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BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO: GOVERNING SCOTLAND AND WALES IN THE 1980s

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Governing Scotland and Wales in the 1980s

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The 1987 British General Election result confirms a trend towards territorial asymmetry in the parliamentary representation of the major parties. While constitutional theory suggests that government with a restricted territorial base loses none of its legitimate authority, problems arise in Scotland and Wales where the conventions and practices of administrative devolution and parliamentary organisation have required governments to possess at least a substantial parliamentary base. For their part, Labour oppositions have accepted the legitimacy of Conservative governments lacking majority parliamentary support in Scotland and Wales because the practice of alternation in government would, in due course, allow them to govern without a majority in England. Neither of these conditions appears to apply in the wake of the 1987 election. This posed immediate practical problems for both ministerial appointments and parliamentary procedure. More serious difficulties are likely in the longer term, as the Scottish and Welsh questions, experienced in the 1970s as marginal, external threats to the British party system, pose major, internal problems for the Conservative and Labour parties, threatening their traditional role as territorial integrators.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO

Territorial Asymmetry and the British Periphery

When Churchill was canvassed for his opinion of an optimum majority, he responded with the aphorism: "one is enough." With a characteristically Churchillian flourish, this underlines a basic political truth, that the important arithmetic in general elections is not the popular but the parliamentary one. That reality was driven home with considerable force in 1951 when Churchill presided over a Conservative government with a parliamentary majority of twenty one, supported by a deficit of 230,000 in the popular vote; but this was enough to usher in thirteen years of Conservative rule.

Most British governments possess 'majorities', whether slender, working or substantial. The adjective may vary according to circumstances but the usage presumes a parliamentary context. The hyphenated adjective 'broad-based' is less frequently employed because it has little relevance to the procedures of Parliament and is a comparatively rare political phenomenon, associated (although not invariably) with electoral landslides. The National governments of 1931 and 1935 and the Labour government of 1945 possessed this one thing in common, a majority which was not only overwhelming but broad-based. The difference is not simply semantic. The term majority, as normally used in the parliamentary context, is strictly numerical and one-dimensional. By contrast, a 'broad-based' majority is extra-parliamentary and multi-dimensional, possessing spatial and societal as well as numerical qualities. Thus the general elections of 1931, 1935 and 1945 returned governments with a broad base of support among all classes and all regions of the country. Their claim to be national governments, therefore, carried a ring of authority denied to subsequent administrations.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO

One need not probe too deeply to discover why broad-based majorities have been singularly absent in the last forty years. A two-party system reflecting an ideological and socio-economic division inhibits appeals extending right across the political and social spectra. The process of political polarisation has been accentuated by increasing residential segregation in the cities and developments within the parties themselves. While general elections were in the past seen as competitions for the occupation of the middle ground, neither party could seriously countenance a strategy which might endanger its electoral bastions. At the same time, the rise of ideology in both parties has reduced their ability to function as 'catch-alls'.

The dangers inherent in such a polarisation have been avoided, first by the constitutional convention that an MP is presumed to represent all his constituents; and secondly by the periodic electoral swing. The two are interlinked. Many MPs have reputations as good constituency members and a personal following which extends beyond their own party supporters. This happy situation, however, is dependent on the reasonable expectation by the partisan minority in the respective constituencies that their political aspirations will be met; that while they may remain a minority in the constituency they will, from time to time, be part of the national majority; and that at such times government policies will reflect their interests, those of their community, or class or region. In short, the political cycle is based on an even balance of hope and disappointment, success and failure.

In the last forty years, the even balance has been progressively threatened by the territorial asymmetry of electoral behaviour (Tarleton, 1965). An analysis of the regional composition of the government party's representation in Parliament (Punnett, 1984) reveals that, whereas Labour won majorities in five of the six regions of the United Kingdom in 1945, it

was unable to win in more than four in all subsequent elections in which it won office. Conservative parliamentary majorities during the 1950s and in 1970 were dependent upon the party's predominance in only three of the UK regions. Since 1979, it has been able to win with the support of only two regions. The pattern is clear. While Labour support is more widely distributed than that of the Conservatives, both major parties operate from fewer and narrower regional bases.

The 1987 general election, therefore, merely gave added emphasis to the regional distinctiveness of the two major parties. Such a development has obvious and alarming implications for the operation of the political system and is reflected in the use of the term 'North/South divide'. If one takes the three English regions (South-West, South-East and East Anglia) in which the Conservative Party won an absolute majority of the vote, the territorial asymmetry is vividly illustrated. In the South-West, 50.6% of the vote delivered 44 of the 47 seats to the Conservatives. In the South-East, 55.6% of the vote produced 107 Conservative seats out of 108. In East Anglia, 52.1% of the vote resulted in the Conservatives winning 19 of the 20 seats. Thus, in that part of England south of the Severn/Wash line (but excluding London), the opposition parties can muster only 6 seats; in the whole southern region of England, Labour and Alliance supporters were virtually disenfranchised. A mirror image, though not so extreme, is found in the North. In the Pennine regions (the North, North-West and Yorks and Humberside), the Labour Party was the winner, polling consistently over 40% and winning 96 of the 163 seats.

The current debate on the North/South divide is replete with claims from the North that the government's disproportionately small number of MPs renders it unsympathetic to and, indeed, incapable of comprehending the difficulties and problems facing the North. Testing these claims

scientifically is notoriously difficult but it is at least plausible to argue that the weight of party opinion and interest will be for rewarding supporters in favourable regions rather than pushing resources into opposition-dominated regions in an effort to win back lost support, particularly when these regions have been shown to be electorally dispensible for the Conservatives. This would have the effect of increasing the territorial imbalance of votes.

The constitutionalist response to the territorial asymmetry critique is clear and consistent and derives from the Burkean view of Parliament. An MP is not so much a delegate of his constituency - still less for his region - as a member of parliament who rightly subordinates the particular interests of his constituency to the national interest. Parliament is not, therefore, to be regarded as an arena for competing and conflicting interests but as the forum for the whole nation. The party system buttresses this classical constitutionalist interpretation. The parties are national, seeking national mandates and each claiming to represent the national interest. Thus, strictly speaking, it should be of no great concern that parties are grossly under-represented in certain regions. Socialist supporters in Guildford can identify with Neil Kinnock despite his Welsh constituency, just as enthusiasm of Conservatives in the South Wales valleys is unalloyed by Mrs. Thatcher's base in a north London suburb. Disregarding the not inconsiderable fact that the basis of our representative parliamentary system is territorial, there is a fundamental problem with the Burkean view of Parliament. It is all very well to reject narrow, particularist interests in favour of the national interest; but how is a member to discover that national interest, particularly when he is elected by a constituency located in a territory which possesses a separate or distinctive sense of national identity? It is precisely this situation which applies in Scotland and Wales. Serious though the North/South divide is for the continued health of the British body politic,

territorial asymmetry in the context of Scotland and Wales introduces an additional fissiparous factor.

