathered.
Various student reports, from the local information centre, indicated
that the mood of the meeting was one of extreme anger and frustration.
A dampness campaign proper was formed, and an organising committee was
elected with a remit to, amongst other things, examine the possibilities
of taking legal action against the authority. Three weeks later, legal
action was instituted. The committee was composed of local residents,
and was advised by community workers from the Laureston information
centre, a local resource and social work training unit. The committee
was composed of some outstanding individuals, who were well able to
communicate with a rather intransigent local authority. The tone of
correspondence throughout the campaign from the committee to the local
authority becomes increasingly one of frustration during this period.
It is hardly surprising therefore that as in other campaigns the act-
ivity escalated, to one of taking legal action.

A letter was sent to the local authority intimating to them that there
was a nuisance present in the flats owned and managed by them. It was
stated that they were in breach of their statutory obligation in terms
of the Public Health Act 1897 and they were given 14 days to abate the
nuisance. This drew an immediate response from the local authority
and 6 officials appeared to inspect the houses but no further action
was taken. The difficulty was that when the local authority ows and
manages the houses, it has a twin role of the accused and prosecutor.
Prosecutions would be undertaken by the environmental health inspector,

and would be against the housing department, as an agent of the local authority. The ubiquitous position of the former department should be obvious, let alone the dilema faced by individual inspector, with their own careers in mind. No action was taken by the local authority after the inspection took place, either to remedy the nuisance, or to even recognise the problem.

The local authority did however respond by advising tenants of how to deal with 'condensation' problems. The Corporations's stance had not changed since their initial response, that the problem was due to tenants' living habits. A caravan costing some £10,000 was purchased to tour the city and issue leaflets on how to combat condensation, and give advice as to how to deal with the problem. This rather belated response on the part of the local authority, appears to have served to further agitate the campaigners in the Gorbals.

The caravan spent two days in the Gorbals: the response of the tenants was to picket it, and publicise their own views on the causes of the problem. The demonstration succeeded in bringing the campaign to the attention of the press, radio and television. The TV coverage included a visit to a flat which had a particularly severe dampness problem. Media coverage continued into 1976, and preparation continued for the forthcoming legal action against the authority. It could be said in fact that the use of the media to publicise the problem was one of the main strategies used by the campaigners to put pressure on the local authority.

Suddenly, with no warning to the tenants, an official response was forthcoming. The Chief Executive of the council announced that he had ordered a fullscale enquiry into the condensation problem in Hutchesontown 'E' flats. It is possible that the Chief Executive as the potential recipient of a writ, was becoming rather worried at the inaction of the authority in general, and the architectural department in particular. The report was published in June 1976 and was significant in that it contained the recognition that modern building methods may have contributed to the problem. However, the lifestyle of tenants and increases

in feul costs were also cited as being contributory factors. The
report admitted that there had been a recent upsurge in complaints
about condensation problems. The solution in part, was seen to be the
use of landlord controlled central heating, to avoid temperature
extremes. The Tracoba flats, the report pointed out, were at least
up to the specifications laid down by the Scottish Development Department.
Therefore, the local authority would be able to mount a legal defence
against claims, except if negligence in construction of the flats could
be proven. The report concluded that the local authority should do
everything practicable to combat dampness and also to discuss with the
SDD, the NBA, and the Building Research Establishment, to decide upon
the best course of action. The compilation of this report, which only
amounted to a few pages, was undoubtedly a tactical move by the local
authority, both to play for time, and to preclude legal action. By
admitting the problem, and expressing an intention to remedy it, the
corporation was in effect preparing a legal defence. The tenants could
not claim that dampness was being ignored. However, at this time, the
authority apparently approached central government to ask them to con-
tribute towards necessary repairs. (Bryant, 1978). It should be noted
that the seeming intransigence of the local authority can at least
partly be explained by the fact that the stakes were high. The flats
in question represented a large investment by the local authority,
and of course contributed to income in the form of rent payments by
tenants. It may also have been that an admission that dampness was due
to structural problems, would have been seen by councillors and offic-
ials, as an admission of incompetence by the local authority. It
appears however to have been the local authority's strategy to max-
imise rent income, and also to pressurise central government to contr-
ibute to repairs. This central government apparently refused to do,
and the local authority had no alternative but to fight on, to neg-
otiate as good a deal for themselves as possible. Unfortunately for
the local authority, as time went on the stakes for the tenants were
becoming bigger. Existing dampness was worsening, and gradually more
houses were being affected. Worsening conditions, may have further
incensed existing members of the campaign, and the spread of dampness
doubtless induced more tenants to join the campaign. In a sense, time

was on the side of the campaigners, rather than on the side of the
local authority. We saw in the last chapter how local authorities
have the ability to sit out campaigns, which they know incur costs
to the participants. In this sense the campaign was unusual, although
as we shall see later this advantage disappeared.

