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‘Prescribing Enterprise’: Examining how New Labour modernised social welfare

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Introduction

"I want this government to be the champion of entrepreneurs."

On the 6th of July 1999, in a speech to the British Venture Capital Association, Tony Blair outlined the importance of entrepreneurship in Great Britain as he unveiled a new £50m state fund to back the next best risk-takers in society. Fresh-faced in a sharp blue business suit, the youngest prime minister of the twentieth century, armed with the largest landslide General Election victory in British history, was determined to enact major change to society at the turn of the millennium. At this unscripted meeting in London, Blair complained that the public sector's stubborn old-fashioned ways had left him with 'scars on my back after two years in government.'[1] As a remedy, the New Labour project reiterated that it wanted to rid a 'certain snobbery' that Old Labour had about entrepreneurs; Blair felt they 'had focussed on social justice but regarded wealth creation as inimical to it.'[2] The prescription espoused within this capitalist crusade was a call for 'a revolution' in people's attitudes to entrepreneurs – 'the front-line troops of Britain's new economy.'[3] Blair's off-the-cuff remarks in the confines of Park Lane's five-star Intercontinental Hotel were telling.

This dissertation will examine how New Labour pursued this commitment to enterprise within the realm of social welfare. It will argue that the political ambition to develop the enterprise culture throughout the sectors of employment, education and charity was the guiding rationale to its project of modernising the welfare state. This reveals how New Labour had broken with the traditions of the Labour Party. While social democracy claimed to be reborn through the Third Way, neoliberalism was ascendant. The advancement of neoliberalism in social welfare is important to historicise because of its continuity in policy throughout the twenty-first century thus far. Often associated with Thatcherism, New Labour's political commitment to this enterprise model has had, and continues to have, profound contemporary implications for both individuals and institutions.

[1] Nicholas Watt, Blair berates old Labour 'snobs', *The Guardian* (July 7, 1999) <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/1999/jul/07/uk.politicalnews2> [accessed 12 March 2023]
[2] BBC News, 'Blair aims for enterprise culture' (July 6, 1999) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/387531.stm> [accessed 12 March 2023]
[3] Julie Hyland, 'Blair denounces public sector workers to an audience of Venture Capitalists', *WSW* (July 12, 1999) <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1999/07/blai-j12.html> [accessed 14 March 2023]

The Enterprise Culture

The enterprise culture is the conversion of neoliberal ideology into a cultural programme, which sees this type of 'turbo-capitalism' develop beyond an economic system. Terry Flew has summarised it as taking the commercial enterprise form as a model for society and individual behaviour.[4] This theory is related to a series of lectures in the 1970s in which Michel Foucault argued that governmentalities create a subjectivity through a neoliberal discourse.[5] In short, the way the state governs instructs individuals and thus society to operate in a certain way through creating a culturally constructed representation of the limited ways in how it is possible to think and act. Governance in this way produces what has been termed 'the neoliberal subject' – a type of economically rational individual that is resilient to the market.[6] To supplement this, social policy must support the enterprise model by encouraging entrepreneurial behaviours rather than counteracting them through a dependency culture. This has required a fundamental governance shift 'from the philosophy of interventionism to entrepreneurship.'[7] Using enterprise as an analytical term to uncover this shift is an effective way to study neoliberal reform and explain its hegemonic status in the UK in the last forty years.

In Britain, this shift emanated from the New Right. For instance, encapsulating the meta-narrative formulated by Keith Joseph in the 1970s, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher famously proclaimed in 1981 that 'economics are the method; the object is to change the heart and soul.'[8] However, this dissertation shares the recognition that Thatcher's reforms in social policy were modest as she was 'confronted with a recalcitrant electorate still attached to the Keynesian legacy.'[9] Whereas Thatcher initiated large-scale privatisation and deregulation of the British economy, typified by the 'Big Bang' of 1986, this thesis will provide a political history of how New Labour applied neoliberal governmentality to social welfare in an unprecedented manner. In essence, they prescribed enterprise to cure the dependency culture. Asked by Tony Blair to 'think the unthinkable', Frank Field (Minister for Welfare Reform in 1997) complained that the 'welfare system in the United Kingdom is

[4] Terry Flew, 'Six theories of neoliberalism', *Thesis Eleven*, vol. 122.1 (2014), pp. 49-71, (p. 56).
[5] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France 1978-79*, ed. Michel Senellart (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008)
[6] David Chandler, Julian Reid, *The Neoliberal Subject* (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016)
[7] Ash Amin, *Post-Fordism: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 229.
[8] Margaret Thatcher, 'Interview for Sunday Times', Margaret Thatcher Foundation (1981) <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104475> [accessed 1 February 2023]
[9] Manfred B. Steger, *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 22.

broken' because of an imbalance that failed to address the roles of self-interest and self-improvement of the new aspirational middle-class.[10] The ambition to develop policy in accordance with this acknowledgement can be seen in the 1997 Green Paper *'Charting a new course for welfare'*. It outlined that 'a modernised welfare system is central to a fair society and an enterprise culture.'[11] Following the 1997 manifesto promise to 'be the party of welfare reform', New Labour made a persistent push to develop the welfare system in line with the demands of the enterprise culture over the next thirteen years they were in office.[12]

Literature

This research exists within the Anglo-American historiographical trend of understanding the hegemony of neoliberalism following the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. Published by University College London in 2021, *'The Neoliberal Age?'* assesses Britain's political economy since the 1970s and is a testament to the contemporary relevance of this historiographical trend.[13] Furthermore, Bob Jessop has recently explored the 'unhappy marriage' of capitalism and the welfare state, recognising the 'neoliberal economic imaginary' as the primary axis of societal organisation.[14] However, approaches that conceptualise neoliberalism through the idea of enterprise have been limited and often restricted to the fields of political science, sociology or economics. The first use of enterprise conceptually was Russell Keat's and Nicholas Abercrombie's '*Enterprise Culture'*, an approach that Colin Gray developed in 1998 as he recognised the political effort to initiate a 'reappraisal of social attitudes and individual values across the complete spectrum of society.'[15] Since then, the historiography has increasingly recognised the efforts of both Thatcher and Reagan to free the spirit of enterprise.[16] However, despite these acknowledgements of the centrality of the enterprise culture, a comprehensive analysis of its

[10] Frank Field, *Making Welfare Work: Reconstructing Welfare for the Millennium* (London: Institute of Community Studies, 1995), p. 21.
[11] The National Archives (Kew), JB 4/655 'Welfare Reform Green Paper' (09-11.1997), p. 1.
[12] Labour Party Manifesto (1997) <http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1997/1997-labour-manifesto.shtml> [accessed 20 March 2023]
[13] Aled Davies, Ben Jackson, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *The Neoliberal Age? Britain since the 1970s*, (London: UCL Press, 2021)
[14] Bob Jessop, 'Neoliberalism and Workfare: Schumpeterian or Ricardian?', *The SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism*, ed. Damien Cahill, Melinda Cooper, Martijn Konings, David Primrose (London: SAGE Publications, 2018), pp. 347-57, (p. 348).
[15] Russell Keat, Nicholas Abercrombie, *Enterprise Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991). Colin Gray, *Enterprise and Culture* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 11.
[16] Tomas Martilla, *The culture of enterprise in neoliberalism: spectres of entrepreneurship* (New York: Routledge, 2013). Edward J. Nell, *Free market conservatism: a critique of theory and practice* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009)

substantial development under New Labour has yet to occur. Where enterprise has been historically traced through the Labour Party by Richard Beresford, it has been confined to understanding SME business policy rather than as an explanatory concept.[17] Although Robert Huggins and Nicholas Williams began to broaden the understanding of enterprise and recognised its presence across several realms of public policy, they also largely focussed on the economy and how the total business stock rose to 4.3 million through schemes such as the Small Business Service, the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative and the Enterprise Directorate.[18] These articles ignore the primarily cultural purpose that has been behind the efforts of policy for successive decades, a historically specific development for which agency has been attributed mostly to the Conservative Party.