It is in Scotland and Wales that the territorial asymmetry of British electoral results is most marked. In 1987, they were the only parts of the country in which the Conservative vote dipped below 30% (24.0% in Scotland and 29.5% in Wales) and they registered the largest increase in Labour's (up 7.5% in Wales and 7.3% in Scotland). The two-party system is also at its weakest in Scotland and Wales, with only 64.6% of the vote in Wales and 66.4% in Scotland. Nor can this be explained by the intervention of the Alliance, which suffered its biggest reverses in Scotland and Wales (down 5.3% in both nations) and which now languishes below the 20% level. The explanation, of course, is to be found in the four-party system. While Plaid Cymru no longer shows signs of penetrating Labour's industrial valleys, it has become increasingly locked into its linguistic heartland and shows every sign of becoming a permanent and indigestible part of Welsh politics. Similarly, the SNP, while posing no challenge to Labour in the central belt, is well dug-in elsewhere. The distinctive flavour of politics in the two nations has led the British parties to organise at the Scotland and Wales levels and to publish separate manifestos in which distinct issues are highlighted and territorial particularisms recognised.

The existence of the nationalists and the concessions made by British parties are symptomatic of the distinct status of Scotland and Wales within the United Kingdom. They both possess a historic identity; both were incorporated into the 'British' political system by formal Acts of Union; and both share a sense of territorial coherence and integrity absent in the English regions. That sense is reflected in the structure of government, notably the Scottish and Welsh offices (Kellas and Madgwick, 1982) and the Scottish legal system which requires separate legislation

on a wide range of matters. The Offices, indeed, originally devised as responses to real or perceived differences in Scotland and Wales, have, by their very existence and procedures, served to reinforce that sense of difference. This is particularly evident in their relations with their respective local authorities and in negotiation with the Treasury, but it is also identified in the ambassadorial role expected of the two Secretaries of State. Unlike other government ministers, whose reponsibility is the politically effective and administratively efficient delivery of services which fall within their functional remit, the Scottish and Welsh Secretaries are expected to 'speak up' for Scotland and Wales, where they serve definable and politically aware clients. The special treatment extends to Parliament, where Scotland and Wales are over-represented (substantially so in the case of Scotland) and the provision made for handling Scottish legislation in separate committees. The Scottish and Welsh Grant Committees enable distinctively territorial issues to be debated if not resolved and the post-1979 select committees on Scottish and Welsh affairs, although ostensibly departmental, nevertheless follow a multi-functional, territorial remit which sets them apart from the departmental select committees created at the same time (Drewry, 1985). This institutional differentiation creates a Scottish and a Welsh political arena in which issues are raised and discussed in a Scottish and Welsh context, albeit resolved through the mechanisms of the unitary state.

Thus, in Scotland and Wales, territorial identity is underpinned by institutional difference, cultural distinctiveness, economic particularism and political nationalism. Politics within these two enclaves of the British polity, while not outside the frame of the British political process, exhibits a distinctive pattern of values, preferences, aspirations and apprehensions. The degree of territorially asymmetrical voting behaviour in the two nations therefore carries profound political implications.

Territorial Management Before 1987

The situation created by the 1987 general election was not entirely novel. The Scottish and Welsh questions had been posed before in the mid-1970s when, paradoxically, the situation was more pressing, yet less complex. In October 1974, the nationalist vote in Scotland had exceeded 30% and in Wales 10%. Together the Scottish and Welsh nationalist parties had controlled a block of 14 seats in the House of Commons, quite sufficient to exert pressure on a Labour government with an overall majority of 3. As successive by-elections eroded Labour's majority and ushered in a minority government, it became increasingly susceptible to demands for devolution. The pressures then produced a classic parliamentary response because the circumstances were politically apposite. The two major parties were fairly balanced in terms of seats, with the Conservatives holding 277 and Labour 319 and there was a relatively even geographical spread, Labour occupying 80 of the 173 seats in southern England, including the South-East, South-West, East Anglia and Greater London. Thus, the particularist interest - in this case Scotland and Wales - could be identified and appropriate means or policies produced to placate the discontents. The Royal Commission ploy, used in 1968, was no longer sufficient and something more radical was called for. Elected assemblies were proposed but with the proviso that central economic planning and the maintenance of the United Kingdom (i.e. the sovereignty of the Westminster Parliament) would be unimpaired (Jones and Keating, 1985). Although the Scotland and Wales Bills proceeded to dominate the parliamentary timetable throughout 1977 and 1978, the devolution issue was nonetheless marginal to the wider British political debate. Instead, the preoccupation of both government and opposition in this period was the continuing financial crisis. As this did not involve legislative commitment, it is even arguable that having Parliament tied up with devolution suited the government, giving it breathing space while it sought a favourable economic conjuncture for an election.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO

The devolution issue in the late 1970s had never seriously threatened the British state because neither Labour nor the Conservatives were prepared to outbid the other on the issue. Both were prepared to make concessions to nationalist pressure only to preserve the essentials of the parliamentary state (Jones and Keating, 1985). The Conservatives under Mr. Heath flirted with devolution in the 1968 Declaration of Perth but at root the Conservative Party remained unionist and such concessions were short-term or superficial. Labour was more open to territorial pressures because, after 1951, it had become the party of the deprived regions; but its instinct was to reduce all regional problems to economic terms (Jones and Keating, 1982). The extension of regional development programmes in 1975 and the establishment of the Scottish and Welsh Development Agencies, the party's initial response to the nationalist threat, were characteristic of its ideological pattern. Political devolution counted for less and this explains why the Labour government were prepared to concede the referendum and make so little of a fight over the wrecking 40% amendment. It also explains why the government's devolution proposals for Scotland and Wales were presented - as much to the party faithful as to the general electorate - as the price of preserving the unity of the British state.

