

## The Body Politic

Stuart Hall's analysis of the Left's ills (*MT* March) suggests that the patient must minister radically to herself. A few moral placebos about the virulent incencies of Thatcherism won't restore the socialist body politic to a sound and pristine health. It's no good just putting a slick, new pacemaker into the old heart. Anyway, as Stuart Hall explains, it's the brain that really needs surgery.

He looked at the NHS. I'd like to consider education. There are many similar themes and tensions: individual freedom and social equality; professional interests and public accountability; local initiative and strategic control. Such contradictions can't be solved/or people by a 'master plan'.

We have to find ways of democratising the process of education so that all parties to this social contract can intelligently negotiate its contents. Socialism isn't a series of ready-made solutions to be locked in place by 'professionals'. It is a range of critical perspectives on the whole of society which have to be creatively interpreted and ap-

### Authoritarian Populism

Stuart Hall states (*MT* March) that Thatcherism has been engaged in 'aligning its historical, political, cultural and sexual "logics" with some of the most powerful tendencies in the contemporary logics of capitalist development'. If only this were the case!

Most Conservatives today no more accept the social by-products of 'post-Fordism' than they were prepared to welcome the postwar boom-economy-induced permissiveness of the 60s.

The expansion and changing nature of capitalist production presents Thatcherism with political opportunities but it also poses an acute dilemma for the authoritarian Right. Post-Fordist economics undermine the Tory Party's desire to preserve and enforce social and sexual mores.

### Trade Union Posters

We are preparing a major new illustrated book and exhibition on the history of the poster in the British trade union movement from its earliest times to

plied in every sphere.

Constructing a curriculum which empowers the next generation demands a dialogue between schools, the local community and industry. If industrialists bring demands about 'basic skills', others can respond with searching questions about the nature of vocational training and how the 'creative' content of work relates to morale and productivity; or about the kinds of goods and services produced and how they meet social and personal needs. The curriculum can then be shaped by this dialogue into a learning which is active, exploratory and critical rather than passive, routine and mechanical.

We seek a wider politicisation of society where the Tories wish to individualise politics out of existence. We need to socialise individual initiative, to create contexts in which enterprise can be oriented towards the community, and not just detach a few high-fliers from their disadvantaged social roots to join the modish new elite of smart money. •

*John Salway, Sheffield*

Secondly, the growing importance of the service and information technology sectors has resulted in smaller units of production. In this work environment mindless deference to higher authority is not only on the decline but is incompatible with the pursuit of business success.

Thirdly, technological developments have contributed to the decline of traditional identities and group loyalties. A revaluation of beliefs and lifestyles has been the result; particularly among the young and prosperous.

Authoritarian populism (à la Thatcher) is not only contradictory in theory but in practical reality as well. The new Right will soon have to decide whether it subscribes to the 'logic' of personal liberty or collective authority. •

*Marc Henri Glendening, London*

the present day.

We would like to hear from any of your readers who may possess or know of any posters, particularly those printed before 1980. •

*John Gorman, London*

### Women And Love

Trust *MT* to hide its pearls and promote its swine. Rosalind Brunt's analysis of Shere Hite's report, *Women and Love* (*MT* March), is one of the best and most important articles you've ever printed - yet where is it? Shunted in at the back with only a page and not even given a cover byline.

Rosalind is right when she says this 'damning and comprehensive indictment of men's treatment of women who love them' will shock women with recognition. To know that the earth (the report only covered the US but let's face it, this is global) is covered square mile after square mile with women who aren't satis-

fied in their love relationships, and with men who won't work at them, fills me with a deep sadness and anger.

There are so many aspects of Rosalind's article that you could follow up - why do women go on making a heterosexual choice, just what is going on with men, how can things change for all women and the role of women friends in women's lives?

Come on *MT*, give John Lloyd a rest for a few months and let's have some real discussion about these issues which intimately touch all our lives. Or are you, like the men in the report, preoccupied with 'more important things'? •

*Irene Kaye, London*

### Ultimate Accolade

Congratulations! Heseltine caught firmly in the net. Now forward to the ultimate accolade.

lade.

The Blessed Margaret dangling on your line. #

*Sid Gregory, London*

### Guns Over Houses

Martin Pawley asserts (*MT* March) that the only thing wrong with modern architecture is that it no longer has enough money to do its own PR.

What we need is not PR but honest history, for the barrage of criticism directed at the modern movement by Lubbock and others is often inaccurate. It fails to recognise, for example, the achievements and the unrealised potential of the postwar building programme.

Lubbock is wrong in saying that the Tories won the num-

bers game because they, unlike Nye Bevan, were willing to reduce standards to achieve a construction target of 300,000 houses a year. In 1947 Bevan's target could have been achieved within a few years, had it not been for Treasury restrictions and the diversion of resources to the enormous rearmament programme of 1950-51 - which Churchill cut down as soon as he returned to power. Labour had only itself to blame for giving priority to guns over houses. •

*Malcolm MacEwen, Minehead*

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16 St John Street, London EC1M 4AY. Brevity means you are more likely to be published. We reserve the right to cut.O



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