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Introduction

This paper focuses on the current 'welfare to workfare' project of the New Labour government in the UK and the contradictions within this project around the politics of community and conditional social inclusion (based on paid employment). There is a burgeoning literature from academic commentators attempting to 'read the runes' of the so-called 'Blair project' but we suggest that few critics have focused on the tensions and contradictions associated with its combined appeal to a conservative communitarian 'remoralisation' of the public and to social inclusion on the basis of paid employment, at times coercively enforced and realised. Furthermore, hardly any critical commentaries have devoted sufficient time and effort to teasing out the ideological ambiguities and subtleties in the dominant New Labour rhetorics of a (neo-liberal) modernisation[1] and of a moralising communitarian solidarity project. We begin this task here.

We begin by outlining the broad features of New Labour's adoption of a 'workfare' strategy and its promotion of community as the 're-moralised public'. Next we examine in depth the points of ideological convergence between the moral communitarianism of Amitai Etzioni (1994) and New Labour. Particular attention is paid to the illustrative example of the moral communitarian agenda on law and order - an agenda which is arguably to the fore in New Labour's rallying call of 'safer communities'. In the final part of the paper we examine the authoritarian populist tendencies of both New Labour and moral communitarians such as Etzioni and UK

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[1]New Labour's economic 'realism' envisages a key role for the state as 'enabler' within the apparently determining context of flexible, globalised markets. New Labour appears to be at its most thrustingly 'young', dynamic, modern and ,perhaps most tellingly, uncritically celebratory of the neo-liberal version of globalisation in its pronouncements on the role of markets and labour flexibility (Massey, 1997).

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'fellow-travellers' before ending with our own argument for a radical communitarian agenda opened up by basic income theorising and debates.

It is important early on in the paper to emphasise that what follows is necessarily speculative in character given, *inter alia,* the time-scale of the developments under review (just over one year on from the election of the Labour administration), the uncertainty as to how ideological rhetoric and legislative intentions will become realised (or not) as concrete policy outcomes, and the sheer volume and pace of policy statements and papers on social welfare coming from government at the time of writing. This qualification noted, it is our contention that there are distinct features to the New Labour project on the public sphere that make it distinct from, although influenced by, the dominant neo-liberal orthodoxy which was rampant in the UK in the 1980s and during most of the 1990s . In particular, we argue that a neo-conservative, moral communitarianism[2] plays a key role in New Labour's attempted re-imagining of the people and the public sphere alongside its ideological genuflection towards economic liberalism in much of its thinking on social and economic policy.

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[2] On the main features of neo-conservative, moral communitarianism see, Hughes, 1998a, chapter 6, Hughes and Mooney, 1998a and b.   Key examples of this discourse of re-moralisation and responsiblisation include Etzioni, 1994 and 1995 and Murray, 1990 from the USA and Dennis, 1993, Green, 1995, Phillips, 1996 from the UK. We may note in passing the powerful impact of this self-consciously commonsensical and populist discourse in the UK and USA when compared, it seems to us, to mainland Europe. Is it that European countries are more enlightened about the need for the state to play a prominent role whilst Etzioni and UK commentators are clearly more ambivalent? In the preface to the first UK edition of 'The Spirit of Community', Etzioni (1995) pointed out that the expression of communitarian ideas was increasingly to be found in politicians of diverse political persuasions in the USA, UK and, he includes, Europe. Etzioni's explanation for influential politicians getting on board the communitarian platform, and thereby apparently 'breaking the mould' of traditional party and ideological positions, is quite simple: 'they are visionary people who have seen the power of a compelling set of ideas whose time has come' (Etzioni, 1995, p.ix). Such claims to influencing politicians and the like are acknowledged even by the critics of Etzioni's moral communitarian manifesto. Accordingly, Finn Bowring (1997, p.98) has noted that Etzioni's work 'has provided a fertile vocabulary for policy-makers and politicians in Britain, many of whom recognize his fear of society's moral decline – and the more political of whom know this anxiety is a potential source of electoral support'.

As an important aside we would emphasise that we do not wish to give the impression that all communitarian thinking on community and social justice is necessarily politically and morally conservative or authoritarian in its arguments. Indeed, here and elsewhere (Little and Hughes, 1998, Hughes, 1996, Hughes, 1998a, chapters 6 and 7), we have argued strongly for a radical communitarian agenda on community, not least associated with proponents of basic income theories and in particular in the work of Bill Jordan (1992). We return briefly to the question of the possibilities of a new agenda on welfare, work and the common good in radical communitarian thinking in the last part of this paper.

In the next section we trace the main components of the New Labour project (from welfare to workfare) in greater detail and in so doing engage with some other interpretations of the Blair project which are currently unfolding .

