

# In The Land Of The Dispossessed

The late 80s is witnessing quite new divisions within the workforce: between the employed and the unemployed, between core workers and peripheral workers. These divisions threaten to become the basis of a new political order. **Charlie Leadbeater** argues that we need some new thinking to tackle the problem.

**T**he terrain of British politics has shifted irrevocably since 1983. It is not just that Thatcherism still occupies the ideological high ground through its sustained colonisation of the public political discourse. Nor that it has forced through change in institutions which gathered their strength in the postwar era - trade unions, the welfare state, the nationalised corporations.

The most fundamental change is the development of new lines of division within British society. These divisions are the product of irrevocable changes in Britain's 'employment base': the rise and *persistence* of mass long term unemployment, and recurrent short term unemployment; while the growth of a peripheral workforce of part timers, temporary workers, and the self employed, have accompanied rising security and prosperity for those in full time employment.

Thatcherism is attempting to mould this radical polarisation in British society into a stable political order. Thatcherism is encouraging the development of cultural identities, social and economic interests, to channel the expression and resolution of conflicts between the groups which inhabit divided Britain.

It is attempting to construct a 'post-recession settlement' to match the coherence and comprehensiveness of the 'postwar settlement' of old.

**The central task for the Left is to** develop a socialist strategy to reconcile the new divisions in Britain. This is not just a matter of winning the support of particular constituencies, nor merely a question to do with the credibility of an

economic strategy, but a vision of what kind of political order, what kind of society, should be built from the divisions of the late 1980s.

Before examining in detail the new divisions in Britain, it is worth recalling the character of the employment base for the 'postwar settlement'. In the 1960s the unemployment rate was about 2.3%. Less than 20% of those unemployed were out of work for more than a year. In the sphere of employment the norm was male full time employment, often with a large company. Part time employment was about 2% of all employment in the 1950s. Temporary workers, and the self employed also made up a small proportion of employment.

In the 1960s many conflicts were expressed within the context of full employment. Through the machinery of corporatism, the trade unions, the state and employers harnessed these conflicts so they could be resolved in a way that was compatible with the social democratic ethos of the times. There was a kind of fit between the grassroots of the employment base, the institutions of politics, and the overarching ideology. In the 1980s that employment base for postwar politics has broken apart. The differences which existed within the full employment labour market, differences of earnings and skills, have been superseded by a much more radical polarisation between those secure within the labour market, those bobbing in and out of employment, and those stuck firmly on the edges in long term unemployment. The task of the late 1980s is to fashion institutions and a political strategy to cope with the conflicts created by what



**Downcast: the human face of unemployment**

is a new *fivefold* segmentation of the labour market.

The most dramatic change in the employment base is the rise in unemployment from 1.14m or 4.3% in 1979 to 3.19m or 11.7% last year on official figures. But this rise masks important shifts in the composition of unemployment over the last five years.

**The first of the five groups in the** segmented labour market are the long term unemployed.

About a quarter of men unemployed in 1977 had been out of work for more than a year. By 1986 the proportion had risen to 44%, or about 1.02m men. The growth of long term unemployment is a dramatic turn-around from the 1960s. In 1963 for instance, about 800,000 men per quarter were registering as unemployed. But they were quickly moving out of unemployment and finding jobs again. So the *level* of male unemployment was 500,000. In 1985 the flow into unemployment was lower than in 1963 with about 750,000 men per quarter



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becoming unemployed. However the level of male unemployment was 300% above its level in 1963 at over 2m. The explanation for this apparently paradoxical development is simple: in the 1980s unemployment had risen because a larger group are unemployed for a longer period.

The vast majority of the long term unemployed are more or less permanently outside the labour market. As a result of ill health, depression and the loss of skills, the long term unemployed are severely disadvantaged in competing for vacancies. Through their unemployment they become isolated, and fatalistic. They lack any sense of individual power, for instance through the freedom to consume, or collective power through institutions such as trade unions. The long term unemployed suffer a kind of permanent exclusion from society.

The importance of the growth of long term unemployment should not deflect attention from a second group among the unemployed: those who suffer short

term unemployment. There were about 1.23m men unemployed for less than 52 weeks last year. A study published by the Policy Studies Institute in 1983 showed that workers who have experienced unemployment frequently have irregular and discontinuous patterns of employment thereafter. This is because when they are recruited to jobs it is most likely to be on the bottom rung of the ladder in companies. Even when they are in employment they are the group most vulnerable to redundancy.

