

Scottish Devolution: The View from south of the Border

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Résumé : Nous tenterons d'examiner brièvement la relation entre l'Ecosse et l'Angleterre, de 1966 à aujourd'hui, surtout du point de vue anglais.

La conférence se décline en trois parties comme suit :

- (i) La dimension politique : les chemins de la dévolution vus de Westminster ; une comparaison des résultats pour les travaillistes et les conservateurs lors des élections législatives de 1992 à 2005, en Ecosse et en Angleterre, et par région anglaise ;*
- (ii) Une dévolution à l'anglaise ? Le débat parlementaire sur la dévolution écossaise vu par des députés anglais ; le succès de la mise en place d'une assemblée pour le Grand Londres et l'échec de la dévolution pour les régions anglaises ; la fin du rêve d'une 'Angleterre des Régions' ;*
- (iii) La dimension populaire : la fin tant annoncée du Royaume-Uni et le début d'une réflexion sur les contours d'une identité anglaise ; la réaction des Anglais à la dévolution écossaise et l'amorce d'un sentiment d'injustice vis-à-vis la mise en place d'un 'raj' écossais, pour reprendre le terme utilisé par Jeremy Paxman.*

Dans ce contexte un certain nombre de questions se posent : quels en sont les enjeux pour l'avenir du Royaume-Uni et le gouvernement de l'Angleterre ? Va-t-on assister à un schisme au sein du Parti travailliste, entre le parti en Ecosse et le parti en Angleterre ? Et les conservateurs ? Vont-ils devenir le Parti conservateur de l'Angleterre ?

I. The road to devolution as seen from Westminster

With the unexpected victories of Gwynfor Evans at Carmarthen in July 1966 and Winifrid Ewing at Hamilton in November 1967 the Labour Government realised that protest about its economic policies in the United Kingdom as a whole was not only leading to renewed support for the Conservatives in England but was also beginning to tap into latent nationalism in Wales and Scotland.

In Wales, the defeat at Carmarthen was put down to Labour's unpopularity caused by the Seamen's Strike, and local factors such as the closure of the Carmarthen-Aberystwyth railway. But it represented nonetheless a sudden surge in Welsh Nationalism, as was confirmed at subsequent by-elections. In Scotland, the defeat at Hamilton was in part due to the perilous state of the United Kingdom's trade position and particularly the weakness of the pound but also confirmed a continuing upturn in support for Scottish Nationalism which had begun at the 1966 General Election.

As a result, in 1969 the Labour Government set up the Royal Commission on the Constitution (the Kilbrandon Commission) to see whether it was necessary to implement changes in the constitution of the United Kingdom and the government of its constituent parts. Its conclusions were somewhat confusing, with a number of different options proposed, not to mention a minority report (a Memorandum of Dissent) signed by Professor Alan Peacock and Lord Crowther-Hunt. What was excluded was federalism or independence for Scotland or Wales. A majority of the Commission proposed a devolved legislature for the former and a slightly smaller majority approved the setting-up an assembly for the latter, with fewer responsibilities. In both cases, a rise in devolved powers would be accompanied by a reduction in the number of Scottish and Welsh MPs at Westminster. As far as England was concerned, the Commission proposed the setting-up of 8 Regional Advisory Councils, with a majority of members elected by the local authorities and a minority nominated by central government. There was no question of granting legislative powers to England as a whole. Even the Regional Advisory Councils had no real power and they were not directly elected by the people of the regions they were purported to represent. A minority of the Commission proposed devolution not only for Scotland and Wales but also for the English Regions, with executive though not legislative powers.

The Kilbrandon Commission presented its report to the Conservative Government in October 1973. Despite being also known for many years as the 'unionist party', the Conservative Party, under the leadership of Edward Heath, had been quite sympathetic to some kind of devolution for Scotland when in opposition, from 1967 to 1970. First of all, the Conservatives were a declining force in Scotland and espousal of greater powers for Scotland was thought to be a potential vote-winner. In addition, it was felt that a more 'devolutionist' position would enable the Conservatives to portray the Labour Party as a centralising force, the party of state control, insensitive to the interests of the component parts of the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the Conservative Party could claim to be closer to the people, taking into account regional/national differences and aspirations. Finally, the establishment of the *Younger Committee* and the *Thistle Group* in 1967, not to mention Heath's *Declaration of Perth* in 1968 and the setting-up of a Scottish Constitutional Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Alec Douglas-Home, were all seen as signs that the Conservative Party had apparently changed its tune and despite remaining strongly in favour of the union of the home nations, had accepted the need for some form of Scottish Devolution.

However, when they came to power in 1970 the Conservatives concentrated their efforts on industrial relations and the economy - the question of Scottish Devolution seemed to have been put to one side. Of more importance were the situation in Northern Ireland and the fraught relations between Westminster and Stormont. As far as England and Wales were concerned, the principal measure introduced was the Local Government Act (1972), which came into force in 1974. This measure set up a two-tier system of local government in England and Wales (essentially counties and districts). Parish councils were also retained at the grassroots level. It was decided to wait until the publication of the

findings of the Kilbrandon Commission before proposing any further legislation about regional/national devolution for the constituent parts of the United Kingdom.

This reorganisation of local government in England and Wales met with some popular criticism, essentially because it seemed to cut many people off from their historical communities. For example there were some administrative creations: Avon, which brought together for the first time Bath and Bristol; Cumbria which merged Cumberland, Westmoreland and parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire. There were also disappearances: Rutland and Herefordshire for example vanished as separate counties. Other historical counties were dismembered with the creation of the metropolitan counties. Indeed, many of the changes introduced in 1974 were rescinded by the Thatcher Government in 1986, a sure sign that this reorganisation had not been popular throughout the country.

The Kilbrandon Commission finally produced its report in October 1973 and it had a very lukewarm reception:

It is not surprising that, faced with so wide a range of differing views whose significance was concealed rather than brought out by the form of the Report, most MPs greeted its publication with bafflement and even mirth. The Report appeared in October 1973, shortly after the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East, And at a time when there seemed to be a serious threat to Britain's oil supplies. It seemed, therefore, quite irrelevant. The Report was debated briefly in the Commons. Both government and opposition promised to consider its findings carefully, but then it was forgotten.¹

At both 1974 General Elections there was little in the way of clear-cut promises about devolution. In February, the Conservatives talked vaguely about reinforcing the regional offices of government but preferred to bide their time about whether or not to implement the Kilbrandon Report. In October, as well as focusing on North Sea oil, they in fact promised a Scottish Assembly. Wales was only offered a strengthened Welsh Council and other minor sops. However the word 'England' is absent from the manifesto - the word 'English' is only used once to describe the 'English' language.²

The Labour Party also only gave scant attention to devolution in its February manifesto: it was in fact still in thrall to planning machinery and public enterprise. In October however there was far more: as well as the repeated promises to reinforce regional planning machinery and to introduce new public enterprise, there was a considerable section on North Sea oil - the solution to the nation's ills - and, more importantly, on the setting-up of elected assemblies in Scotland and Wales. There was a vague promise to consult about "the democratisation of those regional bodies which are at present non-accountable." There was nothing specifically about England. Indeed the word 'England' is absent from the manifesto.³

¹Vernon BOGDANOR, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, Oxford: OUP, 2001 (1999), p. 175.

² See Appendix 1.

³ See Appendix 2.

As the Labour Government of 1974-1979 began its slow process of consultation and legislation on the issues of Scottish and Welsh Devolution the question of English regionalism seemed to have been forgotten. On the other side of the political fence, when Margaret Thatcher replaced Edward Heath as leader in 1975, the Conservative Party conveniently put to one side all thoughts of devolving power to the English Regions and indeed, to Scotland and Wales. Consequently, at the 1979 General Election the Conservatives were vague and cursory about regionalism/nationalism. They simply promised “discussions about the Government of Scotland” but failed to say with whom or from where.⁴ On the other hand, the Labour Party clearly promised to return to Scottish Devolution but acknowledged that the Welsh had rejected the idea of an assembly. The only mention of the English Regions was the creation of ‘quangos’, as an instrument for regional development.⁵

Two prominent English politicians of the time, representing both ends of the national political spectrum, try to explain through their memoirs the events of these years. Denis Healey⁶ believes that the failure to achieve devolution between 1976 and 1979 was partly due to opposition from within the ranks of the Labour Party itself. What was especially striking is the feeling among some Labour politicians that devolution would divert resources from south to north and to a lesser extent, west of the border.

The issue which caused us the greatest trouble, however, was that of devolution. There had always been pressure in Scotland and Wales for greater devolution of power over their affairs from Westminster to their national capitals in Edinburgh and Cardiff. The development of North Sea oil greatly increased this pressure in Scotland, although cynics pointed out that the oilfields themselves were closer to the Shetland islands than to the Scottish mainland. What was particularly galling to both the Scots and the Welsh was that the Labour Party in England seemed to be in historical decline, while Scotland and Wales had permanent majorities of Labour MPs, so government from Westminster looked like overruling the political views as well as the national sentiments of the Scots and Welsh.⁷

Our attempts to achieve devolution also foundered, again because opponents on our own benches combined with the Tories to defeat it. Some Scottish and Welsh MPs, notably Tam Dalyell and Neil Kinnock, opposed it as the thin end of a wedge which would end by splitting both the Labour Party and the country into fragments; indeed the leaders of the Labour Party in Scotland were initially hostile to devolution for the same reasons. There were also many Labour MPs, particularly in north-east England and Merseyside, who thought that devolution in Scotland and Wales would divert resources from their own regions, and create a disruptive demand for devolution elsewhere.⁸

Margaret Thatcher believes there was no “Tartan Thatcherite Revolution”, despite a tradition of scientific invention and entrepreneurial innovation in Scotland, because socialism and militant trade unionism, along with long-term

⁴ See Appendix 3.