The Chief Executive's report therefore was an attempt to undermine
the tenants' ability to take effective legal action. A further
obstacle to legal aid, occurred when a request to the legal aid
committee, by the campaigners for permission for one tenant to bring
a test case under the Public Health Acts, was refused. The test case
proposal was considered an abuse of the scheme, because it was being
used to circumvent the paying of an action by a tenants association.
Solicitors acting on behalf of the campaign appealed against this
decision, but the appeal was unsuccessful.

Although this action was unsuccessful, the local authority in June
1976 issued a summons against the tenant who had been withholding his
rent, since early in the year. The solicitor advising the campaign
decided that this action should be vigorously defended. The court
could be used as a platform on which the right of the tenant to with-
hold his rent because his house was uninhabitable, could be tested.
The potential gains were great, exposure of the authority's case, and
if the tenant won, a moral victory. The local authority however pre-
empted this by dropping the case and conceeding the tenant's right
to withhold rent pending repairs. An admission was made by the sol-
icitor for the authority that there was an apparent defect in the
flat and that repairs would be carried out. A similar case was also
conceeded by the authority a few months later. It is not clear why
the authority conceeded these cases, but no doubt the admissions in the
Chief Executive's Report had an influence on the decision to do so.
Also in June the campaign was informed that a survey was to be carried
out by the National Building Agency. The NBA had been involved both
in assessing the Tracoba design, and passing the Gorbals flats as fit
for human habitation. At first the tenants were not pleased at the
survey being done by an interested party. The Report was published

in April of the following year. The NBA report placed greater
emphasis on technical and design factors than on living habits. The
proper maintenance of the ventil ation system was recommended,
electric ventil ation fans in kitchens, and considerably more insu-
lation in top flats and those flats near access decks. The NBA
reported that 270 out of 759 flats were affected by dampness, a figure
considerably less than that claimed by the tenants. Nevertheless
the report was a considerable victory for the tenants and confirmed
many of the arguments they had been using. More crucially, while
the report was being compiled, significant concessions were made by
the authority.

It must be said that during the campaign, the relations between the
authority and the campaigners were strained. The tone of correspondence
between the protagonists was extremely curt. The authority attempted
to give out as little information as possible, especially when the
threat of legal action was posed. The campaign found itself corres-
ponding with a number of departments, until eventually the department
of legal services began to deal with all correspondence. Both the
administrators and at times the authority as a whole attempted to
undermine the legitimacy of the campaign, and the representativeness
of its leaders.

A certain tension existed, it seems, between the district councillor's
role as councillor and member of the housing committee. She was
continually defensive with regard to the campaign's claims, and had
extremely little contact with campaign leaders. Frequent attempts
were made by the authority to undermine the campaign, and question the
motives of the leaders. This involved a questionning of the technical
validity of the campaigners' analysis of dampness. Also the motives
of leaders were questioned, they were accussed of being self interested
and not representative of the Gorbals community. To counter such claims,
and allow for discussion of future tactics, a public meeting was
arranged. 750 people attended, as did all the political representatives,
and press and television. The numbers and the strength of feeling at
the meeting indicated the severity of the problem, as dampness affected

more and more flats. The politicians, including the local MP expressed their full support for the campaign, and said that they considered the flats to be uninhabitable. Given the size of the turnout, they probably had little option.

A number of important developments resulted. First the organising committee was re-elected and the mandate for the campaign therefore was confirmed, beyond doubt. Second, the Minister responsible for housing visited the area soon afterwards, almost certainly as a result of the publicity surrounding the meeting. Third, and most important, the local authority agreed to re-house tenants who were in damp houses, and not to re-let flats which were so affected.

Thus, the meeting marked a turning point in the campaign. It appeared that a major victory had been won. However, there was to follow another period of non-response from the local authority. Letters were unanswered, damp houses were re-let and offers were made to tenants not in damp houses. Tenants who had joined the rent strike received threats of eviction. After a further public meeting the campaign leaders decided to force the hand of the authority by a campaign of direct action, and an appeal against the rateable value of the flats in the scheme. Tenants picketed the housing management offices in February 1977. Apart from some temporary improvement in replies to correspondence this did not achieve much. A large meeting in the Citizens Theatre in May 1977 was organised, and 900 - 1000 people attended.