**T**he short term unemployed are within the labour market, but on its fringes as they move in and out of employment. Their income and contact with the socialised world of work, their sense of their position within society, fluctuates with their employment prospects.

**The third segment is the peripheral workforce** - a growing army of part timers, temporary workers, homeworkers and the self employed, who are suspended in a grey area between

unemployment and full time employment.

The first national estimates of the size of the permanent and peripheral workforces, published by the Department of Employment in February shows that the peripheral workforce expanded by 16% between 1981 and 1985 to 8.1m workers, while the permanent workforce of full time employees declined by 6%. While some of this growth is a continuation of trends established in the 1970s, it seems to mark a permanent change in the structure of employment.

It seems that after the dramatic loss in full time jobs, employment growth in Britain might be concentrated on peripheral jobs. A recent study of future employment trends by the Institute of Employment Research at Warwick University forecast that in the next four years full time employment will decline by a further 1m while the number of peripheral workers will rise by 900,000.

Several factors explain this shift from

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permanent jobs to peripheral jobs. First, most companies do not pay peripheral workers non wage benefits such as sick pay, holiday pay and pensions. This allows savings on labour costs. Second, through the use of part timers and temporary workers, companies can easily vary employment levels to match fluctuating levels of production. Thirdly, it reflects the ambiguous position of trade unions. Trade union weakness has undoubtedly been one reason why companies have been able to push through these changes.

But peripheral workers are also used to provide security for full time employees. Several unions have allowed companies to introduce more temporary workers under an agreement which says that these workers will be the first to be laid off during a downturn, thereby giving greater security to the full time employees.

All this adds up to a deep cleavage between the security and status of peripheral and permanent workers within a company. This is reflected more broadly in the legal position of peripheral workers. Labour law has traditionally categorised workers as either employees dependent on an employer or independent and genuinely self employed. This leaves peripheral workers in a grey area. Temporary workers are clearly not self employed. But according to the law because they do not establish a permanent relationship with a single employer, they are not 'employees', a status reserved for full time workers.

In the most important legal case in this area in 1983, an industrial tribunal ruled that a regular casual waiter, who worked solely for Trusthouse Forte, and attended for duty when summoned, was actually self employed and had no legal redress against the company for redundancy pay regardless of years of service. Peripheral workers thus go without many of the protections against unfair dismissal or redundancy afforded to full timers.

**The final two segments are those 15.6m workers in full time employment.** In recent years many of those in full time employment have enjoyed a combination of rises in earnings of around 7-8%, and low inflation. The contrast between the apparent security and rising prosperity of the full timers and the vulnerability of peripheral workers has led some to identify full time workers as 'core' employees. However the last few years have not just seen a radical polarisation between those in work and those out of work, the gap between skilled and unskilled workers has also widened.

The unskilled and semi skilled in employment make up the fourth segment of the labour market. The earnings of the worst paid 10% of male workers fell from 65.9% of the average male wage in 1979 to 60.2% in 1986, while the earnings of the best paid 10%

rose from 156.9% of the average to 173.3%.

This widening gap between the earnings of the top and bottom of the labour market reflects the way that companies have restructured production in recent years. The workers most vulnerable to unemployment are the unskilled, particularly the young and the old. They are the first to be laid off in recession so they are the most vulnerable to pressure to reduce labour costs.

**A** related development is the changing skills companies demand with new technology. The introduction of micro-electronics into manufacturing has not just contributed to lower overall employment, it has shifted the skills demanded. There is a premium on programmers, systems analysts and multi-skilled maintenance workers who can understand both the electronics and the mechanics of a robot. These workers have benefited from the introduction of new technology, with expanded responsibilities and new wider jobs covering a range of activities. However the work of unskilled operatives may have become increasingly deskilled. So while many among the skilled have become reskilled in line with the new production methods, many among the unskilled have become further deskilled. The growth of labour intensive services, and the abolition of the wages councils have also contributed to this widening of differentials.

