Arthur Horner and Jack Jones, rather than George Woodcock or Len Murray.

National trade union organisations have always been aware of the need to weld such piles of localised and sectionalised action into a general movement and policy. And here lies the second root of "syndicalism" in the wider sense. There is a permanent potential or actual tension between the rank and file and the leadership in unions. As the Webbs showed long ago, in spite of the deep-rooted union passion for direct local democracy (which still survives in the practice of decisions by mass meetings), an effective movement could not develop without national organisation, discipline, leadership and full-time functionaries. The unions of classical syndicalism were mostly too ineffective for more than the occasional battle.

The question is one of balance. If this is tilted exclusively on the side of the rank and file, national unions may disintegrate, as sometimes happened in the 19th century, or become incapable of conducting a coherent policy for all their members. That danger is particularly great where, as often in Britain, they include a variety of groups or industries with divergent and sometimes conflicting interests. If the balance favours the leadership exclusively, as has been much more common (in the 1950s, for example), the union risks losing contact with its members. British unions have striven in various ways, and with varying success, to combine both democracy and national leadership. But the balance is not often permanently stabilised.

It becomes particularly unstable, not only at times when the leadership wishes to impose unacceptable policies on the rank and file, but also when the basic pattern of industrial relations changes. Established methods of organisation, negotiation and struggle then become irrelevant, ineffective and obsolescent.

Plant negotiation

In the 1960s, the Donovan Royal Commission on Trade Unions noted such a change. The centre of gravity in collective bargaining had shifted from broad, and increasingly vague, national agreements to plant negotiation. Shopfloor and plant leaders were increasingly important. At present, the balance has therefore shifted towards the rank and file, with national leaderships falling into line.

The situation is complicated by the changeover in the leadership of crucial national unions, by internal and inter-union rivalries, by technical and other changes, and above all by the conflict between the national economic policies of the Labour government (if that is the right word), and the perfectly rational interest of unions in making the best bargain for their members.

How far is present British labour militancy comparable to classical syndicalism? Of the four main components of this till-now almost forgotten movement, it has lost the strategy and most of the hope; it has retained some of the attitudes, but above all the technique. This militancy is not directly concerned with restructuring society, and is not so much an alternative to politics as unconcerned with them. Little is now heard about the systematic reconstruction of the union movement—let alone the syndicalist ideal of social transformation through unions, which would become the basic organs of society. In 1979 "The Miners' Next Step" (to quote the title of a famous syndicalist pamphlet of 1912) was to ask for a 40 per cent wage rise.

In any case, today, those militants who hope that the industrial struggles will bring socialism closer—a matter which does not appear to concern most of the strikers—are not syndicalists. So far as one can tell, their hope lies in the *political* radicalisation of the working class as a whole, precipitated by industrial struggles directly or indirectly. The evidence that this is happening is slim.

There remain the attitudes and the technique. Both have something in common with classical syndicalism—though without the strategy and the hope, they are impoverished. True, "the fullest possible share in the control of the conditions under which [the producer] works" is once again a live issue. Under such general labels as "workers' control" and "participation," it has become part of the thinking of marxists and others who did not, until the 1960s, pay much attention to it.

To this extent demands pioneered by syndicalism have been revived—but mainly on the *political* left. Neither the practice nor the rhetoric of the actual industrial militancy of the 1970s reflects this preoccupation significantly. In fact, and in contrast to both the classical syndicalist era and the general tendency of strikes for a good deal of this century, the great strike movements of the 1970s are overwhelmingly economic in the narrowest sense.

So what we are left with is a particularly militant and effective technique of strike action, based on the rank and file. The old syndicalists would certainly have approved it, even though its aims are narrowly "economist" and sectional: to raise wages, to hold or change the place of a group of workers in the pecking order of the pay envelopes, to protect jobs against redundancy, mechanisation or other competing groups of workers And many more groups than ever before—but by no means all—are now strategically placed. It is all the more effective because one restraint of classical syndicalism has been tacitly dropped. Even Pouget, the champion of the extreme tactic of sabotage, made it quite clear—at least in public—that militancy was directed "only against capital; against the bank account": "The consumer must not suffer in this war waged against the exploiter."

The strength of strikes today, particularly in the public sector where the market and profits are not the determinants, rests largely on the ability to put political pressure on the government by the ability to make life difficult for the public, including all non-striking workers. It is pointless to pretend otherwise. Naturally the public may think the inconvenience tolerable in a good cause, and (if strong bargainers) look forward to using the same methods when their turn comes.

All this is, inevitably, a long way from syndicalism. If we forget the political cheers and hisses, the ideological commentaries and the wishful (or fearful) thinking, what we see today is a set of strike tactics, being militantly applied by one group of workers after another, for objects which, even by the criteria of "trade union consciousness" are rather narrow. At present union action is not only like what R. H. Tawney and Hugh Clegg (with differing sentiments) called "an opposition that never becomes a government" but, to the disappointment of socialists and such syndicalists as may survive, it does not seem bothered about it.

