

The changing state of local government: restructuring for the 1990s
Allan Cochrane

Policy differences within the United Kingdom: the case of housing policy in
Northern Ireland 1979-89
Michael Connolly and Colin Knox

The computerization of social security: the way forward or a step backwards?
Helen Margetts

The new system of local taxation in Scotland: principles and practice
Arthur Midwinter and Claire Monaghan

New challenges or familiar prescriptions?
Robin Butler

Public Administration

on the cards. Since the recent change of management the probability seems just a little higher – say about 60/40?

Geoffrey Marshall
Queens College, Oxford

POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY IN SCOTLAND

Arthur Midwinter, Michael Keating and James Mitchell
Macmillan 1991. 240pp. £35.00 (cloth); £9.99 (paper)

For those not already familiar with the work of the authors, this book represents a fair collage of their interests. As such, it is undoubtedly good value for money. The chapters essentially update earlier work done by Keating and Midwinter in *The Government of Scotland* and elsewhere.

Because the authors have sought to recycle so much of the excellent material they have already produced, there are inevitable omissions. Thus, while much time and effort is justifiably spent on local government, there is for example only one reference to health in the index and none to the health service. It is difficult to understand how a text on public policy and administration in Scotland could miss out this critical area.

Indeed, the authors have chosen to go in a curious direction. In their desire to engage in a polemic against James Kellas's idea of a Scottish political system, they cover very similar ground to Kellas's material on Scottish politics, without any additional insight. Kellas's survey of parties, voters, voting behaviour and political institutions generally represents a more coherent and readable approach to that found here, and the bibliography contains some surprising omissions in this area.

In the context of Jeffrey Stanyer's view that local authorities can be seen as political systems, the rejection of the idea that there is a Scottish political system is puzzling. Moreover, not only do the authors present substantial evidence of such a system themselves, but they also come up with some radical solutions for constitutional change similar to those suggested by Kellas.

But these are small criticisms. *Politics and Public Policy in Scotland* is to be welcomed by all students and teachers of public administration in Scotland.

Roger Levy
Glasgow College

ENDURING INEQUALITY: RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Vincent McCormack and Joe O'Hara
National Council for Civil Liberties, Russell Press, Nottingham, 1990. 77pp. £3.95

NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: AN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

Arthur Aughey, Paul Hainsworth and Martin J. Trimble
Policy Research Institute Northern Ireland, Belfast and Coleraine, 1989. 157pp.
Price not known

In the 1980s more discriminating academic and policy research has been carried out on

the government and politics of Northern Ireland. Much of it is lucidly and justly summarized in John Whyte's masterly, but sadly posthumous work, *Interpreting Northern Ireland* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990). The booklets reviewed here deal with two major policy controversies in Northern Ireland: the scale of discrimination in employment and unemployment; and the impact of the European Community upon the antagonistic politics and asphyxiated economy of the most violent region covered by the Single European Act. In *Enduring Inequality* McCormack and O'Hara provide a lucid exposition of the scale of inequalities in employment and unemployment in Northern Ireland. For those who do not know the facts this presentation will have a sobering impact. Despite their direct rule and legislation outlawing religious discrimination, Catholic males are two-and-a-half times as likely to be unemployed as Protestant females, whereas Catholic women are nearly twice as likely to be unemployed as Protestant females. In 25 out of the 26 local government districts in Northern Ireland Catholics are more likely to be unemployed than Protestants: i.e. including areas where Catholics form a majority of the local population. One way to think about these facts is that Protestants experience the average Great British rates of unemployment, whereas Catholics fare much worse, at least twice as badly than their fellow citizens. To put it another way: Protestants enjoy British citizenship, whereas Catholics have a form of citizenship which is lower quartile British.

How does one interpret this evidence? David Smith of the Policy Studies Institute (author of *Equality and Inequality in Northern Ireland*, 1987) concluded, after rigorous investigation, that a very substantial proportion of the differential employment opportunities of Catholics and Protestants could only be accounted for by direct and indirect discrimination. McCormack and O'Hara agree with Smith, cite other supporting data in favour of his explanations, and summarize the errors in alternative explanations which seek to downplay the importance of discrimination.