Unskilled workers are in an increasingly fiercely fought differentials race with the skilled. They are likely to identify themselves in terms of their relative position within the world of employment, rather than with unemployed workers. For this reason they must have a predisposition to see promotion through companies' internal labour markets as the main route to advancement rather than improvement in the overall level of employment.

**Finally in the fifth segment are the genuinely core workers, permanent, skilled workers, with stable employment prospects.** The source of continued high earnings growth is companies' approach to motivating these skilled well paid 'core' employees.

As the CBI makes clear in a recent submission to the National Economic Development Council, companies are increasingly attempting to maximise demand for products through exploiting market niches to the full. While price competition remains important, other 'non-price' elements of competition have increased in importance. As a result companies are putting more emphasis on design, marketing, reliability and after sales service.

This shift in companies' strategies to competition has carried important consequences for the way they organise, motivate and pay their workers. There is an increasing stress on agreements to allow workers to be used more

flexibly in line with shifting marketing strategies, as well as to control labour costs. Employees are also being asked to play more of a role in quality control, reduction of wastage, preventive maintenance, and incremental product innovation. The CBI concludes: 'It is impossible to obtain the best performance from employees through detailed work rules, constant supervision and threat. The only way this can be achieved is by establishing a skilled and motivated workforce, committed to the goals of the enterprise.'

Combined with this, more companies are introducing new technology production processes. This puts a premium on skilled workers. But it has also led to a change in industrial relations, with more companies attempting to wrap workers into the goals of the business through employee involvement, quality circles and profit sharing.

This fivefold division of the workforce is not the only dimension to division in Britain. These divisions within the working class may be overshadowed by the obscenity of the boom in City and executive salaries. Nor are these five groups homogenous. Running through these labour market divisions are others. There are regional divisions. The job losses of the early 1980s were concentrated on manufacturing and thus its heartlands in the Midlands, North and Scotland. Within regions there are differences between areas, for instance between the depression of Merseyside, and the affluence of nearby Cheshire.

There is also a gender dimension to these divisions. While the male long term unemployed are outside the labour market, women's unemployment is largely invisible, unrecorded by official statistics. Women with husbands in work cannot claim benefit: the state is effectively telling them they were not really working, not in real, ie, male jobs. Women also make up a disproportionately large part of the peripheral labour force. Over 60% of peripheral workers are women. There are also significant ethnic divisions with unemployment rates among ethnic minorities far higher than among whites.

**B**ut it is not just that the labour market has segmented in this way. What is important is that these divisions have created new and conflicting interests, and as a consequence set up a new distributional dynamic for politics. Thatcherism has set about managing and moulding these divisions and conflicting interests to form the stable base for a coherent political order.

When Thatcherism rose to power in the late 1970s, it came with policies very different from those of other postwar governments. But Thatcherism also maintained one important element of continuity. The ethos of postwar consensus politics was *inclusive*. Through full employment and the welfare state all were offered an opportunity to

share in growth.

The initial monetarist cure offered by Thatcherism was also *inclusive*. It claimed to be a popular national government addressing Britain's malaise. The monetarism looked clinical and neutral. And indeed Britons did plunge into the recession together. As unemployment rose, so did pressures on business. As trade unions protested, so ICI posted its first ever loss and the CBI warned of a bare knuckle fight with the government. The clear message was that we could all suffer through the cure but we would all benefit from the inclusive market economy that would emerge.

As we have seen what has emerged is a radically divided Britain. With the emergence of those divisions Thatcherism's basic political strategy has changed. It is no longer attempting to build a popular base by offering itself as a national, crusading, inclusive political force but rather through the opposite. Its political strategy now depends on *exclusion*. The government is attempting to create a new political equilibrium based on stabilising the new economic divisions. This is not just a matter of satisfying the economic and

material interests of various constituencies. It is a project to wrap them into a new political order which gives members of these groups a sense of a legitimate place within society. At the core is a strategy to legitimise a society where roughly two thirds have done, and will continue to do, quite well while the other third languish in unemployment or perpetual insecurity.