From Welfare to Workfare: The moral register of 'dutiful working communities'

An alternative heading for this section may have been 'whatever happened to the post-industrial leisure society?'. New Labour's 'Welfare to Workfare' strategy in the UK has been seen as one aspect of the 'Clintonisation of Labour' (Rustin, 1997) and it certainly borrows much from US social policy developments in the wake of moral panics about the 'crisis of the welfare state' in terms of excessive costs, 'fraud' [3], welfare dependency and the 'underclass' on both sides of the Atlantic (see Murray, 1990, Dennis, 1993). It would seem that the 'unemployed' have practically disappeared in this new 'vision' of a full (waged) working population faced with Blair's two favourite options of 'opportunity' and 'responsibility'. Ruth Lister (1998b) has pointed out that the central sound-bite in Labour's new deal on work and welfare as expressed in the Green Paper of 1998 is 'work for those who can, security for those who cannot'(ii) and yet there is no clear explanation of the meaning of

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[3] In the Green Paper (1998) produced by the current administration on welfare, 'fraud' is listed as one of the three key problems facing British society, alongside exclusion and barriers to (paid) work. The articulation of social security fraud as one of new post-Beveridge 'Giants' to be slain in the New Labour discourse on welfare is indicative of the shift from social democratic concerns with the 'distribution of resources ' to an overt project of re-moralisation concerned with the 'change of behaviour' (Deacon, 1998) among 'dependent' populations.

'security' . When interrogated as a 'cultural text' (Clarke, 1998), it is evident that 'work' here means paid employment rather than other types of labour such as the highly gendered 'care work' mostly undertaken by women. In the Clinton model adopted, we would appear to be locked in to a 'full work/low wages' strategy, itself dependent on successful economic performance in the global economy. In its self-proclaimed 'Third Way' (supposedly between the old statism of the Left and the rampant marketisation and individualism of the Right), New Labour's attempt to construct a hegemonic project is premised on what the new Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mandelson has termed 'a vision of competitiveness and social cohesion' (Mandelson, 1997: 7).

Again to decipher such claims, paid work in labour markets is viewed as moralising for the people/nation/communities not just because it makes individuals independent and competitive (as in New Right apologists) but because waged work creates heightened levels of social cohesion resulting from the responsibilities and duties of paid employment. It would seem in New Labour thinking that we 'get' moral(ised) through paid work in an intrinsic manner and yet there is a contradiction at play here since New Labour also seems to assume that many of us are morally weak and have no agency and so the state needs to be brought in to educate and coerce us into proper moral ways.[4] In our view this scenario of a (virtually) full employment society is clearly both hyper-workerist in its assumptions and wrong-headed in the era

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[4] Thanks to Fiona Williams for her helpful insights on the contradictions in the moral discourse of New Labour as relayed to one of the authors (Gordon Hughes) at the British Social Policy Association (SPA) conference at Lincoln, July 1998. Fiona Williams also made the important point that some moral re-ordering is necessarily part of any new welfare settlements and critics of the New Labour project need to be aware of the danger of saying that we are uninterested in debates over what new moral values might be appropriate in changing times and contexts .   We would endorse this plea for taking moral values, and the question of what we are as moral beings, seriously. Indeed debates around basic income, the common good, autonony, diversity and solidarity are necessarily concerned with new imaginings of the moral. In the current conjuncture, it is also crucial that we acknowledge and think through the discomforts in the New Labour discourse. Contestations are emerging not least around notions of respect and civility in a diverse, multi-cultural society (thanks to John Clarke for this insight also at the SPA conference mentioned above). This paper itself is also a small contribution to this contestatory politics.

of post- full (male) employment societies. it is also very likely to lead to high 'enforcement costs' against those who fail to 'include' themselves.

This authoritarian communitarian discourse on work and welfare is thus characterised by an 'upping' of the moral register around obligation, duty, conditionality and responsibility. A key dimension to 'workfare' initiatives is what may be described as the notion of 'dutiful work'. Indicative of this process were the headlines and coverage in the British tabloid press on the Green Paper on welfare (which the government arguably aided and abetted in its own media strategy). Throughout the tabloid portrayal and celebration of the reforms associated with the Green Paper, the dominant message was that of a new era of re-moralisation based on duties and responsibilities in the 'working welfare state' as against the old welfare state made up of 'scroungers', 'idle dependants' and 'de-moralised claimants'[5]. We would note in passing the critical reception of New Labour's populist discourse on welfare from social policy 'experts' in the academic community (see the Social Policy Association's open letter to the new Social Security Secretary, Alistair Darling, The Guardian 29 July, 1998) in contrast to that of the tabloid press in the UK.