Within the literature on New Labour, a major controversy is the extent to which its 'Third Way' ideology is a continuation of Thatcherism or a modernisation of its social democratic tradition. One notable piece of work that shares this concern is Steven Fielding's *'Continuity and Change in the Making of New Labour'*, which positions New Labour as a modern application of 'eternal' Labour Party values.[19] This is achieved through a narrative of an ideological journey that focuses on the change of Clause IV to argue that New Labour was the latest link in a long chain of modernisation efforts, akin to the revisionism of Hugh Gaitskell in the late 1950s. However, as this thesis highlights, egalitarian values ceased to dominate the thought of the Labour Party and 'eternal' values should not be artificially moulded to form a false continuity in the historical narrative. In contrast, Richard Heffernan's *'New Labour and Thatcherism'* recognises how Thatcherism relocated the dominant agenda of the party.[20] This thesis will recognise this by assessing how a central commitment to enterprise (a prime concept of Thatcherism) demonstrated the novelty of the New Labour approach. Although Heffernan speculated in 2000 that the neo-liberal agenda of Thatcherism might strengthen under New Labour, this thesis can move beyond prediction and demonstrate how Thatcherism was indeed a continuing phenomenon.[21] Crucially, this understanding can be drawn from both the political rhetoric of the party and thirteen years of policy

[17] Richard Beresford, 'New Labour and enterprise policy: Continuity or change? Evidence from general election manifestos', *British Politics*, vol. 10.3 (2015), pp. 335-355
[18] Robert Huggins, Nicholas Williams, 'Enterprise and public policy: a review of Labour government intervention in the United Kingdom', *Government and Policy*, vol. 27 (2009), pp. 19-41. (p. 24).
[19] Steven Fielding, *The Labour Party: Continuity and Change in the Making of 'New' Labour* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), p. 57.
[20] Richard Heffernan, *New Labour and Thatcherism: Political Change in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), p. 169.
[21] Ibid, p. 175.

implementation rather than turn-of-the-millennium prophecies. This critical distinction between rhetoric and reality is particularly poignant in addressing New Labour because of their unprecedented focus on presentation. Norman Fairclough recognised this in his language-focussed work '*New Labour, New Language?',* which concluded with the demand for constructive and critical engagement with the policy work of the party from Matthew Taylor (head of the pro-Labour Institute for Public Policy Research).[22] To engage in this way, this dissertation will examine policy from its appearance in political discourse to its implementation and impact on society. In doing so, this thesis addresses a substantial gap in the literature.

Methodology

This work draws on various political sources, such as speeches, manifestos and reports to examine the prescription of enterprise in social policy through qualitative analysis. The recent release of many government records to the National Archives in Kew has significantly enhanced this primary source base. Contemporary history depends on both the amount and the quality of source material available, thus this availability makes this analysis feasible.[23] Consequently, the intentions behind changes to employment, education and charity policy are evident from the accounts of their first-hand architects, which have thus far been confidential. Approaching these three sectors ensures that a broad approach to social welfare is covered. This breadth is necessary because the initiation of a cultural change must, by definition, be pervasive across society. However, the claim is not that enterprise dictated all government policy in this period but that using enterprise as an explanatory concept helps to understand the blueprint of New Labour. This conceptual approach enables conclusions to be drawn within and across policy areas to provide a broad understanding of historical change.

The way the government converses with citizens is integral to understanding the societal norms that are being encouraged. Moreover, understanding language is essential when analysing New Labour, for they often sought 'to achieve rhetorically what they cannot achieve in reality' through promotional rather than dialogical language.[24] Thankfully, when doing contemporary history, it is easier to recognise new trends in opinion and contextualise

[22] Norman Fairclough, *New Labour, New Language?* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 175.
[23] Llewellyn Woodward, 'The Study of Contemporary History', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 1.1 (1966), pp. 1-13, (p. 5).
[24] Fairclough, p. 16.

the meaning of terminology.[25] In the case of New Labour, the presence of moral rhetoric to justify the self-regulating market is notable. Paul Turpin has highlighted how this is 'covertly dogmatic' in how it celebrates individual freedom, so long as individuals conform to desired behaviours.[26] Moving beyond language, this thesis will examine policy development, implementation and the precedents these reforms set to understand how neoliberalism has continued to produce 'nothing less than a regime-wide transformation of the welfare state.'[27] Also, no culture remains stagnant and cannot be analysed from one single time, so the political impetus of the government will be assessed across their thirteen years in office to show both the changes and continuities in their approach. Moreover, the longer-term impact is more apparent now that this government has been absent for a further thirteen years. Overall, this systematic approach to contemporary history responds to the call for a more sophisticated historical analysis of the immediate past.[28]

Chapter Structure

The structure of this work takes inspiration from Heffernan's five-stage policy analysis model that assesses attitude, intention, chosen policy methods, designated objectives and policy outcomes.[29] This dissertation takes a similar approach but digresses to include a brief historical context of each sector, which is important when quantifying novelty because it gives a contextual grounding from which to base judgement. Then, significant policy developments are explored to assess how they demonstrated government intentions and continued to impact British society. A three-chapter structure is used to explore the various ways that enterprise was prescribed across society. The first chapter outlines how New Labour emphasised personal responsibility through their employment-first approach to welfare. Welfare-to-work policies for young people, disabled people and lone parents are looked at, alongside the development of Education and Employment Action Zones, Jobcentre Plus, and tax credits. The second chapter explores New Labour's ambition to develop aspirational human capital through reforms to the education sector. To do this, structural changes to schools and universities are examined, alongside the discourse of enterprise

[25] Woodward, p. 6.
[26] Paul Turpin, *The Moral Rhetoric of Political Economy: Justice and Modern Economic Thought* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 10.
[27] Sanford F. Schram, 'Neoliberalising the Welfare State: Marketizing Social Policy/Disciplining Clients', *The SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism*, pp. 308-320, (p. 312).
[28] Jen Palmowski, Kristina Spohr Readman, 'Speaking Truth to Power: Contemporary History in the Twenty-first Century', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 46.3 (2011), pp. 485-505, (p. 487).
[29] Heffernan, p. 40.

evident in government initiatives. The final chapter examines how enterprise redefined the approach to governance by repositioning the state as an investor that aimed to facilitate community development through social enterprise. This is evident through exploring statutory reforms, the Futurebuilders initiative, and the development of new institutions. Together, these changes reveal how New Labour developed a meta-governance that governed through an economistic logic. This dissertation concludes that New Labour's modernisation project changed social welfare in line with the enterprise culture by shifting responsibility away from the state and emphasising the need for personal responsibility, aspiration and innovation.