A series of grievances and demands were agreed at the meeting. These included claims for compensation, rent reduction for those in damp houses, no re-letting of damp houses, a request for an NBA survey into other housing problems in the area, and the setting up of a Parliamentary Enquiry into dampness. Following a meeting between campaign representatives and officials of the housing management department, a new set of policy guidelines were instituted. No damp houses were to be re-let, a tenant's previous period of tenancy was to be included in the qualifying time for a new tenancy, and tenants were to be allowed to return to the area of the original accommodation. These were not insignificant

concessions from a rather rigid housing department. Indeed, these ran
contrary to stated policy, and amounted to a significant victory for the
campaign.

The meeting in the Citizens had given a mandate to institute a rates
appeal for two reasons. First because it was felt that the rates were
too high for damp houses, and that the change in circumstances required
for such a reduction had taken place. Second, the publicity surrounding
such an appeal would potentially put more pressure on the authority.
The appeal lasted two days and was held in September 1977. A large
procession of tenants escorted the witnesses, and the exhibits through
the streets to the Court. Various tenants, all the political repres-
entatives and experts appeared as witnesses. The advocate for the
assessors department used the argument that the campaign was unrepres-
entative, and that not all the flats were damp. The valuation appeal
committee published their decision a few weeks later. Reductions were
awarded for some 500 flats, excluding those not recommended for
remedial work by the NBA. The reductions were small, between 5 - 7½%:
this however, is fairly normal in such cases and still amounted to
a considerable political and moral victory for the tenants. It
probably also put more pressure on the authority to deal with the re-
housing issue more effectively.

Ironically, the re-housing of tenants was a source of faltering
support for the campaign. It was literally losing its members, esp-
ecially those who contributed from day to day with routine activities.
These activities of course formed the basis of the campaign, and incl-
uded rallying support and fund raising. Also, the constant campaigning
was beginning to take a toll on the energy and morale of the organising
committee. After re-housing had begun then we could say that the time
advantage had passed back to the local authority. The campaigners
decided that the campaign would continue but on a low key basis. Two
committees were set up, one to deal with re-housing and the other to
deal with compensation claims. In 1977 the authority had conceded in
principle the right to compensation for damaged furniture etc. and
removal expenses. Such compensation amounted to a lump sum payment, and

a one third remission of rent, backdated to the date for a tenant's complaint about dampness could be substantiated. Again, these amounted to substantial concessions from the authority, although actual compensation claims have been for higher amounts, and considerable dispute has taken place over the past two years. Indeed, the compensation limit has trebled and higher claims are considered by the authority. As tenants are re-housed, conditions for those remaining in the flats deteriorate and clearance is now being done on a block by block, level by level basis. However, such arrangements appear to be continually negotiable, and continually contradicted by individual cases. The fear of further legal action does however, appear to be keeping the authority on its toes, at least when dealing with the campaign rather that individual tenants. The main role of the campaign is now a negotiating, low key one, as watch dog over the current housing issues. Until recently the housing department appeared to have regressed into splendid isolation. Further negotiations however established clearer criteria for re-housing and compensation, and the attitude of the department has changed to one of rather more co-operativeness.

The Gorbals campaign was one in which many forms of protest activity occurred, and this may have been one if its strengths. Lobbying, petitions, technical information gathering, rent strikes and demonstrations were all used as a means of protest. We can conclude that the campaign was highly successful. Tenants are being re-housed, under favourable conditions not normally extended to transfer applicants, such as a better choice of area, and the option of returning to the tenan's previous area. These are no small concessions from an authority which normally rigidly adheres to an allocation and transfer policy which has been passed by the council.

The victory however, was not a complete one. Some tenants are still living in damp houses, and compensation is often inadequate to cover actual losses. The local authority's stance was generally one of intransigence, and much activity had to take place even before small concessions were made. If there were divisions within the local authority, between departments or officials and councillors, on the issue of dampness, then these were not obvious to the campaigners. Perhaps

the importance of the issue promoted unity or a pretence of unity to outsiders, especially after the threat of legal action.

We shall draw further conclusions from this particular campaign in chapter 6, particularly with regard to what we can learn about the applicability to protest activity of the perspectives we have examined previously. Meanwhile we shall consider the squatting movement as a form of organised protest.