Uncertainty and bad temper

The sectionalism of industrial action imposes great and silent strains on class solidarity, strong though this is. Much of the militancy aims to increase inequalities within the working class; and much has this effect without the intention.

Striking workers are often uneasily aware of isolation. In spite of the hopes and efforts of the left, the militancy is largely non-political. Indeed, the gap between a militant and strong union movement and an organisationally enfeebled Labour Party (whose political support has long been eroding) is dangerously wide.

And yet this militancy unquestionably reflects a notable assertion of class consciousness and class power: a combination of mass discontent with the discovery that a generation of unnoticed changes has given direct action a new effectiveness. The history of labour movements is punctuated by such moments of discovery or rediscovery at intervals of a few decades. Italy in 1969 is a recent example.

The present British wave of industrial militancy seems to lack the sense of hope and liberation, the almost holiday feeling of earlier "labour explosions"—in 1889 or 1911, for example. It is surrounded by doubt, uncertainty and bad temper. Nevertheless, it is a genuine class movement growing upwards from the grassroots, against which governments and even union leaderships are relatively powerless.

And in spite of the fact that our generations have been brainwashed by capitalism into the belief that life is what money can buy, there is more to this movement than asking for wage rises. There is more, even, than despair about a society incapable of giving its members what they need, and forcing each individual or group to look after themselves, and never mind the rest.

It has been said: "Inside every worker there is a human being trying to get out." In the history of the British working class, there have been better and more hopeful attempts by the human beings to get out. But this *is* such an attempt. It will not do to dismiss it, damn it, and even less to wish it away. Attention must be paid. But it will not do, either, to overlook its limitations.

The baby blues

Ann Oakley

The label "postnatal depression" is often applied to women after childbirth. It is part of the commonsense and "scientific" understanding of the psychology of human reproduction, and conveys the idea that the depression many women feel after childbirth is *different* from other sorts of depression: a uniquely female discontent. Moreover, the term is often used as an explanation: when we say a woman has postnatal depression, we imply that we know *why* she feels like that.

This curiously umbrella-like character of the term "postnatal depression" was an area I examined in a research project on women's attitudes to becoming a mother. Sixty six women booked for delivery at a London hospital were followed through pregnancy, birth and the early months of motherhood. Four interviews took place, inquiring into social and medical aspects of the first birth. The data on how they felt emotionally and psychologically in the period after birth described four syndromes.

There was, firstly, the "blues": crying, and the tendency to be easily upset in the first week or so after birth. Secondly, many women reported a state of anxiety on first coming home with the baby: they described feeling constantly tense and "on edge," being ultrasensitive to the baby's behaviour, being unable to concentrate on anything else. Thirdly, some women said they experienced depressed moods in the early weeks or months; they had bad days and good days, and on their bad days they felt generally fed up and miserable. Lastly, there was a group of women who had "clinical" depression. They were not only in a constant state of depression, but had various symptoms, like insomnia, appetite disturbance, panic feelings, and so on. In all, 84 per cent of women in the transition to motherhood sample experienced postnatal blues, 71 per cent an anxiety state, 33 per cent a depressed mood, and 24 per cent depression with symptoms.

> "I think I've got a better relationship with him now because at the beginning I was terrified of him. I didn't know what to do with him—I didn't know how to hold him, how to change him or anything. But I think I've got more used to him now, so we're sort of more friendly."

These figures suggest that a certain amount of depression is normal after childbirth—indeed *not* feeling depressed should be counted as abnormal. Other investigators also report high figures—though it is difficult to make direct comparisons as definitions of postnatal depression vary widely between different studies. Many have focused on the kind of depression that requires medical treatment and hospitalisation. A disproportionate number of studies discuss the much rarer "puerperal psychosis" (which occurs in perhaps 0.2 per cent of women after childbirth).

But if people agree that it is normal to feel unhappy after having a baby, no one, it seems, agrees as to *why* this should be so. Two explanations are most popular: the hormonal, and the "psychoanalytic." According to the first, depressed feelings are caused by some kind of hormone imbalance. Changes in the level of the hormone progesterone are usually held responsible. Progesterone is manufactured by the placenta, so that levels of this hormone rise during pregnancy and fall rapidly after delivery. On the surface, this seems reasonable. After all, having the baby precedes the depression, and birth has a physiological effect on the mother.

> "I mean I'd heard about baby blues—I mean postnatal depression, I thought that was in hospital, those few tears, that was it. I never *dreamt* that you could get . . . . . . and I mean I thought it was *me*, but when the doctor said it *is* quite common . . . but to feel that bad with it, I don't think I've ever cried so much in all me life."

But there are problems with this explanation. In the first place, while hormonal factors could underlie the blues which many women get three or four days after birth, it is much more difficult to see how they could cause a depression which begins when the baby is about two or three months old. Secondly, almost no research has been carried out which actually attempts to measure hormone levels and correlate these with mental states. Thirdly, the *same* hormone factors are held responsible for the tendency to depressed moods in pregnancy—and in pregnancy progesterone levels are high, not low.