Chapter I - Responsibilisation: 'Welfare-to-work'

"People don't want hand-outs; they want a chance to achieve…
We will put welfare to work – a nation at work not on benefit."[30]

Throughout British history, 'pauperism' - the condition of utter poverty that requires state assistance – has been stigmatised, notably through the workhouses introduced by the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. In 1911, Lloyd George's Liberal government introduced unemployment assistance; however, in 1936 the Unemployment Assistance Board revealed how unemployed people still lived in squalor and that life 'centred around the day when unemployment assistance is doled out.'[31] In response to this absent social security in the context of World War Two, the Beveridge Report outlined that 'a revolutionary moment in the world's history is a time for revolutions, not for patching.'[32] However, the following development of state welfare provision under the Attlee Government relied on a core assumption of an unemployment rate under 8%. In deindustrialised Britain, where unemployment peaked above 14%, this system did not suffice. Thus, by the mid-1990s this contributory system had virtually ceased to apply, with only 8% of unemployed males receiving National Insurance.[33] In response, the Major government redefined unemployed people as Jobseekers in 1996 through the provision of an allowance that demanded people actively seek work as the government aimed 'to secure better value for money for the taxpayer.'[34] At the approach of a new millennium, unemployment policy was assessed in terms of value and it was the duty of the individual to actively solve being unemployed.

New Labour built on this change in attitude and enshrined the importance of personal responsibility for unemployed people throughout their time in government to underpin the enterprise culture and rid society of dependency. The was a significant change - the tradition of this political party was to represent their working-class voter base and commit to full employment. For example, the 1950 election poster (figure 1) depicted the Jarrow Crusade of

[30] Tony Blair, Leader's Speech at Labour Party Conference (Blackpool, 1994), *British Political Speech* <http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/speech-archive.htm?speech=200> [accessed 14 March 2023]
[31] TNA, AST 7/255: 'The Pilgrim Trust Enquiry into causes and effects of long-term unemployment' (1936-38)
[32] TNA, PREM 4/89/2: William Beveridge, 'Social Insurance and Allied Services' (1942)
[33] Paul Spicker, *An Introduction to Social Policy* (2023) < http://www.spicker.uk/social-policy/socialsecurity.htm#Means-tested-benefits> [accessed 18 March 2023]
[34] Pat Strickland, *Jobseeker's Allowance Research Paper 96/5* (London, House of Commons Library, 1996), (p. 6).

1936, a protest against the closure of Palmer's Shipyard that became a symbol of working-class organisation. More recently, the 1983 manifesto set out Labour's 'alternative to mass unemployment' to 'save British industry and rebuild the welfare state' through a programme driven by 'new partnerships with the trade unions.'[35] However, the ditch of the 'tax and spend' image became an electoral necessity when the 'tax bombshell' to revise Nigel Lawson's cuts to the highest earners diverted Neil Kinnock away from Number Ten in 1992.[36] Consequently, the 'new' ideology stressed economic prudence through a pledge to not raise taxes and so necessitated that employment was a matter of individual responsibility. To consolidate this image, New Labour divorced itself from Trade Union cooperation and partnered with the values of the enterprise culture.

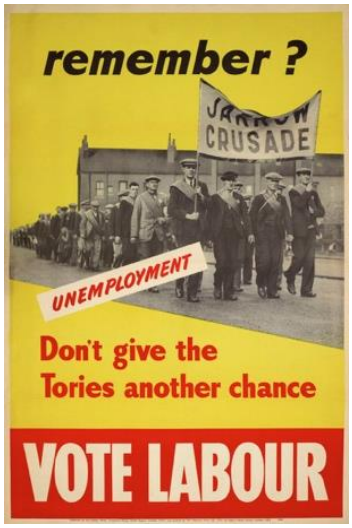

Figure I: 'Remember?' 1950 General Election Poster
Source: People's History Museum, 1995.39.226

This ideological transition is evident in the language of Tony Blair in his first Leader's Speech at the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool in 1994. For example, Blair argued that unemployed people just wanted a 'chance to achieve.'[37] This phrasing highlighted his commitment to a culture of individualised aspiration rather than welfare from the government, which he argued constrained personal development and led to a lifetime of dependency. In essence, Blair's rejection of hand-outs enshrined the neoliberal perspective

[35] Labour Party Manifesto, (1983) <http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1983/1983-labour-manifesto.shtml> [accessed 27 March 2023]
[36] Tom O'Grady, *The Transformation of British Welfare Policy: Politics, Discourse, and Public Opinion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), p. 252.
[37] Blair, Leader's Speech (Blackpool 1994)

that the opportunity of the market embodies freedom and welfare.[38] This represents how the Third Way philosophy of Anthony Giddens that New Labour idolised was at odds with the social democratic tradition it claimed to renew; in fact, Giddens believed that the welfare state 'creates almost as many problems as it resolves'. In contrast, he wanted 'to develop a society of responsible risk takers.'[39] In this vein, Richard Cracknell (head of the Welfare Reform Unit) insisted that 'the labour market is by far the most powerful adjudicator of claims: which is why work is the best form of welfare.'[40] This significant change was critical; the government felt 'redrawing welfare' was critical to sketching out 'a vision of what we want our future to look like.'[41] They had dropped their opposition to the compulsory programmes and Job Seekers Allowance of the Conservative 'Project Work' by the mid-1990s.[42] New Labour now privileged the moral discourse of individualism associated with the enterprise culture as the corrective remedy to what they deemed the corrosive collectivism of excessive state welfare.

Once elected, New Labour aimed to redefine welfare provision through their flagship New Deals that codified personal responsibility. For instance, the New Deal for Young People focussed on those aged between 18 and 24 because of the 'danger that even a short period of unemployment could encourage future welfare dependency.'[43] This scheme gave unemployed young people four options: subsidised jobs with employers, training basic skills, voluntary sector work or placement on an environmental task force. Most crucial was that there was no fifth option – to remain unemployed. It is important to note that sanctions were used to enforce this. This mirrored Bill Clinton's Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 that represented the New Democrat's attempt to 'end welfare as we know it' – the end of a 61-year-old federal entitlement born in Roosevelt's New Deal with an estimated saving of $55 billion.[44] Blair recalls in his autobiography that this similar imposition of personal responsibility in Britain was 'very controversial ground

[38] Rachel S. Turner, *Neo-liberal Ideology: History, Concepts and Policies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), p. 149.
[39] Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), p. 100.
[40] TNA, JB 4/655 'Welfare Reform – Green Paper Steering Group' (01.09.1997), p. 3.
[41] Ibid, p. 7.
[42] Dan Finn, 'The New Deals and New Labour's 'Employment First' Welfare State', *Developments in British social policy*, ed. Christopher Pierson, Nicholas Ellison (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 4.
[43] TNA, EDG 3/48/2: Part 2, 'Incapacity to Work (Pilot Measures Report)', p. 22.
[44] Martin Carcasson, 'Ending Welfare as We Know It: President Clinton and the Rhetorical Transformation of the Anti-Welfare Culture', *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, vol 9.4 (2006), pp. 655-695, (p. 655).

with a lot of the party.'[45] Furthermore, the 1999 Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill defended this coercive element by necessitating that all claimants had a work-focussed interview before being entitled to benefits. In essence, New Labour was adamant in its push of welfare to the adjudication of the labour market.

New Labour aimed to aid the transition of the 'workless class' into work through the creation of Education and Employment Action Zones. These were supply-side area-based initiatives aligned to regions of high 'social exclusion' that aimed to tackle unemployment through 'innovative plans for job creation.'[46] They intended to exemplify their active governance approach to welfare. However, government reports in 1999 voiced that training options were being taken by 'higher numbers than we expected.'[47] The fact that many people were not entering work should not have come as a surprise. This is because this programme largely ignored the critical demand-side considerations that formed the primary explanation for unemployment in these areas after two decades of deindustrialisation. As Jamie Peck outlined; 'unemployment is not five times higher in the Yorkshire coalfields than in the Surrey suburbs because of some local deficiency in the work ethic.'[48] In essence, these action zones naively believed that entrepreneurial training and the opportunities of the market could provide jobs across the country despite uneven demand for labour.