Section 6. A Note on Squatting

We have, already shows that during the late 1960's andearly 1970's protest activity including housing protest, appears to have increased considerably and that such protest was increasingly directed towards the state, as supplier and regulator of housing. By examining squatting campaigns, it is possible to show that this was also true in termsof protest activity from those outside the housing market. It is also the case that even where empty private property existed, the incidence of squatting was small, and activity focused on state property. We shall consider whether squatting, as a form of direct action had any effects in terms of affecting state policy. The relevance of Castells' theory of urban social movements for such an analysis shall also be taken up.

Squatting is not a new activity. As a response to homelessness it has a long history and dates back to before the middle ages at least. In the post second world war period the immediate post war housing crisis appears to have prompted squatting often by demobilised service men, in empty army camps.

Squatting requires of course, not only the existence of the homeless, but the existence of empty property. In chaper 3 we saw how homelessness has been a persistent problem, despite massive state building, and that in 1977 there were some 550,000 to 770,000 empty properties in the UK. In 1971 there were 675,000. (Wates, 1980). There are many reasons for the existence of empty property in both the public and private sectors. In the public sector, a vacancy rate of 4% is considered by most local authorities to be reasonable, and inevitable when property

is being rehabilitated or is between lets. Properties purchased for
slum clearance, or road schemes or other forms of redevelopment are
also often left empty. Delays in purchasing because of legal compl-
ications, and often the sheer scale of redevelopment because of
councils pressed for money, often leads to some property lying empty
for long periods. In the late 1960's the switch from redevelopment
to rehabiliation may also have meant that property lay empty, awaiting
rehabilitation, rather than having been demolished. (Additional
reasons for the existence of empty property in the public sector are
discussed in chapter 3 p 39 - 39).

In the private sector, property can also lie empty between lets, or
between purchases. State activity, such as delays in processing
planning applications, or the creation of blighted areas because of
uncertainty as to future uses, can also lead to private property re-
maining empty. However, it would appear that a major cause of empty
property in the London area at least, was property speculation. In
the early 1970's property prices soared. In some areas landlords
attempted to evict low income tenants in order to sell their proper-
ties, often improved with the aid of government grants, to wealthier
newcomers. This process of gentrification transformed a number of
areas in London, and in other cities. The boom in property prices
therefore, increased the importance of property as an investment asset.
Property development companies attempted to buy up areas of housing,
hoping to redevelop, or refurbish for more profitable uses. Property
could therefore be left empty for long periods, as land and property
prices rose dramatically. Returns could be realised, either by re-
furbishing houses and then re-selling them, or demolishing them and
building high rent office blocks. Property then, came to be seen as a
financial rather than a social asset. As we saw in Chapter 3, of
72,000 empty properties in London, 60,000 were privately owned.

Given such a situation, we could expect that squatting would have been
a phenomenon which was mainly confined to the private sector, at least
in London. However, this was not the case and the vast majority of
squatting took place in public property. This is in a sense, to be

expected as the state has gradually come to be seen as the agent responsible for homelessness and empty housing - and is an easily identifiable target. The concentration of activity in the public sector therefore tends to confirm Castells' assertion that state involvement in collective consumption does tend to politicise areas of life which formerly were taken for granted, being controlled by the market.

If we consider that the stakes involved were the rights of landlords to keep their property empty while many were homeless, then we can see that squatting raised an extremely important issue. The principle of ownership is one on which much depends, in a capitalist society. Indeed, Marxists argue that the concentration of property ownership forms the basis of the capitalist economic system. (see Westergaard & Resler, 1975). Had squatting taken place in private property to any great extent, this could have been seen as a challenge to the fundamental principle of ownership. In Moorhouse's (1973) survey of tenants on rent strike, there was a questioning of property rights, and a feeling that squatting, in certain circumstances were justified.

Most squatting took place however, in publicly owned property and the political movement which developed did so in opposition to the state, rather than to private owners. Indeed, Bailey (1975) shows how the beginning of squatting as a political movement developed partly because of the inadequacies of the state's attempts to cater for the homeless. Under the 1968 National Assistance Act, the local authorities were obliged to provide temporary accommodation for those in urgent need. Part III accommodation as it was known, often involved the splitting up of families, and consisted of hostel living, often under strict conditions. Councils could interpret 'temporary' to mean a period of three months, after which the family could be evicted, and the children taken into care. Bailey shows how some families decided to squat in the hostels after this period, and husbands also moved in. Eventually, after various court actions, conditions in such hostels were improved, and the attention of the homeless turned to empty state property, in order to escalate the campaign. It appears to have been led by a small group of politically motivated activists at least initially. The

majority of squatters, appear not to have been politically motivated, and the obvious main reason for squatting was the need for accommodation.