⁵ See Appendix 4.

⁶ Labour MP, Minister and Deputy Leader of the Party.

⁷ HEALEY, Denis, *The Time of My Life*, London, Penguin, 1990 (1989), pp. 459-460.

⁸ HEALEY, Denis *op.cit.*, p. 461.

economic difficulties, had sapped the Scottish desire for her brand of neo-liberalism. In addition, she puts forward the idea that changes in social and religious attitudes could also be invoked to explain the decline in Conservative support in Scotland. But the real reason to explain the difference in fortunes of the Conservative Party north and south of the border was, according to her, the culture of dependency in Scotland and the inability of her Scottish Office to get across the Thatcherite message.

The reaction of the Scottish Office ministers to these difficulties had cumulatively worsened the problem. Feeling isolated and vulnerable in the face of so much left-wing hostility, they regularly portrayed themselves as standing up for Scotland against me and the parsimony of Whitehall. Yielding to their temptation brought instant gratification but long-term grief. For in adopting this tactic they increased the underlying Scottish antipathy to the Conservative Party and indeed the Union. The pride of the Scottish Office - whose very structure added a layer of bureaucracy, standing in the way of the reforms which were paying such dividends in England - was that public expenditure in Scotland was far higher than in England. But they never seemed to grasp - as their opponents certainly did - that if public spending was a 'good thing' there should be lots more of it. That effectively conceded the fundamental argument to the socialists. But the truth was that more public spending in a dependency culture had not solved Scotland's problems, but added to them.⁹

The 1992 election showed that the fall in Tory support had been halted; it had yet to be reversed. Some part of this unpopularity must be attributed to the national question on which the Tories are seen as an English party and on which I myself was apparently seen as a quintessential English figure.

About the second point I could - and I can - do nothing. I am what I am and I have no intention of wearing tartan camouflage. Nor do I think that most Scots would like me, or any English politician, the better for doing so. The Tory Party is not, of course, an English party but a Unionist one. If it sometimes seems English to some Scots that is because the Union is inevitably dominated by England by reason of its greater population. The Scots, being an historic nation with a proud past, will inevitably resent some expressions of this fact from time to time. As a nation, they have an undoubted right to national self-determination; thus far they have exercised that right by joining and remaining in the Union. Should they determine on independence no English party or politician would stand in their way, however much we might regret their departure. [...]

It is understandable that when I come out with these kind [sic] of hard truths many Scots should resent it. But it has nothing whatever to do with my being English. A lot of Englishmen resent it too.¹⁰

Here we see a characteristically forthright outburst: what she and her faithful followers were pursuing in England was the right and only way. She decries the opposition parties and also her own weak-minded Scottish ministers, like Malcolm Rifkind, whom she accuses of "proving his Scottish virility by posturing as Scotland's defender against Thatcherism."¹¹ She also claims that the balance sheet of Thatcherism in Scotland was "economically positive but politically negative."¹²

⁹ THATCHER, Margaret, *The Downing Street Years*, London, HarperCollins, 1993, pp. 619-620.

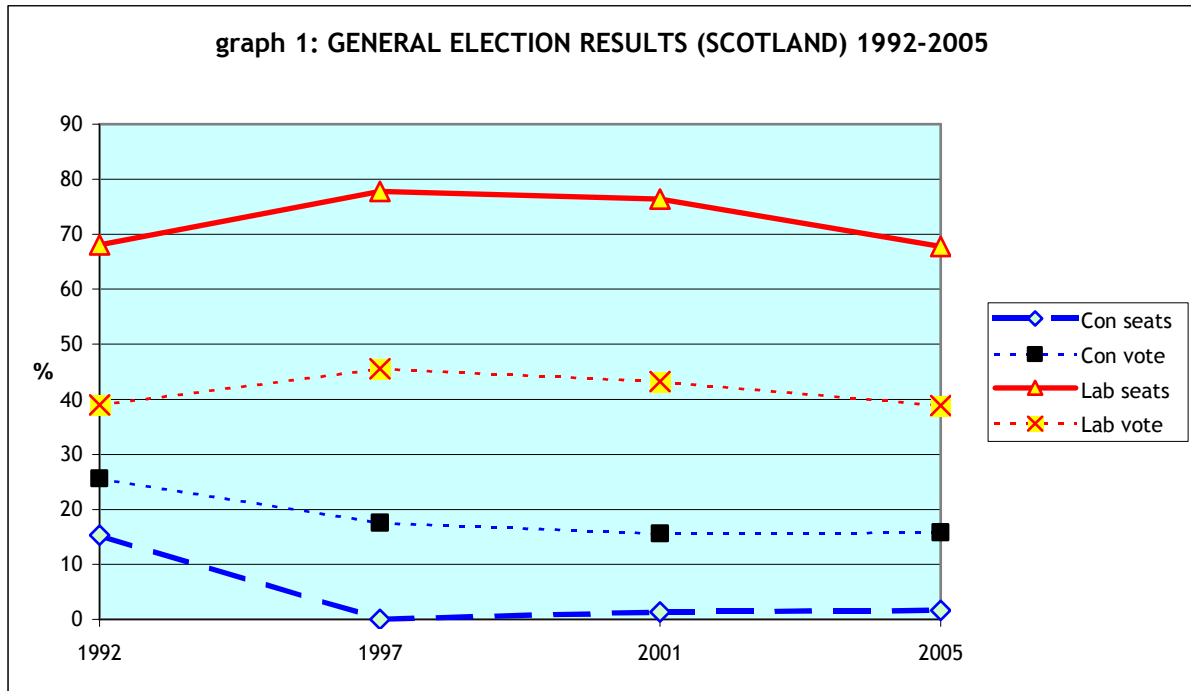
¹⁰ THATCHER, Margaret, *op.cit.*, p. 624.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 622.

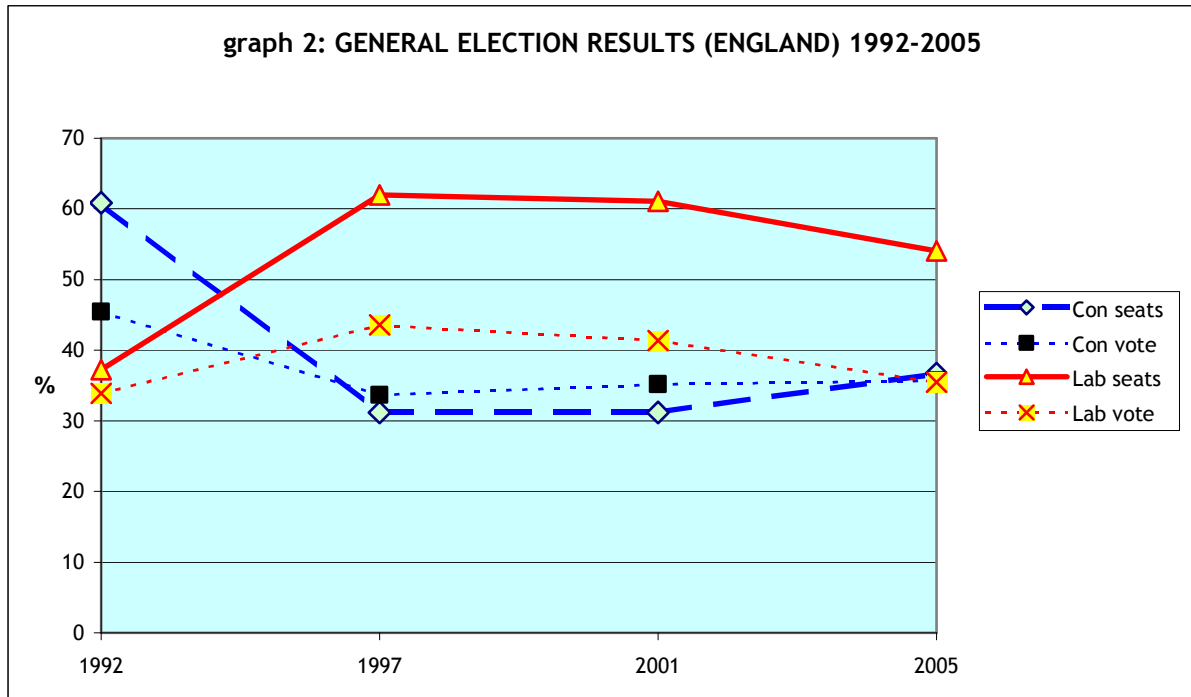
¹² *Ibid.*, p. 623.

The Thatcher and Major years (1979-1997) saw the Conservative Party turn its back on devolution. The 80s were characterised by an on-going battle between a radical Conservative central government and local councils, more often than not Labour-controlled. The GLC (Greater London Council) was abolished in March 1986 and the rest of the country seemed to be ignored from the point of view of decentralised local government: nothing for Scotland, nothing for Wales, nothing for the English Regions and the Metropolitan Counties. Local councils were either circumnavigated (by the *Local Management of Schools*, for example, or the *Right to Buy* housing scheme) or else punished (by rate-capping or the ring-fencing of central government grants). When the Thatcher Government decided to introduce the Community Charge (Poll Tax) in Scotland in 1989 and then in England and Wales a year later, it met with widespread opposition as being out of touch with popular feeling and with the needs of local government. It was seen as a decision imposed by an insensitive, central government, based in London.