Community as the Re-moralised Public

The appeal to community was given renewed meaning and vitality in the mid- to late-1990s in the UK and of course it is not an exclusive ideological category of New Labour[6]. Here it is important to note the ways in which community, and ideas of community, are sites upon which social relations are *figured* and *imagined* in political/moral discourses. In particular community may be valuably explored as a way of imagining relations between the individual, civil society and the state.

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[5] See for example, the following headlines all taken from 27 March 1998, the day of the unveiling of the welfare reform package: Daily Mail 'Welfare War On Workshy', The Express 'Thou Shalt Not Shirk', The Sun 'Blair Snips Jack The Lads, welfare blitz traps fathers who leave us to pick up the bill'.

[6] We may note in passing that community has, historically, a stronger affinity to Conservative political thought (see, for example, Willetts, 1997, Green, 1995). For a fuller discussion see Hughes and Mooney (1998a).

Importantly for the purposes of this discussion, community in recent years has become increasingly valorized as a means of thinking about (re-)imagining the 'public' or the 'social' (Rose, 1996). In much of the discourse of New Labour, for example, community has been accorded a central place in its arguments about the need to forge new sets of relations between individuals and wider social groups and institutions. Fiona Williams has argued that community is a figure then used both as a 'vehicle' for greater opportunities and as a 'glue' binding the inclusive society together. In this way community may be seen as symbolising the 'social', connecting individuals and families to the nation-state and work (Williams, 1998: 12). However, as Gorz (1992) has argued, community and society are not necessarily the same.

From the late 1970s political theorization was dominated by liberal individualism which postulated an autonomous, assertive, rational individual – the consumer – who needed to be protected from state power and 'public interference' (see Clarke, 1998). But such ideas did not go unchallenged. In the New Labour Party under Tony Blair, prominence has been accorded to the 'social' as well as to the individual. Community in this respect may imply a rejuvenated 'civil society', occupying some mid-way point between the state and the market (Kenny, 1996, Keane, 1988) . Appealing to community 'values' thus allows for a reconfiguration of the public sphere after a prolonged attack by the New Right. It is also important to recognise that community has provided New Labour with a figure through which older socialist, social democratic and labourist conceptions of the 'social' can be subordinated (Clarke and Newman, 1998: 4). At this point it is worthwhile re-emphasising our own position on New Labour ; namely that it is not just an appropriation of 'Tory' or 'Thatcherite' ideas. Advocates of communitarian ideas in particular argue that the 'community' rather than the individual (or the state) should be at the centre of both the analysis of social relations and the prevailing value or normative system. Ironically, however, the ideas of communitarians like Etzioni (and Blair/New Labour) actually often end up in the discourse of individualism , as evidenced by the crucial role accorded to

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such notions as responsibility and independence in their moral 'diagnoses' (see below).

The next section examines the 'manifesto' of Etzioni in some depth in order to help make our case for moral communitarianism's potent influence on the New Labour project in the UK. In particular we suggest that there is a striking homology between the logic, intellectual slippages and rhetorical tricks of both Etzioni and Blair which are too striking to be accidents or coincidences.[7]

Etzioni and New Labour's communitarianism

Some illustrative statements from the work of Amitai Etzioni - moral communitarianism's leading apologist and self-publicist - will help us make the connections and see the elective affinity between moral communitarian thinking and New Labour's attempt to forge a re-moralised Public which we address more directly later in the paper. According to Etzioni:

'Communitarians call to restore civic virtues, for people to live up to their responsibilities and not to merely focus on their entitlements, and to shore up the moral foundations of society' (Etzioni, 1995, p.ix).

In passing we would note again that the talk of civic virtues and responsibilities are as grounded in the individualism approach as is that of the talk of entitlements and rights.

According to Etzioni again,

'We adopted the name *Communitarian* to emphasize that the time had come to attend to our responsibilities to the conditions and elements we all share, to the community. As Communitarians we also recognized a need for a new social, philosophical, and political map. The designation of political camps as liberals or conservatives, as left or right, often no longer serves. We see at one extreme

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[7]This focus on the Etzioni/Blair intellectual 'marriage' (of convenience?) is not to downplay other influences on Blair's version of moral communitarianism, not least the influences of so-called ethical socialism and Christian social democratic thought (see Blair, 1994).

Authoritarians … They urge the imposition on all others of moral positions they believe in, from prayer in schools to forcing women to stay in the kitchen. At the other end we see Radical Individualists … who believe that if individuals are left on their own to pursue their choices, rights, and self-interests, all will be well. We suggest that *free individuals require a community*, which backs them up against encroachment by the state and sustains morality by drawing on the gentle prodding of kin, friends, neighbours, and other community members, rather than building on government controls or fear of authorities.' (1995, 15).