Those who retained their full time jobs through the recession are doing better than during the mid 1970s. Then the growth of their earnings of 14.3% in 1976, and 9.8% in 1977, was outstripped by high inflation, 15.3% and 14.7% respectively. In the last three years those in full time employment have seen their earnings outstrip inflation by 1%, 2.2% and 4.3% respectively. It is not the British economy that has gained from low inflation but those who have remained in employment. The government has acquiesced in these earnings gains, despite its professed belief that pay is the crucial determinant of employment. Clearly it believes its support can best be deepened and maintained by appeasing wage earnings rather than trying to curtail the

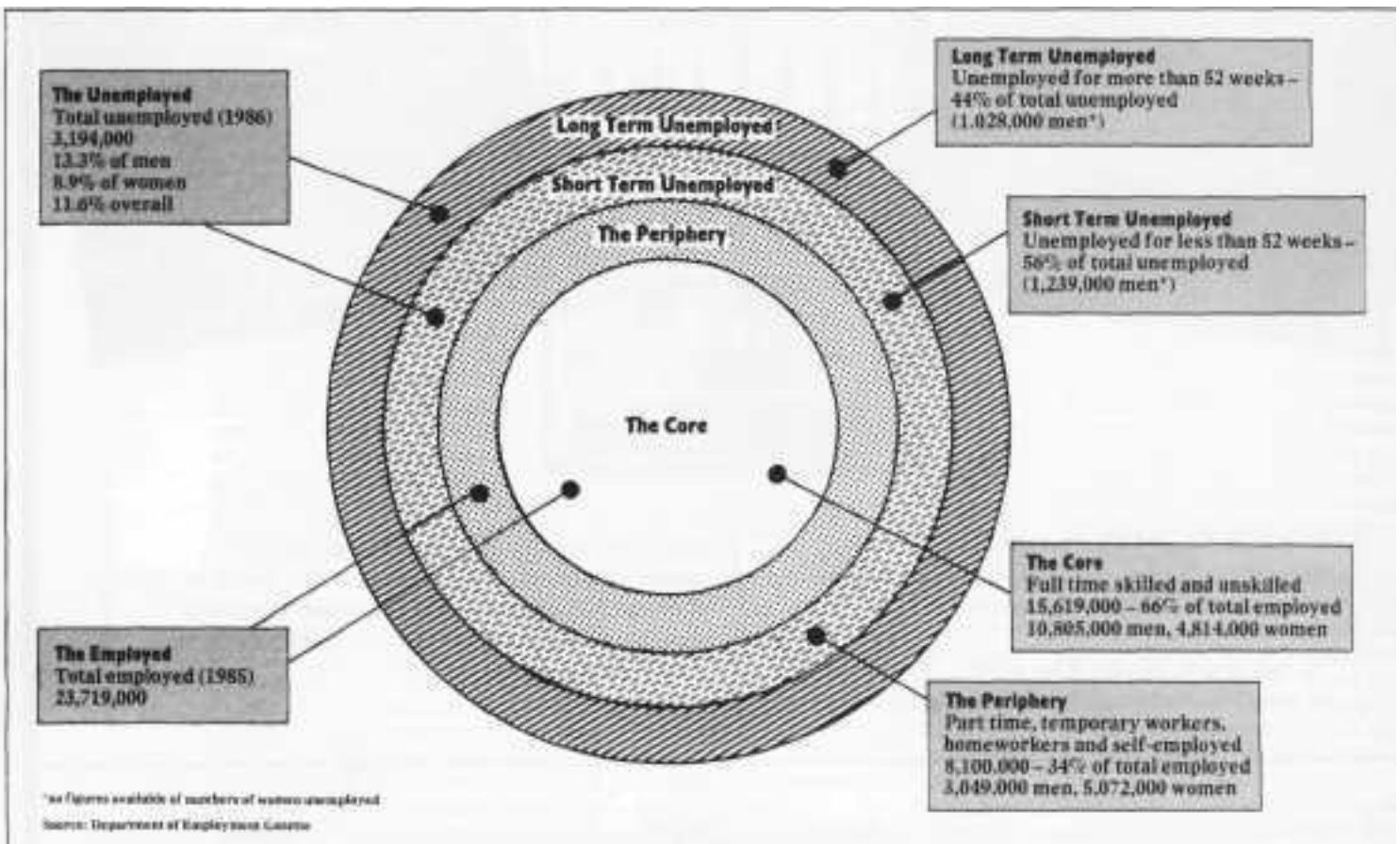
rise in earnings.