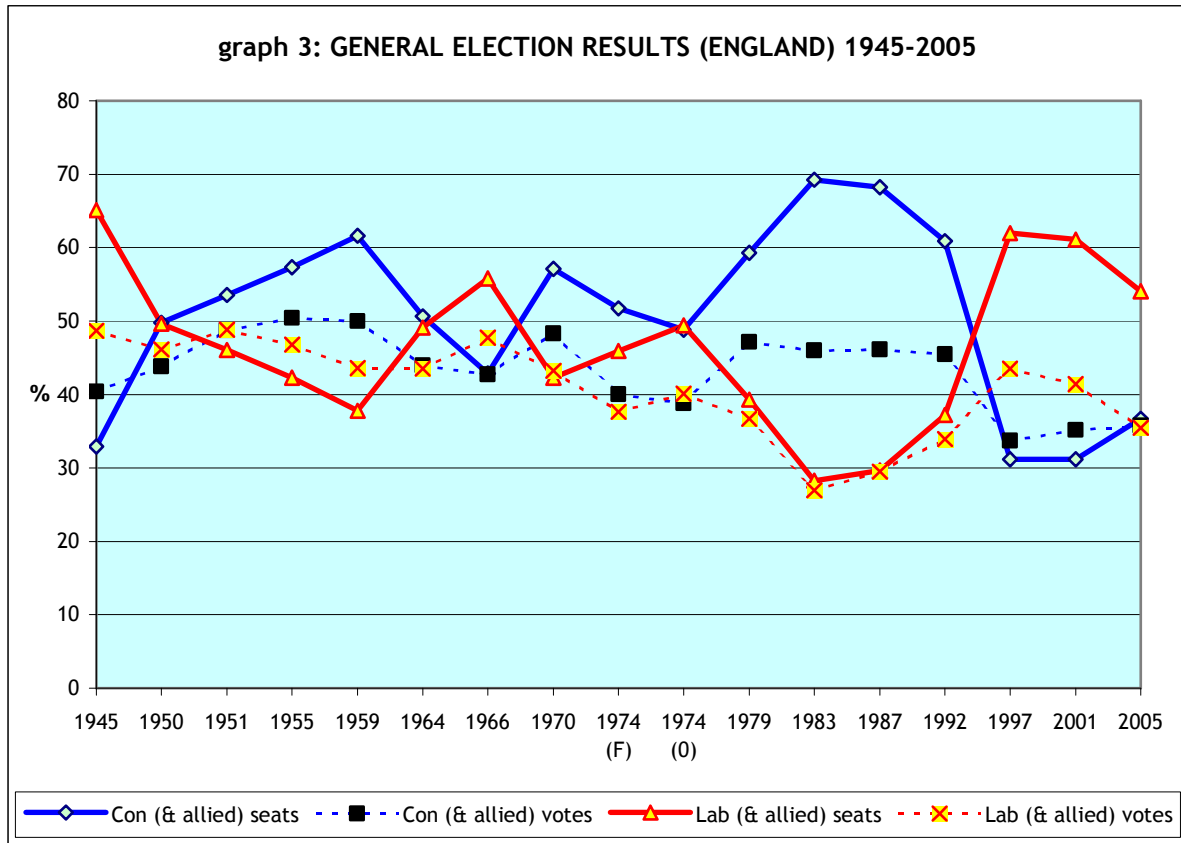
The 1997 General Election marked a turning point in British politics in more ways than one: it signalled not only the end of 18 years of Conservative government in the country as a whole but also, for the first time ever, the end of Conservative Party representation in Scotland (see graph 1). Even at the large Labour victories of 1945 and 1966, Scottish Conservatives had resisted the tide, even though they had been weakened: in 1945, for example, Conservative and National Liberal votes exceeded 40%, as did the percentage of seats won. During the period 1979-1992 the Conservative Party, despite its strength in the majority of English Regions, became progressively weaker in Scotland. Its share of the popular vote went from 31% in 1979 to 25% in 1992. During the Blair years the trend continued: the Conservative share of the vote reached a low of 15% in 2001. In other words the vote had halved in 22 years of both Conservative and Labour Government in Westminster. In 2005 the Conservative Party was in fourth place as far as the popular vote was concerned. A similar pattern emerged in Wales.



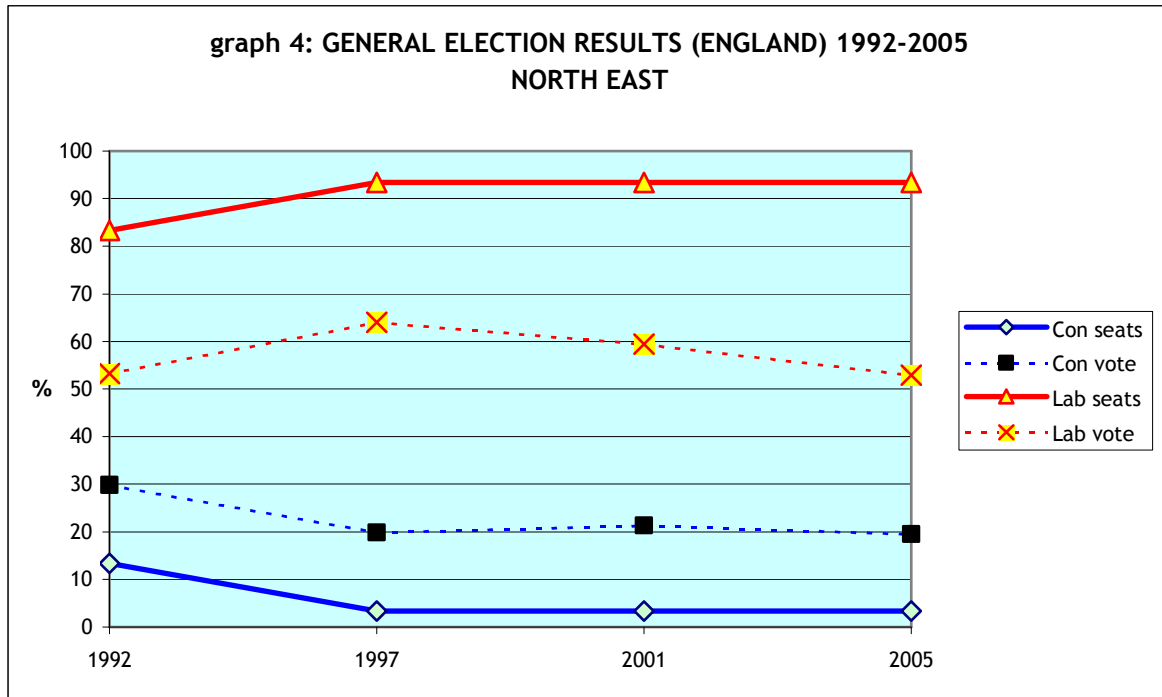
In England, at the 1997 General Election, the Conservative vote fell considerably, whereas the Labour Party, throughout the whole period, from 1997 to 2005, experienced uncharacteristically strong support, engendered by New Labour's middle-of-the-road policies, Tony Blair's personal popularity and the need for a change after 18 years of Conservative domination (see graph 2).



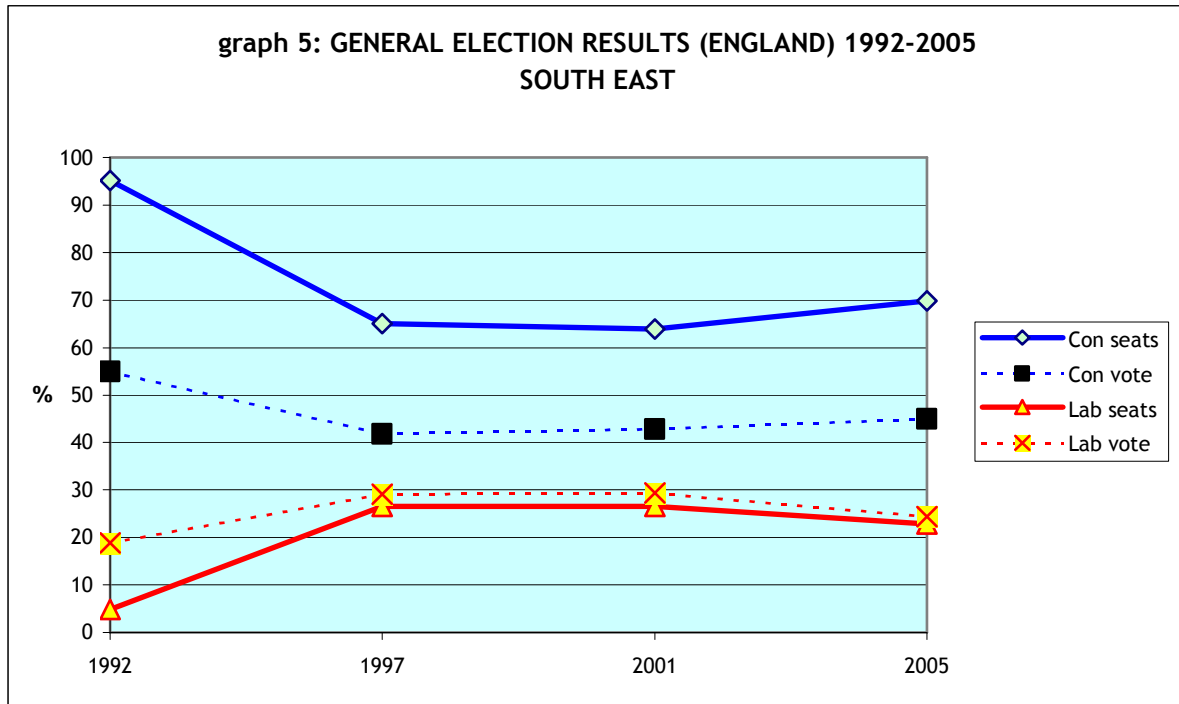
Of course the Conservatives have traditionally been the dominant political force in England since the end of the First World War. Labour has only won more seats than the Conservatives in 1945, 1966, 1974 (October), 1997, 2001 and 2005. In terms of votes, Labour has only beaten the Conservatives in 1945, 1950, 1951, 1966, 1974 (October), 1997 and 2001 (see graph 3). In the first case, Labour's dominance was at only 6 out of 17 General Elections; in the second case, at only 7 out of 17. In 2005, even though Tony Blair's Labour Party managed to achieve a reasonable majority in seats over the Conservatives in England, the popular vote for the Conservatives was in fact slightly higher than for Labour.