"Psychoanalytic" interpretations of postnatal depression are not much more helpful. In this line of thinking, the women who become depressed after childbirth are those who "reject the feminine role." This phrase opens a Pandora's box of pseudo-scientific terminology. Meanings include not loving the baby immediately, or being disturbed by its crying and failure to sleep; undergoing a forceps delivery or any kind of medical intervention; having had painful periods as an adolescent or having climbed trees in childhood; having suffered (or not suffered) from pregnancy sickness; not having orgasms in the marital bed; disliking housework; combining some kind of paid job or career with motherhood.

The main problem with this theory is that "femininity" can mean anything you choose. What people usually mean is a debased version of the anatomy-is-destiny, women-ought-to-stay-at-home theme. Most psychoanalytic investigations of postnatal depression have concentrated exclusively on depressed women without taking a control group of "normal" women. One researcher who did do this, followed up a study of eleven depressed women with a second study of women who had not been thus classified. She found there was no difference in the incidence of depressive reactions between the two groups: the "normal" women simply coped better with their feelings.

Neither hormonal nor psychoanalytic explanations of postnatal depression include a woman's social environment as a relevant factor. This is a very important deficiency.

In my own research, I looked at which social and medical factors were associated with the various kinds of depression the women reported. Feelings of anxiety on coming home with the baby didn't seem to be associated with anything (except, clearly, the experience of having a first baby). Depressed moods in the early months of motherhood, on the other hand, had definite social correlates: housing problems, not being employed, and having a "segregated" role-relationship with the baby's father, so there was little sense of sharing interests and activities within parenthood and marriage.

Crying in hospital shortly after birth—the blues—was mostly likely to follow an instrumental delivery, or epidural analgesia (an injection of local anaesthetic into the spinal column, which numbs the pain and usually also the sensation of giving birth to the baby). It was also associated with a feeling that the actual delivery of the baby had not been a satisfying experience for the mother.

With the more serious and disabling depression accompanied by symptoms, some of these connections were even more marked. Women who were depressed in this sense were likely to have felt dissatisfied with the whole management of their birth, to have reported feeling not in control over their childbirths, and to have been subjected to a high degree of medical technology. The other association that stood out was between the extent a mother had been in

> "There didn't seem to be any *reason* for me to be depressed. And Emma was a good baby, which was another thing—she never really got on my nerves. I just felt so *drained* myself, I got feelings of panic, I felt so uptight in my stomach and I looked around me and I thought gosh: there's no one here who can cope with her."

"I think I was terribly affected by the whole thing, I was really surprised at that—the whole thing about adjusting. I was just miserable, tearful, crying at everything, at the slightest thing. When you're in pain you cry about that, and you cry when the baby cries, but apart from that, I just felt *so miserable* and at night she wouldn't go back to sleep and I just was beside myself. I just wanted to die."

contact with babies before becoming a mother herself and her likelihood of developing postnatal depression. Those women who had had little contact were likely to become depressed.

Since I also asked about mental health during pregnancy, and found little connection between this and mental health after the birth, postnatal depression (in any of its meanings) is unlikely to occur only in already "neurotic" women. Moreover, none of the four kinds of depression the women described was associated with their attitudes to the feminine role or to whether or not the baby had been planned or wanted initially. Whether or not there is a hormonal factor in one or more of these types of depression, the hormonal "explanation" seems redundant. Looking at the social and medical situation of women having babies is quite sufficient to explain what postnatal depression is and why it happens.

George Brown and Tirril Harris in their recent study of mental illness in urban women report that pregnancy and birth as life events are not associated with depression, except where they occur in already difficult situations—poor housing, a disintegrating marriage, too many children, and so on. They see depression mainly as a response to loss, in which, following or in the face of some severe difficulty, a person is deprived of sources of value or reward and feels life is worthless, meaningless and hopeless. They argue that social factors (loss of mother before eleven, not being employed, lack of an intimate relationship and housing difficulties) make a woman particularly likely to get depressed.

"Perhaps I was tired, I don't know, feeling a bit sensitive. I don't *think* it was depression—I was upset. I felt in a dream. But I don't think it was postnatal depression. I mean *I probably would have felt like that if I'd had an operation or something.*"

I carried out a similar analysis of my own data and found that, taking a factor like birth technology, being socially "vulnerable" made a woman much more likely to become depressed. All 13 women who went through a serious depression had a high technology birth and were socially vulnerable. The four types of social vulnerability that were significant were housing problems, not being employed, having a "segregated" marital role-relationship and not knowing much about babies before becoming a mother.

This kind of approach to postnatal depression treats childbirth as an event akin to others like changes of job, moves, emigrations, natural disasters, illnesses, marriages and so on. The symptoms of so-called "postnatal" depression have been reported after a large number of other such life-events. For example, various studies of surgical patients (a category in which women having babies today also fall) have shown the patient's tendency to be depressed after surgery and to have symptoms like anxiety, restlessness and insomnia. After amputation surgery (which, some say, parallels the loss of one's "bump" during childbirth), initial numbness is often succeeded by anxiety, tension, difficulty in concentrating, insomnia, loss of appetite and weight and depression. Survival through disasters like earthquakes brings on a phase of euphoria, followed by depression in which feelings of hopelessness, low self-esteem, loss of pleasure in usual social relationships and irritability all feature. The same kind of reactions are often experienced when people become redundant or retire or change their jobs—and becoming a mother can be construed as redundancy or retirement of job change.