As a self-proclaimed social movement , Etzioni's communitarianism seeks the regeneration of *moral obligation* between citizens. Again awkward questions come to mind in reading such commentary. There is the not so subtle attempt to use the 'end of ideology' argument , with the communitarian position presented as if it was not ideological (the so-called 'Third Way' of New Labour comes to mind). More specific questions and gaps also come to mind in this imagery of the community: who co-ordinates communities? how are their structures maintained in the long run? how are they policed?[8]

In 'The Spirit of Community: The Reinvention of American Society' , Etzioni has written a manifesto which brims over with evidence drawing on a mix of simple moral tales, social scientific evidence and anecdotal material . All such 'evidence' is employed in support of the call for citizens to face up to their 'responsibilities and duties' to the moral consensus, yet always qualified by the concern to avoid any accusation of discrimination against minorities unless dangerous and criminal. However, at times Etzioni is quite explicit in harking back to a more stable, orderly and lawful past in the 1950s when 'most Americans spoke with one voice' (Etzioni, 1994, p.22). Apart from the possible romanticization of the past , there is a clear

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[8]We may note the irony of moral communitarianism's celebration of communal voluntarism and the heavy-handed interventionism of New Labour's pronouncements on safer communites (Hughes, 1998a, Hughes, 1996)

vision of community as a sense of belonging and security and we are left to ponder who were the ones left out of the population of 'most Americans' in the past. Etzioni expresses concern that the previous bedrock of moral consensus has not been replaced by anything of substance other than 'a strong sense of entitlement and a weak sense of obligation'. This has resulted in an extremely self-centred outlook or what Etzioni terms a 'me-istic orientation' associated with the libertarian individualism of the 1980s (Etzioni, 1994, p.3, p.27). Furthermore, this rights-based, 'me-istic orientation' is viewed as carrying morally hazardous as well as economically costly welfare consequences by both creating a welfare state dependency culture and undermining communities' capacity for voluntary self-help and succour. Implicit in all this is the assumption that these morally hazardous and economically costly consequences apply much more to certain groups than others and the argument leads us back to the underclass thesis of Charles Murray and fellow-travellers (Murray, 1990). A similar logic is evident in New Labour's promotion of a draconian 'zero-tolerance' towards selectively targeted misdemeanours (e.g.. curfews for the young on deprived working class housing estates).

Etzioni contends that in the late twentieth century there has been too much emphasis on individual entitlements or rights (delivered through the state) and not enough attention paid to civic obligations to others. The 'welfare' solution which Etzioni offers appears to lie at the level of morals and in particular social responsibilities, with communities especially through 'the family' and schools given back their moral voice to encourage all their members to act virtuously. All this is in sharp contrast to both the centralized top-down organization of welfare associated with the post-war welfare state and the self-centred rights orientation of liberalism. Put simply, Etzioni argues that the broad challenge facing countries like USA and the UK is the 're-moralization' of society in contrast to the 'de-moralization' of society associated with individualism at the end of the twentieth century .

At the more practical welfare policy dimension, the thesis of a 'parenting deficit', particularly among the supposed underclass, is to the fore in Etzioni's work although he is careful to state that this 'deficit' concerns both men and women as parents who should in turn receive support from what Etzioni vaguely refers to as the 'wider community' (Etzioni, 1994, p.55). Put briefly, the parenting deficit thesis suggests that children are not receiving the parental and social attention they are due. Compared to previous decades, the last decades of the twentieth century are viewed as a period during which children (and their needs) are not being well attended to. Etzioni is in no doubt that delinquency is a reflection of the home from which the young people come (Etzioni, 1994, p.70). Modern parents then are viewed as falling down on their responsibilities to children due to such phenomena as family breakdown, working excessive hours, the previously mentioned 'me-istic' orientation and welfare (state) dependency. Etzioni argues that marriage in particular should be awarded more status in a pro-family policy as the prime expression of our civil responsibilities .

At the concrete welfare policy dimension then Etzioni's brand of communitarianism places a premium on familial parenting, would actively discourage parents from splitting up, dissuade single women from having children, support generous maternity and paternity leave, improve child care and make it easier for one parent to stay at home. The following statement captures his position on parenting.

> 'These ideas about the need to restore our sense of community supersede the left-right political debate. When I'm attacked by both sides I know I'm in the right place. On the family the left tends to say that anything goes. The right wants to put women back in the nursery. They are both wrong. The core of our whole movement is that we hold that fathers and mothers have the same duties and the same rights, and should stay together until the children are grown. We owe that to our children, to ourselves for the civilising experience of parenting, and to

the wider society which has a right to expect its new members to be
raised responsibly'.