However, despite this traditional Conservative strength in England, it would be wrong to conclude that election results are uniform south of the border. Indeed, the Scottish ‘model’ (graph 1) is replicated in the North of England (North East and North West), where the Conservatives are traditionally weak (see graph 4).



Various arguments could be put forward to explain Labour's continuing strength in the North of England: traditional support among a large working-class where social mobility has not yet changed voting patterns; the feeling among many Northerners that the Conservatives only represent the interests of the South of England and 'look down' upon the Northerners. The English 'model' of traditional Conservative dominance is in fact most clearly to be seen in the South, especially the South East and the East (graph 5).



In the South West of England the situation is made more complicated by a large number of Liberal Democrat seats. The situation in London and the English Midlands seems much more volatile and, in recent years, much closer, and it is possibly here where the next General Election will be decided if the other parts of the country remain true to type.¹³

Consequently, the Labour Party has to make sure that by giving greater representation to Scotland and Wales, it does not alienate its own political strongholds in the North of England, where the people often share the same economic difficulties as those north and west of the border. It has to be seen as the Labour Party of Scotland, Wales and England if it wishes to remain a contender for political power at Westminster. The Conservative Party, however, seems to be prioritising its political support in England. Can it make inroads into Scotland and Wales (where the Additional Member System has given the Conservatives a greater voice than they would normally have had with the First Past the Post System) or would it be more judicious to focus on regaining former strength in the Midlands and Greater London, not to mention reinforcing its traditional hold on the South of England?

¹³ See Appendix 5.

II. Scottish Devolution: an inspiration for London and the English Regions?

On July 24 1997, Donald Dewar, the newly-appointed Secretary of State for Scotland, made an important statement to the assembled House of Commons on the forthcoming legislation concerning Scottish Devolution.¹⁴ The first to react were, naturally enough, Scottish MPs: a number of Labour, Liberal Democrat and SNP members spoke, mostly in glowing terms, about the proposed legislation. The Conservatives found themselves with no Scottish MPs to take the floor. Michael Ancram, the Constitutional Affairs spokesman, stood up to speak for the party: though born in London and representing an English constituency he was a Scottish Marquess and former MP for various Scotland constituencies. Though he had been a prominent member of the *Thistle Group* in the late 60s, advocating some kind of devolutionary arrangement for Scotland, he was now an ardent anti-devolutionist. He claimed that it was a somber day for Scotland. Then a number of English Conservative MPs joined the fray, all of them foretelling doom and gloom for the future of the United Kingdom.

The issues raised by these English Tories were those which would characterise the main thrust of anti-devolution arguments over the next decade:

- the West Lothian Question;
- the overrepresentation of the Scottish Parliament compared to the proposed London Strategic Authority (especially as Greater London had a larger population than Scotland);
- the Barnett Formula;
- the inequality between the size of constituencies in Scotland and England and the unfair advantage this inequality gave to Scottish popular representation.

If it is true that the perceived injustice of the latter has been in part rectified by changes in the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster at the 2005 election, the other issues remain political ‘hot potatoes’, especially among Conservatives. Just as devolution was becoming a reality for Scotland and Wales, what to do about the ‘English Question’?

The devolutionist Labour Government had the choice between giving greater autonomy to England as a whole or else to the English Regions. Its priority was London, a symbol for the Labour Party since the Labour-controlled GLC had been abolished by the Thatcher Government just over a decade previously. In its 1997 manifesto the Labour Party had promised a referendum for London on whether to set up a new structure with a directly-elected strategic authority and mayor. Labour was also committed to setting up “regional chambers to co-ordinate transport, planning, economic development, bids for European funding and land

¹⁴ Hansard, July 24 1997.
www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199798/cmhansrd/vo970724/debtext/70724-06.htm
(accessed January 18, 2008)

use planning.” However Labour was circumspect about imposing a uniform system of directly-elected regional government for England.

In time we will introduce legislation to allow the people, region by region, to decide in a referendum whether they want directly elected regional government. Only where clear popular consent is established will arrangements be made for elected regional assemblies.¹⁵

Accordingly, a few months after the debate in the House of Commons on Scottish and Welsh Devolution, there was another debate on the question of local government for London. Parliament decided to go ahead with holding a referendum on the issue just as it had done for Scotland and Wales. In the event, the London turnout was disappointingly low (35%), even lower than the turnout in the Welsh referendum (50.1%) and far lower than that in the Scottish referendum (60.4%). Nevertheless the result of the London referendum was clear: 72% for the proposal; 28% against.

It seemed natural to have some umbrella structure to oversee planning for the capital. The GLA (Greater London Authority) would have responsibility for: transport; economic development and regeneration; the Metropolitan Police; fire and emergency planning; planning; environmental functions; culture, media and sport. The GLA aimed to be a streamlined authority (not a reincarnation of the GLC) with checks and balances to modulate its role (London Assembly; directly-elected Mayor, and the continuing role of the London boroughs and Westminster). The official Labour line was that the GLA should be strategic, democratic, inclusive, effective, small, audible, consensual, clear about its role, efficient and influential.¹⁶

In May 2002 the Labour Government published a White Paper entitled *Your Region, Your Choice*. Building on the “success” of devolution elsewhere in the UK, it aimed to provide for “directly elected regional assemblies in those regions that want them”. Solutions would be “tailored” to regional problems making local government in England “more accountable”, “more streamlined”, “more joined-up”. The proposals were based on three clear principles: giving devolution to the English just as it had been given to the Scots, Northern Irish and Welsh; giving people more choice; avoiding creating more bureaucracy. But the failure of the test referendum in the North East, carried out in November 2004, sounded the death-knell of the project. Although the turnout was not catastrophic (at 47% it was higher than the turnout in London though slightly lower than the turnout in Wales) what was most surprising was the clear vote against the measure: only 22% voted in favour of the proposal.¹⁷

¹⁵ See Appendix 6.

¹⁶ Greater London Authority: Research Paper 98/115.
www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp98/rp98-115.pdf
(accessed January 18 2008)

¹⁷ Your Region, Your Choice White Paper.
www.communities.gov.uk/documents/citiesandregions/pdf/151228
(accessed January 18 2008)

It had been assumed - incorrectly - that the London vote would be replicated in the rest of the country. Clearly it was now impossible to continue with other referendums in the English Regions if the region which had seemed to have a clear identity of its own - the North East - had spoken with such a clear voice. Many observers however were not sure that the vote was a rejection of English Regional Devolution - some, including Roy Hattersley - saw the result as an indictment of establishing another layer of costly and bureaucratic government:

When I spoke in Durham during late October [...] my audience insisted on telling me that regional assemblies would be nothing more than wind and waste. The charitable minority feared pointless speeches and unnecessary spending. The cynical majority asserted, without doubt or apology, that the new tier of government would become a vehicle for institutionalised corruption. They anticipated inflated expenses, worthless foreign trips, lost-earnings allowances for meetings that never took place and salaries far higher than the recipients could hope to earn in any other job.¹⁸

These conclusions seemed to be borne out by a report produced by the Economic and Research Council in 2005 on the question of public views on elected regional assemblies in the North of England. The key points of the report were the following:

Respondents in the three northern English regions did display distinctive regional identities, though these were expressed most strongly in the contrast of 'northerners' with 'southerners'
Decision-making in 'London' was perceived as remote and self-serving.
Northern identity and alienation from 'London' did not translate into strong support for regional government. There were three main reasons:

1. All politicians were mistrusted. A new set of regional politicians would be no different.
2. Respondents had close to no knowledge of the purposes and details of government policy on regions.
3. Once given basic information respondents were sceptical that Elected Regional Assemblies would work in the right policy fields and would have enough clout to make a difference; they did not understand the idea of 'strategic' assemblies.¹⁹

It would however be wrong to think that the refusal of the voters of the North East of England to approve a regional assembly meant that all the people of England were without any form of regional body. Admittedly during the Thatcher and Major years the Conservatives, through their policy of centralising power in Westminster and some would say, in Downing Street, had done little to provide the regions with any meaningful form of local government. After 1997, Labour however

¹⁸ Labour MP, Minister and Deputy Leader of the Party.