Thus, the issue of devolution in the mid-1970s was resolved by means of economic reforms, protracted parliamentary debates, strategic procrastination, procedural obstacles and a referendum. But the basic prescription for its success lay in the unwillingness of Labour and Conservatives to threaten the balance of the constitution or the traditional party political process. This unspoken agreement was possible because both parties possessed a similar balance of principles: the Conservatives, unionists but with a strong localist tradition; Labour, statist but drawing its strength from the regions of the economic periphery. Furthermore, both parties, operating within a two party

system, expecting to benefit from regular, if not equal, swings of the pendulum, could reasonably expect to satisfy the respective aspirations of their differing socio-economic constituencies. Nationalism was, not merely in the territorial sense, peripheral to the parliamentary two-party game and in these circumstances, the nationalist forces from the peripheries were relatively easily smothered.

The situation following the 1987 election poses more profound problems. The third force in British politics has seriously eroded the two-party system and with it many of the presumptions about the electoral swing. Territorial asymmetry of the party vote has exacerbated the situation, raising doubts about the claims of the two parties to possess national constituencies and calling into question their ability to act as agencies of political integration. Their failure in this respect is vividly illustrated by the so-called 'Doomsday Scenario' in Scotland, where the Conservatives emerged with less than a quarter of the vote and only one in seven of the seats. It is this gross geographical disparity of the major party vote, rather than the electoral advance of the nationalists, which creates the central problem. The problem, in essence, is that the two-party alternating system which we have known in the post-war era is ill-fitted to manage in these circumstances. The threat to the system is thus potentially more profound than in the 1970s since it now concerns not politically and territorially peripheral parties but the functioning of the two-party model of government upon which the whole Westminster system has come to rest.

The Conservatives - Problems of Governing

'Doomsday', leaving the Conservatives with a majority of 100 at Westminster but a mere 10 Scottish and 8 Welsh MPs, poses no problem according to a narrow reading of the constitution. With a Westminster majority, the government can do what it likes in any part of the United

Kingdom. In reality, of course, it is a series of unwritten understandings and conventions which make the constitution work, preserve consent and bolster the legitimacy of the Westminster regime. One of these, of some hundred years' standing, is that Scotland possesses its own department with its minister representing a Scottish constituency. In the case of Wales, the conventions are more recent and flexible. Since it was founded in 1964, the Welsh Office has once been entrusted to an expatriate Welshman sitting for a London constituency. In addition, there are Scottish and Welsh committees in Parliament, the former playing the vital role of dealing with Scottish legislation. The main institutions are as follows:

SCOTTISH OFFICE

- Secretary of State (by convention a Scottish MP)
- Minister of State (a Scottish peer)
- 2nd Minister of State (a Scottish MP) (not essential but appointed under Labour Governments and in 1987)
- 2-3 Parliamentary under Secretaries (Scottish MPs) (3 are needed if 2nd Minister of State not appointed).

There is also a Scottish whip and a parliamentary private secretary to the Secretary of State, conventionally Scottish MPs. In addition, one or both of the Scottish law officers is usually a Scottish MP, though this is not essential and in 1987 neither is.

WELSH OFFICE

- Secretary of State (preferably a Welsh MP)
- Minister of State (a Welsh MP) and
- 1 Parliamentary Under-Secretary

OR

- 2 Parliamentary Under Secretaries (3 under Labour)

(the appointments usually have to balance North and South

Wales and English and Welsh speakers).
There is also a Welsh whip.

SCOTTISH AND WELSH COMMITTEES

Committee	Membership	Function
Scottish Grand	All Scottish MPs	Debates, 2nd Reading of Scottish Bills
Welsh Grand	All Welsh MPs	General Debates
Scottish Standing	16 Scottish MPs	Committee Stages of Bills
Scottish Select	13 Scottish MPs	Investigative
Welsh Select	11 Welsh MPs	Investigative

For purely practical reasons - the need to staff all these bodies - the conventions assume that the governing party possesses, not necessarily majority support, but at least a reasonable basis of support in Scotland and Wales. When, following the 1987 election, they were deprived of this, the Conservatives faced a number of options.

Integration

This would involve winding up the Scottish and Welsh Offices along with the committees in Parliament and governing Scotland and Wales as if they were Yorkshire. In practical terms, this would pose immense difficulties, especially in Scotland where legal and institutional differentiation would require at least Scottish sections of unified British departments. Politically, it would cause great offence and serve to boost nationalism. Short of full integration, the government could downplay the importance of Scottish and Welsh committees, refusing to establish select committees, restricting meetings of the grand committees and minimising the amount of separate Scottish legislation. To some extent, this last was evident immediately after the election, with the decision

not to produce a separate local government bill for Scotland.

The Governor-General Strategy

This strategy would involve the Conservatives governing Scotland and Wales without consent, with the Secretaries of State acting purely as emissaries from London. The nearest analogy would be the government of Northern Ireland, where the Secretary of State operates without the support of any of the local MPs. To some extent, this is being applied in Wales, where Peter Walker, MP for Worcester, has been appointed Secretary of state after his imminent sacking from the Cabinet had been extensively leaked from on high, an appointment recalling James Prior's exile to Stormont Castle. The appointment was forced on the Conservatives by the retirement through ill health of Nicholas Edwards and the defeat, in Newport West, of Mark Robinson, who had apparently been groomed as his successor. Walker's appointment, widely regarded as a reflection upon the quality of the remaining Welsh MPs, not only incensed opposition parties in Wales but also left the local Conservatives dismayed, if not in disarray.

In Scotland, such an expedient was rendered unnecessary by Malcolm Rifkind holding his Edinburgh seat while his colleague George Younger, by holding on by 182 votes in Ayr, ensured that Scotland would continue to have two ministers of Cabinet rank. English Conservatives seem to find it difficult to see the objections to a Governor-General strategy for Scotland. After all, the United Kingdom is a unitary state and Scots representing English constituencies have featured prominently in Conservative governments. An English Secretary of State, however, would not only break the conventions of the past. He would find it difficult to work himself into the somewhat closed world of Scottish government in which everyone knows everyone else and which allows the

participants, while not dropping anything of their partisan attachments, to develop some sense of common interest against the English. This is particularly true in relation to the Scottish Office's lobbying role, where an English Secretary of State would be in a difficult position arguing against the interests of his own constituency, and in relation to local government where, despite all the conflict on the big financial issues, there is still an inclination to accommodation on day-to-day matters. The greatest objection to the Governor-General strategy, however, would be from Scottish Conservatives who would feel themselves written off as an effective force, unable even to find a Secretary of State from their ranks. This would make the rebuilding of Scottish Conservatism as an effective force extremely difficult.