The point is, that because of the state's involvement in housing, and the expectation that it should provide for the homeless, a potentially major challenge to property rights was deflected to protest against the state. The issue became the existence of empty state property, and the bureaucratic mis-management that this implied. The right of private landlords to keep their property empty appears not to have been challenged.

There were attempts however, to enable the state to requisition empty private property by means of a Bill introduced to Parliament by Frank Allaun, MP on a number of occasions. The Bill was designed to allow local authorities to take into public ownership property unoccupied for 6 months or more, the owner being entitled to compensation equal to the rateable value of the house. The Bill however, was never made law. Some local authorities themselves, did use existing powers to attempt to bring property into use. 24 out of 33 local authorities in London, used their powers to charge full rates on empty property, a power they received in 1974. 16 out of 33 local authorities used compulsory purchase orders to purchase empty private property, and these were confirmed by central government if the property had been empty for two months or more, and there was a need for its use as accommodation. (Wates, 1980).

Thus, if squatters themselves failed to challenge private property rights, the state fared little better. This is not to say that squatting served no purpose. Wates (1980) estimated that at any time 30,000 to 50,000 people are squatting, who would otherwise be homeless, or forced to use undesirable accommodation. It could also be argued that protest over Part III accommodation contributed to the passing of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, although there were many other factors involved, including the impact of well organised pressure groups within the traditional political system. We should remember that the vast majority of squatters occupied public property which was in very

poor condition, and often awaiting rehabilitation or demolition. Even
the introduction of licensed squatting by local authorities cannot
really be considered to be a major concession on their part. The local
authorities did however become more concerned to utilise such short
life property, and indeed were urged to do so by central government,
even if it was not of a high standard. (See p 49). This of course was
in keeping with central government policy at the time, a policy which
favoured rehabilitation. Indeed, in some areas housing associations
had been set up to manage such short life property, with financial
help from central government. It could be argued that such management
of hous ing had the effect of de-politicising the use of empty public
stock, by removing it from the control of the local authorities.
(Swann, 1975) Their boards of management are often not composed of
tenants, and Merret (1980) concludes that "they have done nothing that
the local authorities could not have done with the same capital finance
used to finance the 'third arm'." (p 119) They are therefore unaccou-
ntable bodies, in a democratic sense, although they receive funds from
the state. The local electorate therefore have little control over
their policies. (Swann 1975).

Thus, we can see that the effects of squatting have been considerable,
in terms of the number of people housed and the use of habitable
property by those excluded from the traditional housing markets. We
can also confirm Castells' assertion that where direct action occurs
over collective consumption issues, it occurs in the public sector. It
is difficult to see, however, that such action has revolutionary
implications. Attempts to attack private property rights by direct act-
ion would seem to have more revolutionary potential, yet no movement
developed. Similarly, attempts to usurp these rights within the
state itself failed. We can also conclude that the state's action in
this case, tended to diffuse protest by licensing squatting, and fund-
ing housing associations to utilise short life property. It is diffi-
cult however to see that these amounted to major concessions by the
state even if the management practices of the local authorities were
altered as a consequence. Indeed it may be that the most effective
influence on the state to manage its stock more efficiently came from

traditional pressure groups operating inside the traditional legal
system, even if the publicity surrounding squatting made their task
easier. Thus, social change, in this case many have been initiated
by direct action, but this action was not completely successful. There
were other influences at work, within the traditional political
system, which may have been equally effective in changing housing
management policy. The fundamental issues in the private sector re-
mained unchallenged. The mere extension of the role of the state into
the economy therefore, appears to be no guarantee of an attack on
the fundamentals of the capitalist system.

Chapter Six. Summary & Conclusions

In the first two chapters, we examined five perspectives of the state,
as a preliminary, to gain an understanding of the institution towards
which much protest is directed, at least in the housing field. Each
perspective was found to have a particular view of the local and central
states, and this largely determines its capacity for analysing protest.
We also considered the five views of the state, in the context of
their explanatory power to account for the beginnings of, and continued
involvement with the state in housing policy.