"We Need More Than 'What Works'", The Guardian, November 8 2004.

¹⁹ Before the Referendum: Public Views on Elected Regional Assemblies in the North of England, Economic and Research Council (2005).

www.devolution.ac.uk/pdfdata/Briefing%2017%20-%20Jeffery.pdf
(accessed January 18 2008)

had managed to set up RDAs (Regional Development Agencies) to aid economic development. With the failure of the 2004 Referendum, other structures came into being. In 2006 for example the North West Regional Assembly appeared. Its aims were the following:

(a) To seek to improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the North West of England by incorporating the principles of social inclusion and sustainability into all the activities of the Assembly and influencing other regional partners in these respects.

(b) To act as the representative body for the region; to carry out such functions as are required to operate as the designated Regional Planning Body & Regional Housing Board; to assess the strategic needs of the region so as to make a strong input into the Regional Economic Strategy and scrutinise its preparation, review and implementation by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA); to promote the interests of the region nationally and internationally and with Government and European agencies; and to promote the partnership of interests within the region.

(c) To provide a strong authoritative voice for the region through the joint involvement of regional partners and through a Regional Co-ordination Group comprising the NWRA, the NWDA and GONW.

(d) To promote a clear identity of the region and to present a positive image of the region in the context of the United Kingdom, the European Union and elsewhere.²⁰

This Assembly is a partnership of local government, business organisations, public sector agencies, education and training bodies, trade unions and co-operatives together with the voluntary sector, but it is not a directly-elected body. However laudable its aims, it is still merely the latest reincarnation of various 'quangos' and other nominated consultative bodies, working essentially in the field of economic development. It cannot be compared with the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly or even the Greater London Authority.

From the evidence it seems that the English are wary about directly-elected regional assemblies for three main reasons: the perceived high cost and heavy bureaucracy of such structures; scepticism about the value and probity of politicians in general and 'local' politicians in particular; a lukewarm concept of regional identity.

Today, the English Regions are fixed for statistical purposes and to conform to the need for clearly-defined regions within the context of the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the setting-up of the *Committee of the Regions* within the EU. Over the years the number of these regions and the definition of their borders have varied considerably. Even today however there is still an overlap between administrative

²⁰ North West Regional Assembly.

www.nwra.gov.uk/downloads/documents/dec_06/nwra_1165330624_Constitution_July_06.pdf
(accessed January 18 2008)

regions and 'affective' regions, as the following examples show: historical regions (Thames Valley...); *Britain in Bloom* regions (Cumbria is a separate region...); *National Trust* regions (Wessex is a separate region...).

Indeed the question of whether English people feel close to the very concept of a 'region' has to be considered. Might it be truer to say that very often people feel a close identity with a city (Liverpool, Birmingham...), a historical county (Yorkshire, Cornwall...), a historical region (the Welsh Marches...) or, on another level, quite simply with the 'North of England', than they do with a specific region?

At the same time as the Labour Government was coming to grips with the consequences of Scottish and Welsh Devolution on the future of the United Kingdom as a whole, as well as facing up to the dilemma caused by the failure of English Regionalism, there seemed to be more and more emphasis on the notion of 'Britishness' and national unity.

In the first flush of electoral victory in 1997, Tony Blair's Labour Party seemed intent upon stressing how 'cool' and 'new' Britannia had now become:

The autumn following his election, Tony Blair played host to the heads of Commonwealth governments from around the world. Before they could hear his speech of welcome, they were obliged to sit in awkward silence through a video presentation celebrating the creative, commercial and scientific achievements of the new meritocratic Britain. With music from Oasis and the Spice Girls, pictures of dealing rooms, Formula One racing cars and pharmaceutical factories, the presentation battered relentlessly on the theme that Britain was now a young country [...]

The silly slogan used for selling this new country was 'Cool Britannia', at which any truly cool person could only wince or shudder: when middle-aged politicians embrace youth culture they always get it wrong. The 'Britain' element was significant, though no one talked of a Cool England. This was because the country was going through one of the phases in its history when an Englishman could be defined as someone who lived on an island in the North Sea governed by Scots. 'Britain' also has the advantage of being inclusive. You don't need to be a white Anglo-Saxon to be British. It seems that you can be Nigerian, Moslem, Jewish, Chinese, Bangladeshi, Indian or Sikh British, a great deal more easily than you can be English and any of those things. Precisely because 'Britain' is a political invention, it allows diversity.²¹

This attempted 'rebranding' of the United Kingdom quickly became an object of ridicule and was quietly dropped.

The second attempt to evoke 'Britishness in the new millennium' began with a speech delivered in 2001 by the then Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook.²² British identity was, according to the doomsters, under siege and threatened in three ways: from waves of immigrants who had transformed the nature of the United Kingdom; from the increasingly pervasive nature of the European Union; from the drift towards devolution and greater autonomy granted to Scotland and

²¹ PAXMAN, Jeremy, *The English: Portrait of a People*, London: Penguin, 1999 (1998), pp 239-240.

²² Robin COOK in a speech delivered to the Social Market Foundation in London April 19 2001.

Wales that could lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom. In his speech, Cook analyses these apparent threats and sees them more as opportunities to celebrate what it meant to be British at the dawn of a new age.²³ Other Labour politicians quickly jumped on the 'nationalist' bandwagon, with the Home Secretary, David Blunkett, proposing a year later to introduce tests of 'Britishness' for would-be immigrants. For these tests to be useful there would have to be some kind of definition of what exactly is meant by 'Britishness'. Since that time there have been other speeches on the same subject. Gordon Brown himself made a significant speech in January 2006 to the Fabian Society extolling the advantages of cultural diversity within a unified British nation. He even went so far as to advocate a National 'British' Day and greater respect for the national Union Flag.²⁴

It is clear that the rise in talk about British national identity has a number of causes, as Robin Cook has pointed out. What is perhaps of most importance for the Labour Government is that perceived 'threats' to national identity from the European Union and/or from waves of immigration are not primarily the 'fault' of the Government, however much the Conservative Opposition tries to prove it - these issues concern many European countries today. The perceived 'threat' to the Union from devolution however is very much 'self-inflicted' and here the Conservatives have more chance of gaining electoral points in England at Labour's expense since they can blame Labour for implementing a policy which *could* lead to the break-up of the union.

III. Popular sentiment in England about the issues raised by Scottish Devolution

Just as Labour politicians were becoming almost obsessed with talking about redefining the nation(s), so historians and political commentators were devoting hundreds of pages to the question of whether the country could remain united.²⁵ A theme emerged which seemed to take on a new and significant importance: was there such a thing as an 'English identity'?

Any attempt to analyse the relationship between Scotland and England needs to begin by looking at the *identity* of those who live on both sides of the border. Much has been written about 'Scottishness' but notions of 'Englishness' have tended over the years to be subsumed within the greater, imperial notion of 'Britishness'. Who exactly possesses a Scottish or English identity today?

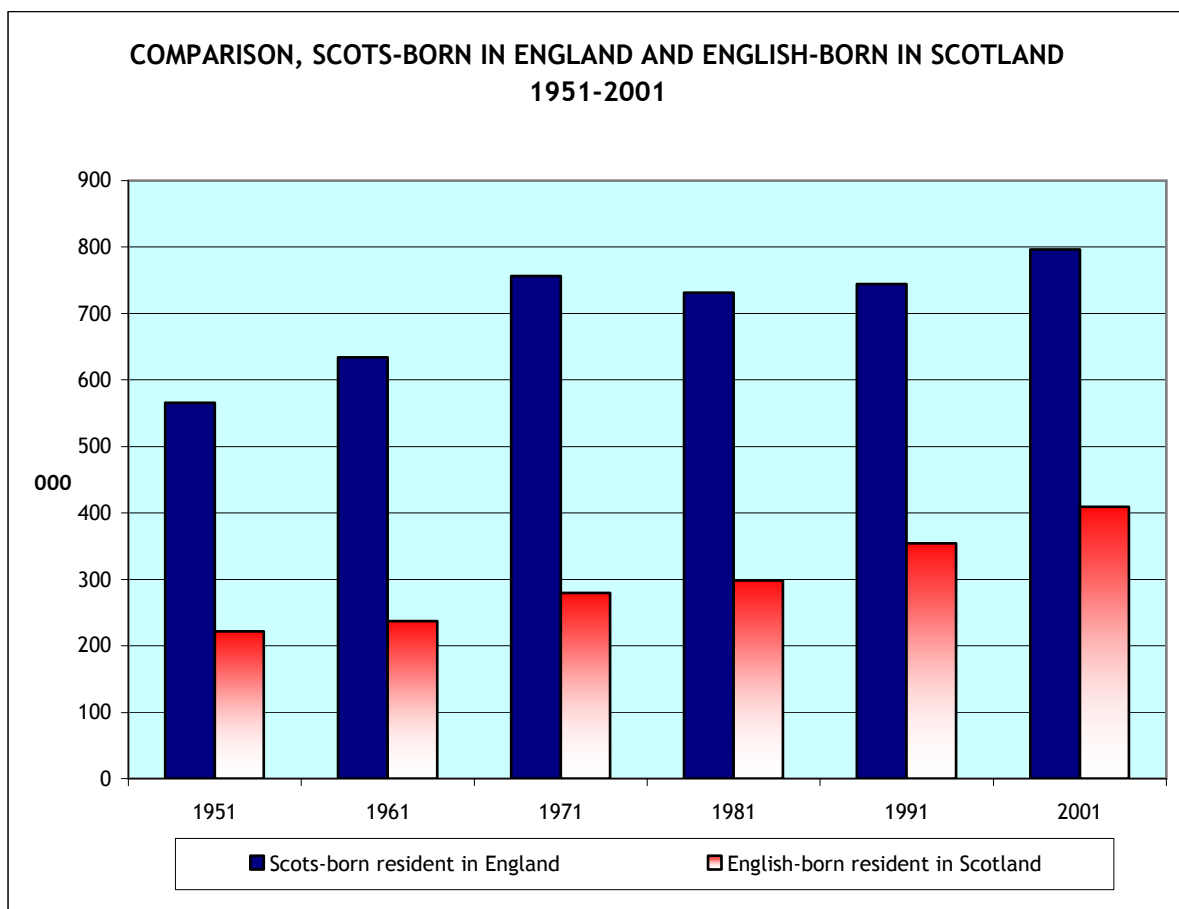
In the context of the United Kingdom, what seems to matter more and more is where people live rather than where people were born: civic nationalism