"Oh God—is he mine? Where did he come from? I didn't really feel anything, I was so tired: I was glad it was over, that was it. I couldn't think of anything else."

Reactions to change often include a feeling of bereavement in relation to the past, even if the change in question was planned and welcomed. Peter Marris in his book, *Loss and Change*, makes the important point that loss cannot be made good merely by substitution: widows, amputees and rehoused families have to gradually work through the change in their life.

It might seem strange to apply all this to childbirth. After all, when women have babies the experience is surely one of gain—a new human being and, in the case of first childbirth, a new status, role and occupation for the mother. This is too simple an explanation, too tied up with our cultural ideology about women and motherhood bear much relation to the truth as experienced by women themselves.

The main reaction by the women in my sample to becoming a mother was that of shock.

"It [childbirth] is a state of *shock*. I was unaware of what was going on—I mean I'd like to have another one, just to be aware of what's going on."

"I woke up in the middle of the night and I couldn't believe that I'd actually delivered him. It was such a *shock*."

"I felt depressed in hospital. It was partly *shock* really, and being away from home."

"I think the biggest *shock* was the amount of time that is required to look after a newborn baby."

Most women said that the whole process—the pregnancy, birth, the relationship of mother and child, work of child-care and social position of mother—was different from what they expected. Four out of five said their expectations had been too "romantic"; 82 per cent said pregnancy was different from what they had expected, 93 per cent said that birth was; and social motherhood was described by 91 per cent as contradicting previously held images.

Not only is this gap between expectations and reality likely to be a blow to self-esteem, but research on other "life events" has shown that it is particularly likely to be accompanied by depression: the person has "lost" something—a cherished vision. But the biggest loss of first-time motherhood is that of personal identity. Two thirds of the women said their lives had been totally changed by the baby, and the same proportion felt they were treated differently (by husbands, friends, neighbours, relations) as mothers, and that they had no time to themselves any more. Two out of five felt isolation and monotony, four out of five that they were incurably "tied down" by the baby.

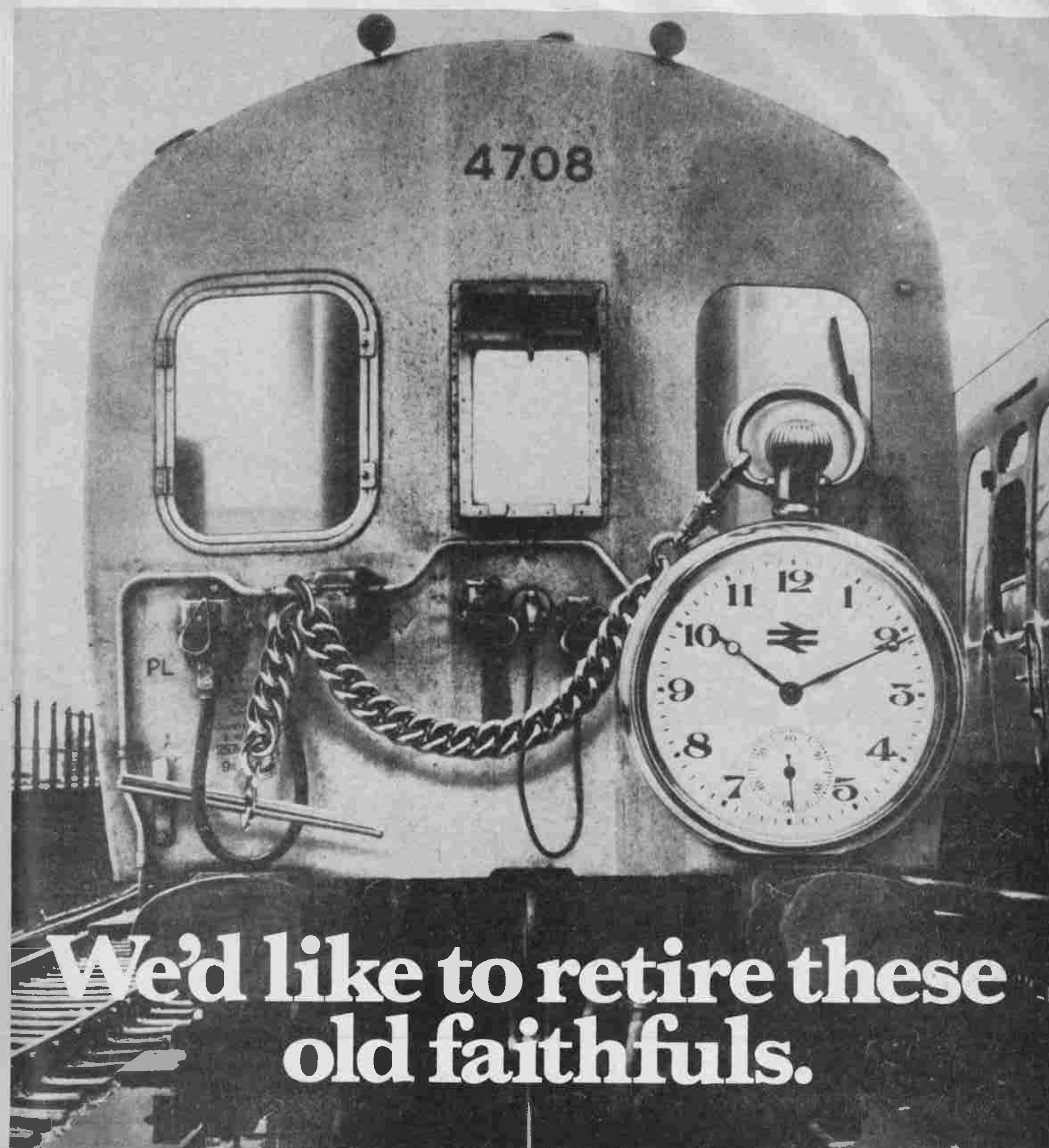
Although a third went back to work after the baby was born, only one did so fulltime. All the others took on occasional or part-time work in a different field from their previous jobs—a nursing tutor stuck up envelopes for £1 an hour, a language teacher answered the telephone at her husband's office two days a week, and so on.