Devolution

It has been suggested in several quarters that the Conservatives' most astute response to Doomsday would be to establish an elected assembly in Scotland (and possibly Wales), with limited powers and restrictions on its finance, and allow it to make the hard choices in public spending priorities. With a Scottish Assembly in existence, Conservatives could then argue that Scotland should logically lose its over-representation at Westminster. The effect would be to cripple Labour's parliamentary strength and ensure a Tory majority until the end of the century (Edwards, 1987). The Conservatives could then constitute themselves formally as the Scottish opposition, lose the taint of being 'anti-Scottish', rebuild their organisation on the ground and make political capital out of the Assembly's difficulties. Such a move would certainly throw their opponents into disarray and open up divisions not only between SNP and Labour but within the Labour Party between those who would want a militant confrontationist strategy with moves into illegality and those who would seek to play the game within the tight parameters set by central government.

In practice, such a response is not to be expected from the Conservatives. Traditionally, they have been the unionist party and the party of local government. Yet, as Bulpitt (1983) points out, the party's pursuit of central autonomy (i.e. autonomy for the Westminster parliamentary party) has weakened its position in the periphery, most notably in Northern Ireland and, increasingly, in Scotland; the party's presence in Wales has always been slight. The reform of local government in the early 1970s and the rather crude financial controls over local authorities which it has imposed since 1979, have weakened the Conservatives' traditional attachment to local government. Conservative philosophy under Mrs. Thatcher is no longer to regard local authorities as bastions against the incursions of the overpowerful, centralist state. Local autonomy itself is now seen as an equal, if not greater, threat to individual liberties. According to Thatcherite populism, the bastion against the over-mighty state is not a countervailing institution, nor even a plurality of institutions but the autonomous citizen; the owner-occupier, the newly enfranchised shareholder with rights to act against his or her local education authority, or to opt out of the state services in education, health or whatever. Taken together, they represent a new code of territorial management in which the party at the centre assumes a direct relationship with individual citizens. It is anti-corporatist, anti-institutional and anti-territorial because all of these have collectivist connotations and are obstacles to central control. This combination of privatisation and centralisation not only makes it difficult for the Conservatives to respond to the problem of territorial asymmetry posed by the Doomsday scenario; it prevents them from even recognising the problem. To establish a Scottish assembly would mean recognising that there is a collective Scottish political perspective at least potentially at odds with the view of central government. The government which abolished the Greater London Council is unlikely to take this view.

Making the System Work

This strategy involves continuing to govern as though Doomsday had not occurred, retaining the existing system of administrative devolution while working to rebuild Conservative fortunes in Scotland and Wales. This, to a large degree, is what the government has opted to do, relying heavily on the opposition, for its part, also to continue playing by the old rules (see below). In Scotland, the viability of such a strategy has been questioned since 1979 when the Conservatives, having lost both the devolution referendum vote and the general election in Scotland, proceeded to act as though they had won the former and declared that the latter was irrelevant. George Younger's tenure as Secretary of State was marked by an insistence on Conservative legitimacy in Scotland (which few were seriously questioning) but a recognition of the weakness of his political position. So, while the national Conservative programme was applied in Scotland, the Scottish Office refrained from all policy initiatives of its own, sought to unite Scottish opinion behind issues of territorial defence such as Ravenscraig and maintained a dialogue with everyone. While rate-capping was brought in, there was no serious assault on Labour's power bases in the regional councils comparable to the abolition of the GLC and Metropolitan counties. For his part, the Secretary of State became renowned for his emolient manner. While this certainly defused the tensions of 1979 following the repeal of the Scotland Act - opposition was perhaps defeated by sheer boredom rather than argument - it did not restore Conservative fortunes and by late 1985 the party was running fourth in the opinion polls. Serious crises had arisen on teachers' pay, Ravenscraig and rating revaluation, all the Secretary of State's 'responsibility' but all beyond his powers to resolve.

With Younger's replacement by Malcolm Rifkind, there was a dramatic change of style. Rifkind was clearly determined to take the political offensive to rebuild Conservative fortunes in Scotland, setting himself

the modest target of 30% of the popular vote. The poll-tax proposals which George Younger had extracted from the Treasury and Cabinet as a response to a rate-payer revolt centred on Edinburgh, were pursued aggressively as a real Scottish initiative. When asked why reform was to proceed in Scotland in advance of England and Wales, Rifkind responded that it was because Scottish opinion wanted it that way. Taken literally this was devolutionary talk, a claim that Scottish opinion should prevail where it was at odds with that of England. More seriously, it ignored the fact that the poll-tax was opposed by parties who together were registering some 86% of the opinion polls and were to gain 76% of the popular vote at the election. In fact, the Scottish poll-tax appears to be the sort of political error to which parties in decline are prone. The smaller their base of support, the more inclined they are to listen to their more vocal supporters, mistaking them for public opinion.

Post-1987, the problems for the Secretary of State in using his existing range of powers and responsibilities to bolster Conservative fortunes are even greater. In terms of style and approach, something can be done. There were just enough Conservative MPs left to man the Scottish Office, though some careful juggling of responsibilities was necessary to keep responsibility for local government finance or industry away from right-wing ideologue Michael Forsyth, who had refused to support the campaign to keep Ravenscraig open. Malcolm Rifkind remains a highly respected Secretary of State, though his indispensibility makes his prospects for higher office rather dim. It remains the case, nevertheless, that the sorts of political initiatives which might be necessary to rebuild Conservative fortunes in Scotland require financial and policy-making powers well beyond those available under the present system of administrative devolution. Given the marginal position of Scotland in Conservative electoral arithmetic, it is unlikely that he will be able to get the necessary Cabinet approval for major concessions. On

the contrary, in the past year, the atmosphere has been laden with leaked tales of Scottish Office defeats on public spending, albeit strenuously denied by the Scottish Office. A further problem with specifically Scottish policy initiatives is the need to man the legislative committees. If these are to be filled with English MPs the image of a vibrant Scottish Conservative policy machine would be damaged and some of the impact lost. The Opposition, on the other hand, would be given a platform on which to appeal through the Scottish media.