²³ For further comments on the issues raised by British national identity see: LEES, Paul, "National Identities in Britain" in: ARLEO, Andy, LEES, Paul, LE JEUNE, Françoise, SELLIN, Bernard, *Myths and Symbols of the Nation*, Nantes, Publications du CRINI, 2006, pp. 11-65.

²⁴ Gordon BROWN, in a speech delivered to the Fabian Society in London January 14 2006. <http://fabians.org.uk/events/new-year-conference-06/brown-britishness/speech> (accessed January 18 2008)

²⁵ See Appendix 7.

has in large part superseded the traditional notion of ethnic nationalism.²⁶ In recent years the population of the United Kingdom has been increasing more and more rapidly.²⁷ Between 1981 and 2006 the population of England increased by 8% and that of Scotland declined by 1% (though it has risen over the last 5 years). It is also interesting to consider the movement between Scotland and England. Murray Watson²⁸ has used official figures to show that the English-born are the largest minority group in Scotland today (approximately 8% of the population) whereas those born in Scotland represent only 1.6% of the population of England. In other words, though the number of Scots-born living in England is twice as high as the number of English-born living in Scotland, the impact on the composition of the nation is five times less than that of the English living north of the border.



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²⁶ "English Civic Nationalism."

www.theenglandproject.net/documents/englishcivicnationalism.html

(accessed January 18 2008)

²⁷ *The Changing Demographic Picture of the UK*,

(National Statistician's Annual Article on the Population.) (2007)

www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/population_trends/changing_demographic_picture.pdf

(accessed January 18 2008)

²⁸ WATSON, Murray, *Being English in Scotland*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2003.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Murray Watson deals with the question of how the English are perceived in Scotland, by focusing on statistical data and oral testimonies. He refers to work carried out by, among many others, Beveridge and Turnbull³⁰, as well as by David McCrone.³¹ The latter believes, according to Watson, that “‘English’ is undoubtedly a shorthand for some complex and contradictory terms.”³² It could be that social and cultural differences are sometimes becoming confused with perceived differences of ethnic identity.

Rivalries have existed for many years between the English and the Scots, but since the advent of Scottish Devolution, cases of tension in Scotland and between Scotland and England have been highlighted by some elements of the London media. Watson tries to deal with the question of how Scotland’s largest minority is becoming integrated into Scottish society by exploding the myths that have grown up around the subject in recent years, while at the same time situating the (relatively few) cases of abusive behaviour in context. He claims that ‘anti-Englishness’ is often confused with ‘anti-Englandness’. However Watson does devote a chapter in his book to the question of anglophobia and verbal abuse and does not try to minimise its existence or its effects, especially on children. Professor Bill Miller of Glasgow University also raised the question of Scottish ‘antagonism’ against the English living in Scotland, claiming that up to a third of such English residents think the Scots are Anglophobes.³³ Examples cited seemed however to be essentially verbal insults and anti-English jokes. Although it was reported that there was an increase in the number of youngsters reporting anti-English bullying, Professor Miller pointed out that those taking part in his survey “had not noticed much difference in attitude since the creation of the Scottish Parliament.”

Sport, especially football, is an area where differences and tensions between the ‘Home Nations’ can often rise to the surface. England and Scotland are the two oldest national football associations in the world and their first competitive match took place in 1872. Since then there has been intense rivalry between the two and in the 1970s and 80s, at a time of increased hooliganism in Britain, numerous matches were marred by scenes of drunken behaviour and sporadic outbursts of wanton violence. As a result it was decided in 1989 to put an end to the regular ‘home international’ fixtures between the two teams. In 2002, Andrew Wilson, a Member of the Scottish Parliament, representing the Scottish National Party, tried to convince his fellow Scots to support the English team at the forthcoming World Cup, since Scotland had not itself qualified and England was the only home nation represented.³⁴ A representative of the Scottish Tourist Board claimed that such a gesture would show that Scotland was a welcoming place for

³⁰ BEVERIDGE, Craig, TURNBULL, Ronald, *The Eclipse of Scottish Culture: Inferiorism and the Intellectuals*, Edinburgh, Polygon, 1989.

³¹ MCCRONE, David, “Who Do We Think We Are?”, *Scottish Affairs*, no. 6, Winter 1994.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 1: as quoted in WATSON, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

³³ “English Face Scots Antagonism.”

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/3167418.stm>
(accessed January 18 2008)

³⁴ *The Scotsman* February 25 2002.

English people. However it seemed that the majority of Scottish football supporters were hostile to such a proposal. It was said that Scotland should always support the team that was to play England. Another nationalistic 'storm in a teacup' brew up in June 2006, during the last World Cup, when the Scottish tennis player, Andy Murray, allegedly said he would be supporting the team playing England. He was forced to explain his remarks and was the butt of numerous anti-Scottish blogs and press comment.³⁵

It is difficult to prove whether there is more or less tension between the English and the Scots since the introduction of Scottish Devolution. What is clear however is that the popular London press and even more serious media pick up on any examples of such rivalry to illustrate how Anglo-Scottish relations are evolving over the last decade. More and more websites are springing up, claiming that the English are being 'victimised' in some way within the United Kingdom. However the most recent General Election results clearly show that the English are not yet voting for political parties which advocate more muscular nationalist policies. For example, in the 2005 General Election, UKIP obtained 2.5% of the English vote (0.4% in Scotland); the British National Party, 0.8% of the English vote (0.1% in Scotland); the English Democrats,³⁶ 0.1% of the English vote.³⁷ Yet the power of the Internet and of the London popular press is perhaps more insidious in putting forward the idea that the English are being in some way 'hard done by' and are the real losers in the devolution debate.

Since Scottish Devolution and especially since the (relative) victory of the SNP in the Scottish Parliamentary Election of 2007 there have been numerous cases where Scotland has decided one course of action and England and Wales, another, and these anomalies/inequalities are often picked up by the (English) popular press:

- in 2007 the Scottish police forces will receive a pay increase of 2.5% whereas the English and Welsh police forces will only receive a pay increase of 1.9%;
- in Scotland nursing home residents have free personal care whereas in England there is an assets-based means test;
- in Scotland there is free central heating installation for pensioners but not in England;
- in Scotland university tuition fees are less than in England and it is planned to phase them out as soon as possible;

³⁵ "Murray Receives Weblog Hate Mail."
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/5128028.stm
(accessed January 18 2008)

³⁶ Website of the English Democrats: "Putting England first!"
<http://www.englishdemocrats.org.uk/>
(accessed January 18 2008)

³⁷ Results for the 2005 General Election in the United Kingdom.
www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2005/rp05-033.pdf
(accessed January 18 2008)

- in Scotland prescription and dental check-up charges are being phased out and eye tests are free. This is not the case in England.³⁸

Questions are being asked in the press about how it is possible for those living in Scotland to have more generous benefits and social measures than those living in England. This naturally leads many commentators to look in detail at how the national budgetary cake is sliced up and distributed. Since 1978 the Barnett Formula has been applied each year to give each home nation a proportionate increase or decrease in public spending. Today it is perceived by many in England that the percentage allocated annually to Scotland is disproportionately large, so allowing the Scots to benefit more generously from the national cake. However the British Medical Association tried to set the record straight, pointing out that “Scotland does not receive a disproportionate share from an imaginary UK health budget ‘pool’.”³⁹

The popular press still draws (English) public attention to the ‘unfairness’ of the system as far as the English are concerned:

Under the Barnett formula, drawn up in the 1970s, Scotland currently gets £1,500 more cash to spend on public services for each member of the population than England.⁴⁰

Lord Barnett, whose formula this originally was, allegedly called for it to be scrapped because it was unfair. However he did not advocate, as many English nationalists do, a scheme based solely on per capita expenditure. Instead he put forward the idea that expenditure should be allocated in function of need, wherever it was greatest, throughout the United Kingdom. If such a system were applied then English Regions, like the North East and North West, would be advantaged, like Scotland, whereas other ‘richer’ parts of the country, like the South East, would receive less. Yet the way of reporting this story in the Daily Mail is typical of many articles in the popular press: focusing on the perceived unfairness between England and Scotland, to the detriment of the former, and criticising the Scots for taking more than their due from the United Kingdom budget. The high cost of the new Scottish Parliament was one such example of ‘wasteful’ spending, financed in large part by the generosity of the English, according to the English popular press.