Such loss can be counteracted by the enormous reward of the baby itself. But it takes some time for this reward to be felt. Mother and baby, so inseparably joined before birth, have to learn to fit together, to love and respond to one another after birth. Three quarters of the mothers in the "transition to motherhood" sample said they did not love their babies immediately, and sometimes felt violent towards them; all the mothers reported that exhaustion in the early weeks dampened the emotional satisfaction of motherhood.

Postnatal depression is also deeply disturbing to the mother, because she cannot understand why she should feel like this, and is led to wonder if her reactions are normal and if she is suitable to be a mother. What has she done wrong—what is wrong with *her* that she can't appreciate her tremendous good fortune in having delivered a normal, healthy baby, and in having achieved that goal still held up as women's ultimate fulfilment?

It is time that we stopped blaming women for being depressed after childbirth by identifying their hormones or their psyches as causes. Postnatal depression is not a "scientific" term, but an ideological one. It mystifies the real social and medical factors that lead to mothers' unhappiness.

"I know Lawrence feels a bit left out. Because I'm tired. I used to be an awfully happy, jolly person and I've just been so tired."



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The backbone of the nation

The right lines for race research

John Rex

The new director of the SSRC ethnic relations unit points up the political realities.

Most of those who have seen fit to comment on the achievements of academic research in the social sciences have done so from a vulgar and shallow technocratic point of view. According to this view, research has been all too expensive and has failed to produce "results." But what does this concept of "results" mean?

Clearly, researchers cannot by themselves change the world. All they can do is to provide understanding. The task of changing the world is a political one and depends not solely upon understanding, but on the goals which we all, as political people, set ourselves, and on our will to achieve them.

Nowhere are these general propositions about social research more true than in the sphere of race relations. As one of the greatest of all social scientists, Gunnar Myrdal, pointed out, the social scientist cannot tamely accept a remit to go out and collect neutral "facts" to solve problems. Nor can we "prove" that any particular state of affairs is "necessary." Necessity in human affairs can only mean necessity from a particular point of view. Ends as well as means, therefore, must come under scrutiny.

In race relations research in Britain, these questions take on an acute form. Politicians have by their actions and their omissions, over the past 25 years, created a particular situation. The social scientist who now enters the field will only deceive himself and others if he ignores those actions and omissions as part of his subject matter.

Inconvenient solutions

He is not talking about something which is scientifically "necessary." He is talking about a situation in which political will is important and which is subject to political control. He cannot be neutral. In Myrdal's terms, he must make his value standpoint explicit. But what he cannot do, if he is honest, is to ignore the possibility of certain solutions because, from a party-political point of view, they are inconvenient or impractical.

To say this, is not to advocate utopianism, or else to claim for the social scientist a licence to be politically partisan. The mere act of setting out his premises in an explicit way lays them open to scrutiny and debate. In a free society, such scrutiny and debate might well lead to agreement that it is worthwhile to consider how such values might be realised.

The above paragraph is particularly relevant to the question of race relations in Britain. Almost everyone is aware that mistakes have been made, and a cumulative process started in which racism has escalated to a point at which no solutions appear politically practicable. In these circumstances, it is worth asking what could have been, and whether there are not still political means which could be found for making something like that "could have been" into a reality.

What could have been is this. Britain could, within a framework of economic planning in a mixed economy, have decided to import immigrant labour according to her needs. We could then have asked how the acceptance of immigrant workers might best be facilitated, including both the options of individual assimilation and of pluralistic accommodation (ie, recognising the possibility of a group maintaining its own culture and social organisations, even though its individual members gained rights as British citizens).