Source: *The Guardian*, 13 March 1995

Underpinning Etzioni's analysis of the specific 'ills' of the USA is the recurrent theme of a collapse of a common moral base beginning in the family and then spreading through the wider community. Here we may note again the close connection made between community and family in this discourse. Such a discourse calling for the re-moralisation of society through community and family (rather than individual and state) has been widely influential in contemporary UK social commentary, particularly in the think tanks of the IEA and Demos [9] and not surprisingly in New Labour's discourse.

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[9] Given the limited remit of this paper we are unable to develop illustrative examples to support this claim in any depth (but see Hughes and Mooney, 1998b). Let us look at just one example, namely Melanie Phillips, a journalist and 'moral' campaigner in the UK. Phillips makes a powerful argument for the close relationship between family breakdown and community decline and in turn the growth of social problems among young people. The following extract sums up Phillips' moral communitarian thesis on the primacy of family-based, collective duties over individual rights:

'The causes of disorder are highly complex and difficult to disentangle from each other. But it appears clear that the roots of crime lie in a breakdown of the moral sense which occurs in certain circumstances, leading to a collapse of both formal and informal social controls. Individuals internalise a moral sense as they develop through childhood and adolescence. It is acquired through a secure attachment to their families and to the surrounding culture, through which they learn the elementary codes of human behaviour and the relation between acts and their consequences. But in recent years there has been a comprehensive breakdown of such attachments. Family life has become conditional and contingent; employment is either insecure or non-existent; religious belief has been eroded; schools, both in what they teach and the way they teach it, increasingly abandon children to their own devices.

Instead of authority, firm rules and fixed boundaries which define the world as something intelligible to which the child can become attached, there is now merely an endlessly shifting landscape of subjectivity and ambiguity. The child has become an autonomous and solitary individual, left alone to construct his or her own meaning from the world.
…

There has been a breakdown in moral transmission from one generation to the next. In the adult world, both parents and their surrogates – teachers, social workers and increasingly the judiciary and other members of the establishment – are retreating from the parental role of promoting the care, control and development of children. In particular, they display a failure to recognise the need for clear moral judgements, discipline and punishment as part of a child's social learning process. Their retreat from this agenda marks a retreat from the principal duty of adults to socialise a child'. (Phillips, 1996, pp.270–1)

In turn Phillips' 'solution' is to promote greater use of discipline towards young (and potential) offenders, including punishments for misdeeds, which is seen as 'an essential constituent of parental love' (Phillips, 1996, p.280). According to Phillips, offenders in the late twentieth century were crying out for discipline and for proper parenting but instead all they received was 'indifference masquerading as benevolence' (ibid.). Seen in this light punishment is 'the act not of a harsh but of a caring society' in that it presupposes that the offender is attached to values defining 'his' identity as a moral being (Phillips, 1996, p.281). Once again, we see an emphasis on the key role of healthy, disciplined, 'natural' families in overcoming what Phillips terms 'the culture of individualism' and the associated

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<u>Community, family and morality in New Labour</u>

The following comments are taken from Tony Blair when in Opposition in the mid-1990s. In particular we may ask ourselves what sense of community they are using and in what ways is community linked with representations of 'the family'?

'I have no doubt that the breakdown of law and order is intimately linked to the break-up of a strong sense of community. And the break-up of community in turn is, to a crucial degree, consequent on the breakdown in family life. If we want anything more than a superficial discussion on crime and its causes, we cannot ignore the importance of the family'.

(Tony Blair speaking in the aftermath of the Jamie Bulger murder, quoted in Hughes and Mooney, 1998a, p.68)

'History will call it the Decent Society, a new social order for the Age of Achievement for Britain. We will respect family life, develop it in any way we can because strong families are the foundation of strong communities'. (Tony Blair, Speech to the Labour Party Conference, 1996)

In this discourse from Tony Blair, direct links are made between community and family. This is not a new departure by any means in social commentary. Both concepts are often treated together (and are equally contested and elusive). They are commonly constructed as 'naturalness'. Linking social relationships such as community with familial ones can provide them with a powerful reinforcement and indeed the gendered ideology of familialism is at the heart of many representations of community. For Tony Blair the decline in community is associated directly with family breakdown, leading to increasing moral decay and social disorganization. Such claims are closely aligned to moral communitarian arguments that a new

moral crisis, and in promoting a cohesive society.

socially excluded 'underclass' has emerged in the UK in the latter stages of the twentieth century and against which the only viable panacea is the 'restoration' of traditional communal-qua- family values. In stating that 'strong families are the foundation of strong communities', Blair proffers a one-directional view of the relationship (i.e. family>community). What about vice versa? (strong communities>strong families). This one-directional view of the relationship helps to explain the neglect of the positive role of the state and public sphere in the Etzioni/Blair positioning (unless via the deployment of state powers 'negatively' via disciplinary sanctions to deal with recalcitrant deviant families and their off-spring).