Moreover the better paid have benefited from income tax cuts, and the power of this group has warned the government away from reforming taxes on mortgage interest relief and pensions. It is the earnings of this group which has created the consumer boom of the last year, accompanied by spiralling credit card debt, and rising imports.

The boom on the high-streets in affluent areas, continually rising house prices, the comfort of new consumer durables in homes, building societies and banks competing for their savings, new cars in drives, all create the impression for those doing the spending that the bad times are over.

One reason they are able to do that is the invisibility of the depression and insecurity of the long term unemployed and the outsiders. While the southern service sector booms, in the north the long term unemployed have been deserted and forgotten. While Hampstead blossoms, Hackney wilts. But the invisibility of the outsiders in British society is not just a matter of geography. Government schemes to create work for the long term unemployed are

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## Divided Workforce

Britain's workforce is acquiring, in the late 80s, a new shape, characterised by new

and deep-seated divisions. It divides into five main categories: the skilled core, the unskilled core, the periphery, the short-term unemployed and the long-term unemployed.

The long-term unemployed are now virtually permanently excluded from the labour

force. They have borne the brunt of the recession. The short-term unemployed are on the fringes of the labour market. The peripheral workers, such as part-time and temporary workers, bob in and out of the workforce. They are now the fastest growing sector of

the labour force.

The unskilled core is in work but finds itself increasingly losing out in the battle of differentials with the skilled. The skilled core not only enjoys job security but has in recent years benefited from rising real wages.

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as much aimed at salving the consciences of the insiders. Unemployment becomes an inevitability, akin to a motorway pile-up people drive around gawking at, but glad they were not caught up in it as they speed on. Above all it is not something which is the creation of economic and social processes, in which they play a part.

This deliberate state policy to make unemployment invisible is compounded by the fatalism of the long term unemployed excluded from the social institutions of work and pleasure. Increasing privatisation through consumption in the core is accompanied by privatisation through depression on the fringes.

This coexistence of depression and prosperity has been reinforced by a major shift in economic policy. The higher public spending announced last autumn, the tax cutting budget, all suggest that the need for belt tightening is over. Moreover the increases in spending are a nod to the insiders' consciences over the state of the health service and education.

**The development of this strategy to legitimise divided Britain has been facilitated through changing the role of key institutions.**

The trade unions are being forced further into a non-political, purely industrial role representing workers within the narrow confines of their particular places of work. The labour movement is caught between attempting to maintain and maximise its organisation among those still in employment and being able to represent workers who are unemployed.

Along with a generalised curtailment of the legitimate sphere of state activity, the government has changed the way the state operates, centralising many functions, taking them out of the arena of political bargaining. The state no longer plays a guardian, managing role with the wide compass it had during the postwar years, but it has become a tool to deal with problems on a selected basis, within financial constraints. The Fowler review of social security, which emphasised the targeting of spending on those deserving and in need, is a clear example.

Finally, private companies have come to play a much more important role in shaping the foundations of politics. The crucial divisions created by the fracturing of the employment base are the accumulation of companies' policies. By passing responsibility to companies, Thatcherism has depoliticised these divisions, which are presented as the result of common sense economic imperatives. With the state disowning the obligations it once had, and companies insisting they are only responsible for what goes on within their walls, the whole notion of social obligation has disappeared into a black hole. Where business does operate in the community it is presented as an enlightened act of charity.

Enveloping these in the economic, cultural and institutional roots of the 'post-recession settlement' is a powerful ideology. Apparently neutral, applying equally to all, it brims with common sense, while justifying the new divisions. The economy must be driven by consumers' desire for value for money. We are all consumers, we all like high quality/low priced goods. So the dictum must bring benefits for all. But not if there are some in a position to enjoy consumption while others scabble to get by. Another 'neutral' catchword is flexibility. More flexible production must be more competitive, it must yield better value for money. But if the UK labour market has become more flexible it is because particular groups have been weakened: the low paid have created pay flexibility; the insecurity of peripheral workers has allowed companies the flexibility to vary employment levels.

Most importantly the strategy has dramatically lowered the outsiders' judgements of what they deserve, while simultaneously relieving the insiders of any sense that they or their society has 'obligations'. As the gap between them grows something fundamental happens to insiders' sense of their place in society. The outsiders become to look less and less like the kind of people insiders mix with at work and socially. They become less recognisable as members of the same society, with a similar right to claim a decent standard of living. At best they are an unsettling embarrassment to be treated with charity. At worst they are an unwanted burden.