It may seem strange that England, for so long seen as the dominant force in the United Kingdom, is now perceived by many as being unfairly treated by the new arrangements introduced in the wake of Scottish (and to a certain extent) Welsh Devolution. Prominent politicians on the right and left have pointed out the

³⁸ “Fury over Cameron threat to strip Scottish MPs of voting rights.”
The Mail on Sunday, October 28 2007.

³⁹ *Public Spending and the Barnett Formula*.

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/Healthcare+funding+review+research+report+2-healthcare+funding+review+research+report+2+-+barnett

⁴⁰ “My Scheme Gives Scots Too Much Cash Aid, Says Peer.”

www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=392231&in_page_id=1770

(accessed January 18 2008)

dangers of a potential rise in 'defensive' English Nationalism. A BBC Radio 4 Programme called *Brits*, broadcast in 2000, contained interviews with such leading political lights. Among those who participated were the Labour Minister Jack Straw and the Conservative Leader at the time, William Hague. According to the BBC, the former described the English as "potentially very aggressive, very violent" and the latter said "English nationalism is the most dangerous of all forms of nationalism that can arise within the United Kingdom, because England is five-sixths of the population of the UK."⁴¹ The programme wished to show that there was an "English backlash against devolution and self-doubt about English identity."

It is too soon to say whether English Nationalism will become a strong and potentially divisive force but what *can* be discerned at the present time is an ever-more insistent call for the citizens of England to have an exclusive right to decide their own affairs, in a similar way to the Scots and to a certain extent, the Welsh. Such calls command support not only from the right but from many different quarters in English (and indeed Scottish!) public life. Opinion polls and blogs show an undoubted rise in such sentiments. In a BBC poll taken in 2007, to coincide with the anniversary of the Act of Union, it was claimed that most people in the United Kingdom thought England should have its own Parliament. The figures were the following: 61% in England; 51% in Scotland; 48% in Wales.⁴²

However the same poll also showed that a majority of British people wanted the Union to continue. In other words and according to these figures, it is wrong to say that the English want to 'go it alone.' Nevertheless, they see the Scots and Welsh exercise their own political choices and yet find themselves governed from Westminster by a Government of the United Kingdom, composed of English, Welsh and Scottish MPs. The West Lothian Question is still to be dealt with to the satisfaction of all, especially the English.

Another perceived source of irritation is the presence today of so many Scots in the corridors of power in London. The Labour Party hierarchy has always had a relatively large percentage of Scots and Welsh or people representing Scots or Welsh constituencies. Harold Wilson may have been a Yorkshireman, representing a Liverpool constituency, but his successors - Jim Callaghan and Michael Foot - represented Welsh constituencies; Neil Kinnock also represented a Welsh constituency and was Welsh to boot. John Smith was Scottish and represented a Scottish constituency and Tony Blair was born in Scotland, though you would never know it from his English accent. The Conservatives have given the impression of being decidedly English over the last 40 years - with the exception of Michael Howard, who was born in Wales of a Romanian father and Welsh mother, and Iain Duncan Smith who was born in Scotland and who is 1/8th Japanese. Both

⁴¹ "English Nationalism 'Threat to UK'."
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/596703.stm
(accessed January 18 2008)

⁴² " 'Most' Support Parliament."
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/6264823.stm
(accessed January 18 2008)

these leaders however represented English constituencies and come across as English. The other Conservative leaders have been perceived as quintessentially English - Heath, Thatcher, Major, Hague and Cameron (who despite his name is an Eton-educated Englishman, though the Camerons are of course a Scottish family.) As well as the leaders of the two main parties we also have to look at the composition of the Cabinet. In 1997 more than a third of the Labour Cabinet were born in Scotland (9/25). Is this an issue? As long as 'Scottishness' and Scottish Devolution were themselves less of an issue it did not really matter too much where a prominent British politician was born. David Lloyd George's 'Welshness' and Ramsay MacDonald's 'Scottishness' were never political issues for the British public even though they were sometimes a source of humour in the music hall. Nowadays, for many English people there seem to be 'a lot of Scots at Westminster', especially among the prominent members of the Labour Government, deciding how life should be organised for the English. Jeremy Paxman, the BBC journalist, himself coined the phrase 'Scottish Raj' to describe the power the Scots wield in London.⁴³ His remark may have been made in jest but it touched a raw nerve for some. When the question of who would replace the Welshman, John Humphrys, as principal co-anchor along with the Scotsman, Jim Naughtie, of the flagship BBC Radio 4 Morning News and Current Affairs Programme *Today*, the name of Eddie Mair was circulated, but it was rejected allegedly because middle England could hardly have been expected to digest two Scottish brogues with its morning cornflakes.

Conclusion

Today Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland have their own directly-elected legislative bodies and many decisions affecting the daily lives of the inhabitants of these parts of the United Kingdom are increasingly taken by those who live there. The two 'hot potatoes' created by devolution, namely the West Lothian Question and the Barnett Formula, have still not been fully addressed, to the satisfaction of all.

The reactions of both main political parties to these events have been diametrically opposite. After the popularity of Scottish Devolution north of the border the Labour Party was successful in introducing more representative local government for Greater London but encountered apathy and downright hostility when it proposed limited devolution for the English Regions. For 8 years Labour reaped the rewards of its devolution policy and remained in power in both Wales and Scotland. Today Welsh Labour has been forced to govern in tandem with Plaid Cymru, having lost overall power in the 2007 election, and even more significantly, has ceded political power in Scotland to the SNP. Labour politicians seem unsure of

⁴³ The Guardian Profile: The Scottish Raj
<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/scotland/comment/0,,1440521,00.html>
(accessed January 18 2008)

how to continue and have resorted to making speeches about 'Britishness' and the need for national unity.

The Conservatives have long since abandoned any hope of becoming a significant force in either Scotland or Wales but the electoral system in both countries has at least given them a louder voice. Currently, their tacit support for the SNP Government has ironically allowed the Scottish Nationalists to consolidate their own tenuous hold on power. In a way it serves the Conservatives' interest to weaken Labour in Wales and Scotland while at the same time portraying the Labour Party as in some way working against the interests of England, where the Conservatives have maintained their support and might well consolidate their support if Labour were to falter.

The issue of national identity in the United Kingdom continues to provide a rich seam of academic research to counter the more extravagant claims of some sectors of the (largely English) popular press. In February 2008 two reports were published by the Institute for Public Policy Research (North)⁴⁴ as part of a series of commissioned research papers for the *Future of the Union Project*.⁴⁵ The first, by Professor John Curtice, confirms other surveys which show that the English remain committed to the Union. However he also mentions a *British Social Attitudes Survey* for the period 1999-2006 where, contrary to other polls, only 22% of English people currently support the creation of an English Parliament. But as Curtice points out, everything depends on how you put the question. What is undeniable is a rise in English irritability with the current situation where Scottish MPs can vote on 'English' laws. Curtice also stresses the fact that the English want something done about perceived inequalities caused by the Barnett Formula and the West Lothian Question, both of which could potentially create further tension within the United Kingdom. The second report, by Kenny, English and Hayton, also focuses on the need to address the growing sense of English identity and posits the idea that Englishness is not incompatible with a wider British identity. The authors take the Government to task for not setting out a policy for the future of the 'English Question' in the wake of the refusal of the people of the North East of England to support the setting-up of their own regional assembly.

The question for the future is whether the two main political parties - which both remain staunchly unionist - can find policies to bring together the frustrations in England and the centrifugal forces elsewhere in the Kingdom. Firstly, will the

⁴⁴ *Where Stands the Union Now? Lessons from the 2007 Scottish Parliament Election*, (Institute for Public Policy Research: North) (2008)

<http://www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=589>

Beyond the Constitution? Englishness in a Post-Devolved Britain, (Institute for Public Policy Research: North) (2008)

<http://www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=590>

(Both sites accessed February 26 2008)

⁴⁵ Other subjects in the Future of the Union Project include:

- Barnett and the politics of the distribution of public spending;
- The social union and marriage and migration between England and Scotland;
- Economic interdependence and the trade relationship between England and Scotland;
- The impact of the media on the cultural union between England and Scotland.

Labour Party be able to remain united or else will the specific interests of Labour in Scotland and Labour in Wales clash with the interests of Labour in England? Secondly, the Conservative Party has nailed its colours to the mast by advocating clearly some kind of Grand Committee of English MPs which would take decisions on certain matters such as education, health, law and order and transport in England: does this mean the Conservative Party is now about to reinvent itself as the Conservative Party of England?⁴⁶ Just as Mrs Thatcher became the butt of every more sexist innuendo as her popularity waned, so Gordon Brown's 'Scottishness' and the fact that he represents a Scottish constituency might well become more significant if his own national popularity continues to ebb away. There are even those who say that the British Prime Minister should not be allowed to participate in debates on English affairs - an interesting conundrum for devotees of British constitutional matters.