Making the system work is a more viable option in the case of Wales. The lone opposition of the Conservative Party to Welsh devolution was vindicated by the result of the referendum in Wales which revealed deep divisions within the Welsh Labour Party and a breakdown of the traditional loyalties. The result appeared to usher in a more fluid political situation which the Conservatives were well placed to exploit. In the 1979 general election the Conservative vote in Wales increased from 23.9% to 32.3%, with Labour's dropping marginally. In 1983, however, Labour plummeted by eleven points to 37.5%, the steepest Labour decline in any region of the United Kingdom and opposite to the trend in Scotland. As a result of the 1983 election, the Conservatives held fourteen Welsh seats, more than at any previous election in the twentieth century.

The explanations are various. Welsh society had changed; the traditional basic industries, coal and steel, had declined to be replaced by 'high-tech' industries developing along the westernmost extension of the M4 motorway (Balsom and Jones, 1984) and the emergence of Cardiff as an administrative and political centre highlighted the growing embourgeoisement of south-east Wales (Foulkes et al. 1983). Nicholas Edwards, as Welsh Secretary, also played a part. Despite the referendum result, the Welsh Office grew in importance, assuming responsibility for

negotiating the Welsh Rate Support Grant in 1980 and with such success that English local authorities complained to the Department of the Environment about preferential treatment (Balsom and Jones, 1984). Relations between Welsh (largely Labour) local authorities and central government never deteriorated to the same degree as in Scotland and England. Within the constraints of government policy, Edwards fought the Welsh corner with some success and his defence of the Llanwern steelworks was no less strenuous, if somewhat more discrete, than that of his Scottish counterpart in support of Ravenscraig.

Given this socio-political context, it is surprising that the 1987 election has created problems for the Conservatives in Wales sufficiently similar to those in Scotland for there to be talk of a 'mini-Doomsday'. To some extent, the Conservatives were victims of the electoral system; their vote in Wales was down by just 1.5% but the virtual collapse of the Alliance in key constituencies resulted in a loss of six seats. With only eight MPs, the immediate problems were more logistical than ideological - and these were only partly offset by the appointment of an English MP as Secretary of State - but the relative ease with which Labour reoccupied the centre ground conceded by the Alliance re-emphasised the marginality of the Conservatives in Wales and the paltry contribution made by Wales to the strength of the Conservative parliamentary party. In these circumstances the chances of the most senior 'wet' minister in Mrs. Thatcher's Cabinet being able to wring concessions for Wales must be slight. Nevertheless, at a fringe meeting of the Tory Reform Group in Blackpool Walker argued the need for greater social investment using Welsh evidence in support of his case (Sunday Times, 04.04.87). Even if Walker were to be partially successful, such government policies as the poll-tax, the privatisation of water and steel and, possibly, coal, could have serious repercussions for Welsh Conservatives, presenting Labour and the nationalists with exploitable issues.

Labour - Problems of Opposition

For different, though not entirely unconnected reasons, the Labour Party also finds it difficult to respond to the situation. It was created to serve the interests of a self-conscious British working class defined largely by its relationship to the means of production. This became an integral part of the party's conventional wisdom. Neil Kinnock distinguished himself from the party's pro-devolutionists in the party during the 1970s by declaring himself a "democratic socialist - a representitive of the working class" (Hansard, v. 903, col. 291, 1976), implying that his political loyalties disregarded territorial boundaries. In practice, however, the spatial division of the working class vote meant that Labour emerged as much a regional as a working-class party, its strength concentrated in the heavy industrial areas of northern England, central Scotland and South Wales. Labour's redistributive policies possessed spatial and regional dimensions as well as social and economic. For such policies to take effect, the political centre had not only to be won but its redistributive power increased. The experience of successive Labour governments led Labour increasingly to central control and state planning and produced the paradox of a party drawing its strength from the regional periphery yet staunchly statist in its ideology and policy (Jones and Keating, 1985).

The nature of the paradox is crucial to the role which Labour came to play; that of integrating the periphery into the policy process and, specifically, to directing the attention of the periphery in the 1920s away from Home Rule and towards Westminster and the benefits which could flow from control of the centre (Keating and Bleiman, 1979). Labour's inability in 1987 to win more than a handful of seats in southern England not only denies the party the realistic prospect of power, it compromises its integrative role. Support in the periphery for a centralist, statist Labour Party was always conditional on the party's ability to win control

of the centre from time to time. The result of the 1987 election, however, creates a unique and potentially destabilising situation. The periphery invested heavily in a Labour victory, giving the party 74 seats in Scotland and Wales to the Conservatives' 18. Admittedly, in 1966 Scotland and Wales had delivered 78 seats to Labour; but then Labour had formed the government with a majority of almost 100 and was in a position to reward its supporters. In 1987, by contrast, Labour was in opposition without a realistic short-term or even medium-term prospect of victory. The question, then, is what is it to do with its Scottish and Welsh 'victories'?.

Before the election, there was much talk of what would happen in the event of the Doomsday Scenario coming to pass. Some Labour radicals claimed that the Conservatives would lack a mandate in Scotland and spoke vaguely of plans for parliamentary disruption and even civil disobedience. The 'no mandate' argument is in fact an extremely complex philosophical issue and one which is almost impossible to reconcile with Labour's traditions and beliefs. Let us examine three propositions which might be made to sustain the no-mandate case:

1. ***The Conservatives lack a majority of the Scottish vote and so have no mandate to govern Scotland.*** The problem here is that no party has a majority of the Scottish vote.

2. ***The Conservatives lack a plurality of the Scottish vote,*** or, closely related, ***The Conservatives lack a majority of Scottish seats.*** The implication of this is that any government, to be legitimate, needs a concurrent majority of seats or plurality of votes in all parts of the United Kingdom. This would make every government this century illegitimate and, even if we exclude Ireland, would make most of them illegitimate. It would certainly make it difficult for a

future Labour government to rule in England. A few Labour radicals, having written off England and with it the UK as hopeless for Labour in any case, would not worry unduly about this but the overwhelming majority in the party would find the argument utterly unacceptable.