Joan Smith has argued that family and community have become central to New Labour's political discourse. Exhortations to return to family values and to rebuild communities in this discourse, she claims, are an attempt to address the growing problem of poverty, especially among younger families, and increasing 'social disintegration' in poor communities, but without additional financial resources from central government (Smith, 1997, p.183). This critique is important but it is limited in its analysis of the contradictions and tensions in the New Labour project. In particular, critics such as Smith downplay the statist commitment of this government to proactively intervene and 'police' such poor communities. It is the Janus-faced character of what is being done by New Labour in the current conjuncture which we would highlight rather than an over-simplified neo-Thatcherite 'cuts' interpretation made by some critics on the Left[10].

It is evident in the New Labour discourse that community tends to be deployed along with other socially constructed figures: notable here are the family and nation. Taken together, family, community and nation (an unholy trinity of contested and problematized notions) serve to try to hegemonise ways of thinking about 'the social' or 'the public'. In the Labour Government of Tony Blair, the language of

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[10] Noting of course that Thatcherism was never 'pure' New Right liberalism but always carried profoundly neo-conservative components in its project.

community, family, nation (and 'the people') have been ever-present. The New Labour discourse is one which continually stresses personal responsibilities, albeit in ways which borrow from the language of the New Right. Building communities founded upon the obligations of responsible, 'working' families has become central to Labour's strategy to *modernize* UK society[11]. For Labour leader Tony Blair, 'the search is on to reinvent community for a modern age, true to core values of fairness, co-operation and responsibility' (*The Guardian*, 29 January 1996). Community thus becomes a key channel through which government will be enacted. 'Social justice' appears in the process to be reworked as community and individual obligation (Hughes and Mooney, 1998b).

In contrast to such conservative appropriations of the figure of community, we suggest that community could be articulated around the idea of freeing up time as a precursor of 'strong' and diverse communities. The basic income approach clearly suggests that time needs to be liberated. For New Labour on the other hand community seems to be something that one encounters after a hard day's work (unless of course your 'partner' is doing unpaid community work like bringing up your children!).

Moral communitarianism on law and order

Quite specific suggestions are put forward by Etzioni on 'law and order' which further reinforce the dominant motifs of obligation and the shoring up of our moral foundations above rights in this strand of communitarian thought. Apart from support for community policing and neighbourhood watch schemes in the community, Etzioni's law and order agenda appears to lend support to a draconian version of 'reintegrative public shaming'(see Hughes, 1998a, chapter 6). Thus, for first offenders only, a strategy of public humiliation which allows community re-

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[11] We might of course question how modernisation can be achieved through traditional (and outdated?) premises such as 'the family'. Perhaps Stuart Hall's notion of 'regressive modernisation' is helpful in this context. Alternatively the combined use of the word 'working' with that of 'families' may illustrate New Labour's attempt to synthesis the old (family) values with the new discourse of equal opportunities for all to 'work' as waged earners.

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integration is supported as it would 'serve to underscore society's disapproval of the crime committed rather than of the people themselves. Temporarily marking out those convicted in open court, after due process, seems a legitimate community-building device' (Etzioni, 1994, p.141). Again we would ask in passing if community can be built, who constructs it? Is the court a community institution and where does the authority to do 'justice' and 'punishment' lie?

The bottom line for Etzioni in the fight against crime and disorder appears to be the existence of a tight and homogeneous moral community. Thus he argues that the level of crime is deeply affected by the total communal fabric and he cites the state of Utah as an exemplary oasis of order and low criminality in the USA in the late twentieth century 'where families are strong, schools teach moral values, communities are well intact, and values command respect' (Etzioni, 1994, p.190).

'New' Labour, law and order and zero-tolerance

The debates generated by communitarian thinkers have now clearly entered the practical politics of the 1990s in the UK. As Jordan (1996: 21) notes, communitarian 'solutions' for providing a new cement for society are not least attractive to politicians as they appear to offer low price options for softening conflicts, producing harmony, trust and obedience to rules and identification with fellow citizens. This is evident in the proposals made by Home Secretary, Jack Straw, in 1997 to adopt a policy of 'zero-tolerance' regarding incivilities in communities and on the streets. The much vaunted and ill-defined notion of 'family values' appears to be the key to the decent society/cohesive community whilst those parents who do not meet these criteria, as manifested in the delinquent and criminal tendencies of their children, are promised punishment. Issues of responsibility are clearly to the fore here. In turn a policy of 'zero-tolerance' is seemingly recommended for both noisy and disruptive neighbours on housing estates whilst much is made of getting the homeless, graffiti 'vandals' , 'aggressive beggars' and 'squeegee merchants' off the streets together with curfews on

young people (see Hughes, 1996: 21). Labour's rhetoric of community is thus bound up with an exclusionary targeting of the dangerous 'other' in line with the particular variant ('moral authoritarian') of communitarianism which they have espoused . The enforcement costs of such exclusionary strategies in the future may prove very high (Jordan, 1996).   The take-up of the moral communitarian agenda by New Labour appears to accord with what Bill Bowring has termed its 'studied indifference to relations of power and oppression in society' (Bowring, 1997: 110). Accordingly, the source of social crisis is located in parental irresponsibility (derived from Etzioni's 'parenting deficit' thesis) or in the malicious, irresponsible behaviour of groups and individuals. The logic of this position is the social censure and exclusion from society of those who will not take responsibility for their actions , or persist in deviant behaviour (Bowring, 1997: 110).