**How should the Left respond to the possibility that Thatcherism might build a stable order on these divisions?**

The main alternative to Thatcherism is a modernised version of the social democratic management of the postwar era. The modernisation reflects recognition of the criticisms of policy in the declining years of the postwar consensus, and the need to address the productive efficiency of the economy in the light of Britain's accelerating industrial decline. Labour offers a mix of reflation, combined with a strategy for increasing investment to create new companies, making new products offering new jobs. Along with this it has outlined plans for an expansion in MSC type schemes for the long term unemployed and an increase in education and training.

**D**espite these innovations the values and political strategy underlying Labour's approach remain broadly the same. It offers to reintegrate divided Britain through managing the labour market. But Labour's approach is insufficient for two reasons.

Firstly, even if the strategy is entirely successful 2m people will still be out of work, (3m on estimates Labour ministers used to refer to.)

Secondly, as Bob Rowthorn and John

Grahl showed recently (*Marxism Today* November 1986) Labour has chosen to ignore some obstacles which would stand in the way of its success. Labour has stayed silent on incomes policy, although it's clear that the reflation could easily be derailed by inflationary wage demands. It has also maintained that its plans can be financed through raising taxes only for the highest paid, while it seems that much more broadly based tax rises would be needed.

**B**oth these obstacles are symptomatic of deeper unresolved problems in Labour's strategy. Firstly, it has accepted that its employment goals should be constrained by what the labour market can deliver. Secondly, it believes it would be electoral suicide to challenge too strongly the tax and earnings privileges of the insiders.

**These obstacles are symptomatic of deeper problems with a traditional social democratic attempt to manage the employment crisis in the UK.** For years social democrats in the tradition of Tony Crosland have argued that economic growth will solve problems of distributive justice. There is no need to change people's relative ranking in the queue, just keep it moving along to ensure that at some point in the future the people right at the back will have moved onto ground that was once occupied by people in the middle. The economy's capacity to produce growth was taken for granted.

To develop a credible response to the employment crisis the Left will have to overturn both those assumptions. It will have to develop a strategy to promote production as well as becoming much more radically redistributive.

There are only two routes to create work, and the Left must promote both. Firstly work can be created through the market as employment. Workers are paid a wage and in return they produce a good or service to be sold. The overriding constraint on the possibilities of creating this kind of work is profitability.

Labour's policies will not induce enough currently profitable firms to expand employment, nor create enough new profitable firms to take on workers. Full employment in the postwar years was not just the creation of demand management. It was also the product of the mass production industries of the postwar boom - cars, televisions, washing machines - which employed armies of labour. Full employment in the 1990s will require equivalents of these industries.

The creation of such industries based on the diffusion of information technology should be a central task of a socialist economic policy.

But even with a concerted strategy for production it will take a long time to recreate full employment through the market. If this is accepted then it raises fundamental questions. Is the lesson of the last few years that Keynesian or

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monetarist policies to reform the labour market have not been taken far enough to be effective? Or is the employment crisis a sign not of the failure of these policies, but of the failure of the labour *market* itself?

The labour market is simply a mechanism to allocate workers to work in one direction, and income to workers in the other. The market is conspicuously failing to do either. Millions of people are languishing in unemployment rather than producing goods and services of value. As a result they are also suffering low incomes. The market has failed as an overall principle for allocating labour and income. The Left needs to develop a radical and imaginative strategy to address the social and individual problems of people out of employment for long periods of time. The only alternative is to supplement the market with non-market mechanisms of allocating labour to useful work and income to workers.

**A formula for solving this problem is not difficult to construct.** In one way or another the state could provide those not in market employment with some kind of basic decent income. The problem is developing a politics which would justify such a rejection of the familiar principles of the market.

The first objection to such a proposal runs as follows. In the market we can see the value of what workers do because they make products which are sold for a price. Why should we give money to people to do nothing of value? There are two counters to this. Part of the strategy would have to be the development of institutions, such as voluntary organisations among the unemployed, which would organise socially useful work along the lines of the best Community Programme initiatives. These forms of work do not have to have a price to have value. Consumers value a product on after-sales service, and quality as well as price; public services have a value but no price. So one initiative a left government could take is to set aside funds which voluntary associations of the unemployed could apply for to carry out socially useful work like refurbishing buildings.