3. ***The 1979 referendum result favouring a Scottish Assembly was overturned and the Government which did this was subsequently rejected in Scotland.*** This argument is on firmer moral ground though no party which believes in the sovereignty of Parliament can really challenge Parliament's right to change its mind on devolution or set whatever rules it wishes for advisory referendums. It is true that parties favouring an assembly gained some 76% of the Scottish vote in 1987 but to argue that the Government has no mandate on education (devolved in the Scotland Act) but does on the steel industry (retained in the Scotland Act), and thus may close Ravenscraig, has no mandate on housing (devolved) but does have a mandate on the poll tax (retained) would scarcely make sense to the voters.

The no-mandate argument, indeed, resting as it does on a rejection of the authority of Westminster, is an argument for self-determination. It is not necessarily an argument for separatism, since the Scottish people, given the choice, might reject that option. It is, though, an argument for allowing Scotland to determine its own constitutional preferences - which would then have to be negotiated with London. This is, in essence, the position adopted by the all-party Campaign for a Scottish Assembly but rejected by the Labour Party which continues to adhere to the principle of parliamentary sovereignty and must therefore play by the rule that the overall majority is all that counts.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO

Labour's position, repeated before and during the election campaign, is that an assembly will come from a Labour government at Westminster, using its parliamentary majority. It would be based on a strengthened version of the 1978 Scotland Act and be elected on the first-past-the-post electoral system. Scottish interests in Whitehall and Westminster would continue to be looked after by a Secretary of State and the full complement of 72 MPs. This position was regarded with considerable scepticism outside Labour's ranks, for three reasons. Firstly, many people doubted Labour's ability to win a UK majority. Secondly, many doubted the ability of a Labour government to put through an assembly bill, given the hostility encountered in Parliament last time. Thirdly, there was an inconsistency in Labour's claims to be in favour of devolution as a democratising measure at the same time as insisting on the first-past-the-post electoral system which would ensure a permanent Labour majority as long as it hung onto as little as a third of the total vote. There is, of course, even greater inconsistency in claiming, in defiance of the parliamentary conventions, that the Conservatives lack a mandate in Scotland and then relying on precisely one of those conventions (that it is the majority of seats and not votes which count) to claim that Labour has the mandate.

It follows that any campaign to discredit the government's mandate in Scotland and to demand an assembly on democratic grounds must be a cross-party one and must incorporate some form of proportional representation into the assembly proposals. Yet this the Labour Party consistently refuses to countenance, believing that it would set a precedent for proportional representation at national elections and sticking to the view that Labour will put through assembly legislation as a normal bill once it wins a majority.

There remains the problem as to how in the meantime Labour is going

to demonstrate to its Scottish supporters that their vote has not been entirely wasted. In the immediate aftermath of the election, a set of policy demands was lodged, involving government recognition of their setback in Scotland. These included the establishment of a Scottish Assembly, the repeal of the poll tax legislation, measures to tackle unemployment, more investment in housing, and no privatisation of the Scottish electricity boards. Not surprisingly, the government refused to concede and there, presumably, the matter will rest. Prospects may be greater at the local government level, where Labour-controlled regions and districts can resist pressure to cut services and try to continue to deliver the goods. This power base, such as it is, though, will be further undermined by rate-capping, contracting-out legislation and the squeezing of fiscal autonomy through the community charge and the nationalisation of the business rate. There may be some more high-profile campaigns to highlight Labour's opposition to Conservative policy but, given the fear and distrust of Scottish nationalism on the part of the leadership, these are likely to play down the Scottish dimension. After all, to highlight their own inability under present conditions to resist Conservative policy in Scotland is to play into the hands of the SNP.

In Wales, the no mandate argument is a non-starter. The Welsh have long been accustomed to living with a Conservative government while casting their political lot with Labour. Between 1951 and 1964, thirteen years of Conservative rule, Labour consistently won more than 50% of the Welsh vote. The decisive rejection of an assembly in the 1979 referendum, could also be interpreted as a Welsh endorsement of Westminster rule. Yet Labour in Wales, as in Scotland, faces problems in discharging its role as the leading party.

BEYOND THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO

Labour's vote in Wales is experiencing a secular decline. Despite the short term oscillations exemplified by the traumatic fall in 1983 and the morale boosting rise in 1987, the unmistakable trend is downwards. There is no prospect of Labour returning to the heady days of 1966 when it won 32 out of the 36 Welsh seats and 60% of the vote. In the last twenty years, Labour has been forced back into its industrial enclaves, threatened on one flank by the advance of Plaid Cymru and the Alliance in the rural heartland and, on the other flank, by the Conservatives in the anglicised areas (Balsom and Jones, 1984). This political pincer movement, which Labour appears powerless to withstand, explains its ambivalence on the devolution issue in the 1970s. The declining population of the South Wales valleys and the continuing in-migration of English people to south east Wales and parts of rural mid Wales, estimated at over 40,000 a year (Osmond, 1987), confronts Labour with a series of acute policy choices; how forcefully and frequently to play the Welsh card given that most of the incomers are, if not Conservative, then anti-Labour.

There was evidence during the mid 1980s of a shift in Welsh Labour thinking on specifically Welsh issues. The party's natural reluctance, given the 1979 result, even to consider the devolution issue was already weakening before the 1987 election. One factor contributing to the change was the miners' strike which, in Wales, acted as a catalyst effecting an alliance between labour and nationalist movements and injecting a 'nationalist' element into the dispute. Of equal significance, was the government's attitude towards local government. In 1979 all the Welsh counties had come out against devolution because they feared it would erode local autonomy but the rate-capping experience persuaded many local Labour councillors, anti-devolution in 1979, that an elected Welsh assembly was necessary to preserve local democracy in Wales (Sunday Times, 23.8.87). Thus the Welsh Labour Party, despite 1979, is steadily moving towards a re-affirmation of the devolution policy.

Resolutions in support of an elected assembly were passed at the 1986 and 1987 Welsh Labour conferences and the Welsh party has pledged unequivocal support for a Scottish assembly. The electoral evidence strongly indicates that the more anglicised parts of Wales - the so-called British Wales - display political characteristics akin to southern England. Labour, in order to retain its reservoir of Welsh seats, may well have an interest in preserving the Welsh cultural identity; but to press that case too strongly would imply concessions to the nationalist position and open up Labour's other flank, which is already vulnerable given the party's electoral defeats.