The intention to replace state welfare with the labour market was again demonstrated when the Employment Service and the Benefits Agency become the new 'Jobcentre Plus' in 2002. The development of this institution intended to embody the 'hand-up' not 'hand-out' approach that New Labour had proclaimed over the previous five years. Nevertheless, by March 2003, the unsubsidised job entry rate of the New Deal programme delivered through this agency was down to 38.3%. This demonstrates how the commitment to this 'employment first' strategy largely ignored the integral aspect in areas of high unemployment that continued to struggle – jobs.[49] Although demand-led social protection had become less feasible in this post-Thatcher era, New Labour's restricted approach to active governance

[45] Blair, *A Journey*, p. 93.
[46] TNA, 'ED 269/772: Social Exclusion', p. 6.
[47] TNA, EDG 3/48/2, p. 19.
[48] Jamie Peck, 'Making space for welfare-to-work: assessing the prospects for Labour's New Deal', *The ESRC Labour Studies Seminars* (1998) <http://web.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/complabstuds/confsem/esrcintro2.htm> [accessed 1 April 2023]
[49] Dan Finn, 'The Employment-first Welfare State: Lessons from the New Deal for Young People', *Social Policy & Administration,* vol. 37.7 (2003), pp. 709-724, (p. 720).

could only go so far without providing sufficient demand for employment. Termed the 'New Deal' by Gordon Brown to echo Franklin D. Roosevelt's comprehensive public projects of the 1930s, this project lacked the resources to match its ambitions.[50] Therefore, although financed by a windfall tax on privatised utilities, New Labour's limited attempts to tackle structural unemployment in a continually buoyant economy left a precarious and vulnerable configuration of 'support'.

New Labour was determined to extend this responsibilisation across British society. Firstly, this saw a major backbench rebellion of 47 MPs when benefits for lone parents were cut. The response of Blair was that 'we were elected as a government because people believed we would keep tight control of public finance.'[51] Most significantly, the same economic rationale was applied to limit the spiralling Incapacity Benefit, which 2.85 million people claimed at the cost of £24 billion per year.[52] To combat this, the 'New Deal for Disabled People' replaced the 'all work test' with the Personal Capability Assessment. This effort to highlight 'people's capacities, not just their incapacities' was developed in part through a conference on 22 February 1999 on the medical assessment for state capacity benefits in which speakers from the private insurance sector simply insisted that 'to be employable, an individual must have something to offer an employer.'[53] This reasoning demonstrates how a neoliberal logic of humans as capital had replaced a paternalistic approach of aiding disabled citizens. To incentivise employment, a meagre Jobfinder's Grant of £200 was offered as promotional flyers proclaimed 'getting a sickness of disability benefit? Can't afford to try to work? Think again.'[54] For cultural theorist Stuart Hall, not since the workhouse had labour been 'so fervently and single-mindedly valorised.'[55] Fundamentally, although these changes claimed to transform individuals from a life of dependency to personal prosperity in the labour market, the project of welfare-to-work was an indiscriminate attempt to tackle the supposed entitlement to benefit through responsibilisation.

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[50] Blair, *A Journey*, p. 93.
[51] Colin Brown, 'Lone Parents: Blair savaged as MPs defend the 'betrayed', *Independent* (11 December 1997) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/lone-parents-blair-savaged-as-mps-defend-the-betrayed-1288064.html> [accessed 2 April 2023]
[52] UK Parliament, 'Ninth Report', Select Committee on Education and Employment (1999) '<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199899/cmselect/cmeduemp/111/11109.htm> [accessed 20 March 2023>
[53] TNA, EDG 3/48/2, p. 3.
[54] Ibid, p. 5-8.
[55] Stuart Hall, 'The Great Moving Right Show', *Marxism Today* (Nov/Dec 1998), pp. 9-15, (p. 11-12).

Where New Labour did introduce redistribution through tax credits, they did so to develop this culture of in-work personal responsibility. For example, the Tax Credits Act (1999) enabled parents of around 1.5 million families to claim 70% of eligible childcare costs provided they worked over 16 hours per week, with greater tax cuts for those who worked over 30 hours.[56] As outlined in the 1997 manifesto, this merger of the tax and benefit system was to 'reward work, encourage enterprise and promote investment and saving.'[57] It is important to note how welfare was now considered an 'investment' for the future. Discipline was not to be seen in negative terms, but as productive in seeking a new type of economically rational citizen.[58] Although redistributive, the selective approach of tax credits and the presence of a minimum wage (kept low at £3.60 to avoid impact on job creation) rewarded the those who had economically integrated into society and substantiated their moralised discourse that an unrelenting work ethic would lead to self-improvement. This embodied Tony Blair's vision that 'with the right policies, market mechanisms are critical to meeting social objectives, entrepreneurial zeal can promote social justice.'[59] Again, this vision had migrated from across the Atlantic – where Clinton had tripled the Earned Income Tax Credit in 1993. As a consequence of tax credits, social spending substantially increased under New Labour even in a period of economic security; in 1997, it represented just 16.53% of GDP, yet reached 19.57% of GDP by 2007.[60] This demonstrated how committed they were to prize aspiration and responsibility. The Welfare Reform Act of 2007 aimed to counteract these spending commitments. It pushed for further prudence by replacing the Incapacity Benefit with the Employment and Support Allowance at an estimated saving of £7 billion annually.[61] This desire to streamline and conditionalize benefits has dictated reforms ever since.

In short, New Labour modernised social welfare for unemployed people through a process of responsibilisation that indiscriminately made individuals take any opportunities afforded by the labour market. The transition from a 'Keynesian welfare state' to a 'Schumpeterian workfare state' that Thatcherism had fallen well short of constructing finally

[56] UK Gov Legislation, *Tax Credits 1999* (c.10) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/10/notes/division/2> [accessed 1 March 2023]
[57] Labour Party, 1997 Manifesto
[58] Schram, p. 313.
[59] Tony Blair, *The Third Way: New Politics for the New Century* (London: Fabian Society, 1998)
[60] OECD, 'Social Spending' <https://data.oecd.org/socialexp/social-spending.htm#indicator-chart> [accessed 19 March 2023]
[61] UK Gov Legislation, *Welfare Reform Act 2007* (c. 5) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/5/contents> [accessed 3 February 2023]

occurred.[62] Rather than tackle structural imbalances across society, this paved the way for the 2010 General Election to be fought over fierce rhetoric of cuts as the Conservatives argued on billboards across the nation 'let's cut benefits for those who refuse work' and set the precedent for their recent Universal Credit reforms.[63]

[62] Bob Jessop, 'The Transition to Post-Fordism and the Schumpeterian Workfare State', *Towards a Post-Fordist Welfare State*, ed. Roger Burrows, Brian Loader (1994), pp. 13-37, (p. 24).
[63] Simon Jeffery, 'New Tory campaign poster – let's cut benefits', *The Guardian* (20 April 2010) <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/2010/apr/20/1> [accessed 3 March 2023]

Chapter II - Aspirational Human Capital: 'Education, Education, Education'

"These people have enterprise within them. They have talent and potential within them. Ask me my three main priorities for government and I tell you: education, education and education."[64]