But it would be unacceptable and inefficient for the state constantly to police people in 'non-market employment' to check that they were doing something for their money. Better incomes for those out of employment should not be justified by compassion nor by the performance of some work, but by need. The right to a decent income should come with citizenship rather than with membership of the smaller community which is lucky enough to be in employment.

How could that need and thus the level of income be established? This question is connected to another. If better incomes for those out of employment are to be financed by taxes on those in employment how could this be justifi-

fied?

This is not a matter of finding the methodology for the new Beveridge, it is a question of politics to create common interests between those in and out of employment.

If we make the realistic assumption of near to zero altruism among those earning a wage then we are left with two options. The first is to create a direct incentive for those in employment to boost the incomes of those out of employment. This could be achieved if everyone had some of their income provided by the state. For those out of employment it would be their main source of income. For those in employment the state income would replace part of their pay which is currently not subject to tax. As a result those in and out of employment would have something in common: an income from the same source.

So they would both have an interest in what level that income is set at. Those out of employment would obviously want this state income to be as high as possible. But those earning a wage would want it to be kept as low as possible because they would have to pay the taxes to finance it.

**One way through this conflict would be to tie the state income to a pay policy.** Those in work would be allowed pay rises over a certain level only if a significant portion of those rises were channelled back into the state income via the tax system. This would create a clear incentive for pay bargainers. To get a rise in their pay they would simultaneously have to sanction rises in the state income which goes to all.



Other ways of creating common interests can be imagined. There are those in employment who would like to work less and those out of employment who want to work more. It should be possible to encourage exchanges across this divide, a flow of people between market and non-market work. Measures to promote part-time work, job sharing, sabbaticals, early retirement, would facilitate this flow. It would be crucial that this takes place within a legal, financial and economic framework which ensures security as well as desirable flexibility. But such measures might play an important role in opening doors to the world of employment. It would also mean that the chances of the average person being voluntarily 'unemployed' for some time would go up and thus so would their concern for the conditions of unemployment.

The second way to ensure that non-market income is set at a viable level is through reform of the political process. The market has disenfranchised the outsiders from a decent income: the political process must compensate. Just as the incomes of those in market employment depend on their strength in the market, so the incomes of those out of employment would depend on

their strength in the political process. This would require a radical repoliticisation of work, with representation of the outsiders as an interest group at all levels of the political process from local councils to the National Economic Assessment. So another initiative a left government could take is to enable, encourage and subsidise the creation of organisations among the outsiders to push their interests.

**Finally how could a coherent political strategy be built which encompasses these differing interests but in some sense unifies them?**

The first point is that this advocacy of non-market work is not a global solution to the employment crisis, but the opposite. The crisis of employment, of divided Britain does not have a single solution. There might be a set of partial solutions, including non-market work, which could be combined. This would require the renunciation of Keynesianism or Japanisation as the single solution to the crisis. Instead the Left would have to become much more plural. At the extremes it would have to encompass the pure market, driven by competitiveness and profit, while at the other end establishing non-market mechanisms for allocating work and income in line with social need.

But as well as admitting greater plurality the Left has to build on what is common. The power of Thatcherism lies in its ideology. Its common sense language of value for money resonates widely. It appears as a common standard to be used by all, offering benefits to all, while actually legitimising growing inequality and division.

The Left has to accentuate what is common across the divides in Britain. Almost all have a common interest in the public services of health and education. Improving those will simultaneously improve the position of the two thirds and the one third. Moreover it is an area where the two thirds would clearly recognise the rights of the dispossessed one third to demand a decent service. The political strategy must be built around movements which already span the divides.

Beyond that it is essential the Left should insert a new morality into politics based on the idea of citizenship: that the right to a decent standard of living is not a contingent matter to be decided by the market.

Of all the tasks for the Left - refashioning the role it gives to the state, making itself more open as a political movement - the most important is to develop a strategy which addresses the reality of the new divisions in Britain.

For the groups in British society are like two ships passing in the night. For a while the passengers of each see that the gap between them is getting alarmingly wide. But as they get further and further apart, and to the relief of all, the gap appears to vanish - as they pass over opposite horizons. •