Authoritarian populism again?

This discourse may be termed moral authoritarian or neo-conservative communitarianism given inter alia its following domain assumptions:

* an emphasis on one moral community at the expense of a recognition of the plurality and diversity to identities in late modernity ;

* a desire to return to a traditional and nostalgic past albeit couched in the language of modernisation;

* a neglect of power structures in human societies or at least a naturalisation of hierarchical relations;

* a critique of personal rights and a call for duties but a failure to critique property rights;

* a glorification of past solidaristic communities together with a failure to conceptualize the crucial importance of struggles versus oppression in the creation of collectivist communities;

* finally a political and moral rallying call for a return to the traditional family as the means to prevent social ills, including crime.

All in all, within this popular variant of communitarianism shared by Etzioni and Blair, there is a vision of a unitary, homogeneous community sustained by strongly-held moral certainties, and setting, albeit at times implicitly, a morally prescriptive agenda for the social exclusion of marginalized and 'deviant' categories of people. At the core of this discourse is a particular vision based on an 'essentialist' view of human nature in which there is a conservative fear of dis-orderliness. In turn community as an orchestrating principle of welfare appears to act through the 'naturalized' practices of the familial, self-help groups, philanthropy and voluntarism, supported when necessary by the enabling or enforcing state. Accordingly Campbell argues that 'Communitarianism celebrates a holy trinity of family, community and nation, as if community represented a halcyon pasture , small but perfectly formed, an immaculately conceived domain of homogenous kinships, shared interests and common histories' (Campbell, 1995:51). This quote appears to capture moral communitarianism's particular representation of the re-formed, re-moralised 'public'. We would agree with Campbell's powerful critique of this particular <u>variant</u> of communitarianism. However, her critical comments do not apply to all communitarian thinking and politics, and certainly not that which may be termed 'radical left pluralism' (Little and Hughes, 1998, Hughes and Mooney, 1998a). A radical politics of community necessarily recognises that communities are 'messy' spheres in which there is disorderly dispute as well as orderly agreement.

<u>W(h)ither Diversity and Pluralism?</u>

In this paper we have plotted the influence of a moralising and authoritarian communitarian discourse on New Labour's attempt at forging a hegemonic project for the One Nation/People. And yet, New Labour's agenda also continues to speak to questions of diversity and new ways of belonging. This important component of the New Labour agenda has tended to be down-played in most critical commentaries on the emergent 'social settlement' around welfare. Yet we would suggest it is unlikely to

just fall off the agenda in the post-Thatcherite conjuncture. How such appeals to anti-discriminatory practices against oppressed groups from women to gays and disabled people will co-exist with the celebration of the remoralised Family/ Community/ Nation remain sources of deep ideological ambiguity for any Blairite settlement (see Chris Smith 1996). It is possible that the ideological resolution of the contradiction between celebrating the 'normal' way of life (Parent, Family/Marriage, Heterosexuality, Christian etc.) with that of different life-styles will be on the basis of tolerance of (some, relatively harmless) individual difference within the parameters of an overarching and unified Moral Nation-Community. As we know from the past settlements of the old, social democratic welfare state (Williams, 1994, Hughes, 1998b and c), there have always been 'conditional' and 'subordinated' inclusions of problem populations. We may speculate nonetheless on the extent to which the seemingly dominant trend in New Labour to remoralise individuals as members of the community through waged work will be able to contain those who deviate from the ascendant norm of waged work and that of family obligation. This has been termed an 'equal opportunities to work' discourse of sorts, addressing how to enable the 'different' (them) to overcome barriers that prevent them from being like 'us' ('the normal') (Clarke and Newman, 1998, 15). In passing we note the conflict between these two norms which occur to those 'responsible' for, or 'obliged' to care for sick relatives in the context of the ascendant norm of waged work for all. As delegates will be aware the addressal of such potential conflicts lies at the centre of basic income proposals for some autonomy for all from full-time waged work.

Beyond Workerism and Authoritarian Re-moralisation?