Appendix 1

Conservative Party Manifesto February 1974

We will strengthen and improve the regional offices of Government. Local authorities and the regional economic planning councils will be encouraged to work more closely together so that the views and needs of the regions can more effectively influence national decisions.

We are studying the Report of the Kilbrandon Commission.

We are publishing separate manifestos for Scotland and Wales.

Conservative Party Manifesto October 1974

SCOTLAND AND NORTH SEA OIL

Secondly, the Scottish people must enjoy more of the financial benefits from oil, and they must be given a far greater say over its operation in Scotland. We will, therefore, establish a Scottish Development Fund. This will provide immediate cash help to solve the problems created by oil development, but beyond that it will lay the foundation for Scotland's long-term economic prosperity. We will move the Oil Production Division of the Department of Energy to Scotland and encourage the oil industry to locate their UK production headquarters in Scotland.

People in Scotland and Wales

⁴⁶ "Exclude Scots MPs from English Votes."
www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/10/28/nscotland228.xml
(accessed January 18 2008)

A recurring theme in our programme is the need to recognise that people want more freedom and more control over their own lives. This is what has shaped our policies for Scotland and Wales.

In Scotland we will: set up a Scottish Assembly; give the Secretary of State for Scotland, acting with the Scottish Assembly, the power to decide how to spend Scotland's share of the UK budget; establish a Scottish Development Fund, as stated earlier, to provide substantial help with both the new problems created by oil, and with Scotland's old deprived areas; transfer the Oil Division of the Department of Energy to Scotland.

In Wales, we will: increase the powers and the functions of the Secretary of State for Wales and ensure that Wales' share of the UK budget is spent in accordance with decisions taken in Wales and the Welsh Office; establish a new Select Committee of Welsh MPs entitled to meet in Cardiff as well as at Westminster; strengthen the functions of the Welsh Council and reconstitute its membership so that the majority will be elected from the new County and District Councils.

In Scotland and Wales we are publishing separate manifestos, setting out these plans and others in more detail.

Appendix 2

Labour Party Manifesto February 1974

Regional development will be further encouraged by new public enterprise, assistance to private industry on a selective basis, and new REGIONAL PLANNING MACHINERY, along the lines set out in *Labour's Programme 1973*. We will retain and improve the Regional Employment Premium. Revenues from North Sea oil will be used wherever possible to improve employment conditions in Scotland and the regions elsewhere in need of development.

Labour Party Manifesto October 1974

Regional development will be further encouraged by new public enterprise, by assistance to private industry on a selective basis, and new Regional Planning Machinery, along the lines set out in 'Labour's Programme 1973'. We will set up Scottish and Welsh Development Agencies. Moreover, the revenues from the North Sea and Celtic Sea oil will help us to improve employment in Scotland, Wales and the English regions in need of development.

The Labour Government will:-

[...]

Set up a British National Oil Corporation to enable the Government to exercise participation rights; to play an active role in the future development, exploration

and exploitation of offshore oil; and to engage in the refining and the distribution of oil. Its headquarters will be in Scotland.

Impose a substantial extra tax on the oil companies' profits from the North Sea - and plug the loopholes in existing taxation.

Take new powers to control the pace of depletion, pipelines, exploration and development - and to protect the environment; and nationalise the land needed for the oil platform construction sites.

Set up new Development Agencies in Scotland and in Wales - financed by the United Kingdom exchequer - with extra funds to reflect the revenue from offshore oil.

SCOTLAND, WALES AND THE REGIONS

The next Labour Government will create elected assemblies in Scotland and Wales. It will also consult with the local authorities and other interested parties about the democratisation of those regional bodies which are at present non-accountable. A separate statement setting out more detailed proposals has already been published by the Labour Party and the Government's proposals are set out in the White Paper. Separate manifestos are being published for Scotland and Wales.

Appendix 3

Conservative Party Manifesto 1979

It is not only the future of the Second Chamber which is at issue. We are committed to discussions about the future government of Scotland, and have put forward proposals for improved parliamentary control of administration in Wales. There are other important matters, such as a possible Bill of Rights, the use of referendums, and the relationship between Members of the European Parliament and Westminster, which we shall wish to discuss with all parties.

Appendix 4

Labour Party Manifesto 1979

Whitehall will devolve power, in an acceptable form to Scotland. Local services will be handed back to local authorities closer to the people. These are practical ways to set the people free.

Agricultural workers in tied cottages have been given security of tenure in England and Wales; we intend to do the same for Scotland.

Devolution

In our 1974 manifesto, we promised to create elected assemblies in Scotland and Wales as part of our programme of decentralization and devolution of power. Following the result of the referendum in Wales, it is clear that the majority there does not want an assembly, and we accept their decision. In Scotland, however, a majority voted for devolution.

We reaffirm our commitment to devolution for Scotland. We are therefore ready to discuss constructively with all concerned any changes which would make the scheme in the present Act more widely acceptable, so that we can establish a Scottish Assembly.

We shall expand the work of the Welsh and the Scottish Development Agencies. The Labour Government will create similar development agencies in the English regions suffering similar problems.

Appendix 5

General Election results by country (1945-2001) are available at the following website:

www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/uktable.htm (accessed January 18, 2008):

Results for the period 1992-2005, by country and by English Region, are available at the following websites (accessed January 18, 2008):

1992/7 GE www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2001/rp01-038.pdf

2001 GE www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2001/rp01-054.pdf

2005 GE www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2005/rp05-033.pdf

(%)	1992	1997	2001	2005
SCOTLAND				
Con seats	15,28	0	1,4	1,69
Con vote	25,65	17,51	15,6	15,83
Lab seats	68,06	77,78	76,4	67,8
Lab vote	38,98	45,56	43,3	38,87
ENGLAND				
Con seats	60,88	31,19	31,2	36,67
Con vote	45,46	33,7	35,2	35,74
Lab seats	37,21	62	61,1	54,06
Lab vote	33,93	43,55	41,4	35,46
ENGLISH REGIONS:				
EAST				
Con seats	92,86	58,93	60,71	71,43
Con vote	52,5	39,5	41,8	43,3
Lab seats	7,14	39,29	35,71	23,21
Lab vote	26,4	38,6	36,8	29,8
EAST MIDLANDS				
Con seats	65,91	31,82	34,09	40,91
Con vote	46,6	33,7	37,3	37,1
Lab seats	34,09	68,18	63,64	56,82
Lab vote	37,4	47,8	45,1	39
LONDON				
Con seats	55,41	14,86	17,57	28,38
Con vote	45,3	31,2	30,5	31,9
Lab seats	43,24	77,03	74,32	59,46
Lab vote	37,1	49,5	47,4	38,9
NORTH EAST				
Con seats	13,33	3,33	3,33	3,33
Con vote	29,8	19,8	21,3	19,5
Lab seats	83,33	93,33	93,33	93,33
Lab vote	53,3	64	59,4	52,9
NORTH WEST				
Con seats	35,53	11,84	11,84	11,84
Con vote	38,4	27,6	29,3	28,7
Lab seats	63,16	84,21	84,21	80,26
Lab vote	44,4	64	50,7	45,1
SOUTH EAST				
Con seats	95,18	65,06	63,86	69,88
Con vote	55	41,9	42,9	45
Lab seats	4,82	26,51	26,51	22,89
Lab vote	18,9	29,1	29,4	24,4
SOUTH WEST				
Con seats	76,47	43,14	39,22	43,14
Con vote	47,5	36,7	38,5	38,6
Lab seats	11,76	29,41	31,37	25,49
Lab vote	19,2	26,4	26,3	22,8
WEST MIDLANDS				
Con seats	52,54	23,73	22,03	27,12
Con vote	44,7	33,7	35	34,8
Lab seats	47,46	72,88	72,88	66,1
Lab vote	38,8	47	44,8	38,9
YORKS & HUMBERSIDE				
Con seats	39,29	12,5	12,5	16,07
Con vote	38	28	30,2	29,1
Lab seats	60,71	83,93	83,93	78,57
Lab vote	44,3	51,9	48,6	43,6

Appendix 6

Labour Party Manifesto (1997)

London

London is the only Western capital without an elected city government. Following a referendum to confirm popular demand, there will be a new deal for London, with a strategic authority and a mayor, each directly elected. Both will speak up for the needs of the city and plan its future. They will not duplicate the work of the boroughs, but take responsibility for London-wide issues - economic regeneration, planning, policing, transport and environmental protection. London-wide responsibility for its own government is urgently required. We will make it happen.

The regions of England

The Conservatives have created a tier of regional government in England through 'quangos' and government regional offices. Meanwhile local authorities have come together to create a more co-ordinated regional voice. Labour will build on these developments through the establishment of regional chambers to co-ordinate transport, planning, economic development, bids for European funding and land use planning.

Demand for directly elected regional government so varies across England that it would be wrong to impose a uniform system. In time we will introduce legislation to allow the people, region by region, to decide in a referendum whether they want directly elected regional government. Only where clear popular consent is established will arrangements be made for elected regional assemblies. This would require a predominantly unitary system of local government, as presently exists in Scotland and Wales, and confirmation by independent auditors that no additional public expenditure overall would be involved. Our plans will not mean adding a new tier of government to the existing English system.

Appendix 7: Bibliography

List of some of the books published during this period of renewed interest in the future of the nation(s):

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WATSON, Murray, *Being English in Scotland*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2003.

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