We rejected the representational perspective, on the grounds that the
state appeared to react to pressure, rather than purely electoral
considerations. Also, this perspective gave us no means of dealing with,
and accounting for, direct action by groups. Indeed, as we saw it
could be disillusionment with existing political institutions that has
contributed to the rise of community protest groups. The pluralist
perspective does allow an analysis of conflict, but limits the area of
conflict to a narrowly defined institutionalised type, within the
traditional political system. Pressure groups are seen to operate
within this system, and are relatively enduring and accepted. There
appears to be no place for local community groups who take up specific
issues, and then fade away. Both these perspectives see the state,
and the local state as being neutral and responsive to pressure. We
therefore must reject these. The corporatist managerialist perspective
appears to see the rise of the state as being accounted for by the
increasing need for bureaucratic planning, and sees democracy as merely
a means of legitimating such decision taking. The state is seen as
being dominant, and controlling capital. There is little evidence for
this. The existence of central planning does not imply such control .
Associated with the corporatist view of the central state is the
managerialist perspective on the local state. Bureaucrats are seen
to largely be in control of the local state, and again local democracy
merely legitimised this. Leading local members are seen to have con-
siderable power however, as administration assumes a corporate form.
This approach has much to commend it, as a means of analysing decision
taking within the local state. Such decision taking appears to be

increasingly bureaucratic and technical, rather than political. It
requires research, of course to assess to what extent this is so.
(See Sandbach 1980). In the field of housing as we saw in Chapter
3, both the central and local states appeared to see the solution to
the housing crisis as being technical, with reliance on new methods
and designs. Such decisions were taken by experts, with questionnable
influence being wqilded by politicians. (Young, 1974). However,
such approaches fail to consider generally, the influence of wider
societal structures in determining the context of decision taking, in
which bureaucrats operate. We shall however, find this type of analy-
sis to be a useful one in explaining the form housing protest has
taken in the UK.

The view of the state taken by the managerialist/corporatist approach
is inadequate. We must turn to the functionalist/structuralist persp-
ective to gain insight into the part the state plays in society.
As we saw this perspective, as an ideal type, takes a functionalist
view of the state and sees it as serving the interests of the dominant
faction of the dominant class ie monopoly capital. It could be said
that the representative and pluralist perspectives also take a
functionalist view of the local state, but not one based on a class
analysis of society. In such a view the local state is seen to per-
form functions which are necessary for capital accummulation, but
are unprofitable. Thus, the state is forced to step in - since after

all, it serves the interests of capital. There is some truth in this,
the state for example stepped intothe housing marked when private inves-
tment became unprofitable, and failed to produce housing of a reasonable
standard. Housing expenditure can be categorised as social consumption
expenditure, the effect of which is to reduce the costs of reproduction
of labour to capital, by allowing lower direct wages. The local state,
is of course seen in this perspective as contributing more directly to
production, by the provision of infrastructure for industry. In
practice, the local state, as in Glasgow, does act in this way as we
saw in Chapter 5. The provision of infrastructure to aid industries,
and encourage others to come to the city was a prime motivating force
behind the redevelopment of Glasgow. To say however, as the struct-

uralist perspective implies, that industry controls the state, nationaly
and locally, is probably to overstate the case. There is evidence,
however, that more subtle influences are at work which tend to ensure
that the state does not as a rule, act against the interests of capital.

To suggest that the state, and the local state is purely functional
to capital therefore, is an overstatement, and historically inaccurate.
In the provision of housing we saw how the state was forced to inter-
vene in the housing market to appease a working class which was growing
in political and economic strength. Thus, we are coming close to
accepting a derivationist view of the state. It is seen as both a set
of institutions and as a product of social relations between classes.
The state in this perspective is the focus of a particular type of
social relations ie legal relations in the form of citizenship.

The economic and political spheres have become artificially seperated,
and therefore real economic and social divisions become translated into
the legal relation of citizenship. Class action is therefore diffused,
and becomes transformed into individual and for example, legal action.
We have seen that this is typical of the type of protest which takes
place over housing issues. The local state is also seen in this way,
but as an expression of local social relations. Local democracy is
not seen as necessarily being a sham, because of the particular way
local populations see the world. The working class specifically tend
to relate to concrete issues, based on every day local experiences,
rather than an abstract idea. Poor housing conditions, or shortages,
or high rents are not experienced abstractly but concretely, and serve
as a basis for action at the local level. Thus it seems that the local
state is particularly susceptible to working class pressure and even
control, as these concrete experiences are translated into political
actions. So the local state may not simply be an adjunct to the national
state, and indeed may oppose it. From time to time therefore, arise
'red enclaves' of local authorities committed to high welfare spending,
often at the expense of local capital. It seems, then that the local
state can act against the interests of local capital. In such cases,
an ideological hegemony which tends to induce the local state to act

'responsibly' ie in the interests of capital and as the central state wishes, can be resisted by local politicians.