The Changing Periphery

One school of Conservative thought regards Scotland and Wales as cases of late development, nations still stuck in the collectivist mode of the past and attached to their vanishing heavy industries. In due course, it is argued, the social and economic changes which have overtaken southern England will catch up with them, making them more receptive to the message of modern Conservatism, to whose parliamentary strength they presently contribute just 4.8%. In effect, this is a modern version of the diffusionist theories which prevailed in the 1950s and 1960s, predicting the disappearance of territorial distinctiveness in the face of modernisation and technological advance. Recent scholarship (Agnew, 1987) has cast doubt on the validity of the diffusionist thesis and shown how contemporary social and economic changes may be accompanied by an increase in territorial political distinctiveness. This whole area is necessarily speculative but we see little reason to expect Scottish, Welsh and English voting patterns to converge again in the near future.

Wales, it is true, is experiencing some of the socio-economic changes found in South East England, particularly at the end of the M4 corridor and in parts of North Wales. Other parts of Wales, however, remain quite

distinct socially and economically, requiring policies which take account of the Welsh dimension. The housing situation in Wales differs markedly from that in England; not so much in terms of the percentage of owner-occupied dwellings (the highest in the United Kingdom) but because over 25% of the stock predates 1891. The concentration of such housing in decaying industrial valley communities creates unique problems. Similarly, a large agricultural sector (almost twice the proportionate UK figure) characterised by small marginal hill farms, an underdeveloped banking and industrial services sector and an unemployment figure which, despite developments in south-east Wales, has remained consistently three points above the national average, suggest that Wales is still far from being incorporated into the socio-economic system of the affluent south of England. The distinct institutional identity of Wales, barely twenty years old but already firmly established, ensures that politics in the principality as a whole will continue to exhibit a different character. The language issue remains a potent factor which could - in the right circumstances - spill over into extra-parliamentary activities. Other issues such as English second homes, the privatisation of Welsh water and the planned early introduction of the poll tax, also possess the capacity to activate and enrage moderate public opinion. A similar threat in 1980, over the Welsh language television channel, forced the government into a policy U-turn. It remains to be seen whether the government will be as accommodating on policies more central to its economic and ideological strategy.

In Scotland, anti-Conservative voting is not simply the result of low living standards for, as the government likes to emphasise, it is third in the regional earnings table and seventh in terms of unemployment. Conservative reverses occurred in 1987 throughout Scotland and not merely in the depressed areas of the central belt. So we need to look at other factors. One is clearly housing tenure, identified in successive

studies as a key element in voting patterns. Council house sales have had a limited impact in Scotland, where some 50% of households remain in public-sector tenures against a little over a quarter in England and Wales. Partly, especially in Clydeside, this is a reflection of unemployment and uncertain income; but it also reflects the poor quality of much of the tenemental stock and, possibly, a cultural lack of attachment to owner-occupation. Certainly, it is impossible to imagine the great council estates of Clydeside being converted *en masse* to owner occupation. House sales in Scotland have amounted to some 5% of the council and new town stock, against 15% in England and Wales. In the last two or three years, sales in Scotland have fallen as the better non-flatted stock has been largely exhausted. In recognition of this, the government's proposals for the schemes involve the introduction of cooperatives and private landlords - measures hardly likely to have the anti-collectivist effect of owner-occupation. It is also arguable that in Scotland there is a wider consensus on collectivist and interventionist values, as witness the lack of opposition to the Scottish Development Agency and the almost total absence, outside Edinburgh, of organised ratepayers revolts. Private medicine, though it has increased slightly in recent years, is much less significant than in most regions in England. The Scottish Office, even under the Conservatives, itself retains much of the collectivist orientation and has conspicuously failed to bring forward proposals for the abolition of regional councils or to follow the English proposals to allow schools to opt out of local authority control. There is, too, an intangible cultural factor, with the Conservative Party of Margaret Thatcher increasingly regarded as a product of the English counties. Battles over Ravenscraig, regional aid, the threat to Scotland's public expenditure levels or the independent inward investment effort are capable of mobilising a wide territorial constituency, constantly reinforcing Scotland's sense of identity. So, while the Conservative agenda of privatisation, deregulation and anti-collectivism will be pushed

in Scotland, it may not find a ready market and Scottish ministers will doubtless proceed carefully.

In both Scotland and Wales, the very existence of territorial departments of government will ensure that issues are presented in a Scottish and Welsh context and encourage interest groups to look to them for support and protection. In recent years, government, without appreciably enhancing the powers of the Secretaries of State, has increased their responsibility, notably in financial matters, where the spending formula (Heald, 1983) has forced them to find any new moneys needed from within their own budgets, rather than going back to the Treasury and Cabinet for more. The effect is to allow Cabinet to distance itself to a greater degree from Scottish and Welsh affairs while increasing the local pressures on the Secretaries of State, reducing rather than increasing the integration of Scotland and Wales into mainstream British politics. The marginalisation of Scotland and Wales within British Conservatism, where Scotland counts for less than 3% and Wales barely 2% of the parliamentary party, could further reinforce the sense of territorial identity within those nations.

If the Conservatives are likely to find it impossible to reintegrate Scotland and Wales into the British political mainstream, Labour is also faced with long-term problems. Its integrative function continues to depend on its ability to win sufficient seats in Westminster to form a government which could reverse cuts in public expenditure and regional policies to the benefit of the periphery, particularly Scotland. However, a future Labour government would be obliged to honour its commitment to set up a Scottish Assembly significantly more powerful in relation to economic matters than that proposed in 1978. In these circumstances, the 'West Lothian Question' would arise again. Posed by anti-devolution Scots Labour MP Tam Dalyell in the 1970s, this fastened upon the

constitutional asymmetry of an arrangement allowing Scottish MPs to vote upon English domestic matters while neither they nor English MPs would be able to vote upon Scottish matters. In practice, the result of the 1987 election suggests that Labour will be spared this dilemma for there appears little chance of a Labour government in the short or medium term. The substantial swing to Labour in both Scotland and Wales and their continued over-representation in the House of Commons have not prevented a third Conservative majority only marginally short of landslide proportions. Thus, whether Labour continues to lose general elections as a result of the territorial asymmetry of electoral support or, winning, is obliged to introduce devolution policies for Scotland (and perhaps Wales), its traditional role of integrating Scotland and Wales will be seriously undermined.