However, the bulk of McCormack and O'Hara's work consists of sharp analysis of why British fair employment legislation failed after the passage of the relevant act in 1976, and why the Fair Employment Agency proved to be a toothless tiger. Their work is written with a political objective in mind: to warn that the newly passed Fair Employment Act of 1989, and the newly minted Fair Employment Commission are likely to go the way of their predecessors. As they show convincingly, both in 1976 and 1989, British governments ignored the substantive advice of the committees set up to advise them, and instead drafted weaker and unworkable legislation. If McCormack and O'Hara are right, as I believe they are, then Westminster and Whitehall's failure to reform Northern Ireland's discriminatory economy is going to persist into the 1990s. *Enduring Inequality* will provide relevant and controversial case-material for those teaching courses in policy implementation, especially implementation failures.

Northern Ireland in the European Community consists of seven essays by Aughey, Hainsworth and Trimble. Northern Ireland has the unenviable distinction of being the only region of the UK to be designated as of 'Objective One' status under the reformed Structural Funds. However, it will not surprise most readers that the politics of the European Community are primarily discussed in Northern Ireland through its local communities' conflicting national aspirations, rather than in debates over which status the region deserves under Brussels' techno-speak.

A wide range of political opinion, including both nationalists and unionists, regularly expresses the view that European integration has definite implications for the political relationships within Northern Ireland, as well as those between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and between Ireland and Britain. However, this thesis is logically deficient: for the simple reason that European economic integration is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the establishment of a united or, if you prefer, an agreed Ireland – whether federal or confederal kind; and neither is it a necessary or a sufficient condition for the establishment of an agreed United Kingdom – whether of a unitary, devolved or federal kind.

The fact that the two Germanies united politically this year, long before their economies

As the Little Stalin Library used to do for other groups of dogmatists in days gone by. As such, it could serve as a useful guide for administrators faced with the task of coping with the consequences of the latest wizard wheeze concocted by some recent graduate of St. Andrew's which has passed through ministers' minds without encountering any substantial resistance and fetched up on the statute book. Or rather, until recently it might have done so. Now, the rules of the game seem about to change again.

This is a poignant moment for the New Right think tanks and especially for those who believe, as on the evidence of this pamphlet Dr. Green clearly does, that the Thatcherite mission was essentially about morality. For their leader, economists were always mainly a means to the end of securing a change in values; and to that extent, debate about whether the economic policies of the eighties were successful or not is beside the point. The argument on values, as Green deploys it, rests on two legs: pessimism about human nature and optimism about the role of the market as a corrective device. As he rightly notes, this is the precise opposite of the traditional left view, which is optimistic about human nature and cynical about the market – a position also adopted by Christian critics, with whom Green is much less eager to tangle.

The market, for Green, is the arena in which we discover our virtue, since we are induced by the checks and balances of the competitive market place to behave properly, and where our endeavours to contribute maximum service to our fellows are recognized. The convenient signalling mechanism of material success ensures that this recognition is general (and if it does not, there is always the Honours system to fall back on, as Mrs. Thatcher's resignation list helpfully illustrated). These virtues of the market make the fashionable notion of citizenship redundant, since it is better to secure one's future and that of one's family by individual effort than to have it conferred from outside, so that we become merely passive recipients of gratuities. As for redistribution of resources in favour of the less well off, that constitutes a wholly illegitimate interference in the delicate functioning of the market mechanism especially if undertaken in pursuit of the totally unjustified objective of equality. This, the worst of all heresies, gives Green his title and labels the heretics for his anathemas.

But there is a serpent in Green's Eden who is less easily disposed of: democracy. If the state does decide to intervene, it may do so with the sanction of popular approval, expressed through the ballot box. It follows that it is essential to lay down a *corollary samitäre* which will prevent such intervention from taking place. This is achieved by declaring that a vote cast (in however superficially democratic manner) on an issue on which the voter might be held to have a personal interest in the outcome is corrupting. Never mind that individuals choosing to seek similar favourable outcomes for themselves in the market may (in Green's universe) deploy any legitimate mechanism to secure their personal advantage – and thereby inevitably disadvantage others with whom they are competing. That is *legitimate* self-interest because sanctified by the context in which it is expressed.