The consensus in post-war Britain was that greater educational attainment was a societal achievement that provided equality. In 1945, the prospect of higher education was limited to just 4% of school leavers, of which fewer than 1 in 100 were children of manual workers.[65] This exclusivity was deemed a societal issue, and the Robbins Report (1963) outlined the need for the mass expansion of higher education through the abolition of tuition charges and the provision of maintenance grants.[66] Harold Wilson's administration then promised education as a means of national renewal but this modernist organisation's failure to combine economic growth with greater social equality in the 'white heat' of the 'scientific revolution' represented another failure to marry these aims.[67] Following this, the neoliberal turn from the late 1970s redesigned the fundamental purpose of education to be the technical development of human capital and the instillation of enterprising qualities. Within the emerging knowledge economy, learning was for 'the purpose of capital enhancement.'[68]

This is traceable in Britain to the critical juncture of 1976 – when, a month after a $3.9 billion IMF bailout that outlined the need for a reduction in public expenditure, Jim Callaghan delivered a speech on education at Ruskin College. He was concerned that the brightest students 'have no desire to join industry' and that recruits 'do not have the basic tools to do the job that is required.'[69] Under Thatcher, the rationale of business underpinned this relationship with the education sector. For example, the Jarratt Report (1985) declared

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[64] Tony Blair, Leader's Speech at Labour Party Conference (Blackpool, 1996), *British Political Speech* <http://www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/speech-archive.htm?speech=202> [accessed 20 March 2023]
[65] James Vernon, 'The Making of the Neoliberal University in Britain', *Critical Historical Studies*, vol 5.2 (2018), pp. 267-280, (p. 270).
[66] The Robbins Report, 'Higher Education', (London: HM Stationery Office, 1963) <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/robbins/robbins1963.html> [accessed 1 March 2023] p. 204.
[67] Matthew Francis, 'Harold Wilson's white heat of technology speech 50 years on', *The Guardian* (19 September 2013) <https://www.theguardian.com/science/political-science/2013/sep/19/harold-wilson-white-heat-technology-speech> [accessed 1 April 2023]
[68] Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Princeton: Zone Books, 2015), p. 177.
[69] James Callaghan, 'A rational debate based on the facts', Ruskin College Oxford (18 October 1976) <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/speeches/1976ruskin.html> [accessed 27 March 2023]

that universities should envisage themselves 'first and foremost as corporate enterprises' who should increase 'value for money' and the 'efficiency' of their operations.[70] This is demonstrative of how New Public Management philosophy was used to expose the public sector to profit-making, investment, audit and accountability.[71] Despite the transition to this new philosophy in the late 1980s, typified by the Education Reform Act (1988), New Labour entrenched both marketisation and financialization in education whilst proliferating an entrepreneurial discourse.

In the context of social welfare, New Labour saw education as a crucial sector where long-term supply-side development would reduce need and provide better-skilled capital for industry. For instance, soon after becoming party leader Blair admitted 'I am an unashamed long-termist' as he outlined his plans for 'the improvement of human capital' in the 1995 Mais Lecture that articulated 'The Economic Framework for New Labour.'[72] He echoed this at the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool in 1996, declaring his three main priorities were 'education, education, education.'[73] The emphasis born from this repetition highlighted to the other MPs and party members that investment initiatives in education were vital for unleashing the 'enterprise', 'talent' and 'potential' within individuals. This reasoning conveys the neoliberal logic that these traits would flourish with government liberalisation. This underlined their move to focus on skills as 'the social security of the future, not benefits', correcting how spending on the latter was three times the former.[74] Essentially, egalitarian redistribution was costly, whereas internal cabinet discussions reveal how education was thought of as 'good value.'[75] In this sense, their commitment to a new version of equality of opportunity through education was one that problematically 'dispenses with egalitarian distribution as a linchpin of social justice.'[76] Thus, while education was framed as having transformative, utopian capabilities for aspirational individuals, economic concerns were the end of this carefully targeted spending.

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[70] Vernon, p. 273.
[71] Michael A. Peters, Petar Jandric, 'Neoliberalism and the University', *The SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism*, pp. 553-561, (p. 560).
[72] John Rentoul, 'Blair shadows Tories with inflation pledge', *Independent* (22 May 1995) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/blair-shadows-tories-with-inflation-pledge-1620695.html> [accessed 23 March 2023]
[73] Blair, Leader's Speech (Blackpool 1996)
[74] TNA, JB 4/655: 'Welfare Reform Green Paper' (09.11.97), p. 2.
[75] TNA, CAB 128/123: 'Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings 1-20' (26.02.1998), p. 7.
[76] Michael Freeden,'The Ideology of New Labour', *The Political Quarterly*, vol. 70.1 (1999), pp. 42-51, (p. 47).

New Labour set the platform for nationwide enterprise in their first term by recasting the purpose of higher education and initiating a standards agenda in schools. For example, the introduction of £1000 fees in 1998, which rose to £3000 in 2003, acted on the recommendations of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education that 'loans should be repaid on an income-contingent basis' and that higher education must serve 'the needs of the economy.'[77] This change meant the value of a degree was calculated by its rate of return in the future world of work. With prospects of the individual in the knowledge economy often being synonymous with their educational attainment, this planted an expectation of rational economic citizens to invest in themselves for future prosperity. For Blair, this significant change was necessary; he was jealous of the 'more entrepreneurial' US system and argued this was 'plainly and inescapably due to their system of fees.'[78] Recounting this in his autobiography, he complained that his 'left-leaning intellectual' peers who opposed this change, such as Ed Balls, 'never get aspiration.'[79] However, Naidoo and Muschamp have highlighted how this requirement for self-investment worsened equality of opportunity as those from an unskilled background, who were most debt-averse, continued to count for less than one in ten in higher education by 2002.[80] Furthermore, this paved the way for unprecedented consumer debt through the rise of tuition fees to £9000 in 2010. By this time, universities were aptly placed under the realm of the Department for Business, Innovation, and Skill, not the Ministry of Education.[81] Fundamentally, this marketized and financialised education model reinforced investment and consumption with a concern for 'quality' above equality.

Competition was also central across education. Just as Teaching Quality Assessment and Subject Review strictly measured higher education, David Blunkett (education secretary) outlined in 1997's *Excellence in Schools* a 'determination to deliver our standards agenda' from Key Stage 1 to 4. For instance, 'persistent failure was to be eradicated' through 'zero tolerance of underperformance' and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority would provide benchmark data so that schools could compare themselves to one another.[82] This

[77] TNA, PREM 49/31: 'Education Policy, Prime Minister's Office' (1997), p. 5.
[78] Blair, *A Journey*, p. 482.
[79] Ibid, p. 484.
[80] Rajani Naidoo and Yolande Muschamp, 'A decent education for all?', *Evaluating New Labour's Welfare Reforms*, ed. Martin Powell (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2002), pp. 145-166, (p. 150-154).
[81] Vernon, p. 279.
[82] David Blunkett, 'Excellence in Schools' (1997), *Education England* <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/wp1997/excellence-in-schools.html> [accessed 25 March 2023]

initiated a culture of competition – a winners-and-losers model commonly associated with business. By 2001, this entrepreneurial model of governance was praised for achieving a 'culture of continuous development' as New Labour claimed that over 700 failing schools had been turned around.[83] At the other end of the spectrum, the concept of role models was applied to education through Beacon Schools – 'schools amongst the best in the system that are given additional resources in order to spread good practice in the wider system.'[84] These sites of success were encouraged to become Academies or Specialist Schools and 'introduce new specialisms in science; engineering; and business and enterprise.'[85] In essence, schools were structured by a business framework of competition, and, if successful, were rewarded with greater autonomy and resources.