One possible way forward would appear to have been opened by the results of the 1987 elections. Some Labour strategists, looking to Labour's success in Scotland and Wales have seen in it the model for a British Labour Party able to win the hearts and minds of those outside the Labour movement and to expand Labour's electoral base in England. Such a reformed party, reflecting in part the values and social composition of the successful Scottish and Welsh parties, might well be able to resume its integrative functions. A shift in this direction, though, looks unlikely. Labour in Scotland and Wales possesses unique antecedents. Both inherited the support, policies and personnel of nineteenth century radicalism to an extent not matched in England and, before the First World War, identified with the aspirations of Scottish and Welsh nationalism (Jones and Keating, 1985). The Scottish and Welsh parties, therefore, entered into a radical, populist political tradition and assumed the role of 'national' parties (Williams, 1985), something in which the Labour Party in England has been singularly unsuccessful.

A remodelled Labour Party on Scottish and Welsh lines appears equally unlikely in the contemporary context. The hard left has made only limited advances in Scotland and virtually none in Wales. Labour in the periphery still reflects the manners and mores of the post-war movement. Despite the decline of the traditional industries, it continues to exhibit a face which is working class, trade unionist, heavy industry and male. While as much concerned about social deprivation as the hard-left Labour parties of the English inner cities, it represents historical and largely stable communities. It was noteworthy during the miners' strike of 1984-5, that the solidarity of the Scottish and Welsh coalfields was firmly grounded in the preservation of mining communities rather than jobs *per se*. Politically radical, the Labour parties of Scotland and Wales tend to be social conservatives for whom the politics of gender and race and the 'rainbow coalitions' of single-issue interest groups espoused by inner city and particularly London parties are often not so much rejected as incomprehensible. Larry Whitty, addressing the London Labour Conference after the general election, noted that the party had won only one of its target seats in the capital and warned his audience that London should not be surprised if "the rest of the party does not understand but criticises and blames London for its impact on national politics" (The Independent, 13.07.87). This frank admission of differences could be dismissed as the rhetoric of the leadership seeking to discipline the hard left; but this begs two fundamental questions. The first concerns the Labour Party. Is it still a viable forum for the resolution of problems and determination of policies; or are the differences within it so profound as to frustrate all efforts at intra-party consensus? The return of a Labour government could raise expectations, particularly in Scotland, of a redistribution of resources to the periphery. But there is no guarantee that such a policy, openly presented for political effect, would not provoke resentment and hostility in the English South-East and Midlands. The devolution episode in 1977-9 provides telling evidence of the threat of an English backlash.

If the Labour Party in Scotland and Wales should travel down the nationalist road, not this time to cover their electoral flanks but as a reflection of their own new leading position in Scottish and Welsh society, will this be sympathetically received by the new left Labour parties of the English cities? It is more likely that it will be dismissed as reactionary and divisive. It is possible, of course, the Scottish and Welsh concerns could be assimilated to the 'ethnic' politics which, in London, has extended beyond the black and Asian communities to accommodate the Irish issue; but this would represent an extreme case of territorial fragmentation in the Labour movement and the virtual end of its claims to be a class party. This leads to our second fundamental question; whether a coherent British working class still exists?

Conclusion

These are big questions which go far beyond the area of territorial asymmetry but they do suggest that Labour's problems in managing the British periphery, now touching the very heart of the Party and not merely an external threat, are more profound and complex than they were in the 1970s. The problem does have some historical precedent. Most accounts of the decline of the Liberal Party in the early twentieth century focus on its inability to adapt to changing class structure, a problem comparable to Labour's current difficulties. The Liberals were also faced with severe territorial tensions in the years before the First World War. It, too, was a left-of-centre party whose strength lay disproportionately in Scotland and Wales, seeking to resolve a series of territorial crises of varying severity while maintaining some semblance of constitutional equity. It faced an opponent with a doctrinal opposition to devolution but with little stake in the periphery and which could therefore afford to take an intransigent line. With the breakaway of Chamberlain's Liberal Unionists, the party was further weakened and dependent, apart from exceptional circumstances such as in 1906, not only on its support in Scotland and

Wales but on Irish parliamentary votes to form a government. Home Rule for Ireland alone was constantly frustrated by British unionists and the solution which might have preserved constitutional symmetry, Home Rule All Round, was never a serious proposition, given the weakness of support in Wales and its complete absence in England. The inability of the Liberals to fashion an enduring constitutional settlement for the United Kingdom left a disastrous legacy in Ireland and a series of unresolved issues in Scotland and Wales.

This historical lesson reminds us that the preoccupation of British politics with socio-economic issues - vital though these are - can lead to underestimating the importance of territorial management as a function of the polity. The Liberal Party's foundering on the question of Ireland was a factor - certainly not the only one - in the breakdown of the nineteenth century party system.

We would argue that the policy of territorial management by the parties of the succeeding two-party system has been partly accidental or coincidental, arising often fortuitously from the socio-economic priorities which those parties set themselves. The increasingly pronounced electoral asymmetry now threatens that fortuitous conjunction. A more explicit and coherent strategy for territorial management is required if the British polity, via the party system which underpins it, is not again to be disrupted. Both (traditional) major parties are vulnerable to issues raised by the territorial asymmetry of the vote in the 1987 election. Scottish Conservatives have to push for policies which benefit Scotland or at least seek to ensure that policies which positively endanger the Scottish economy are not proceeded with. They can do this by attempting to forestall such policies on a UK basis or by seeking special exemption for Scotland. Either option would appear to be incompatible with the ideological parameters of Thatcherite

conservatism. In this context, the question of Ravenscraig's future will prove a stiff test. Labour's need to develop a strategy which comes to terms with the 'Thatcherite revolution' and which will enable the party to restore its electoral fortunes in the affluent south of England has to be balanced against its heavy dependence upon the economic periphery. A policy shift to the right would carry with it implications not only for party ideology but also for territorial strategy. For both parties, then, territorial management threatens to provoke intra-party stress.

There is no easy way forward. The two major parties are less able to fulfill their traditional integrative role because of the (uneven) modernisation of British society. The presence of a third force in British politics (itself a measure of the extent of change in Britain) further complicates the picture by accentuating the asymmetrical character of the British polity. The Alliance - under some new name - could well restore its fortunes; and the nationalists in Scotland and Wales could unearth or have presented to them another emotive issue to relaunch their campaign against the centralist British state. Either or both developments would increase the pressures on the two major parties as they sought to re-establish their territorial integrative functions. In this context, Doomsday will not provide the short, sharp constitutional crisis anticipated before the 1987 election. Given our analysis, it is more likely to materialise as a series of political crises triggered by short-term events but drawing on the underlying territorial tensions within the British polity.

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