The core of Green's case is the encouragement of self-reliance, and this is not to be sneezed at. Indeed, it is refreshing not to have to deal with the stale rhetoric of Tory paternalism and the shibboleths of duty and obligation as motivations for public policy. These shrivel in the harsh light of Green's analysis, in which only self-interest holds its place. His concern that the private sphere should be protected in whatever ordering of society is adopted also deserves serious consideration. But ultimately possessive individualism of the kind this pamphlet so vehemently espouses will only hold its own in the political arena while it can deliver the material rewards that the campfollowers – less interested than the ideologists in the morality of what is taking place – come to expect as their due. In recession, it is possible – that despite your best endeavours as you will fail in the market. And what does the famous signalling mechanism have to say about you then? Does failure represent you just deserts? And so the pendulum swings, and the right rediscovers the Middle Way, as it is trying to do now. Only the true believers

have been integrated, confirms that there is no unequivocal logic about the relations between economic and political integration. Divergent economies can be politically integrated, as is happening in Germany, and integrated economies can diverge politically. European economic integration is also not a sufficient condition of political integration. Economic co-operation, interdependence and standardization have not led to political integration between Britain and France, between Spain and Portugal, between Belgium and the Netherlands, between Canada and the USA, or between Lithuania and the USSR. There is therefore no compelling logical reason to suppose that the economic integration of the two political units on the island of Ireland through the institutions of the European Community has any definite political implications for the national conflicts within and between those units.

Note that I am not saying, nor are Aughey *et al.*, that the success or failure of European economic integration will have no political consequences, merely that that success will not necessarily advance Irish nationalism any more than the defeat of 1992 will necessarily be of benefit to Ulster unionism. Arthur Aughey is correct to complain in his eloquent contributions to this book that a sleight of hand is frequently attempted by British and Irish socialists and liberals when the topic of Europe is discussed with Ulster unionists. Unionists are told that European economic integration is inevitable, and that political integration of the EC will follow automatically from that process, and finally they are told that they had better negotiate now as to how they should share the island of Ireland. The argument is rhetorical and logically deficient. Moreover, it distracts attention from negotiating the real issues in Northern Ireland and British-Irish relations, ones which Aughey would not accept: namely power-sharing within and across Ireland, institutionalizing divergent national identities, fair employment, bills of rights, and the creation of effective and just systems for administering justice.

That many rhetorical arguments about the impact of European integration upon Northern Ireland are fallacious has not stopped some unionists from accepting their premises. Dr. Paisley, whose doctorate is not in politics or economics, sees the European Community as a Trojan horse for Irish unity and Papal aggrandizement – and Paul Hainworth shows clearly how these arguments have been advanced in Northern Ireland's electoral contests. Whether or not the European Community is a Roman Catholic front-organization – a view which Ulster Protestants share with many Scandinavian Protestants – nobody disputes that it has become a front-organization for farmers, fishermen and regional interest groups. The essays by Trimble in *Northern Ireland and the European Community* provide evidence of the extension of these Euro-traits into Northern Ireland. Provided the reader discounts Aughey's more glaring unionist biases – which are partially offset by his excellent and vibrant prose – there is much of value in *Northern Ireland in the European Community*.

Brendan O'Leary

London School of Economics and Political Science

EQUALIZING PEOPLE

D. C. Green

Institute of Economic Affairs, 1990. 65pp. £4.50

One of the curiosities of the New Right approach to social policy is that while it has been immensely influential in determining social policy outcomes, it has yet to generate a substantial piece of home-grown analytical work. Most of the original work from this perspective comes from the other side of the Atlantic and adapts rather uneasily in its detail to different local circumstances. David Green's new pamphlet does not profess to fill this gap; rather, it is a short work of apologetics, setting out some basic dogmas rather