Thus, the derivationist perspective has considerable strengths in terms of its ability to allow for a flexible relationship between the local and central states, and the state and capital. Its emphasis on the importance of citizenship as the means of diffusing class conflict is also useful. As we saw in the anti-dampness campaign, this was probably one reason why protest remained at the individual level for so long. We can assume then, that the derivationist perspective is the most fruitful of the ones we have examined in analysing the central local state relationship, as being flexible to a degree.

However, it is to the structuralist perspective we must turn to achieve a proper analysis of the importance of protest groups. Ironically, because of the functionalist view of the state, the structuralists have developed such a theory. Because the state is seen as being non-responsive, and internally capable of producing only measures to correct 'contradictions', the structuralists see community groups as the only source of social change. So as we saw, the stakesmust be identified, and these always arise out of contradictions. The action must be assessed in terms of its effects rather than by the fact that people participate in it, for such participation maybe ineffective. Such an analysis seems to me to be a worthwhile one, but by itself it is insufficient.

It concentrates entirely on the community groups, and on direct action. Structuralists seem to deny that any changes to benefit the working class can be brought about by action internal to the state itself, such as decision taking by bureaucrats and politicians. Thus, it tends to ignore action that is defined as being institutionalised. Perhaps this is understandable, and we should not criticise structuralists too much. As Marxists they are interested in potentially revolutionary change, and their research focus . therefore steers them away from activity in the state, an institution they see as being incapable of producing such change.

One further point must be drawn out, before we consider the validity
of such perspectives for the campaigns. All the perspectives, except
the Marxist ones fail to take proper account of ideological factors.
Although for example the state may not directly be controlled by capital,
it may be that an ideological hegemony causes the state to produce
decisions and policies which are generally but not necessarily always,
in the interests of capital. In the area of collective consumption for
example, we saw that a tension - or contradiction - existed between the
need for such consumption by capital, and its ability to pay for it
via taxes etc. The present crisis in state spending is a manifestation
of such a contradiction, we could contend. Thus decisions which have
been taken by central government to provide housing, have been con-
strained by the resources available, which have usually been less than
enough to meet demand. In an attempt to increase the quantity of
dwellings produced, as we saw in Chapter 3, standards tended to fall.
Tensions emerged, in the form of housing shortages, and attempts to
increase rents, and thereby shift more of the burden of housing to the
working class and away from the state. These formed the basis for
much protest, as we have seen.

Thus, as Castells (1972) has noted, although the state may resolve
crises, these are bound to emerge later, elsewhere in the system.
Cost cutting in the production of housing for example has led to many
problems such as dampness, and tenant dissatisfaction and protest.
In the end it seems as if the state, because of mounting protest,
may be forced to remedy the situation at huge cost. A recent report,
(S.L.A.S.G., 1981, forthcoming) estimates that 30% of Scotland's
local authorities' stock is affected by dampness, condensation or
heating problems, and 15% is so seriously affected that immediate
attention is required. The cost of even these immediate improvements
is estimated to be some £500 million . There seems little prospect
that the present government will provide such resources, but doubtless,
eventually the problems will have to be tackled.

Thus we can see that three of the perspectives each have something to
offer on analysis of protest campaigns. The derivationist allows an

understanding of central/local relations on a fairly realistic level, and recognised the importance of legal/social relations as expressed in political activity focused on the state. The managerialist/ corporatist perspective seems to be suited to analysing decision-taking within the state itself. This is most important, if we are to assess whether protest groups actually affect policy, or whether policy changes would have taken place anyway, without protest. The structuralist perspective looks almost exclusively at protest groups themselves, and offers a realistic analysis. We shall now consider their relevance to the campaigns we have described.