Beyond institutional changes, New Labour went on to advance 'enterprise education' through a litany of initiatives that proliferated an entrepreneurial discourse across society. The definition of this term is critical, for enterprise education is not a blueprint of how to be an entrepreneur nor a textbook on business studies, economics or management. Rather than a curriculum, it should be understood in the abstract as an ambitious perspective that wishes to bring about behavioural change. In this sense, Jones and Iredale have identified how enterprise education sought to develop 'competencies' that would enable 'ownership' of one's future in the context of globalisation.[86] The attempt to advance enterprise education began in 2001 when the Government asked the Chairman of the Financial Services Authority, Howard Davies, to review enterprise in the education sector. In response, Davies recognised how 83% of employed Britons worked in the private sector or were self-employed in 2000 and declared 'the time is right for a step change both in enterprise activities and in the promotion of economic and financial literacy.'[87] In response to these recommendations, the most explicit demonstration of an enterprise education initiative came in 2004 through the Enterprise Insight Campaign.

Enterprise Insight was the mission of a coalition of private and voluntary actors working alongside Chancellor Gordon Brown to 'be the driving force for a culture of enterprise in the

[83] TNA, PREM 49/1829: 'Education and Skills Policy' (2001), p. 3.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid, p. 31.
[86] Brian Jones and Norma Iredale, 'Enterprise and entrepreneurship education: Towards a comparative analysis', *Journal of Enterprising Communities*, vol. 8.1 (2014), pp. 34-50, (p. 49).
[87] Howard Davies, *A Review of Enterprise and the Economy in Education* (London: Crown Publishing, 2002), p. 7.

UK'. It aimed to 'inspire and mobilise young people to be enterprising.' The desire to initiate this cultural change through schools demonstrates how New Labour wanted to develop an entrepreneurial subjectivity. For instance, Brown declared how 'creating an enterprise culture starts not in the boardroom but in the classroom' as he aired his frustration that 'when I was at school no business came near the doors of our classroom.'[88] To bridge the gap between industry and education that Wilson had recognised thirty years prior, Brown invited people whom he described as 'corporate champions' to speak as part of the campaign (figure II). Stephen J. Ball has highlighted how this narrative aimed to create 'a new hegemonic vision' by introducing 'new key ideas' and establishing 'new social logics' through the presence of 'new social actors.'[89]

Company	Director/CEO
Accenture	Ian Watmore
Amstrad	Alan Sugar
Asda	Tony DeNuzio
BskyB	James Murdoch
HSBC	Mike Geoghegan CBE
John Lewis	Stuart Hampson
Lloyds	Eric Daniels
Merrill Lynch	Bob Wigley
Microsoft	Alistair Baker
O2	David Varney
Orange	John Allwood
Rolls Royce	Sir John Rose
Starbucks	Cliff Burrows
WHSmith	Richard Handover
Yahoo!	Fru Hazlitt

Figure II: Invites to Enterprise Insight Campaign

Source: Produced from letters in TNA, T 720/506/1

Essentially, these speakers were role models that young men and women should have aspired to and learned from. However, inviting just one female CEO (Fru Hazlitt) from these 15 'corporate champions' represents how the enterprise culture was implicitly gendered. This

[88] TNA, T 720/506/1: HM Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer: Gordon Brown: Private Office Papers. *Daily Mail* (28 June 2004), p. 3.

[89] Stephen J. Ball, 'The Enterprise Narrative and Education Policy', in *The British Educational Research Association Annual Conference* (University of Warwick, 2010), p. 19.

exclusivity was because the qualities demanded by the enterprise discourse had a masculinist emphasis on the need for unfettering resilience to 'rise to the top' within a framework alike to social Darwinism. Furthermore, despite numerous proclamations that 'Cool Britannia' finally celebrated its multiculturalism, none of these role models were from an ethnic minority. In this sense, this model of individual welfare through educational attainment represented the 'cruel optimism' of the aspirational meritocracy.[90] Despite this, New Labour unproblematically committed to this valorisation of entrepreneurs; moreover, they tried to direct this cultural phenomenon. For instance, media mogul Rupert Murdoch even enquired to Brown 'would I be allowed to speak about the role of society in developing an enterprise culture?' and George Cox (Director General of Enterprise Insight) reported that 'we have developed five new enterprise storylines on Eastenders.'[91] Within decades of political rhetoric, this was the most ambitious national effort to engineer a spirit of enterprise in young British students.

This national initiative went beyond rhetoric. It was exemplified by the 'Make Your Mark' scheme that challenged students to devise their own business plans. For example, Victoria Tringham, the owner of a flip-flop design company who had a 'holiday brainwave', was one of the inventive young Brits who typified the dynamic qualities that the scheme was deliberately phrased to encourage (Figure III).[92] Furthermore, the Daily Mail launched their competition 'Enterprising Britons' to coincide with this policy announcement.[93] These competitions followed the UK-US Enterprise Agreement of 2003, which included the meeting of ten policy practitioners from each nation at a forum in Boston. Just a year later, enterprise gained royal status through the Queen's Award for Enterprise, which announced an 'Enterprise Day' on June 14th.[94] The repeated efforts of competitions and awards to valorise enterprise reflected Brown's belief that 'it is vital we learn from America and rebuild a truly enterprising culture in Britain – rediscovering the British spirit of enterprise that made us one of the most inventive and creative industrial nations in the world.'[95] In true neoliberal fashion, this echoed Thatcher's admiration of Reagan's America and harked back to the laissez-faire economic liberalism of the Industrial Revolution.

[90] Jo Littler, *Against Meritocracy: Culture, power and myths of mobility* (London: Routledge, 2018), p. 89.
[91] TNA, T 720/506/1: Private Office Papers
[92] TNA, T 720/506/1: Tony Hazell, 'Enterprising Britons', *Daily Mail* (28 June 2004), p. 30.
[93] Ibid, p. 33.
[94] TNA, T 720/506/1.
[95] Hazell, p. 31.

Language	Quality
‘Make’	Tangible and real, implies personal control and creativity
‘Your’	The importance of the individual
‘Mark’	Being known, being recognised, standing out by achieving

Figure III: ‘Make Your Mark’ language
Source: TNA, T 720/506/1

This commitment to education serving the needs of the enterprise culture was neither anomalous nor temporal. For example, as part of the 2004 Budget, ‘A New Deal for Skills’ was piloted to develop a ‘skills passport’ that hoped to ‘create a consumer-led system.’[96] Moreover, to continue action on these ambitions, the government pledged a new £60 million Enterprise Education entitlement from 2005-06 that would provide all Key Stage 4 pupils with the equivalent of five days’ enterprise learning. Alongside two vacant weeks of teaching for work experience, this ensured that students were exposed to enterprising behaviours at a young age when they were most malleable. Furthermore, the commitment to a Ten-Year Investment Framework for Science and Technology to provide a base of highly skilled human capital in the most innovative fields of the economy stands as further testimony to this neoliberal attitude. This was celebrated in letters to Brown from Sir John Rose (Chief Executive of Rolls Royce) and Jean-Pierre Garnier (CEO of Glaxo Smith Kline).[97] Following a push to the labour market through employment reforms, New Labour transformed the education sector to develop human capital fit for this transition. Within a decade, they had repurposed and financialised educational institutions, established the importance of entrepreneurial literacy, and proliferated enterprise education as a societal rationality that would dictate both the future of individual learning and the direction of state investment.