A still wider perspective than this could also have been opened up. It could have been asked what social arrangements were necessary to enable Britain to absorb refugees (for example, Ugandan Asians or Vietnamese boatpeople) as occasion demanded, and to assume some responsibility for reducing starvation in the world by giving people from poorer countries the opportunity of working here.

Of course, neither the first more realistic model, nor the latter more idealistic one, has governed our race relations policy. No preparation was made for the reception of immigrants; government and local authorities panicked; and a wall of discrimination was thrown up. The immigrant minorities who arrived found themselves stuck in semi-ghetto neighbourhoods, in jobs no one else wanted, and increasingly in schools with immigrant majorities.

Their concentration led to an entirely and, indeed, ludicrously false belief that they were getting from Britain more than they gave; and, what is more, getting it because the government was discriminating in their favour. Immigration controls became more and more severe, and racially discriminatory. Any new body of immigrants or refugees, no matter how great their need or how great the injustice they had suffered, appeared as a threat. Leicester, we were told, when Amin was driving out his Asians with British passports, was full.

In these circumstances, Britain faces a new dilemma. It is not simply that of absorbing immigrants and refugees from overseas. It is that of absorbing settled minority communities with an underclass status into the mainstream of British society.

A. H. Halsey was one social scientist who grasped the essentially political nature of this problem. In NEW SOCIETY, in 1970, he wrote an article entitled "Race relations—the lines to think on," in which he commented on the work of the SSRC ethnic relations research unit, then just starting in Bristol.

His somewhat over-dramatised and tactless question, "Will the coloureds revolt?", led some of us to attack his conservatism. But there is a sense in which his anxieties were justified. The real problem, if we were to re-phrase Halsey's question, was simply that West Indian and Asian minorities were getting less than British justice, even British class justice.

There is a certain awareness of this in government quarters, but in a distorted form. It is recognised that the risk of driving the minorities into ghettos would be an evil. (They are *not* in true ghettos yet.) But this evil is seen as lying in the threat to our established social order, rather than in the injustice to the immigrants themselves. Thus, the inner city is now seen as a problem, and we propose energetic (though under-financed) activity to clean it up. But we have little to say about what is to happen to those who have to live there.

The importance of housing

The role of the social scientist in race relations research must be to get beyond these distorted and often panicky conceptions to the real structures which exist, and to the factors which have brought them into being and sustain them. If these are made clear, the politicians will be set a difficult, but a nonetheless manageable task of bringing about change.

To spell out what has been happening in more detail, we should look at the present position of the minorities in each of the major spheres in which social rights are allocated in the welfare state—housing, employment and education.

There is a strong case for giving priority to housing in race relations research. Contrary to expectation, immigrant workers have been accepted relatively peacefully into industry. In housing and the residential neighbourhood, immigrants have met more resistance.

Housing, like most facilities in British society, is distributed in a stratified way. That is to say, there are different kinds of housing of differing degrees of desirability, in which the residents may have differing kinds of tenure. Some few own good houses outright, but the normal housing destiny of an Englishman is to buy a suburban house with a building society mortgage, or rent one from the council.

The striking fact about our immigrant communities is that they have seldom acquired their houses in this way. They did

not originally get building society mortgages on suburban houses, and they were either at the back of the council housing queue or out of it altogether. They were housed in irregular ways and in restricted neighbourhoods only, most usually with council mortgages or with bank loans in housing improvement and action areas in the inner city. The normal working class man got a council house or a building society loan, and moved to the suburbs. The immigrant minorities were trapped in the inner city by home ownership.

The questions now are these. Do we accept the fact of segregation, and ensure that inner-city people get adequate and equal treatment? Or do we provide opportunities for residential mobility which are attractive to those to whom they are offered, and conducive to an improvement of race relations? If the latter is our aim, what do we do to reassure the minority inner-city communities that we are not simply trying to break up their communal institutions, which they see as vital to their self-defence in a hostile society?

We can only begin to pose these question effectively when British people have a better picture of what the residential community of the minorities is like.

In the sphere of work, there appears to be an equivalent process of structural separation taking place. While the children of manual workers in Britain become educated and move up into more highly skilled, supervisory and managerial jobs, the remaining menial jobs still have to be done. They are performed partly by West Indian and Asian men and women, and partly by white Englishmen who have lost out in the struggle for mobility and are threatened with Poor Whitism. Fortunately for these whites, the structure of the British trade union movement is such that they are not treated by their fellow workers as poor whites. But, for their immigrant workmates, the plain fact is that other jobs are closed off.

It remains to be seen what will happen to the children of these immigrant workers. It could be that West Indian children will either be trapped in these jobs by lack of qualifications and by discrimination, or in times of high unemployment left out of employment altogether. Asian children, on the other hand, may have additional strategies open to them, which will enable them to enter the professions (thus by-passing working class jobs altogether) or to enter business.

The crucial point here is acceptance into the working class movement (ie, into trades unions and the Labour Party). There is still evidence of strong support for both trades unions and the Labour Party among actual immigrants. But the number of black shop stewards, trade union officials and representatives is still infinitesimal

Will immigrant minorities and their *children* enter into our class-based politics? Or will they be kept out of, or stay out of, them on a communal or ethnic basis?