The local authority in Glasgow, as we saw, could not be described as being a 'red enclave'. It can be said however, that the controlling labour group was committed to relatively high spending, especially on housing. The Corporation took to high rise and systems building to an extent obvious to those who live in the city. To the local autho-rity, then the stakes in the dampness campaign were high. The houses represent a considerable financial investment, and potentially con-siderable income in terms of rent. Not least, the conflict which developed represented a challenge to the technical competence of the authority. The protest, as we saw was initially individual and some three to four years passed before group action developed. Of course it took some time before residents realised that there was a wide-spread problem, but we can also explain the delay in ideological terms. The ideology of self-help tends to propel people towards the view that they should solve their own problems. However, a counter ideology may have been at work, a belief among tenants that they were entitled to a decent house. Additionally, there were no social devisions among the tenants which would make organisational unity difficult. There were of course problems in setting up the group, which the on-the-spot assistance of community workers, and the existence of a meeting place in the area did a great deal to overcome.

Once formed however, the group found itself faced with a local authority whose unity appeared to be unquestioned. The cause of dampness, they contended, lay with the tenants' themselves. Now, this issue became

a technical one, especially after legal action was undertaken. Experts testified against expert, and the political aspects of the problem became blurred. By 'political', I mean that there were wider political and economic causes for dampness in council housing, but these may not have been obvious to the tenants. They were concerned with the local problem, dampness in their own housing. Even if they had been aware of these wider problems, their campaign would have benefited little from the knowledge: the local authority is unlikely to have been impressed by such arguments. Thus the conflict remained at the local level, against the local state. We saw that the local authority did approach central government for recompense, but that this was refused. The resistence of the local authority to the campaigners, can be partly explained then, by the size of the stake involved, as indeed can the tenacity of the tenants as dampness worsened and spread.

As we saw in the squatting campaign, protest activity does tend to be directed against the local state, but in the context of protest against the inefficiency of the bureaucracy. Thus again, the political stakes were never apparently exposed to scrutiny, let alone conflict. The rights of property owners remained intact. In the dampness campaign, we could say that the causes of low standards in council housing remained unexplored, and therefore unchallenged.

In terms of 'effects', the anti-dampness campaign would seem to have been successful in that it achieved the re-housing of most, and eventually all, of the tenants. These were however, management concessions which could be said to be at the expense of other waiting list and transfer applicants, rather than the local authority itself. (In no way am I questioning the necessity of re-housing tenants from damp houses). It would seem though, that the local authority lost in several ways: in compensation paid out, in lost rent and rate income and the loss of the flats as an asset. Now that dampness has been recognised as a national problem, the state is set to lose considerably more, as the problem becomes recognised. There are now a number of anti-dampness campaigns in Glasgow, and throughout Scotland. These are beginning to

organise on a city wide basis, and to communicate on a country wide
basis. The possibility of a country wide anti-dampness campaign is
not an unreal one. The typical pattern of group housing protest has
been to start off on a fairly low key basis: if faced with an authority
which does not respond, protest usually escalates to other non-
institutional, although legal forms. The prognosis therefore, of
protest over the dampness issue is that it will grow, at a period
when the state is less willing (or the local state less able) to
respond, because of the economic crisis.

Public expenditure cuts which have been imposed by the present gove-
rnment are likely, in the longer term, to generate more housing
protest in the future. (ROOF November, 1979). Council house building
has been cut drastically, as have the funds available to local
authorities for maintenance of the existing stock. Thus we can see
the potential for further protest by the homeless, or by council
tenants in deteriorating properties. The government has already
generated some opposition by its action to force councils to increase
rents. A number of councils have refused to implement rent increases,
and rent strikes and demonstrations have already occurred in a number
of areas in Scotland.

It would be unwise to generalise from one campaign, but at least in
this case, the local state can be seen to have absorbed protest which
had wider social and economic causes. In the squatting campaigns,
although there were numerous empty properties in the private sector,
most protest was directed to the local state. A questioning of
private property rights therefore failed to emerge. The local state
then can be seen to direct conflict away from the private sector in
the case of squatting, and to regulate conflict by concealing politics
behind a state bureaucracy, in the anti-dampness campaign. We also
saw however that in some cases, councils which arecommitted to welfare
spending can in fact escalate the level of protest to the level of the
central state, by defying the government and causing wider issues to
be debated.

To conclude, it would seem that an eclectic approach is required for the study of housing protest, or indeed any form of protest. Three of the perspectives were seen to be of considerable use in analysing different aspects of such protest. Ironically, it is local consciousness, which provided the impetus for much group action but it is precisely this which causes it to remain local. The analyst however should not allow his study to remain at the local level. For a study to be rigorous, we must analyse for example why a housing shortage exists, or why poor conditions in housing occur. These are merely visible and local manifestations of wider social and economic problems, and that latter cannot be ignored.

(Approx 35,000)

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