[96] T 720/506/2: Private Office Papers, part 2.
[97] Ibid.

Chapter III – Innovative Ventures: 'Third Sector, Third Way'

"Government and community need each other…
That is why the Third Sector is such an important part of the Third Way."[98]

After the Second World War, the state orchestrated a comprehensive national welfare system that was developed under the Attlee Labour Government. It was not until the Thatcherite administration shared Hayek's desire to question the 'enthusiasm for the organisation of everything' that organisations beyond the state began to be afforded opportunity through privatisation contracts.[99] This transition away from state-led governance also shared the logic of neoliberal prophet Milton Friedman, who outlined in *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962) that the role of government was to provide monetary stability and 'first, the preservation of freedom to establish enterprise in any field.'[100] As neoliberalism became more accepted throughout the 'stagflation' crisis of the 1970s, this was echoed by the voluntary sector in the Wolfenden Committee's report on *The Future of Voluntary Organisations* (1978) that proposed 'the development of a new long-term strategy, by a new examination of the potential contributions of the statutory, voluntary and informal sectors, and their inter-relationship.'[101] In this sense, the delivery of welfare promised to become more pluralistic.

New Labour advanced this ambition for a pluralistic model of welfare delivery through social enterprise, an innovative venture that aimed to harness the Third Sector. This new approach to governance was typical of the 'Third Way' ideology because it tried to provide welfare whilst avoiding the bureaucratism of the state and cutting expenditure. Within the ambiguity of this institutional amalgamation, social enterprise promised to apply the same methods that had sparked wealth creation to the ends of social betterment. To this regard, Matthew Eagleton-Pierce has recognised how the concept of entrepreneurship diffused from the world of capitalist enterprises of the 1980s to be 'increasingly deployed as an answer to the problems of government.'[102] These answers were provided to New Labour

[98] Steven Howlett, Michael Locke, 'Volunteering for Blair: The Third Way', *Voluntary Action*, vol 1.2 (1999), pp. 67-76. (p. 67).
[99] Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (London: Routledge, 1944), p. 39.
[100] Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1962), p. 92.
[101] Wolfenden Committee, *The future of voluntary organisations* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), p. 74.
[102] Matthew Eagleton-Pierce, *Neoliberalism: The Key Concepts* (Oxford: Routledge, 2016), p. 59.

by think-tank Demos through *The other invisible hand: Remaking charity for the 21st century* (1995) and *The rise of the social entrepreneur* (1997). The former work outlined how mobilising 'voluntary energies' could 'bring a renaissance of the civic' over the coming years.[103] As an allusion to Adam Smith's work, it called for the moral and ethical impulse within human nature to be released through a similar 'panoply of measures' that would capitalise on 'an extraordinary undergrowth of voluntary action.'[104] In the latter work, Charles Leadbeater called for 'a long wave of social innovation to develop a new philosophy, practice and organisation of welfare' that would characterise an active welfare state.[105] He became an essential adviser to Tony Blair, and his rationale for social enterprise guided New Labour's attempt to change welfare delivery.

New Labour was fast to codify the role of the Third Sector through the Compact in 1998. This aimed at the voluntary sector, the state, and business 'getting it right together.'[106] Within this partnership, the primacy of private-sector economic logic was evident. In *New Politics for the New Century*, Blair declared that the 'public servant must do more than administer services; their job is to generate greater public value from our stock of public assets.'[107] The emphasis on striving for greater outputs through better efficiency demonstrated how New Labour had concluded by the end of the Thatcher years that 'it was companies that were seen as successful agents of modernisation.'[108] Hence, the Queen's Speech of 1999 outlined how the third legislative programme aimed to 'modernise the country and its institutions to meet the challenges of the new millennium' with a focus on 'the promotion of enterprise' and the 'reform of the welfare system.'[109] Following this call for modern institutions, the Social Investment Task Force was set up a month later with the remit 'to set out how entrepreneurial practices can be applied to obtain higher social and financial returns from social investment.'[110] Unsurprisingly, the response was that 'what is needed is a market-driven system that harnesses entrepreneurial drive.' More specifically,

[103] Geoff Mulgan, Charles Landry, *The other invisible hand: remaking charity for the 21st century* (London: Demos, 1995), p. 1-3.
[104] Ibid, p. 7.
[105] Charles Leadbeater, *The rise of the social entrepreneur* (London: Demos, 1997), p. 1.
[106] Home Office, 'Compact: getting it right together' (London: Home Office, 1998), p. 12.
[107] Blair, 'New Politics for the New Century' (1999)
[108] Anthony Barnett, 'Corporate Populism and Partyless Democracy', *New Left Review* (May-June 2000), pp. 80-89, (p. 88).
[109] Hansard, 'The Queen's Speech' (1999) < https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/lords/1999/nov/17/the-queens-speech> [accessed 12 March 2023]
[110] Social Investment Task Force, *Enterprising Communities: Wealth beyond Welfare* (2000), p. 3.

they cited the example of the venture capital industry that had grown out of the 'Big Bang' deregulations of the 1980s to a value of £8 billion by 1999.[111] Overall, welfare reform again demonstrated a greater commitment to the enterprise culture by redefining the approach to governance as business-like management and placing the provision of welfare at the foot of risk-fuelled finance.

From 2002, New Labour liberated social enterprise from the footnotes of Whitehall documents to the forefront of public policy. The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit reported how charitable purposes were set out in statute over 400 years ago and how the ignition of this British tradition was of pertinent need for a 'dynamic and vibrant' society.[112] The report stressed the need to equip the 63% of small charities who contributed less than 2% of annual charity income more agency in this role (figure IV).[113] A noticeable issue was that nearly 95% of charities had an annual income of less than £250,000, with less than 5% of charities representing over 85% of total income. The prescription was a change in charity law to cut red tape and the provision of finance so that charities could operate as a new frontier of enterprise, akin to SME businesses in the 1980s. Consequently, The Social Investment Task Force report of 2010 outlines how 15 financial organisations were set up.[114] This capital build-up reflected Patricia Hewitt's (Secretary of State for Trade and Industry) intention to ensure that charity was not a 'side show' but 'an integral and dynamic' part of the economy.[115] Through this capital provision, New Labour set strong foundations for social enterprise to grow small charities as community businesses.

[111] Ibid. p. 12.
[112] Strategy Unit, *Private Action, Public Benefit: A Review of Charities and the Wider Not-For-Profit Sector* (London: Cabinet Office, Sep 2002), p. 5.
[113] Ibid, p. 18.
[114] Social Investment Task Force, *Social Investment: Ten Years On* (2010), ed. Alistair Ballantyne, p. 7.
[115] Ibid, p. 6.

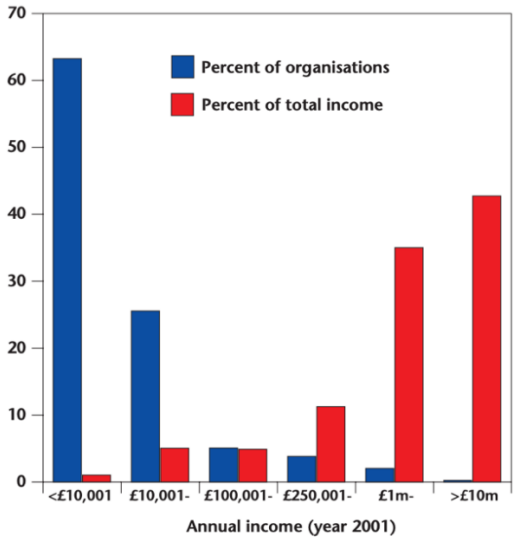

Figure IV: Distribution (%) of registered charities by annual income (2001)

Source: Private Action, Public Benefit, p. 18.