Crucial to all this is the school, and the place of the immigrants' children within it. Here again one has to start by noting the move towards segregation. An American campaigner for school de-segregation once pointed out that, whereas in the United States bussing had been proposed as a means of ensuring equal educational rights for blacks, in Britain it had been thought of as a way of thinning out immigrants.

Not surprisingly, after an initial period in which 30 per cent was thought of as a tipping point, not to be superseded, the idea of the inner-city immigrant majority school came to be quietly accepted. Now the problem is no longer whether inner-city white children are held back through a risk that the school will concentrate on the minority: they have no option. What remains is a problem for minority parents and children themselves—namely, whether in segregated conditions they can really hope for an equal education. No doubt many of the schools they go to benefit from positive discrimination by governmental agencies. But what actually goes on in them? What will be the fate of their students?

It is hardly possible to talk about matters such as these without raising an outcry from teachers' organisations, who fear that they are being accused of racism. But, because of teacher autonomy, we have little idea of what goes on in the immigrant

photographs: Dawn Morgan

How things should be: working together (left) and learning together (overleaf)—photographs taken in a Southall garage and outside a nearby school

schools. It is as right to undertake an ethnography and sociology of the immigrant school, as it is to study working class schools, class-based linguistic codes, or the relative choices of manual and non-manual workers' children.

Underlying all these special themes is one general one—to which I believe Halsey was trying to draw attention. This is the relationship of our West Indian and Asian minorities to the class structure and to the political system.

We do not have a unitary society. Our politics are based on class conflict. We have a class struggle over employment, wages and housing. Our schools are the scene of complex transactions, which have to do with class mobility and the inculcation of belief in the regime's legitimacy.

But all this constitutes a manageable system, compared with the rift which might be opened up by the continued suppression of Asian and West Indians into an "underclass" position. Any serious political thinking about Britain's future must go beyond traditional preoccupations with class, to deal with these wider possible rifts.

To say this is not simply to pose the problem as one of social control. One could not do that and ally oneself with the most conservative forces in our society, by simply asking what would have to be done to force or deceive people into accepting injustice. Alternatively one could consider the organisations and culture of the minorities (which conservatives, of whatever party, might regard as subversive) as necessary defences by the minorities against injustice. Thus, both Rastafari, and the radical younger elements in the Indian Workers' Association, might be seen not as a problem or a threat, but as serious responses to a complex cultural and political situation.

What I suggest here is a perspective on race relations which is based on a serious political sociology. It is a way to look at long-term questions, which is detached from immediate political considerations, but based on clear values. This is how special developments, such as the recent rise of overtly racist political movements, should be considered.

Such a framework for race relations studies will not please everyone. It will not please those who see ethnic and race relations as essentially non-political phenomena. It will not please those who simply regard our present difficulties as problems of prejudice, to be corrected by better facts. And it will not please those who convert all problems into standard ones which British and European marxists have seen as central to the analysis of capitalism.

But it will provide the kind of background for the political thinking necessary to comprehend the tasks of the eighties and the nineties, both for our traditional politicians and for those who speak for minority communities.

Professor Rex is speaking at the British Sociological Association meeting at Warwick University next week on "Race, politics and the law."

Race and immigration control

Martin Kettle

The sharp end of how the immigration appeals system does its work.

Across the road from London's law courts is Thanet House, headquarters of the immigration appeals system. Up on the third floor a young Algerian is trying to show that the Home Office was wrong to refuse him a study permit. He wants to stay and learn English. He tries to put his case in the tongue he aspires to master but becomes hopelessly confused.

"I think we had better have the interpreter," says the adjudicator—a white-haired lady in a blue suit. The Algerian turns to a lady in heavy make-up, wearing a fur-trimmed coat (though it's a sunny day the central heating is full on), and pours out what is presumably coherent Arabic. The interpreter explains: he hadn't intended to become a student when he first arrived, but then his uncle offered him money for his studies. The Home Office representative, known in the jargon as "the presenting officer," leans forward and asks him why then this is the second time that he has arrived in this country as a visitor and then tried to change his status.

More discussion in Arabic. "He says he never did—or rather the expression he actually used was, 'The occasion did not arise'." The interpreter smiles as she explains this dignified expression. But it cuts no ice.

It is time for the closing speeches. The Algerian has a black barrister. He stands to address the adjudicator whereas the Home Office man remains seated throughout. The barrister doesn't seem very much at home with the hearing procedure which is supposed to be more informal than the courts. "If madame will allow a final submission" he begins. But madame cuts across him. The Home Office must speak first.

Concisely and clinically, the presenting officer sums up. "It all comes down to intention and intention cannot be proved. It has to be inferred from certain overt acts." Once before this man tried to enter as a visitor, was admitted and then took a job. This time round he is trying to stay by becoming a student but "he has made a point of studying the minimum necessary—15 hours—to bring him within the law."