Having outlined some of the key features and contradictions of the attempted hegemonic project of New Labour in the late 1990s in the UK, the final part of this paper examines the limitations of this 'hyper-workerist' project. In particular, we wish to discuss this 'hyper-workerist' project in the context of the current European

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debates on basic income and radical communitarianism. We then conclude by raising some questions about new imaginings of the public sphere and of obligation and autonomy in post-full employment societies.

New Labour is committed to workerist notions of neo-conservative 'workfare' policies, centred on educating the irresponsible poor into correct forms of behaviour - waged work- without there being sufficient work being available for all (Little, 1998: 78). There is a powerful rhetoric that all should do waged work, albeit in the context of flexible, deregulated markets. Legitimate membership of the welfare community lies in individual's 'contribution' to the wider collectivity through waged work. Waged work is also a seemingly 'remoralising' activity in its own right and the basis for a sense of social citizenship. However, as Little has noted: 'work for wages provides individuals with a form of social *insertion* , but also.. individuals need to find membership of communities and that requires self identity as autonomous beings. This necessitates a re-evaluation of all activities carried out in the public and private spheres' (Little, 1998: 78, and see chapter 3). New Labour is also committed to coercive enforcement of the waged work norm: all adults if unemployed (i.e. the 'de-moralised') should now be viewed as and transformed into job-seekers' not unemployed claimants. We describe this approach as 'hyper-workerist' in that the waged worker is portrayed as the norm to reach parts of 'the people' that the social state in the social democratic era (especially mothers and disabled people) would not have envisaged enlisting into paid employment. The acceptance of the ideal of full paid employment is not unique to New Labour in the UK. It is a widely shared wish of influential social democratic commentators in the UK such as Will Hutton (1997) but this wish does take an extreme, even evangelical form in New Labour. The widespread currency of such views in turn explains the remote position of the basic income debate in the UK and difficulty of getting it onto the political agenda in this society.

Given the dominance of this workerist approach, important alternative policy agendas around work-sharing, guaranteed basic/citizen's income hardly figure in contemporary UK debates. In UK then we see a very withered view of what 'the communal' (and 'the autonomous') may be said to be, by implication if not explicit dictate excluding non-waged work and projects for the common good. Obviously New Labour does praise voluntary endeavours or what may be termed acts of voluntaristic communitarianism. It would seem such communal activities are accepted as fine so long they do not come into conflict with the centrality of waged work: if they do come into conflict with this dominant norm (e.g. activities in the 'informal economy') then such projects will be criminalised. Much non-waged work is viewed as a poor substitute for paid work and might be used to augment the welfare cutbacks. The example of the environmental task force designed only for people under 25 years old comes to mind here. We may ask why is there no obligation for rest of us (the 'over 25s') to be involved in such work for the common good?

We end by asking some questions raised by radical communitarian and basic income theorising for future imaginings of a welfare society.

*What is needed to move beyond the currently dominant 'conditional integration through paid employment' thesis?

*What are the possibilities for greater autonomy, tolerance and diversity by means of the promotion of particularistic projects in basic income proposals?

*How are we to reconcile the problem that self-identity is formulated in a multiplicity of different ways and yet the capacity to exercise autonomy remains grounded in (modernist) concerns with the common good?

*What of 'work sharing' and Gorz's proposals regarding macrosocial and microsocial inclusion and citizen's wage (Gorz, 1992, Little, 1996)?

*What of the role of the state as the necessary guarantor of any new politics of time given the great deal of collaboration and planning needed at different levels of society?

These are just some of the questions to be asked of New Labour - and of other governments across Europe and beyond - from the view of radical communitarianism. We need to move beyond the Blair-Clinton orthodoxy and its welfare reform equation (social welfare-paid work) not least because of its failure to recognise that many of the relationships which engender human well-being are experienced outside the formal economy. The basic income debate appears to be crucial in reviving the idea of active citizen participation. Basic income if used radically and expansively may offer the basis not only for solidaristic social relations but also the means by which individuals are empowered and provided with the capacity to act upon autonomous desire. The great 'trick' of basic income is that it is both a universal principle where redistribution is encouraged as well as a means of fostering individualistic and pluralistic projects in civil society which are themselves predicated on difference and diversity. Basic income can offer a counter-balance to the 'conditional integration through paid employment' orthodoxy by means of its promotion and commitment to the ethic of care and the equalisation of paid work in the formal economy and unpaid work in non-market spheres. However, basic income is just one component needed for opening up the possibilities of what Williams (1998) terms the new politics of both <u>redistribution</u> and <u>recognition</u>. On such a new political agenda the concept of redistribution itself will be broadened (from that of income transfers and collective provision) to the redistribution of paid work itself, time, care and leisure (Williams, 1998: 24). This paper hopes it has started this interrogation; it has certainly not finished the questioning.

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