Of these fifteen financial organisations, the Futurebuilders initiative encapsulated the innovative market-led approach that typified social enterprise. The Futurebuilders (England) fund for the Third Sector was launched with £215m of government money in 2004, making it the largest single organisation in the social investment world at the time. In Gidden's vision, it redefined the welfare state as a 'social investment state' with the hope that competition between third-sector organisations for the 250 available investment packages would drive innovation.[116] It aimed to initiate a paradigm shift in the culture of the Third Sector towards the dynamism of the business world. This ambition is apparent in the announcement of interim chair Geraldine Peacock; 'this investment fund has been established to demonstrate that the sector can move from a dependency culture, based on short-term grants and contracts, to investment in long-term sustainable funding.'[117] For instance, the average loan length of the £142m of loan and blended finance delivered to 406 charities and social enterprises between 2004 and 2010 was 13.9 years.[118] However, the issue with this approach lies not with its goals but with the logic that underpins it. For instance, the 2008 Report highlights the application of cost-benefit analysis to understand the Social Return on Investment in a single figure through the methodology of the Net Present Value.[119] The issue with this is that

[116] Giddens, p. 117.
[117] Tash Shifrin, 'Blunkett hails voluntary sector fund', *The Guardian* (May 5, 2004) <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2004/may/05/politics.publicservices> [accessed 6 April 2023]
[118] Social Investment Business, 'Futurebuilders England Fund – Learning Project' (2021) <https://www.sibgroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Futurebuilders-Policy-Briefing-Key-Learnings-Final.pdf> [accessed 24 February 2023]
[119] Office of the Third Sector, 'Evaluation of Futurebuilders', *Futurebuilders Evaluation Research Steering Group* (London: HM Treasury, 2008), p. 33.

predicting future returns is very difficult or, in the case of measuring community development, impossible to be measured in monetary terms. Furthermore, where monetary values may be possible, such as measures of job creation, it is difficult to discern changes from these long-term schemes from the impacts of wider economic trends. Alongside issues with quantification, there was a significant lack of utilisation of the finance. For instance, less than 50% of all funds awarded were drawn down and used by the recipients between June 2004 and March 2008.[120] Therefore, although social enterprise promised to be an innovative venture in welfare delivery, it was ineffective, or at best, ambiguous in its infancy.

Nevertheless, New Labour entrenched the importance of social enterprise by creating the Office of the Third Sector in 2006 and developing more financial institutions. For example, the Social Enterprise Investment Fund was established in 2007, and the Social Enterprise Risk Capital Fund was created two years later. As a result, by 2010, the Social Investment Task Force reported that the UK had a massive £65.6 billion in philanthropic foundations. This reveals how the new political dogma was that capitalist vehicles of wealth generation would enable targeted investment in communities of need. This financialised approach went beyond the Thatcherite logic of rolling back state institutions by creating bodies in their wake. The Coalition continued this under their 'Big Society' agenda by creating a social investment wholesale bank (Big Society Capital) in April 2012. The issue with the momentum behind this approach to welfare delivery is that it inevitably carries the 'historical imprint of capitalism and, thus, will implicitly relegitimise a capitalist ethic.'[121] Thus, these new ventures into welfare delivery have failed to address the complexity and depth of socio-economic causes of poverty. Overall, although the reintroduction of civil society organisations through social enterprise romanticised the heyday of British liberalism, this twenty-first-century neoliberal model of governance rejected the liberal conception of government as standing above society and imposes responsibility on the neoliberal subject and non-state institutions.[122] This devolution of authority has meant that welfare delivery has relied on an ambiguous quasi-private model that has failed to deliver the social prosperity that its economistic understanding had promised.

[120] TNA, National Audit Office: 'Building the Capacity of the Third Sector' (London: The Stationery Office, 2009), p. 7.
[121] Eagleton-Pierce, p. 60.
[122] Chandler, Reid, p. 15.

Conclusion

Described as 'The Strangest Tory Ever Sold' in 1998 in The Economist, uncovering the ideology of New Labour was obscured by the 'fog of social-justice third-way communitarian post-modern post-neoclassical rhetoric' that was 'so amazingly dense - thick enough to keep the experts blundering for years.'[123] Twenty-five years later, similar ambiguity remains; the fog is yet to clear and few lucid examinations have occurred. With this recognition, this dissertation set out to demonstrate how New Labour developed social welfare to reflect and support the further development of the enterprise culture. In his autobiography, Blair outlined how 'I was middle class, and my politics were in many ways middle class. My programme was every bit as much geared by the aspirations of the up-and-coming as the anxieties of the down-and-out.'[124] Nowhere else was this philosophy more apparent than with the reforms to social welfare.

Throughout this dissertation, it has become evident that one of the underpinning ideological intentions of New Labour between 1997 and 2010 was to modernise the sectors of employment, education and charity to facilitate a cultural change towards enterprising behaviour. Firstly, the New Deal policies aimed to reduce the culture of dependency by demanding and rewarding individual development through a work-first approach. This shift from a communitarian welfare model repositioned unemployment as a lack of employability rather than a vice of capitalism. Secondly, to equip individuals for this transition, the education sector was modernised to proliferate a discourse of enterprise that would establish a neoliberal subjectivity for students. Finally, the modernisation of social welfare to support the enterprise culture went beyond demanding change from individuals; moreover, it reshaped the liberal model of top-down government to a neoliberal meta-governance. The heightened role of the 'Third Sector' demonstrated this through not only the retrenchment of the state in providing services but through the roll-out of new financial organisations in the guise of social enterprise. As a combination, these significant changes to each sector transformed and continue to shape social welfare in Britain in the twenty-first century.

This dissertation has reasserted the importance of recognising the political project to develop the enterprise culture, specifically its substantial development in the twenty-first

[123] The Economist, 'The Strangest Tory Ever Sold', vol 347.8066 (2 May 1998), p. 13.
[124] Blair, *A Journey*, p. 26.

century that often goes unrecognised. What New Labour did when behind the wheel of government was rapidly accelerate this pace of change and park the fulfilment of the enterprise model as the hegemonic logic to underpin social welfare policy. This rationale remains as relevant as ever. Following the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, which demonstrated the destructive danger of this neoliberal model, this inegalitarian system was cemented by a decade of austerity measures. Most recently, in the 2022 Mais Lecture, current prime minister Rishi Sunak reminisced about 'living and breathing that entrepreneurial culture' when he studied close to Silicon Valley in California and outlined his desire to develop 'a future economy built on a new culture of enterprise' in Britain.[125] Sunak espoused how 'education is the most powerful weapon we have in our fight to level up' as he confirmed 'it is a job of government to determine conditions, not to determine the outcome.' The similarity to the rhetoric of Blair and Brown is stark. This reveals how the political commitment to developing the enterprise culture is ongoing, despite the precarity and instability it imposes on individuals and institutions. Whether its onward trajectory is halted or reversed remains to be seen. In the meantime, we must historicise the recent past with an awareness of how this political idolisation of enterprise has reshaped British society.

[125] Rishi Sunak, 'A future economy built on a new culture of enterprise', *Conservative Home* <https://conservativehome.com/2022/03/03/a-future-economy-built-on-a-new-culture-of-enterprise-sunaks-mais-lecture-full-text/> [accessed 4 February 2023]

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