The barrister now stands, uncertainly. By habit he clearly likes to be on his feet. "If madame would take cognisance of the appellant's attendance record, if I may refer madame to it," he begins. His speech becomes more and more lawyerish—an embarrassing contrast with the incisive brevity of the Home Office man.

When he has finished, the adjudicator screws the top back on the fountain-pen with which she has been taking detailed notes, looks up and closes the hearing. Her decision will be given in writing in two weeks.

The immigration appeals system was set up in 1969 as a result of recommendations made by the Wilson Committee. It gives rights of appeal following refusal of permission to enter or remain in the United Kingdom. Appeals are normally heard by a single adjudicator. There is then a limited right of appeal to the immigration appeal tribunal on points of law. Legal aid is not available—so most appellants either have to pay for a solicitor (and few solicitors know much about immigration law) or get representation from United Kingdom Immigrants' Advisory Service or another specialist voluntary organisation.

Thanet House has four rooms for hearings. They are like school classrooms. The adjudicator sits at a raised desk. In a corner sits a clerk. In the body of the room are two sets of tables with notices marked "Appellant" and "Respondent" at which the representatives sit. To one side is another table marked "Witness." There are seats for the public and the press. These are normally empty.

"Members of the public are very rare here," explains one adjudicator to me between hearings, "so I was naturally curious to know who you were." As soon as the next case starts, he turns to the presenting officer and says, "As I was just saying to our friend from the newspapers. . ." Presumably the message gets across.

The biggest problem for an appellant seems to be that there is no chance to cross-examine the Home Office. All their evidence is in written form, provided by immigration or entry certificate officers. This is particularly difficult in "Asian family cases" in which relatives try to join the family breadwinner in this country. These cases rest on evidence supplied by entry certificate officers in High Commissions thousands of miles away.

"How much did your mother spend on your father's funeral rites?" asks a presenting officer through an interpreter to a Gujerati. "Why did your mother continue to live on her own in Bombay after you came to this country?" "Why should an old lady travel 300 miles to collect money?" How can he answer? He doesn't *know* the answers.

However, he clearly feels under tremendous pressure to produce an answer. So the Gujerati tries to explain. "I just can't make sense of that," says the Home Office man, as an increasingly speculative answer is given. He exchanges raised eyebrows with the young clerk in the corner who is sitting reading *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* concealed behind a clipboard of official papers.

The adjudicator, a stiff little man of military appearance, looks over his half-moon spectacles, senses what is going on. "How do you know he knows that? I'm wondering whether he isn't just making these answers up—not to deceive you—but to give you an answer."

So the Home Office tries again. "Is your uncle a wealthy man?" An amazing question. Here is a member of the English professional classes asking an immigrant peasant from Gujerat a question for which their respective yardsticks may be worlds apart. Inevitably though, he gets an answer. Fail to give an answer and it may appear you have something to hide.

The Home Office man spends most of the afternoon session trying to trick the Gujerati into contradicting himself in explaining why his mother, who is trying to come to this country, should have said or done certain things. The adjudicator lets it all run on. The witness seems to me to be holding his ground well. But suddenly the adjudicator rests one elbow on the desk and, pointing at the man, says to the interpreter: "Tell him, tell him that he has to give very accurate answers. We are being told one thing one minute and one thing the next."

Closing submissions are short. The Home Office man refers to "the Green Book," the collected decisions of the immigration appeals tribunal, and proceeds to show why the adjudicator can't—even if he wants to—use any discretion in making his decision. The rules say so. The Green Book says so.

Downstairs, the tribunal is sitting—a posher version of the adjudicator's hearings. Three men sit at the raised desk. And here, for the first time, another member of the public. It turns out later that she is an MP's research assistant and that this is the appeal hearing of a case that was debated in the House in January.

It's another Asian family case. Immigration officials in Islamabad have refused entry certificates to the wife and two sons of a man who had lived in Derby for ten years. He now wants his family to join him. All three were turned down, but luckily for them, the man is a pay-train guard on a service used regularly by the local MP. The two of them had discussed the family coming to this country before the applications were made. So the MP pestered the Home Office to reverse its decision and got the refusals overturned for the wife and the younger son. Now they are appealing to get the older son in.

There are inconsistencies in the statements to the entry certificate officers. But on this occasion these problems aren't going to matter. The tribunal withdraw for a few minutes before deciding that it was unjust to differentiate between the members of the family. The moral: know your MP.

The next case is another familiar category—"a West African deportation case." Here is a very expensively dressed tall Nigerian, handcuffed to a prison officer. He had been convicted for wounding last summer and recommended for deportation. He is a great talker, but incapable of saying two consistent things consecutively.

"A tissue of lies," says the presenting officer and one cannot but agree with him. The tribunal does not even bother to withdraw to consider their ruling. "He is like a man who comes to your house, behaves badly, and whom you then want to leave."

It was only as I was going down to the street that it suddenly hit me. Yes, he was a liar. Yes, he was nasty. But hadn't he served his sentence for the wounding? He was being deported not for being a criminal but just because, being foreign, he could be deported. He was being punished for being black.